

Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Wichita East High School

Kenneth Thiessen, Principal

Review Dates: 02/19/2009 - 02/19/2009



North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), and the Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation (CITA) are accreditation divisions of AdvancED.

Quality Assurance Review Report

Contents

About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI	3
Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review	4
Summary of Findings	5
Commendations	5
Recommendations	6
Next Steps	6
Standards for Accreditation	8
Standard 1. Vision and Purpose	8
Standard 2. Governance and Leadership	9
Standard 3. Teaching and Learning	10
Standard 4. Documenting and Using Results	11
Standard 5. Resource and Support Systems	12
Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships	13
Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement	15
Conclusion	17
Appendix	18
Quality Assurance Review Team Members	18
AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools	18

About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

Background. Founded in 1895, the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) accredit public and private schools and districts in 30 states, the Navajo Nation, Latin America, and the Department of Defense Schools worldwide.

In 2006, NCA CASI, SACS CASI, and the research and development arm of the accrediting associations, the National Study of School Evaluation, unified to form AdvancED. Dedicated to advancing excellence in education, AdvancED provides accreditation, research, and professional services to 23,000 schools in 65 countries, serving 15 million students.

NCA CASI and SACS CASI serve as accreditation divisions of AdvancED. Through AdvancED, NCA CASI and SACS CASI have defined shared, research-based accreditation standards that cross state, regional, and national boundaries. Accompanying these standards is a unified accreditation process designed to help schools continuously improve.

The Accreditation Process. To earn and maintain accreditation from NCA CASI or SACS CASI, schools must:

- 1) Meet the AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools.** Schools demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for schools to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.
- 2) Engage in continuous improvement.** Schools implement a continuous improvement process that articulates the vision and purpose the school is pursuing (vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school effectiveness, and the school community (profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (plan); and documents and uses the results to inform what happens next (results).
- 3) Demonstrate quality assurance through internal and external review.** Schools engage in a planned process of ongoing internal review and self-assessment. In addition, schools host an external Quality Assurance Review Team once every five years. The team evaluates the school's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards, assesses the efficacy of the school's improvement process and methods for quality assurance, and provides commendations and recommendations to help the school improve. The team provides an oral exit report to the school and a written report detailing the team's recommendations. The school acts on the team's recommendations and submits a progress report following the review.

NCA CASI and SACS CASI accreditation engages the entire school community in a continuous process of self-evaluation and improvement. The overall aim is to help schools be the best they can be on behalf of the students they serve.

Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review

Purpose. The purpose of the Quality Assurance Review is to:

1. Evaluate the school's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards.
2. Assess the efficacy of the school's improvement process and methods for quality assurance.
3. Identify commendations and recommendations to improve the school.
4. Make an accreditation recommendation for review by the national AdvancED Accreditation Commission.

A key aim of the Quality Assurance Review is to verify that the school is operating with institutional integrity - that it is fulfilling its vision and mission for its students.

School Preparation. To prepare for the Quality Assurance Review, the school community engages in an in-depth self assessment of each of the seven AdvancED standards. The school identifies and describes the evidence that demonstrates that it is meeting each standard. Through this internal review, the school examines how its systems and processes contribute to student performance and school effectiveness.

Summary of Team Activities. The Quality Assurance Review Team is led by an AdvancED certified team chair and comprised of professionals from outside the school. The team reviews the findings of the school's internal self-assessment, conducts interviews with representative groups of stakeholders, reviews student performance data and other documentation provided by the school, and observes practices and daily operations. The team engages in professional deliberations to reach consensus on the school's adherence to the standards for accreditation. The team provides an oral exit report and prepares a written Quality Assurance Review Team Report designed to help the school improve.

The Quality Assurance Review Team Report. Following the visit, the review team completes the Quality Assurance Review report. After review by a nationally-trained reader, the report is submitted to the school. The report contains commendations and recommendations for improvement.

Using the Report - Acting on the Recommendations. The school uses the report to guide its improvement efforts. The school is held accountable for addressing the recommendations identified in the report. The NCA CASI/SACS CASI State Office is available to assist schools in addressing the recommendations. Following the Quality Assurance Review Team visit, the school must submit a progress report detailing the actions and progress the school has made on the team's recommendations. The report is reviewed at the state and national level to ensure the school is addressing the recommendations.

Accreditation Recommendation. The Quality Assurance Review Team uses the findings from the onsite visit to make an accreditation recommendation that is reviewed at the state level and by the national AdvancED Accreditation Commission. Accreditation is granted by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission and communicated to the school following action from the commission.

