PHILIPPINE ACCREDITING ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, INC.

Comparative Analysis of Leadership and Governance Practices in PAASCU-Accredited Basic Education Institutions (2024-2025)

Benchmarking Against Global and Local Standards Across 52 Accredited Schools

Ricardo R. Palo
Executive Director

Alven V. Gonzaga
Account Officer, Commission on Engineering and Architecture Education

September 2025

Copyright Notice

© 2025 PAASCU. All rights reserved. The PAASCU publishes this comparative analysis. No portion of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise—without prior written permission from PAASCU.

Executive Summary

The comparative analysis of Leadership and Governance practices among PAASCU-accredited Basic Education institutions for the period 2024–2025 highlights a sector that is structurally robust, compliance-driven, and steadily progressing toward greater coherence and inclusivity. This study examined accreditation reports from fifty-two (52) institutions, with all names anonymized to uphold ethical standards, safeguard confidentiality, and promote candid participation. Such anonymization reduces reputational risk, encourages the sharing of sensitive insights, and aligns with established research ethics—ensuring that findings serve as tools for learning and improvement rather than instruments of comparison or critique.

The analysis reveals that while Philippine basic education institutions share a common foundation of sound governance and regulatory alignment, they differ significantly in the maturity, depth, and integration of these practices. These variations reflect the diverse institutional contexts in which leadership and governance are enacted, offering valuable insights into sector-wide strengths and areas for growth.

To begin with, across the five standards—Vision–Mission, Leadership and Management, Strategic Management, Policy Formulation and Implementation, and Risk Management—the analysis indicates a strong baseline of alignment with PAASCU and local quality assurance frameworks such as RA 9155, the School-Based Management (SBM) Framework, and the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH). In particular, most schools consistently maintain updated and clearly articulated vision–mission statements, qualified and competent leadership teams, structured strategic plans, comprehensive policy manuals, and well-established disaster risk management programs. Together, these demonstrate a shared commitment to stability, accountability, and regulatory compliance, reflecting PAASCU's enduring values of integrity, professionalism, and continuous improvement.

Nevertheless, as the analysis progresses, certain gaps become evident. Across many institutions, stakeholder participation, documentation, monitoring, and long-term strategic coherence remain areas for further development. While procedures are generally in place, implementation often leans toward operational compliance rather than holistic, participatory, and evidence-based governance. Moreover, when benchmarked against international frameworks such as the NPBEA, CIS, and OECD/UNESCO standards, it becomes apparent that domains like inclusivity, equity, safeguarding, innovation, and sustainability are still emerging areas of practice. These global dimensions often distinguish the more advanced institutions that have successfully embedded adaptive and forward-looking leadership models into their organizational systems.

Furthermore, contrasts between institutional types reveal nuanced differences. System-affiliated schools, for example, tend to benefit from established governance frameworks and shared resources, yet may face limitations in autonomy and contextual responsiveness. In contrast, independent schools display greater flexibility and agility, but their practices sometimes lack documentation consistency and systemic alignment. Notably, institutions that actively engage stakeholders in consultative decision-making and data-informed strategic planning exhibit stronger coherence between their mission statements and daily operations, demonstrating that participation and accountability are key enablers of sustained institutional excellence.

In summary, the comparative findings suggest that PAASCU-accredited Basic Education institutions possess a solid foundation of compliance-based governance, but the next phase of development lies in cultivating coherence-based leadership—one where vision, strategy, policy, and risk management operate as interconnected systems. Moving forward, the sector's challenge is to deepen inclusivity, institutionalize monitoring mechanisms, and embrace innovation as integral to governance. By aligning local strengths with global best practices, schools can transition from merely maintaining standards to shaping transformative, learner-centered, and resilient educational communities. This direction fully embodies PAASCU's mission of fostering a culture of quality, integrity, and continuous improvement.

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms 3

Comparative Matrix of Benchmarks of PAASCU Leadership and Governance: Common Features and Key Differences per Standard 6

Comparative Analysis of Leadership and Governance Area Reports Across 52 Accredited Basic Education Schools 8

- **Standard 1 — Vision–Mission** 8
  - **Key Practices** 8
  - **Top 5 Strengths** 8
  - **Top 5 Limitations** 9
- **Standard 2 — Leadership & Management** 9
  - **Key Practices** 9
  - **Top 5 Strengths** 9
  - **Top 5 Limitations** 10
- **Standard 3 — Strategic Management** 10
  - **Key Practices** 10
  - **Top 5 Strengths** 10
  - **Top 5 Limitations** 11
- **Standard 4 — Policy Formulation & Implementation** 11
  - **Key Practices** 11
  - **Top 5 Strengths** 11
  - **Top 5 Limitations** 12
- **Standard 5 — Risk Management** 12
  - **Key Practices** 12
  - **Top 5 Strengths** 12
  - **Top 5 Limitations** 13

