

# WHY ACCREDITATION THROUGH THE COUNCIL OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS?

An on-site visitation team of thirteen international educators will spend a week, October 12-18<sup>th</sup>, validating a rigorous Self-Study completed last spring by the entire GWA faculty and staff. This study, supporting documents and artefacts are measured by CIS educational standards and guidelines for quality international schools. CIS Accreditation is another quality hallmark recognized by colleges and universities that benefits graduates applying for admission.

According to the research work of Nicholas Brummitt, Managing Director of ISC Research, in 2000 there were 2,584 international schools teaching approximately one million students; mainly expatriates. The last report he presented in Lisbon in 2011, that number stood at 5,742 international schools teaching over 2.5 million students, and by 2020 the prediction is more than 11,000 international schools with over 5 million students.

The Council of International Schools, the largest global organization of its kind, has (April 2012) 666 member schools on all continents except Antarctica with projected membership trends rising annually. CIS also has shared protocol with several North American based accreditation agencies, thus increasing member schools to tens of thousands. Each CIS region (Indian Sub and Central Asia, South East Asia, Far East, Europe, Middle-East, Africa, Central and South America, North America and Australasia) is serviced by one of the seven regional accreditation offices, as well as supported by the teams at head office in Leiden and the office for America (which deals mainly with Higher Education). Each regional accreditation officer has potential contact with as many as 95 schools.

In 2011, CIS introduced a new protocol for accreditation entitled School Improvement through Accreditation "Journey to Excellence in International Education", also known as the 8<sup>th</sup> Edition. Section A, which encourages schools to examine themselves in terms of their guiding statements of vision, mission, philosophy and aims, requiring "a commitment to promote international and intercultural experiences for students" --- and more specifically cites a requirement for schools to ensure that this commitment underpins all aspects of the school's actions. For more information about CIS, go to the website: [www.cois.org](http://www.cois.org)