Summary of Findings

A Quality Assurance Review Team representing the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), a division of AdvancED, visited the Wichita East High School in Wichita, Kansas on 02/19/2009 - 02/19/2009.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed the Principal, 1 member of the administrative team, 10 students, 4 parents, and 6 teachers. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by the school. Specifically, the team examined the school's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

- Vision and Purpose
- Governance and Leadership
- Teaching and Learning
- Documenting and Using Results
- Resource and Support Systems
- Stakeholder Communications and Relationships
- Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The AdvancED standards focus on systems within a school and systematic methods of attaining high student performance and organizational effectiveness. The power of the standards lies in the connections and linkages between and among the standards. The Quality Assurance Review Team used the AdvancED standards to guide its review of the school, looking not only for adherence to individual standards, but also for how the school functions as a whole and embodies the practices and characteristics of a quality school.

Through its examination of the school's adherence to the standards, the Quality Assurance Review Team identified the following commendations and recommendations.

Commendations

The Quality Assurance Review Team commends the school for the following strengths and accomplishments. While additional strengths are noted in the detailed review of each standard that appears later in this report, the commendations listed below are the strengths that the team believes are most deserving of being highlighted.

- **The school maintains a clear and powerful focus on student performance and the school improvement process.**

The evidence is supported by the overall organizational plan that is put into effect by USD. 259. The district is committed to the school improvement process. They have placed a high importance on using leadership from within the building. A culture has been established that every student has a face and is valued as an individual. The stakeholders have established a climate that is positive and enthusiastic. Diversity and the reality that every student can find a place to blossom is evident. Their experience with diversity will help the student succeed in society after their education. East High School has established an individualized strategy of voice and choice for in-service and Professional Learning Community (PLC) time.

The school shows a willingness to engage in practices that allow for ownership within the building through

community, staff, and parents.

Recommendations

In addition to the commendations, the Quality Assurance Review Team identified the following recommendations for improvement. The team focused its recommendations on those areas that, if addressed, will have the greatest impact on improving student performance and overall school effectiveness. The school will be held accountable for making progress on each of the recommendations noted in this section. Following this review, the school will be asked to submit a progress report on these recommendations.

- **Investigate ways to more fully promote the outstanding strengths of East High School.**

The academic programs are of high quality, as are the students. Students appear to want to be a part of this school and therefore their academic performances are good.

Additional opportunities for more individualized instructional practices will allow these students to more fully develop their interests and better meet their academic strengths and challenges.

- **Expand upon the processes currently in place and allow them to become an even larger part of the school's culture.**

The External Technical Assistance Team (ETAT), the Summer Leadership program, Advisory Groups, Site Council, and Professional Learning Communities have been developed. All are active and very involved in the day-to-day processes of school improvement for East High School.

These practices have been put into place during the present cycle and now can be more fully developed through instructional practices to increase student achievement to an even greater level.

Review of AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools: The team reviewed the school's adherence to each of the AdvancED standards. The findings from this review are provided in the next section of this report.

Next Steps

The school should:

1. Review and discuss the findings from this report with all stakeholders.
2. Ensure that plans are in place to embed and sustain the strengths noted in the commendations section to maximize their impact on the school.
3. Develop action plans to address the recommendations made by the team. Include methods for monitoring progress toward the recommendations.
4. Use the report to guide and strengthen the school's efforts to improve student performance and school effectiveness.
5. Following the Quality Assurance Review, submit the Accreditation Progress Report detailing progress made toward addressing the team's recommendations. The report will be reviewed at the state and national level to ensure that significant progress is being made toward the recommendations. Lack of progress can result in a change in accreditation status.
6. Continue to meet the AdvancED accreditation standards, submit required reports, engage in continuous

improvement, and document results.

Resources

AdvancED offers a range of resources to support your school as it acts on the findings in this report. The AdvancED Resource Network, available at www.advanc-ed.org/resourcenetwork, provides an online network of peer-to-peer practices, best practices, and resources and tools designed to help schools with their improvement efforts. Available any where, any time, the network can be queried for information on a variety of school improvement subjects. The AdvancED Research and Development division provides research, handbooks, and tools to assist schools with continuous improvement. In addition, your state office provides hands-on professional development and ongoing technical assistance. Contact your state office for more information on the range of resources available to you.