Alignment of Survey Results with Benchmark Common Features 14

Recommendations for Improving Alignment and Compliance 15

Conclusion 19

References 20

Introduction

Quality assurance in education does more than check boxes — it drives continuous improvement and accountability. In the Philippines, PAASCU accreditation is widely recognized as a voluntary process by which Basic Education institutions commit to review, evaluate, and enhance their practices beyond minimum regulatory standards. The PAASCU primer explicitly states that its accreditation is grounded on quality practices "benchmarked with quality standards defined by local and international quality assurance agencies."

However, as global expectations rise, schools must ensure that governance and leadership not only comply with local mandates but also align with international best practices in inclusivity, equity, sustainability, and resilience. Benchmarking helps institutions compare themselves against peers and external frameworks to identify gaps, adapt practices, and elevate performance. Institutions that benchmark can more clearly see where they lead, where they lag, and where they can grow.

In basic education, leadership and governance are foundational: research consistently finds that effective school leadership (second only to classroom instruction) critically shapes school improvement and student learning outcomes. Yet in practice, school heads manage dual roles as instructional leaders and administrators, often under heavy workloads and systemic constraints. Studies in the Philippine context have noted that principals and school heads face challenges in fully executing their managerial and supervisory functions under the demands of RA 9155's decentralized system.

This report constitutes a rigorous research undertaking—a comparative analysis designed to systematically benchmark and align the Leadership and Governance practices of Basic Education institutions under PAASCU accreditation. Drawing on consolidated Area 1 narrative reports submitted by fifty-two (52) accredited institutions for PAASCU's Fiscal Year 2024–2025, the study evaluates school practices against both local and international benchmark standards. Through this evidence-based approach, the analysis identifies areas of alignment, reveals critical gaps, and proposes targeted interventions tailored to the sector's unique context.

The value of this research extends to both PAASCU and its member institutions. For PAASCU, the findings offer empirically grounded insights that inform the continual refinement of accreditation criteria and methodologies, reinforcing its role as a proactive external quality assurance body. For member schools, participation in this comparative study provides actionable feedback, highlights sectoral best practices to emulate, and fosters a shared commitment to collective improvement. In this way, the research not only enhances accountability and transparency but also contributes to an evolving culture of excellence in educational leadership and governance.

The analysis is structured around three phases:

1. **Benchmarking** – how PAASCU standards on Leadership and Governance compare with local and global frameworks;

2. **Alignment** – how institutional practices reflect compliance or deviation from the benchmarks (including key practices, strengths, and limitations);
3. **Recommendations** – what PAASCU and schools can do to improve alignment, especially in areas noted as only partially or not aligned.

By doing this, the study aims to guide schools from mere compliance toward integrated governance systems that are coherent, inclusive, and future-oriented.

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

This glossary presents key terms, concepts, and acronyms used throughout this report. It aims to ensure clarity, consistency, and alignment with PAASCU's terminology in quality assurance and accreditation discourse. Definitions are drawn from institutional and accreditation contexts, particularly those relevant to leadership, governance, and basic education. Both general and technical terms are arranged in alphabetical order for ease of reference.

Term / Acronym	Definition
Accountability	The obligation of school leaders and governing bodies to justify decisions, ensure transparency, and uphold institutional integrity in alignment with established policies and standards.
Accreditation	A voluntary process of external quality assurance through which educational institutions are evaluated against defined standards to promote continuous improvement and public trust.
Benchmarking	A systematic method of comparing institutional practices, performance indicators, and processes against internal, local, or international standards to identify strengths, gaps, and areas for enhancement.
BED	*Basic Education;* the institutional unit responsible for elementary and secondary education programs within a school system.
CIS	*Council of International Schools;* an international accreditation organization that promotes global citizenship, intercultural learning, and safeguarding practices in education.
Compliance	The fulfillment of regulatory, policy, and accreditation requirements set by government agencies or accrediting bodies.
Continuous Improvement	The ongoing, cyclical process of planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating initiatives to enhance institutional quality and effectiveness.
DepEd	*Department of Education;* the Philippine government agency responsible for regulating and supervising basic education nationwide.
Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM)	A comprehensive approach that includes the identification, assessment, and mitigation of risks to ensure school safety, resilience, and continuity of learning during emergencies.
Equity	The principle of fairness in access, opportunities, and outcomes for all learners, regardless of background, ability, or circumstance.
Evidence-Based Decision-Making	The use of verified data, research findings, and systematic evaluation to inform policy, planning, and leadership decisions.
FGD	*Focus Group Discussion;* a qualitative method for gathering stakeholder feedback and insights through structured group dialogue.
Governance	The system through which educational institutions are directed, controlled, and held accountable, encompassing structures, policies, and decision-making processes.

