



arts schools network  
exemplary school

## asn exemplary school designation: how to apply

# Strategically Evaluate Your School's Purpose, Operations, and Educational Programs

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## **I. ABOUT ARTS SCHOOLS NETWORK**

Arts Schools Network is a non-profit association founded in 1981 with a mission to inspire emerging and seasoned leaders in K-16 arts schools by providing quality resources, support, and networking opportunities to elevate their institutions. For more than 39 years, ASN has offered informational and inspirational programs, communications, and services, and helped arts educators share best practices, experiences, and expertise.

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Learn More:

[www.artsschoolsnetwork.org](http://www.artsschoolsnetwork.org)

## **I. DEFINING AN ARTS SCHOOL**

ASN defines an “arts school” as any school for children and youth with a mission that includes intensive education and training in the arts (pre-collegiate arts schools that offer elementary, middle school, secondary education, or a high school diploma, or the arts component of K-12 requirements of the states or other entities, arts magnet or charter schools, or other organizations. Schools may be independent or operate in connection with a governing body, host, or parent organization. Some focus on one artistic discipline, others on a variety.

## **II. EXEMPLARY SCHOOL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Principles of Exemplary Practice**

ASN promotes quality in arts education by acknowledging the values embraced by member schools. Applicants that meet ASN’s criteria for exemplary practice are awarded an Exemplary School designation. The evaluation for Exemplary School designation is based on A Guide to Assessing Your Arts School, a document created by ASN and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Pre-collegiate Arts Schools (ACCPAS) to help arts school personnel plan, evaluate, and implement effective organizational development.

The Exemplary School application process provides a framework for comprehensive review through a series of questions that explore the entire range of a school’s purpose and operations. The process does not attempt to compile or reiterate concepts and techniques covered by existing literature on management, governance, fundraising, elementary/secondary education in the arts, etc. Rather, the process provides a structure to help you analyze your own organization. Responding to these questions helps you gather and develop valuable information

for planning improvements and determining the technical and tactical resources your organization needs.

*Note: While the Exemplary School designation indicates exemplary practice, it does not represent or replace any accreditation or certification of schools or their programs. From ACCPAS's inception, ASN has been involved in drafting and revising accreditation standards, and it continues to support ACCPAS in the development and implementation of its accreditation system. ASN encourages member schools to pursue accreditation, if they deem it appropriate, as a means of developing and recognizing the achievements of the institution.*

### **B. Program Timeframe**

Applications are due APRIL 1; designees are notified on MAY 15 and recognized at the ASN annual conference in October of the same calendar year. Designations are granted for five years. Once a five year designation is up, former recipients may go through the Exemplary Schools application again.

### **C. Designation Benefits**

A designated ASN Exemplary School obtains the following benefits or rights:

- ñ Recognition on the website, in the annual conference program, and at the conference Awards Program
- ñ Engraved bronze medallion and printed certificate
- ñ Prepared news release
- ñ ASN Exemplary School Logo
- ñ ASN e-news feature story

To achieve and maintain the five-year Exemplary School status through ASN, the school must remain a member in good standing.

## **III. APPLICATION PROCESS**

ASN membership dues and Exemplary School application or extension fee (\$200) must be paid in full. Payments can be made through ASN's website. Application deadline is April 1, and notifications are May 15.

### **A. Part One: Conduct Self Evaluation**

Review the Purposes and Operations section in A Guide to Assessing Your Arts School with all administration, faculty, parents, and other appropriate stakeholders.

**B. Part Two: Submit Narrative and Supporting Materials** Via [Acceptd Platform](#). If you have not used Acceptd before, you will need to “create an account” to access the application platform.

**1. Narrative (30 points)**

Provide a summary of the findings from this evaluation process. This may be a description of levels of achievement, relationships of parts to other parts and to the institution as whole, prospects for future changes, viability of educational programs, action plans, areas for further investigation, etc. The summary will necessarily vary based on the objectives of this assessment and each school's unique situations.