Celebrating Accreditation

Following the visit, the Quality Assurance Review Team submits an accreditation recommendation to AdvancED for state review and for action at the national level by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, which confers accreditation and communicates it to the school. Upon receiving its accreditation, the school should celebrate its achievement with the school community. The NCA CASI accreditation seals are available at www.advanc-ed.org/communicationskit for accredited schools and districts to post on their website and to use in school communications. Flags, door decals, diploma seals, and lapel pins are also available and can be ordered from the website to help you share your accomplishment with your community.

Summary

The accreditation process engages the school in an ongoing journey of continuous improvement. The next steps in this journey are to build on the strengths and address the recommendations noted in this report. Doing so will enable the school to advance in its quest for excellence and deepen the fulfillment of its mission for all students.

Standards for Accreditation

The primary requirement for accreditation is that the Wichita East High School demonstrates that it meets the seven standards for accreditation. The findings of the Quality Assurance Review Team regarding the standards for accreditation are summarized on the following pages.

Standard 1. Vision and Purpose

Standard: The school establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the school.

Description - The team noted how the school met the intent of the standard based on the preponderance of evidence:

The vision of East High is a combination of the mission statement, the school's values, and three guiding questions. It was developed with input from faculty, staff, administrators, and site council members. The visioning process sets the stage for setting goals (math, reading, and academic achievement) and the mission. The vision is reviewed annually by all faculty and staff. It is addressed within PLCs as a way to intentionally integrate it into the teaching and learning process, as well as in faculty meetings and in-service activities.

The vision is communicated in a variety of manners, prominently posted throughout the school, in school documents, and on the website. It is ingrained in the culture of the school, at the administrative, faculty and student level. There is broad stakeholder understanding and support.

The reading and math goals were identified as part of the school improvement process and are aligned to the vision. A school improvement plan (SIP) was developed and is continuously maintained. This is evidenced by updated copies on the school's website. The SIP is used to develop and adjust professional development and testing plans during the year. The updates are shared with faculty for data analysis as student achievement data come in.

There are six specific listings of how the vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process: integrated PLCs, curriculum alignment, quarterly assessments, SMART goals, results-based professional development, and periodic review and analysis of student data.

Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:

- The vision of the school is very authentic and purposefully and systematically shared and celebrated with stakeholders.
- Common throughout the stakeholder interviews, the vision was characterized by three features: Caring – teachers and staff genuinely care about the students in their charge; Connections – there are so many opportunities to connect; Diversity – all students can find a kindred spirit at East High.
- Teachers and students have a “Choice and a Voice.” This increases buy-in to the vision of East High School.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement for consideration by the school:

- Broaden the understanding of the vision of the school as it relates to the school improvement process with all stakeholders.

- Explore additional ways to keep this vision current and alive for all stakeholders. Build upon the enthusiasm of the students in promoting this vision.
- Explore additional ways to build a culture of success. Do not be satisfied with one year of reaching Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets and Standard of Excellence; move toward a climate where that is an expectation year in and year out.

Finding: Wichita East High School has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 2. Governance and Leadership

Standard: The school provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and school effectiveness.

Description - The team noted how the school met the intent of the standard based on the preponderance of evidence:

East High School employs a system that provides for analysis and review of student performance and school effectiveness. Principals have created student advisory groups to help formulate policy and provide valuable input regarding rules and regulations of the school. This has helped provide teachers and students opportunities to lead. East High School has also provided the leadership meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promotes a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership. Strong leadership from all administrators in the school improvement process is evident as all have roles and responsibilities in overseeing PLCs, department chair meetings, summer leadership team meetings, site council, and advisory groups. Administrators empower, initiate, incorporate, and evaluate late start meeting times for and with staff throughout the year.

Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:

- Many programs and processes have helped provide teachers and students opportunities to lead. It also provides stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership.
- External Technical Assistance Teams (ETAT) have been developed to help implement an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel and stakeholders at East High School. Their participation gives the school another perspective on interventions/strategies effectiveness and opportunities to better initiate policy and governance.
- Professional Learning Communities, Summer Leadership Team meetings, and Department Chair meetings are practices that address governance.
- Several successful practices deserving of recognition, including: PLC Leadership groups, Department Chair meetings, Summer Leadership Teams, building committees, Advisory Groups, Site Council, and Voice/Choice Options for staff.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement for consideration by the school:

- Explore further stakeholder opportunities to express their voice in building stronger learning communities.
- Empower and provide suggestions for improvement that address multiple indicators.
- Expand next cycle's efforts with instructional strategies that can be implemented to enhance gains made during the present cycle.