Inclusivity	The commitment to creating learning environments and governance systems that recognize and accommodate diversity among stakeholders.
KPI	*Key Performance Indicator;* a measurable value that indicates progress toward achieving institutional or strategic goals.
Leadership	The process of guiding individuals and groups to achieve institutional goals through vision-setting, decision-making, and ethical stewardship.
LGU	*Local Government Unit;* a public administrative entity responsible for governance and service delivery within a defined locality; often partners with schools for DRRM and community initiatives.
Management	The operational function of planning, organizing, and monitoring institutional activities to achieve desired educational outcomes.
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)	Systematic processes used to assess the implementation, effectiveness, and impact of institutional plans and programs.
NPBEA	*National Policy Board for Educational Administration (USA);* the body responsible for developing the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), emphasizing ethics, equity, and continuous improvement.
OECD/UNESCO	*Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development / United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;* global organizations that issue frameworks promoting equity, sustainability, and resilience in education systems.
PAASCU	*Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities;* a private, voluntary, non-profit accrediting agency that promotes quality assurance, integrity, and continuous improvement in Philippine education.
PD	*Professional Development;* structured learning opportunities designed to improve the knowledge, skills, and competencies of school leaders, teachers, and staff.
PPSSH	*Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads;* a national framework defining leadership competencies expected of basic education administrators.
Quality Assurance (QA)	A systematic process of ensuring that educational services meet or exceed established standards through internal and external review mechanisms.
RA 9155	*Republic Act No. 9155, the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001;* the law that institutionalizes school-based management and defines the roles of school heads as instructional leaders.
Risk Management	The identification, analysis, and mitigation of potential threats (e.g., financial, operational, reputational, or environmental) that could affect institutional stability and performance.
SBM	*School-Based Management;* a governance framework promoting participatory decision-making, accountability, and school autonomy within the basic education system.

Stakeholder Engagement	Active participation of internal and external stakeholders (administrators, teachers, parents, students, alumni, and community partners) in decision-making and quality assurance processes.
Strategic Management	The process of defining institutional direction, allocating resources, and monitoring performance to achieve long-term goals aligned with the school's vision and mission.
Succession Planning	A proactive process of identifying and preparing potential leaders to ensure continuity and stability in key administrative and governance roles.
Sustainability	The capacity of an institution to maintain its operations, programs, and resources responsibly and effectively over time while minimizing negative social and environmental impacts.
SWOT/PESTLE Analysis	Strategic planning tools used to evaluate an organization's internal and external environments: *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats* (SWOT) and *Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental* (PESTLE) factors.
Transparency	The practice of open communication, documentation, and reporting that fosters trust, accountability, and ethical governance.
Vision–Mission (VM)	The articulated purpose and desired future state of the institution that guide its goals, decisions, and operations; periodically reviewed to ensure relevance and alignment.

Comparative Matrix of Benchmarks of PAASCU Leadership and Governance: Common Features and Key Differences per Standard

The analysis started with a comparison of PAASCU's standards for Leadership and Governance in Basic Education against recognized local and international frameworks. Locally, the Governance of Basic Education Act (RA 9155), the School-Based Management (SBM) Framework, and the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) served as key references. Internationally, benchmarks were taken from the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (NPBEA, USA), the Council of International Schools (CIS) International School Standards, and the OECD/UNESCO Guidelines on School Governance and Leadership. This comparison highlights both areas of agreement and differences across standards, identifying the common features schools are expected to meet while also highlighting the distinct focuses of local and global frameworks. The results of this step provide the basis for assessing how well institutional practices align with these benchmarks.

Dimension/ Standard	PAASCU (BED)	Local Benchmarks (RA 9155, SBM, PPSSH)	International Benchmarks (NPBEA, CIS, OECD/UNESCO)
1. Vision-Mission	Clear, participatory formulation, widely disseminated, periodically revised.	RA 9155: Mandates school-level articulation of goals consistent with DepEd. SBM: Shared vision among stakeholders. PPSSH: School heads lead in crafting and communicating vision/mission.	NPBEA: Vision must promote student learning and well-being. CIS: Vision reflects intercultural learning, global citizenship. OECD/UNESCO: Vision aligned with equity, inclusion, innovation.
2. Leadership and Management	Qualified administrators; participative, accountable, proactive leadership; succession planning.	RA 9155: Defines the school head as the instructional leader and chief administrator. SBM: Leadership is shared and participatory. PPSSH: Leadership domains (instructional, human resource, community, strategic).	NPBEA: Focus on instructional leadership, equity, ethics, and continuous improvement. CIS: Governance effectiveness, safeguarding, sustainability. OECD/UNESCO: Systemic accountability, collaborative leadership.
3. Strategic Management	Strategic planning involving stakeholders; alignment with VMGO; measurable/time-bound goals; evaluation.	SBM: SIP (School Improvement Plan) as the main strategic planning tool. PPSSH: Strategic leadership domain, data-driven planning. RA 9155: Requires alignment with national and regional goals.	NPBEA: Data-informed continuous improvement. CIS: Strategic planning integrates global outlook, innovation, and technology. OECD/UNESCO: Emphasis on evidence-based policy, system-wide alignment, and adaptability.

