



Accrediting Commission for Schools Western Association of Schools and Colleges

COMMISSION MEMBERS

GREGORY FRANKLIN, Ed.D.
Chairperson
Association of California School
Administrators

DAVID GAUDI, Ed.D.
Vice Chairperson
Hawaii Association of Independent
Schools

MICHAEL ALVAREZ
Western Catholic Educational
Association

SAMANTHA BENISH
California Federation of Teachers

GRANT BENNETT
Association of California School
Administrators

DANNY BLAS
California Teachers Association

STEPHEN CATHERS
East Asia Regional Council of Schools

SHANINE COATS
California Department of Education

RON CARRUTH, Ed.D.
Association of California School
Administrators

NANCY COONIS
Western Catholic Educational
Association

MITCHELL D'OLIER
Public Member, Hawaii

ODIE DOUGLAS, Ed.D.
Association of California School
Administrators

LEE DUNCAN, Ed.D.
Association of Christian Schools
International

JON FERNANDEZ
Pacific Islands

JUAN A. FLECHA
Association of California School
Administrators

KRISTIE FLOHRA
National Lutheran School Accreditation

ANDREA FUKUMOTO
Hawaii State Department of Education

MELISSA HANDY
Hawaii Association of Independent
Schools

CINDY KAZANIS
California Department of Education

RODNEY LUKE
Hawaii State Department of Education

DIANNA MACDONALD
California Congress of Parents and
Teachers, Inc. (PTA)

DEREK MINAKAMI
Hawaii Government Employees'
Association

JOE MITCHNER
Public Member, California

LINDA NORMAN, Ed.D.
Western Catholic Educational
Association

DOREEN OLESON, Ed.D.
California Association of Independent
Schools

MATTHEW RUSSO, Ed.D.
Postsecondary Education

JONATHAN SCHILD, Ed.D.
Western Catholic Educational
Association

DAVID SCJARRETTA, Ed.D.
Charter Schools

MARSHA SERAFIN, Ed.D.
California Association of Private School
Organizations

KATHERINE THOROSSIAN, Ed.D.
Association of California School
Administrators

EMMA TURNER, Ph.D.
California School Boards Association

BERIT VON POHLE, Ed.D.
Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day
Adventists

DIANA WALSH-REUSS, Ed.D.
Association of California School
Administrators

August 27, 2020

Cindy Garcia, Director
The Cottonwood School
7006 Rossmore Lane
El Dorado Hills, California 95762

Dear Cindy Garcia:

The Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC) announces the action taken at the Summer 2020 Commission Meeting. The ACS WASC Commissioners have determined The Cottonwood School (TK-12) meets the ACS WASC criteria for accreditation, through June 30, 2023. This decision is based on all of the information provided by the school, including the school's report, and the satisfactory completion of the accreditation visit.

Prior to the end of this initial accreditation period, schools must complete a self-study assessment and submit a self-study report, including the progress made in meeting the recommendations of the initial visit visiting committee. Self-study training will be provided and Centers/Programs will be expected to have key staff participate in these training sessions. An ACS WASC visiting committee will conduct a site visit to review the self-study findings and supporting evidence, conduct classroom observations, and dialogue with all stakeholders. The committee will evaluate the programs and operations and the impact on student learning.

Accreditation status is conditioned upon The Cottonwood School's continued adherence with the ACS WASC policies, procedures, and criteria for accreditation. One accreditation requirement is the obligation of schools to notify ACS WASC of any changes which might be substantive in nature with an explanation of the change and the anticipated effect on the educational program (see attached).

Another accreditation requirement is that schools and districts annually contribute members to participate on visiting committees. This is particularly helpful to newly accredited schools in order to gain a better understanding of the accreditation process. New members can sign up to serve on a visiting committee on the ACS WASC website at www.acswasc.org. Failure to maintain compliance with said policies, procedures, and standards is grounds for modification and/or withdrawal of accreditation.

The approval of initial accreditation entitles you to use the following phrase on transcripts or in school advertising: **Fully Accredited by (or) Accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges**, until such time as your accreditation has either lapsed or been denied. If all grade levels operated by the school were included in the initial visit review, the above statement is sufficient. In other cases, the statement must specify the programs or grade levels accredited, i.e., "Fully Accredited for Grades (9–12 for example) by the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges."

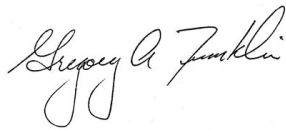
Transcripts of students who are graduating or transferring from grades covered by the accreditation may be stamped or embossed with the ACS WASC accredited seal which can be obtained from the ACS WASC office, or the "Accredited by ..." phrase can be typed on the transcript.

If you choose to disclose your status in any communications with the public, you must specify the program or grade levels which are covered by the initial status. You must also include the name, address and website of the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges in the same communication. The information to include is:

Accrediting Commission for Schools
Western Association of Schools and Colleges
533 Airport Blvd., Suite 200, Burlingame, CA 94010
www.acswasc.org

The Commission looks forward to The Cottonwood School's anticipated success and continuing improvement in keeping with ACS WASC's pursuit of excellence in elementary, secondary, and adult education.

Sincerely,



Gregory A. Franklin
Commission Chairperson

cc:

Enc.: [Visiting Committee Report](#)
[ACS WASC Substantive Change Policy and Procedures](#)
[ACS WASC Merchandise Order Form](#)