Finding: Wichita East High School has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 3. Teaching and Learning

Standard: The school provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

Description - The team noted how the school met the intent of the standard based on the preponderance of evidence:

East High School develops and implements a curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning. Teachers gather, analyze, and use data and research to make curricular and instructional choices. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores, PLAN Testing, state assessments in reading and math, District Common Assessments (DCAs) and Building Common Assessments (BCAs) are used by faculty to determine the viability of school improvement goals.

East High School has incorporated and embraced the district's high school reform movement of incorporating a student advocacy program, Professional Learning Communities, and the Quality Instruction Framework. They have developed a common language, for example, as evidenced in the faculty agreeing on the definitions of rigor, relevance and relationships. Professional Learning Communities are highly functional at East High School with adequate time for collaboration and professional development. Teachers are supported throughout their teaching career with professional learning opportunities beginning with new teacher trainings and mentors.

Additionally, stakeholders have meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership.

Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:

- Clearly, the process of school improvement is supported throughout the building. The "why" we are here is evidenced in the communicated caring attitude. Acknowledgement that "the kid has a face" and they are "our" kids has helped structure the levels of intervention to challenge each learner. The staff has been given responsibility for student success.
- The momentum of school improvement was enhanced when the staff was given "voice and choice" in professional development which also helped build teacher leadership.
- The celebration of the diverse population at East High School engages all learners in education.
- The enthusiasm, caring, and positivity of East High School's climate translates into school success.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement for consideration by the school:

- Upgrade communication with parents (weekly electronic newsletter) and provide more emphasis on intentional instruction.

Finding: Wichita East High School has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 4. Documenting and Using Results

Standard: The school enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and school effectiveness.

Description - The team noted how the school met the intent of the standard based on the preponderance of evidence:

A comprehensive assessment system to evaluate progress toward meeting expectations for student learning has been developed and implemented at East High. Assessments are offered in the form of BCAs (Building Common Assessments), DCAs (District Common Assessments), MAP (Measures of Academic Progress), Kansas State Assessments, PLAN/ACT, PSAT as well as academic grades. There is strong evidence of data triangulation across the curriculum. Collaboration through PLCs, curriculum departments, vertical learning teams, PD sessions and school in-service assists teachers in identifying the needs of all students. With this information, strategies have been implemented, evaluated, improved and re-engineered to ensure the success of all stakeholders. Examples of strategies implemented for student achievement are: Math study hall, Extreme Reading, Tiered Math, Consortium English, Extended School and the ACE paragraph.

Another important aspect of student improvement is ACE time where teachers connect with students in discussing student scores, student academic needs and future academic success. Students are assigned to one of their classroom teachers which helps facilitate communication on a common ground. Through this connectedness, dialogue between student and teacher becomes more meaningful and stable with the end result of a stronger, confident and more successful student.

Through PLCs and data analysis, staff is driven to change strategies and interventions to fulfill the diverse needs of students at East High. An example of a successful strategy for East High is the implementation of the literacy plan. This strategy called the ACE paragraph has resulted in a strong school-wide writing goal that is evident in every subject throughout the building.

The success of each and every student does not lie with just the core curricular teachers but is the responsibility of all departments.

Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:

- The culture of diversity is acknowledged, embraced and celebrated by all stakeholders.
- The caring attitude of teachers, administrators and all other staff permeates the building climate.
- There is a community feeling for all students, parents and staff--no one is excluded; each person regardless of race, gender or socio-economic status is invited to be an active participant of this school.
- Summer Leadership Council establishes the focus and tone of staff development--differentiating delivery based on teacher readiness level.
- The building provides multiple resources for teachers in the form of learning coaches, assessment coordinators, data leaders, and assessment coordinators to assist in the implementation of the school improvement plan.
- Technology is readily available for staff either in their classroom or on demand in a variety of forms that include smart boards, airliners, and clickers.
- Teachers are provided time for professional development, department meetings, and PLCs where data

analysis can occur.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement for consideration by the school:

- The school within a school concept would enhance the non-attende to come back to school. This would lure students back to a familiar environment.
- Consider a social studies intervention.

Finding: Wichita East High School has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 5. Resource and Support Systems

Standard: The school has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students.