4. Policy Formulation and Implementation	Transparent, fair, efficient, values-based, aligned with government regulations.	RA 9155: School heads are accountable for implementing the DepEd policy. SBM: Policies promote transparency, efficiency, and participation. PPSSH: Emphasizes legal and ethical policy-making.	NPBEA: Policies must uphold ethics, equity, and inclusivity. CIS: Strong on safeguarding, diversity, inclusion, and equity. OECD/UNESCO: Policy should reduce inequities and support lifelong learning.
5. Risk Management	Risk management system to identify, assess, mitigate risks; stakeholder involvement; monitoring.	RA 9155: Delegates accountability for school safety and security. SBM: School DRRM (Disaster Risk Reduction and Management) is integral. PPSSH: School heads lead in risk preparedness, safety, and resource protection.	NPBEA: Leaders ensure safe, inclusive, and responsive learning environments. CIS: Includes financial sustainability, safeguarding, health & safety. OECD/UNESCO: System resilience, preparedness for crises, sustainability.

Dimension/Standard	Commonalities	Differences
1. Vision-Mission	All stress participatory, clearly articulated, regularly reviewed vision-mission.	International benchmarks emphasize equity, inclusion, and global citizenship, beyond PAASCU's contextual mission.
2. Leadership and Management	Competent, accountable, participative leadership is universal.	PAASCU emphasizes *succession planning*; international benchmarks highlight equity, ethics, safeguarding, and sustainability.
3. Strategic Management	All stress stakeholder involvement, data-informed planning, and alignment with mission.	International bodies stress innovation, adaptability, and global outlook; local bodies emphasize national policy alignment.
4. Policy Formulation and Implementation	Transparency, compliance, and efficiency are universal.	International emphasizes safeguarding, equity, and diversity, while PAASCU/local focuses more on operational compliance.
5. Risk Management	All expect risk management and safety protocols.	Local emphasizes DRRM and operational safety; international expands to financial sustainability, safeguarding, and resilience.

Comparative Analysis of Leadership and Governance Area Reports Across 52 Accredited Basic Education Schools

This section presents the comparative analysis of Area 1: Leadership and Governance, based on the consolidated narrative reports submitted by 52 Basic Education schools that underwent PAASCU accreditation. The analysis synthesizes institutional practices, highlighting common strengths that demonstrate alignment with established governance and leadership standards, as well as recurring limitations that reveal areas for improvement. Each of the five standards under this area: Vision, Mission, Leadership and Management, Strategic Management, Policy Formulation and Implementation, and Risk Management, is examined separately. For each standard, key practices observed across institutions are summarized, followed by the top five most frequently cited strengths and the top five most recurring limitations. The synthesis provides a sectoral perspective on prevailing trends in leadership and governance within the basic education context.

Standard 1 — Vision–Mission

Key Practices

- Periodic vision–mission reviews, often linked to system or congregational plans. *This ensures that the school's identity remains updated and aligned with institutional thrusts.*
- Dissemination through orientations, manuals, websites, and campus displays. *These methods help stakeholders remain familiar with the school's guiding statements.*
- Stakeholder engagement occurs but varies in depth; parents and students often have limited involvement. *Engagement is recognized but not consistently inclusive.*
- Integration of vision–mission into curriculum, formation programs, and activities. *The values and goals are translated into actual learning and student experiences.*
- Some schools define behavioral or learning indicators to evidence achievement. *This provides measurable proof of how the vision–mission is lived out.*

Top 5 Strengths

1. Regular dissemination of vision–mission across the community. *Stakeholders are reminded of the school's identity and purpose.*
2. Clear alignment of programs and proposals with vision–mission. *School activities directly support strategic goals.*
3. System-wide planning prompts timely updates. *Congregational or network-wide processes encourage schools to review and adjust their VM regularly.*
4. Values integration in curriculum and student life. *Students are formed holistically in line with the school's ethos.*
5. Existence of indicators to track achievement of the vision–mission. *Some schools have tools to measure how VM is practiced in daily operations.*