Please limit narrative to four typed, double-spaced pages, using Times New Roman font, size 11.

While each item in the Purposes and Operations for Narrative section below provides points to consider, you may wish to provide a general assessment in terms of:

- Strengths
- Areas for improvement
- Consistency with school-wide or program purposes
- New aspirations
- Future challenges

**Purposes and Operations for Narrative**

**a. Purposes of the School**

Describe and evaluate the school’s purposes with regard to accuracy and applicability to the school’s educational goals, relationship to decision-making, planning, and evaluation of the school’s operations and programs, communication of purposes to trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students, and applicability of the purposes to the school’s efforts now and in the future.

**b. Size and Scope**

Describe and evaluate the size and distribution of the school’s students and faculty in relation to programs offered and the purposes of the school. Consider whether the numbers of faculty and students are sufficient to support present educational programs. It may also be useful to project this evaluation at various intervals in the future.

c. Finances

Describe and evaluate the finances of the institution in relation to the school's purposes and its size and scope. Consider present and projected funding and any possible or proposed changes to operations, faculty, or educational programs that may change the financial situation. Provide an examination of funding sources and systems for making financial decisions.

d. Governance and Administrative Structures

Describe and evaluate the school's form of governance and administrative structures. The evaluation should include governance and administration's ability to support the purposes of the school, the school's size and scope, its educational programs, and allocation and management of resources.

e. Faculty and Staff

Describe and evaluate the school's faculty and staff with regard to number, qualifications, relation to administrative structures, policies for full-time, part-time, or adjunct status, faculty development, compensation, advancement, workloads, hiring, promotion and tenure, faculty leadership, and student advising.

f. Facilities, Equipment, Health, and Safety

Describe and evaluate the school's facilities and equipment with regard to their adequacy to support the size and scope of the institution and programs offered. Include a discussion of maintenance and repair schedules and systems, and systems for assessing the need for and securing additional or upgraded facilities and equipment. Describe and evaluate the school's policies and procedures for health and safety, including emergency response plans.

g. Learning and Information Resources

Describe and evaluate the school's learning and information resources with regard to access, adequacy to support programs, financial resources devoted to learning and information resources, and any established relationships to other library holdings. Include a projection of needs and allocations for the future.

h. Recruitment, Auditions and Portfolio Reviews, Enrollment, Financial Aid, Retention, Recordkeeping, and Advancement. Describe and evaluate the school's policies and procedures for recruitment, auditions and portfolio reviews, enrollment, financial aid, retention, recordkeeping, and advisement. Include an evaluation of operations in these areas and their benefit to students and educational programs.

i. Published Materials and Websites

Describe and evaluate the school's catalogues, handbooks, websites, published calendars, syllabi, and any other publications or printed/electronic resources. Include an evaluation of content, clarity, accuracy, availability, and usefulness for students, parents, faculty, and any other involved parties.

j. Branch Campuses and Extension and Affiliate Programs

Describe and evaluate any relationships between the school and a branch campus, extension, affiliate, or satellite program. The branch program and its relationship to the parent institution may additionally be evaluated with regard to all lettered items in this area (purposes, size and scope, finances, governance and administration, etc.). Include an evaluation of shared faculty and resources, overall governing structures, and communication systems.

k. Community Involvement

Describe and evaluate the school's policies and approaches to community involvement. Include in this discussion an evaluation of any relationships to local arts and arts education communities, relationships to the school's purposes, involvement of school personnel, and any relationships of community involvement to fundraising, promotion or development for the school.

l. Relationship with Parents/Guardians

Describe and evaluate the school's communications with parents or guardians of students. Consider both communications to parents and guardians regarding issues at the school, its mission or programs, and student progress, as well as the school's procedure for receiving comments from parents and guardians.

m. Evaluation, Planning, and Projections

Describe and evaluate the school's policies, procedures, and execution of evaluation, planning, and projections as they apply to consistency with the school's purposes and size and scope. Include an evaluation of the focus on student achievement and educational programs, usefulness of institutional and programmatic evaluations in advancement of the work of the institution and changes to educational programs, and an assessment of any instructional and/or student evaluations.