Description - The team noted how the school met the intent of the standard based on the preponderance of evidence:

The school works closely with the district in the recruitment and employment of highly qualified staff. Leadership and processes are in place to support new members of the educational team. All professional staff participates in a continuous growth professional development program that engages school leaders at all levels. This system maximizes building capacity as teachers serve as grade level leaders, Professional Learning Community leaders, Department Chairs, and members of the USD 259 Instructional Learning Teams. The staff has a voice in the path of the school as it strives for improvement as well as choice in how that success will be delineated. The web-based data warehouse Schoolnet allows teachers nearly immediate access to data in order to diagnose and provide necessary interventions to ensure the success of all students.

Students, parents and staff feel accepted and value diversity; a feeling of community fosters connections with students as well as overall school safety. East High School's Summer Leadership Council establishes the focus and tone of staff development—differentiating delivery based on teacher readiness level. The building provides multiple resources for teachers in the form of learning coaches, assessment coordinators, data leaders, and assessment coordinators to assist in the implementation of school improvement plan. Teachers are provided the resource of time necessary for instructional improvement by way of professional development and collaboration through department meetings, grade level meetings, and Professional Learning Communities.

Technology is readily available for staff either in their classroom or on demand in a variety of forms that include smart boards, airliners, digital projectors, laptop carts, computer labs, and electronic recording devices. Programs are in place for students with special needs and challenges through a wide variety of special education programs, AP vertical alignment, extended school opportunities, and English Language Learners (ELL) programs.

Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:

- East High School leads the district in its staff development model. The differentiated delivery serves as a standard for other schools as well as teachers managing their own classroom.
- The school's leadership actively supports student success through the allocation of resources dedicated to instructional improvement, data collection and analysis, and assessment coordination. This commitment ensures that all students receive the educational services necessary for success.

- The school's leadership and staff provide a safe and orderly school environment.
- Adults throughout the building are committed to delivering quality instruction to a large student population.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement for consideration by the school:

- Consider expanding extended school and intervention opportunities into curriculum areas beyond those of math and language arts. In addition, more timely interventions may be beneficial to students who are failing.

Finding: Wichita East High School has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

Standard: The school fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

Description - The team noted how the school met the intent of the standard based on the preponderance of evidence:

Faculty and administration foster collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning. The six building administrators have created a climate where stakeholders' opinions are valued and supported. They are highly visible within this very large building and are continually involved in the daily business of school. One of their goals has been to increase the leadership capacity from within, and this has created student and teacher leaders who take these opportunities very seriously. With a student body of over 2200, creating such a climate has been a great accomplishment.

In spite of its size, students reported that it is very difficult for students to be invisible at East High School. There is such cultural diversity in this building that no one group feels they are in the minority. There are clubs and activities that accommodate a huge range of talents and interests. This diversity was considered a strength by both students and faculty members. "You can always find someone to be your friend," commented several of the students.

Student expectations for learning are communicated in many ways. Information regarding student achievement is communicated to parents on the school and district website, in newsletters, and at the various stakeholder meetings. Examples of such meetings include Site Council, departmental meetings, faculty meetings and Coffee with the Principal gatherings. An automated calling system is also in place to notify parents if their child is tardy or has missed particular class periods. "The teachers call all of the time," reported the student focus group. Other avenues of communication include personal contact, email, and parent-teacher meetings. ParentLink is also available and enables parents to check attendance, assignments, and grades frequently.

Formal channels to listen to and communicate with stakeholders are also in place. Site Council is comprised of parents and teachers. This group provides a sounding board for school activities, curriculum and policy and gives parents the opportunity to communicate general concerns or questions to the faculty. The school also has a Parent Association group in conjunction with its International Baccalaureate (IB) program. This parent group and the Site Council are the primary parent stakeholder groups. However, administrators have made a point to promote their willingness to meet with anyone.

Students feel they have opportunities to voice concerns and provide input by participating on the Principal's Student Advisory Council. This group of students has brought forward several student concerns and are encouraged to use appropriate channels to present their concerns. As a result, the policy regarding student use of cell phones was modified. Currently the students would like the faculty to consider a different way of handling final exams. This provides students with learning skills and opportunities to feel they have a voice in their school.

In an effort to more actively involve staff members, Professional Learning Communities have been established. Summer Leadership group (department chairs and building leadership) meets several times during the summer to plan topics for staff development opportunities for the coming school year. They also formulate possible solutions or ideas for changes that would promote greater involvement in the school improvement efforts. These are then taken back to the PLCs and various departments where implementation strategies are formulated. Members of the leadership team and faculty members credit having "voice and choice" as one of the key motivators for this cycle of school improvement. This has increased faculty support and buy-in from what it was during the previous cycle.

Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:

- A climate of acceptance and belonging has been created by the faculty and administration. This message has been communicated to the students and a culture of "everyone belongs somewhere" has been created.
- The philosophy of leadership from within has been established. Administrators and teachers view all of the students as "their students" and they are committed to finding strategies within their own curricula to help students succeed.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement for consideration by the school:

- Investigate additional opportunities to promote the positive culture of East High School and its students. The student focus group reported that some community members hold the opinion that East High School is a "scary place to be." Students and staff members strongly refute this perception and feel their school is safe and inviting. Getting students involved in spreading the message of the many positive attributes of East High School would be a worthwhile project.
- Finding ways to communicate with such a large stakeholder population will always be a concern. While multiple avenues exist, continually search for other ways to increase stakeholder input and access to information.

Finding: Wichita East High School has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

Standard: The school establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.

Description - The team noted how the school met the intent of the standard based on the preponderance of evidence:

East High School makes school improvement a consistent, detailed, and effective part of their school. The Quality Assurance Review visit meeting with parents and students was a testament that school improvement is not something that is just talked about once or twice a year. Late start Wednesdays are used often during the school year to support various school improvement initiatives. The Summer Leadership Team uses information gathered throughout the year to make decisions that best fit the needs of the school. Principals actively encourage leadership from within the building and give them latitude to make a positive influence on staff, students, and parents.

The most promising structure to assist in continuous improvement at East High School during this cycle is the ETAT team development. Partnering with Northwest High School has given them an avenue to discuss issues that are common to Wichita Public Schools and helps tremendously in its efforts towards improvement. This process supports the Summer Leadership Team's work and information is reviewed through Site Council, Coffee with the Principal, and bi-annual meetings with the assistant superintendent.

Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:

- Several successful practices deserving of recognition are evident at East High School. They include: the ETAT process that is clearly embedded in the school's improvement process, Summer Leadership Team, Site Council, Professional Learning Communities, SchoolNet, and the school's leadership actively reinforcing the school's vision, mission, and values during meetings, at school gatherings, and through daily interactions

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement for consideration by the school:

- East High should take a look at ways to promote the school's positive school efforts towards meeting the needs of all of its students. Communicating the results of improvement to stakeholders needs to be done as often as possible. The community's understanding of the improvement process could empower them to take a more active role in moving improvement initiatives forward.
- Develop and implement a systematic approach for communicating with stakeholders about school improvement efforts.
- Enlarge the capacity for reviewing and analyzing the school's profile data (through the Standards Assessment Report) for trends and issues that can inform the school's improvement efforts.

Finding: Wichita East High School has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Conclusion

The commendations and recommendations in this report are designed to focus the school on those areas that will have the greatest impact on student performance and school effectiveness. While powerful in potential, the commendations and recommendations only have meaning when acted upon by the school. The strength of this report lies in the school's commitment to using the findings to continuously improve. The key is action. The school is encouraged to use the report as a call to action, a tool to sustain momentum in the ongoing process of continuous improvement.

The team identified several recommendations for improvement that the school will need to address. Following this review, the school will be required to submit a progress report summarizing its progress toward addressing the team's recommendations.

The Quality Assurance Review Team expresses appreciation to Kenneth Thiessen, members of the professional staff, students, parents and other community representatives for their hospitality throughout the visit. The team wishes the school and its students much success in the quest for excellence through NCA CASI accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Bill Bush, Chair (USD 396)
- Mrs. Sharon Bell, Vice Chair (Kansas North Central Association)
- Jim McNiece, Team Member (Wichita Northwest High School)
- Kristin Caradine, Team Member (Wichita Northwest High School)
- Valerie Phillips, Team Member (Wichita Northwest High School)

AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools

The AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools are comprehensive statements of quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for schools to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness. As schools reach higher levels of implementation of the standards, they will have a greater capacity to support ever-increasing student performance and organizational effectiveness. Each of the seven standards listed below has corresponding indicators and impact statements which can be accessed at www.advanc-ed.org.

Vision and Purpose

The school establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the school.

Governance and Leadership

The school provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and school effectiveness.

Teaching and Learning

The school provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

Documenting and Using Results

The school enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and school effectiveness.

Resource and Support Systems

The school has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students.

Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

The school fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The school establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.