Top 5 Limitations

1. Limited stakeholder participation, especially from students, parents, and alumni. *Ownership is weakened if only administrators drive the process.*
2. Weak ownership evidence; understanding reduced to memorization. *Stakeholders may know the words but not apply them in action.*
3. Lack of clear KPIs to measure achievement. *Progress cannot be tracked objectively.*
4. Inconsistent dissemination after revisions. *Updated VM statements are not always cascaded well.*
5. Gaps in alignment between updated VM and existing operations. *Policies and practices may not reflect new directions.*

Standard 2 — Leadership & Management

Key Practices

- Qualified boards and administrators with relevant experience. *Schools ensure leadership competence through appropriate hiring.*
- Leadership councils and meetings facilitate decision-making. *These create avenues for consultation and transparency.*
- Professional development offered to administrators and middle managers. *This supports leadership growth and effectiveness.*
- Consultative leadership is espoused, though implementation varies. *The intent is participatory, but practice is sometimes centralized.*
- Succession planning is emerging in some schools. *Leadership continuity is being considered, but not always formalized.*

Top 5 Strengths

1. Qualified and competent governance and leadership teams. *Ensures credibility and effective oversight.*
2. Established decision-making structures and regular meetings. *Promotes systematic governance and accountability.*
3. Professional development initiatives for leaders and supervisors. *Improves leadership capability and adaptability.*
4. Proactive leadership in responding to changes and challenges. *Schools show agility in addressing emerging needs.*

5. Documented practices supporting integrity and accountability. *Transparency builds trust with stakeholders.*

Top 5 Limitations

1. Gaps in consultation with broader stakeholders. *Parents, alumni, and students are not always engaged in decisions.*
2. Succession planning remains underdeveloped. *Leadership transitions risk being reactive instead of prepared.*
3. Professional development programs lack targeted design and evaluation. *Activities occur, but without systematic tracking of impact.*
4. Documentation gaps in minutes, reports, and leadership manuals. *This hinders monitoring and institutional memory.*
5. Limited autonomy of BED units in system schools affects responsiveness. *Centralized structures can slow down school-level decisions.*

Standard 3 — Strategic Management

Key Practices

- Regular strategic planning (annual or multi-year). *Provides direction and clarity for the school's future.*
- Use of SWOT/PESTLE and stakeholder feedback to inform priorities. *Decision-making is evidence-based.*
- Strategic plans aligned to vision–mission. *Ensures coherence between goals and identity.*
- Budget provision for strategic priorities. *Allocates resources to support the execution of plans.*
- Some schools adopt scorecards and dashboards. *These tools provide measurable accountability.*

Top 5 Strengths

1. Strategic planning is a regular institutional practice. *Schools recognize their importance for direction-setting.*
2. Plans are aligned with the vision–mission. *Ensures consistent implementation of institutional goals.*
3. Use of stakeholder input in planning. *Promotes inclusivity and relevance of decisions.*

4. Identification of relevant internal and external conditions. *Acknowledges the broader environment influencing the school.*
5. Emerging use of performance monitoring tools. *Signals progress toward evidence-based management.*

Top 5 Limitations

1. Stakeholder participation is inconsistent beyond administrators. *Teachers, parents, and students are sometimes left out.*
2. KPIs and timelines are often vague; weak monitoring and evaluation. *Plans lack measurable accountability.*
3. Annual plans are fragmented and weakly linked to budgets—disconnect *between strategy and resources.*
4. Some schools rely on ad hoc action plans instead of full strategic plans. *Short-term focus undermines long-term vision.*
5. Cascading of strategic plans to communities is limited. *Stakeholders may be unaware of agreed goals.*

Standard 4 — Policy Formulation & Implementation

Key Practices

- Policies documented in manuals for administrators, faculty, staff, and students. *Provides clarity and consistency of operations.*
- Orientations conducted at the start of the school year. *Helps stakeholders understand rules and responsibilities.*
- Schools comply with DepEd and regulatory requirements. *Ensures legality and alignment with national standards.*
- HR policies on hiring, evaluation, and codes of conduct are well established. *Supports professional accountability and fairness.*
- Some schools review policies through surveys and FGDs. *Shows openness to feedback and improvement.*

Top 5 Strengths

1. Comprehensive policies cover key areas of school operations. *Gives structure and clarity to governance.*

2. Schools comply with national standards and requirements. *Reduces risk of sanctions and ensures quality compliance.*
3. Orientation programs support policy implementation. *Promotes stakeholder understanding and adherence.*
4. HR policies and codes of conduct are documented. *Professional standards are upheld.*
5. Some evidence of consultative policy review processes. *Encourages inclusivity and responsiveness.*