## **2. Submit Supporting Materials (70 points)**

Submitted materials represent the quality of an exemplary organization and should present a big picture of the school. When completing this application, please know that

presentation of materials is considered and if selected, may be posted on our website as examples to motivate future applicants.

Submit the following through the online Accepted application platform. (One-page PDF files are preferred, unless you are submitting an original published document):

1. Letter of support from supervising entity
2. Brief history of school data and highlights (year opened, longitudinal milestones, has this school been replicated, where/when/results). Discuss critical success factors (financial support – internal and external, organizational structure, other support systems) that result in exemplary status of your school.
3. Student enrollment by arts area and overall demographics of school
4. Budget detailing arts area expenses and funding sources
5. School organizational chart
6. List of all current school personnel by title and/or teaching assignment
7. Campus map showing arts facilities and resources
8. Course catalogue and student/parent handbook(s)
9. School schedule detailing arts learning and staff development
10. Student exhibition, performance, special events calendar
11. List of outstanding student and school achievements that demonstrate quality arts instruction and preparation
12. Notable alumni and year of graduation, provide college career pathway if possible
13. Governing body 'report card', published annual report
14. A 200-word summary about your school to use for press release, e-communication, and website
15. Electronic copy (hi-res: 300 dip, vector) of the school logo to be used on the ASN website, e-news, conference promotions, and other marketing materials.

### C. 2021 ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR EXEMPLARY PRACTICES

100 POINTS | A SCORE OF 90 OR HIGHER IS NEEDED TO BE DESIGNATED AN ASN EXEMPLARY SCHOOL. Narrative score is worth 30 points and supporting materials score worth 70 points.

	LOW	MID	HIGH	SCORE		
<b>NARRATIVE (30 POINTS)</b>						
<input type="checkbox"/> Strengths	1	2	3	4	5	/5
<input type="checkbox"/> Areas for improvement	1	2	3	4	5	/5
<input type="checkbox"/> Consistency with school-wide or program purposes	1	5		10		/10
<input type="checkbox"/> New aspirations	1	2	3	4	5	/5
<input type="checkbox"/> Future challenges	1	2	3	4	5	/5
<b>SUPPORT MATERIALS (70 POINTS)</b>						
1. Letter of support from supervising entity (required)	REQUIRED				REQUIRED	
2. Brief <u>history</u> of school data and highlights (year opened, longitudinal milestones, has this school been replicated, where/when/results). Discuss <u>critical success factors</u> (financial support – internal and external, organizational structure, other support systems) that result in exemplary status of your school.	5	10	15		/15	
3. Student enrollment by arts area and overall demographics of school	1	2	3	4	5	/5
4. Budget detailing arts area expenses and funding sources	1	2	3	4	5	/5
5. School organizational chart	1	2	3	4	5	/5
6. List of all current school personnel by title and/or teaching assignment	1	2	3	4	5	/5
7. Campus map showing arts facilities and resources	1	2	3	4	5	/5
8. Course catalogue and student/parent handbook(s)	1	2	3	4	5	/5
9. School schedule detailing arts learning and staff development	1	2	3	4	5	/5
10. Student exhibition, performance, special events calendar	1	2	3	4	5	/5
11. List of outstanding student and school achievements that demonstrate quality arts instruction and preparation	1	2	3	4	5	/5
12. Notable alumni and year of graduation, provide college career pathway if possible	1	2	3	4	5	/5
13. Governing body 'report card', published annual report	1	2	3	4	5	/5
14. A 200-word summary about the school for press releases, e-communications, and website	REQUIRED				REQUIRED	
15. Electronic copy (hi-res: 300 dpi, vector) of the school logo. (If the school does not have a logo, please submit a high-res photograph that represents the school.)	REQUIRED				REQUIRED	
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>/100</b>	