Top 5 Limitations

1. Limited stakeholder involvement in policy formulation. *Policies risk being top-down.*
2. Manuals are outdated, incomplete, or missing for some offices. *Reduces clarity and consistency.*
3. Dissemination gaps and weak feedback mechanisms. *Stakeholders may not be well-informed about policies.*
4. Policies not fully contextualized for basic education in system schools. *General policies may not address unique BED needs.*
5. Monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation are inconsistent. *Weakens accountability for results.*

Standard 5 — Risk Management

Key Practices

- Strong focus on disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM). *Reflects compliance with government mandates.*
- Conduct of regular drills and coordination with LGUs. *Builds preparedness and community partnership.*
- Safety equipment and emergency signage in place. *Improves awareness and response time.*
- Insurance coverage for buildings and assets; some cover health. *Provides financial security in case of emergencies.*
- Pandemic-related continuity measures implemented. *Shows adaptability in crisis response.*

Top 5 Strengths

1. Documented and compliant DRRM programs. *Ensures preparedness and safety.*

2. Preventive safety measures and equipment. *Reduces risks and improves readiness.*
3. Insurance coverage for infrastructure and assets. *Protects school resources and investments.*
4. Stakeholder awareness through circulars and orientations. *Increases participation in safety culture.*
5. Continuity measures for learning during crises. *Protects instructional delivery during disruptions.*

Top 5 Limitations

1. Risk management is too narrowly focused on natural disasters. *Other risks, like financial or reputational, are overlooked.*
2. Fragmented or incomplete risk management documentation. *Lack of integration weakens effectiveness.*
3. Monitoring of drills is not systematically recorded. *Hard to measure readiness improvement.*
4. Limited insurance scope or outdated certifications. *Creates vulnerabilities in coverage.*
5. Stakeholder orientation on broader risk issues is insufficient. *The community lacks awareness of comprehensive risk plans.*

The consolidated analysis of Leadership and Governance across 52 Basic Education schools reveals clear patterns of good practice, as well as recurring challenges that cut across all five standards. On the positive side, schools demonstrate a strong culture of **compliance and alignment**: vision–mission statements are regularly reviewed and disseminated, leadership teams are generally qualified and competent, strategic planning is a recurring institutional exercise, policy manuals exist for most operational areas, and disaster risk reduction and management systems are well established. These practices reflect a sector-wide commitment to maintaining structures that promote stability, order, and adherence to both internal and external standards.

However, several **limitations are consistently observed**. Stakeholder participation—whether in crafting the vision–mission, engaging in decision-making, contributing to strategic planning, reviewing policies, or taking part in risk management—is often limited or inconsistent. This results in gaps between espoused participatory governance and the lived experience of inclusivity. Equally, many practices are not systematically documented or monitored; for example, professional development outcomes, policy implementation feedback, and drill evaluations are rarely measured or tracked for impact. Furthermore, schools tend to focus on immediate operational compliance rather than long-term or holistic concerns such as global outlook, sustainability, safeguarding, and equity.

Taken together, the sector demonstrates solid governance foundations but also indicates a need to **move from compliance-driven to coherence-driven systems**. Strengthening participation, establishing clearer indicators and monitoring mechanisms, and broadening governance lenses beyond disaster risk and regulatory conformity toward sustainability and global citizenship will allow schools to align more closely with both local mandates and international benchmarks.

Alignment of Survey Results with Benchmark Common Features

Dimension/ Standard	Common Features (from Benchmarks)	Evidence from Narrative Reports	Alignment Judgment	Explanation
1. Vision–Mission	Clear, participatory, regularly reviewed, inclusive, aligned with goals and values	VM statements are periodically reviewed and widely disseminated; integrated in curriculum and student life; stakeholder involvement is limited; indicators are inconsistently defined.	Aligned (clarity, dissemination) Partially Aligned (participation, indicators)	Schools meet local/PAASCU expectations but fall short of international emphasis on inclusivity, equity, and stakeholder ownership.
2. Leader-ship and Manage-ment	Competent, participative, accountable, ethical, succession planning, stakeholder engagement	Qualified leaders and councils in place; PD programs offered; consultative leadership espoused but unevenly applied; succession planning underdeveloped; equity and safeguarding not emphasized	Aligned (competence, accountability) Partially Aligned (participation, succession) Not Fully Aligned (equity, safeguarding)	Local benchmarks largely met, but gaps exist compared to NPBEA/CIS/UNESCO on structured succession, inclusivity, and safeguarding.
3. Strate-gic Manage-ment	Participatory, evidence-based planning; aligned with VM; measurable	Strategic/SIP planning widely practiced; VM alignment evident; SWOT/PESTLE used; stakeholder participation	Aligned (VM alignment, planning practices) Partially Aligned	Meets PAASCU and SBM expectations but falls short of PPSSH/NPBE

	goals; adaptable; global outlook	uneven; KPIs and monitoring weak; limited innovation/global focus.	(stakeholder participation, KPIs) Not Fully Aligned (innovation, global orientation)	A and international standards on data-driven monitoring, adaptability, and global outlook.
4. Policy Formulation and Implementation	Transparent, efficient, values-based, inclusive, consistent with regulations; equity and safeguarding are emphasized internationally.	Policies in manuals; compliance with DepEd standards; orientations held; HR processes documented; limited stakeholder involvement; some manuals outdated; equity/safeguarding rarely addressed	Aligned (compliance, transparency) Partially Aligned (participation, updates) Not Fully Aligned (equity, safeguarding)	Schools comply with RA 9155/DepEd but fall short of CIS/UNESCO standards requiring explicit safeguarding, diversity, and equity policies.
5. Risk Management	Comprehensive systems covering safety, resilience, sustainability, safeguarding, and stakeholder involvement	Strong DRRM programs, drills, insurance, and continuity plans, but monitoring is inconsistent; risk management is narrowly focused on natural disasters.	Aligned (safety, DRRM compliance) Partially Aligned (monitoring) Not Fully Aligned (financial, reputational, safeguarding risks)	Meets PAASCU/DepEd DRRM requirements but lacks the breadth expected by NPBEA/CIS/UNESCO on sustainability, safeguarding, and systemic resilience.

Recommendations for Improving Alignment and Compliance

This section presents targeted recommendations to strengthen compliance with both local and international benchmarks for Leadership and Governance. The proposed interventions are organized by standard and grouped into actions that PAASCU, as the accrediting body, can undertake to refine its instruments and processes, and actions that institutions themselves can implement to address identified gaps. The aim is to move schools from compliance-driven

practices toward coherence-driven systems that emphasize inclusivity, equity, safeguarding, innovation, sustainability, and global outlook, while ensuring that foundational requirements of leadership and governance are consistently met.

Standard 1 — Vision–Mission

Issues: Limited stakeholder participation; weak ownership; inconsistent indicators; equity and inclusivity are underdeveloped.

PAASCU can:

- Require schools to provide *evidence of stakeholder engagement* (parents, students, alumni) in VM review processes.
- Include *equity and inclusivity* as explicit evaluation points in the survey instrument.
- Provide training or templates for schools to develop VM achievement indicators/KPIs.

Institutions can:

- Formalize stakeholder consultation mechanisms (surveys, FGDs, workshops) for VM review.
- Conduct regular orientation and integration activities beyond memorization (e.g., lived experiences, case examples).
- Define and track measurable indicators of VM achievement (e.g., values-in-action rubrics, student outcomes).

Standard 2 — Leadership & Management

Issues: Uneven consultation; weak succession planning; limited PD targeting; minimal focus on equity, ethics, and safeguarding.

PAASCU can:

- Integrate succession planning as a specific criterion in the survey tool.
- Encourage documentation of equity and safeguarding practices as leadership responsibilities.
- Share leadership development frameworks aligned with PPSSH and NPBEA domains.

Institutions can:

- Design structured succession plans (identification of potential leaders, training pipelines, mentoring systems).
- Broaden participation in decision-making through councils that include parent, student, and alumni representatives.

- Make PD programs competency-based, tied to needs assessments, and tracked for outcomes.
- Institutionalize safeguarding protocols as part of leadership accountability.

Standard 3 — Strategic Management

Issues: Limited stakeholder participation; weak KPIs and monitoring; lack of innovation, adaptability, and global orientation.

PAASCU can:

- Require schools to show data-informed monitoring systems (dashboards, scorecards) in accreditation evidence.
- Add innovation and global outlook as evaluation criteria in strategic planning standards.
- Provide exemplars of effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

Institutions can:

- Engage broader stakeholders (parents, students, industry partners) in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and strategic planning.
- Establish clear KPIs and timelines for each goal, with annual progress reviews.
- Integrate innovation and adaptability into plans (e.g., technology use, global citizenship programs, international partnerships).
- Use digital tools (dashboards, trackers) to monitor implementation and outcomes.

Standard 4 — Policy Formulation & Implementation

Issues: Limited stakeholder involvement; outdated/incomplete manuals; weak contextualization; safeguarding and equity are absent.

PAASCU can:

- Update criteria to explicitly require contextualization of policies for Basic Education.
- Emphasize equity, inclusion, and safeguarding in policy standards, aligned with international benchmarks.
- Encourage schools to conduct periodic policy audits and include them in reports.

Institutions can:

- Involve stakeholders systematically in policy review cycles (students, parents, alumni, teachers).

- Regularly update and contextualize manuals (e.g., tailor university-wide policies to BED realities).
- Integrate equity, inclusion, and safeguarding policies in HR, student services, and community programs.
- Develop monitoring mechanisms (feedback surveys, policy compliance reports).

Standard 5 — Risk Management

Issues: Over-focus on DRRM; fragmented documentation; limited scope (financial, reputational, safeguarding risks); weak monitoring.

PAASCU can:

- Expand risk management criteria to include financial sustainability, safeguarding, and reputational risks.
- Require evidence of systematic monitoring and evaluation of drills and risk programs.
- Provide schools with risk management frameworks/models aligned with OECD/UNESCO standards.

Institutions can:

- Broaden risk management systems beyond natural disasters to cover financial, operational, reputational, and safeguarding risks.
- Consolidate fragmented policies into a unified campus-wide risk management framework.
- Strengthen monitoring and documentation of drills and continuity plans.
- Train stakeholders on comprehensive risk concepts, not only DRRM.

Cross-Cutting Recommendations

PAASCU:

- Revise survey instruments to incorporate equity, inclusivity, safeguarding, sustainability, and global outlook as explicit indicators.
- Share benchmarking tools and exemplars to guide schools toward international best practices.
- Require evidence of monitoring systems (not just activities).

Institutions:

- Move from compliance-based practices (manuals, drills, orientations) to coherence-based systems (integrated frameworks, monitored outcomes, stakeholder engagement).
- Institutionalize participatory governance by embedding consultation in all processes (VM review, planning, policy, risk).
- Build capacity for innovation and global perspective through professional development, international linkages, and curriculum alignment.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis of Leadership and Governance among 52 Basic Education institutions under PAASCU accreditation has provided a comprehensive picture of sectoral strengths, recurring limitations, and areas for improvement. The study confirmed that schools demonstrate strong compliance with PAASCU and local benchmarks, particularly in ensuring clarity of vision–mission statements, establishing qualified leadership teams, practicing regular strategic planning, maintaining policy manuals, and implementing disaster risk reduction systems. These affirm the sector's commitment to building governance structures that are credible, accountable, and responsive to regulatory expectations.

At the same time, the analysis revealed significant gaps when measured against broader local and international benchmarks. Limitations in stakeholder participation, succession planning, documentation, monitoring, and the integration of equity, inclusivity, safeguarding, innovation, and global perspectives remain persistent challenges. These findings highlight the need for schools to go beyond compliance toward more coherent and future-oriented governance systems.

The recommendations—addressed both to PAASCU and to institutions—provide a roadmap for bridging these gaps. For PAASCU, refining instruments to emphasize inclusivity, safeguarding, sustainability, and global outlook will align standards with international benchmarks and encourage schools to aspire beyond minimum requirements. For institutions, strengthening participatory mechanisms, professional development, monitoring frameworks, and risk management systems will ensure that leadership and governance practices translate into meaningful outcomes for their communities.

Ultimately, this report underscores that quality leadership and governance are central to educational excellence. By moving from compliance-driven to coherence-driven practices, Basic Education schools can ensure that their systems not only meet accreditation standards but also embody resilience, inclusivity, and global readiness. In doing so, PAASCU and its accredited schools together contribute to shaping a culture of continuous improvement that prepares learners, institutions, and communities for the demands of a rapidly changing educational landscape.

References

- Al-Kurdi, O. F. (2017). The essence and significance of benchmarking in strategic planning in higher education institutions. *International Journal of Business and Management Review, 5*(6), 10–21. Retrieved from https://www.eajournals.org/journals/international-journal-of-business-and-management-review-ijbmr/vol-5-issue-6-december-2017/essence-significance-benchmarking-strategic-planning-higher-education-institutions/
- Almerol, A. B., & Geronimo, M. D. (2019). Constraints on school-based management compliance under RA 9155 in the Philippines. *Open Journal of Social Sciences, 7*(1), 1–12. Retrieved from https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=93545
- Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *How leadership influences student learning.* The Wallace Foundation. Retrieved from https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/how-leadership-influences-student-learning.aspx
- Marshall University Institutional Research. (2023, September 14). *The importance of benchmarking data against peers in higher education.* Marshall University. Retrieved from https://www.marshall.edu/irp/2023/09/14/importanceofpeergroups/
- PAASCU. (2021). *PAASCU primer for basic education.* Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities. Retrieved from https://paascu.org.ph/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/PAASCU-2021-Primer-for-Basic-Education-1.pdf
- PAASCU. (2024–2025). *Consolidation of Area 1 (Leadership and Governance) Reports from 52 Basic Education Institutions.* Internal document, Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities.