

State Board of Education
Work Session Agenda
June 11, 2012

Days Inn
Thermopolis, Wyoming

	LUNCH		12:15 p.m.
1.	Introduction of New Employee- Sue Belish		1:30 p.m.
2.	Technology Review- Paula Smith		1:40 p.m.
3.	Chapter 6, Proposed Revisions- Dianne Frazer	Tab A	2:15 p.m.
4.	BREAK		3:15 p.m.
5.	Certified Personnel Evaluation System – Carol Illian	Tab B	3:30 p.m.
6.	Accountability Update- John Masters		4:30 p.m.
	ADJOURNMENT		5:15 p.m.



Wyoming Department of Education

Cindy Hill, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Hathaway Building, 2nd Floor, 2300 Capitol Avenue
Cheyenne WY 82002-0050

Phone: 307-777-7675 Fax: 307-777-6234 Website: edu.wyoming.gov

Summary of Proposed Revision of Chapter 6 Rules June 12, 2012

Chapter 6 of the State Board Rules is titled “Accreditation” and also contains rules for accountability and assessment. With the enactment of SEA 65, the Wyoming Accountability Act, Chapter 6 Rules will need significant revision. A task group began to review Chapter 6 during May 2012 as a first step in this process. The following summary describes the initial suggestions for areas needing review and revision. Comments are organized by section numbers in the current rules.

Section 1. **Authority:** Reference the Accountability Act.

Section 2. **Applicability:** Current rules only address accreditation. Accountability and Assessment must be addressed either in these rules, or new rules promulgated.

Section 3. **Promulgation, Amendment, or Repeal of Rules:** No change.

Section 4. **Definitions:** Add definitions pertinent to the Accountability Act. Revise the following:

(c) At-Risk Students

(h) District Improvement Plan

(j) – (o) All definitions related to the former State Accreditation Model and rubric.

(s) & (y) – Related to measures and assessment, revise to update.

(v) & (w) – Related to standards, revise to update.

Add definitions for “Distance Education” and “Distance Education Program Provider” to incorporate into accreditation requirements.

Section 5. **Wyoming Statutes:** No change.

Section 6. **Wyoming State Board of Education Policies and Regulations:** No change.

Section 7. **Student Standards:** Review related to distance education.

Section 8. **Student Assessment:** Needs complete revision to conform to new statutes. Also, consider impact of distance education and consistent assessments for all students in a district. May consider separate Assessment Rules.

Section 9. **Accountability System:** Needs complete revision to conform to new statutes. May consider separate Accountability Rules.

Section 10. **Rewards and Consequences:** Revise. Current rules related to NCLB requirements. Need to be updated and to incorporate elements of Wyoming Accountability Act.

Section 11. **School Improvement:** Revise. Relates primarily to former State Accreditation Model no longer in use. Needs to be updated and aligned to Wyoming Accountability Act. Also need to consider how to apply to different types of schools and how it is coordinated within a district.

Section 12. **Professional Development:** Revise to update for accreditation standards and assurances.

Section 13. **Parent and Community Involvement:** Revise to update for accreditation standards and assurances.

Section 14. **At-Risk Students:** Revise to update for accreditation standards and assurances.

Section 15. **School Climate:** Revise to update for accreditation standards and assurances.

Section 16. **Facilities and Budget:** Revise to update for accreditation standards and assurances. Needs to reflect new statutes on class size.

Section 17. **Technology:** Revise to update for accreditation standards and assurances.

Section 18. **Graduation Requirements:** No change.

Section 19. **Services:** Revise to update for accreditation standards and assurances. Review guidance services, especially related to distance education. Consider individual learning plans for different purposes: literacy, distance education...

Section 20. **Verification:** Revise to clarify related to assurances.

Section 21. **Accreditation Status:** Review to assure it continues to be pertinent. Define meaning and result of Non-Accreditation.

Procedure

An internal review will continue with input from all divisions. A core task group with cross-representation from within WDE and from the field will create a draft of proposed rules. This draft will be vetted across the state and by key stakeholders. This process should take several months and will be done in cooperation with the work being done by the various Accountability committees and boards. If there are changes in statute during Phase 2 of implementation of the Accountability Act, these will be reviewed and incorporated as appropriate. Once a final draft of rules is completed, a full external review with public comment will take place. Public meetings will be held statewide to assure broad input.

CHAPTER 6
SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

Section 1. **Authority.** These rules and regulations are promulgated pursuant to the Wyoming Education Code of 1969 (as amended-1999)(W.S. 21-2-304 (a)(i) and (ii)).

Section 2. **Applicability.** These rules and regulations pertain to the evaluation and accreditation of public schools (K-12). With these rules and regulations, it is the intention of this agency to establish minimum standards with which public schools (K-12) must comply.

Section 3. **Promulgation, Amendment, or Repeal of Rules.** Any amendments to these rules shall become effective as provided by the Wyoming Administrative Procedure Act. (W.S. 16-3-101 through 16-3-115).

Section 4. **Definitions.**

(a) Accreditation. A process by which each school district and each school within the district assesses itself and is monitored by the state in order to identify strengths, plan and implement improvement, assure legal compliance and assure the public that districts are providing educational programs sufficient to enable students to demonstrate proficiency in state and locally determined content and performance standards. (W.S. 21-2-304 (a)(ii) and W.S. 21-9-101(b)).

(b) Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). A series of performance goals that every public school, public school district, and the state must achieve within special timeframes in order to meet the 100% proficiency goal established by the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

(c) At-Risk Students. School age individuals who exhibit behaviors that place the student at risk of experiencing educational failure. (W.S. 21-2-202 (a)(xviii) and (xix), and W.S. 21-9-101(c)).

(d) Benchmark Standard. A statement of skills and knowledge to be demonstrated at a specified grade or at the end of a specified range of grades. Benchmarks are used as checkpoints to monitor progress along a continuum of grades from kindergarten through grade 12.

(e) Common Core of Knowledge. Areas of knowledge each student is expected to achieve at levels established by the district standards aligned to state standards. (W.S. 21-2-304 (a)(iii)).

(f) Common Core of Skills. Skills each student is expected to demonstrate at levels established by the district standards aligned to state standards. These skills may be integrated into the Common Core of Knowledge standards. (W.S. 21-2-304 (a)(iii)).

(g) Compliance. Documenting that the district adheres to applicable statutes and regulations.

(h) District Improvement Plan. A document developed by a public school district that serves as a blueprint for continuous improvement and progress toward school and student achievement objectives.

(i) Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The federal education statute originally passed by the U.S. Congress in 1965, that authorizes many of the major federal education programs, including Title I, and has been reauthorized by Congress several times, most recently by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

(j) Fixed Costs. Costs that are essential to the operation of the school and district facilities that cannot be reduced or eliminated, and over which districts have limited control. These include utility costs and essential facilities repairs. They may also include repairs and construction required by law and safety regulations. (W.S. 21-15-115).

(k) Guidance Services. Services which include the following major functions:

(i) Counseling individual and small groups of students. Diagnostic testing results along with other pertinent information may be used as aides in the counseling process.

(ii) Consultation with school staff and with parents about the general welfare of students as individuals in the classroom and in the total school environment.

(iii) Coordination of guidance services within, between, and among schools, between school and community, and between school and referral agencies in the community.

(l) Health Services. An organized program provided by qualified personnel to: identify potential and existing health problems among students; provide injury and illness prevention services and emergency care; provide procedures for referral to other health care providers and community agencies; protect confidentiality of all health information; provide for the safe handling, storage and administration of both prescription and over the counter medications; and promote the health and well being of all students.

(m) Media Services. An organized program to provide all students with access to resources which include all print, non-print and electronic information and educational resource materials which aid in supporting the teaching-learning process.

(n) Parent, Student and Local Community Involvement. The participation by parents, local community, and students, when appropriate, in helping to support the development and implementation of student content and performance standards and school improvement goals.

(o) Professional Development. A process involving evaluation, identification of needs, and planned activities for individuals, schools and the entire district designed to improve those elements of professional knowledge and skills that affect student learning. The process includes:

(i) Evaluation of professional development needs. The determination of professional development needs through a needs assessment, school improvement plans and teacher evaluations (W.S. 21-2-304).

(ii) Planned activities. Related professional development opportunities for initial study and direct instruction, follow-up training, and in-class practice with administrative support and feedback.

(iii) Monitoring of results. The examination of in-class practice and student learning results as identified by school improvement plans to determine the impact of professional development.

(p) Program. Any or all of the district-sponsored or district-supported educational opportunities for students, either within or beyond the school day. (W.S. 21-3-110(a)(xv)).

(q) Public School. An entity created or chartered by a local district board which provides education free of charge to students ages 5 to 21. (W.S. 21-13-101(a)(iv)(vi)(vii) and (xvi), and W.S. 21-4-301).

(r) Public School District. A governmental subdivision whose function is to provide for the education of persons in grades K-12 (or as otherwise legally authorized) in a geographic area defined by the Wyoming State Committee on School District Organization. (W.S. 21-13-101(a)(iii)).

(s) Reliable Measure. An assessment from which similar scores are obtained when the same procedure is used with the same students on different occasions, on different tasks measuring the same skill, and from different independent assessors.

(t) School Improvement Plan. A document developed by a public school that serves as a blueprint for continuous improvement and progress toward school and student achievement objectives.

(u) School Restructuring Plan. An addendum of the School Improvement Plan that serves as a blueprint for more systemic reform, consistent with federal law.

(v) Student Content Standard. A statement that specifies what students must know and be able to do in the areas identified by the Common Core of Knowledge and the Common Core of Skills.

(w) Student Performance Standard. A definition of how good is good enough to constitute a proficient performance on a set of content standards. This definition may include the following components:

(i) Performance levels. Labels for each level of achievement.

(ii) Performance descriptors. Describes performance at each level.

(iii) Sample student work. Examples of student work from a representative sample of all students that illustrate the full range of performance at each performance level.

(iv) Cut scores. Demarcation between adjacent levels of performance.

(x) Title I. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act program, reauthorized under the No Child Left Behind Act, that focuses on improving the academic achievement of disadvantaged students by providing federal funds to qualified schools to help academically disadvantaged students reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic standards and state academic assessments.

(y) Valid Measure. An assessment that is a relevant and representative sample of the content area being measured. This determination includes the adequacy and appropriateness of the interpretation that is to be made from the assessment results.

(z) Wyoming State Accountability Workbook. The document, officially known as the Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook, required by the U.S. Department of Education, that describes how the state will comply with federal law, including a description of how annual determinations of Adequate Yearly Progress will be made for every public school and public school district.

Section 5. **Wyoming Statutes.** All public school districts, and the schools and personnel within those districts, must comply with the applicable statutes of the State of Wyoming.

Section 6. **Wyoming State Board of Education Policies and Regulations.** All public school districts, and the schools and personnel within those districts, must comply with applicable Wyoming State Board rules. (W.S. 21-2-304).

Section 7. **Student Standards.** All public school students shall meet the student content and performance standards at the level set by the school district aligned to state standards for:

(a) Common Core of Knowledge, emphasizing reading, writing and mathematics in grades one (1) through eight (8): (W.S. 21-9-101(b)(i) and (ii)).

(b) Common Core of Skills. (W.S. 21-9-101(b)(iii)).

(c) The district shall involve parents, community, and professional staff in developing student content and performance standards in the common core of knowledge and skills through an officially adopted planning process reinforced by board of trustee policies. Districts may choose to adopt state standards using the board of trustees' official process that includes involving parents, community, and professional staff. (W.S. 21-9-101(b)).

(d) The district shall implement programs which will align to state standards and meet or exceed the requirements of those standards. Programs shall include:

(i) Planned strategies for intervening with students who fail to demonstrate proficiency on standards; and

(ii) Planned strategies for academically challenging students who consistently exceed standards.

(e) The district shall adopt and implement strategies to monitor the teaching of standards. (W.S. 21-3-110(a)(xvii), (xviii), and (xix)).

Section 8. **Student Assessment.**

(a) The state shall have a system of assessments aligned with state standards, consistent with the requirements of state and federal law. This assessment system shall be designed in accordance with standards of professional technical quality, as described in Section 8(f)(iii)(A) through (E), and be capable of generating results for all identifiable subgroups within each public school and public school district (W.S. 21-2-304(a)(iv) and (v)).

(b) For the 2004-2005 school year, each district shall ensure that all students in fourth, eighth, and eleventh grades participate in the Wyoming Comprehensive Assessment System (WyCAS).

(c) Beginning with the 2005-2006 school year, the state assessment system shall include and each district shall implement an assessment of student performance in reading, writing, and mathematics at grades three through eight and at grade 11.

(d) Beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, the state assessment system shall include and each district shall implement an assessment of student performance in science at least once in each of grades three through five, grades six through eight, and grades ten through twelve.

(e) The district shall ensure that all students enrolled in the grades required to be assessed participate in the assessment system in one of three ways (W.S. 21-2-304(a)(v) and W.S. 21-3-110(a)(xxiv)):

- (i) In the general assessment with no accommodations;
- (ii) In the general assessment with appropriate accommodations; or
- (iii) In the alternate assessment.

(f) The district shall design and implement a district assessment system to measure student performance relative to district content and performance standards aligned to state standards. At a minimum, the district assessment system shall be designed to determine whether all students have had equality of educational opportunity to learn the content and skills represented in the standards and to the level established by the performance standards. This assessment system shall be designed in accordance with standards of professional technical quality, as set forth in Section 8(f)(iii)(A) through (E), and be capable of generating results for all identifiable subgroups within the district (W.S. 21-2-304(a)(iv) and (v), and W.S. 21-3-110(a)(xxiv)).

(i) In order to evaluate equality of educational opportunity, the assessment system shall be implemented uniformly across the district.

(ii) Among other measures, the district shall incorporate the state assessment system into its district assessment system by using state assessment results to measure the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards in mathematics, reading, and writing for fourth, eighth, and eleventh grade students.

(iii) The system shall be designed and implemented so that inferences pertaining to equality of educational opportunity can be supported by the assessment system. The system shall be designed to meet the following technical requirements, all of which contribute to documenting the validity of the overall district assessment system.

(A) Alignment-the combination of assessments that comprise the system shall be aligned with district content and performance standards so that the full set of standards in the common core of knowledge and skills, both in terms of content and cognitive complexity are assessed. The assessment system shall reflect how the district has prioritized the standards.

(B) Consistency-the assessment system should be designed and implemented in such a way so that inferences drawn from the results of the assessments are consistent and not dependent on error due to raters or the quality of the assessments. While the focus is on the system, in order to meet this requirement, individual assessments within the system will need to be designed to yield consistent results, in terms of error due to raters, tasks, administration conditions, and occasions.

(C) Fairness-the assessment system should be designed so that it is not biased against any group of students. As such, appropriate accommodations should be used so students with disabilities and Limited English Proficient students have fair access to the assessment system. As stated in Section 8(e)(i), (ii) and (iii) herein, multiple assessment formats should be employed in the assessment system which will contribute to improving the fairness of the system.

(D) In order to improve alignment, consistency, and fairness, multiple measures in each of the common core of knowledge and skill areas, but not necessarily at every grade level, shall be employed in the system.

(E) Descriptions of what constitutes proficient performance shall be clearly articulated and shall be correlated with the performance descriptors found in the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards. The cut scores that delineate the various performance levels on each assessment shall be tied to these district performance descriptors and shall be based on research or best practices.

(g) The district shall have a board-approved process in which student performance results are identified, monitored, and reported (W.S. 21-2-202(a)(xiv) and W.S. 21-2-304(a)(v)).

(i) The district shall distribute a uniform state report widely to its patrons in addition to other results from the district's assessment system as deemed appropriate by the district.

(ii) The district shall report the results of the district assessment system to the Wyoming Department of Education. Disaggregated results shall be reported for any of the following subgroups that include 10 or more students: gender, ethnicity, economic status, mobility indicators, disability status, and other appropriate for the given locale. These disaggregated results shall be used to determine if all groups of students have been provided adequate opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for meeting the graduation standards.

(h) In order for the State Board of Education to accredit school districts, each district will submit to the Wyoming Department of Education the following information at least 45 days prior to its scheduled accreditation visit:

(i) The district assessment plan that indicates the specific grade/course levels assessed, the types of assessments, the specific standards assessed, and a brief description of the assessments;

(ii) Evidence of alignment among the standards, benchmarks, and assessments;

(iii) Evidence of consistency of the assessment system;

- (iv) Documentation regarding the fairness of the assessment system;
- (v) Participation rates for various subgroups of students including at least students with disabilities and limited English proficient (LEP) students for the various assessments in the system;
- (vi) Procedures for ensuring the participation of all students regardless of disability or English language proficiency;
- (vii) A description of the methods used to include the most severely cognitively disabled students in the district assessment system;
- (viii) Sample reports produced from the assessments in the system;
- (ix) At least three sample assessments from the system which are not purchased, standardized assessments; and
- (x) Other evidence that the district chooses to submit to support the technical quality of the assessment system.

Section 9. **Accountability System.** The state shall have a single statewide accountability system, with rewards and consequences, consistent with the requirements of state and federal law. The Accountability System shall be as defined in the Wyoming State Accountability Workbook, approved by the U.S. Department of Education, and shall include an annual Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determination, based primarily on the results of state assessments, for every public school and public school district. (W.S. 21-2-304(a)(vi)). The Accountability System shall be designed to provide valid and reliable accountability determinations that can help promote continuous improvement in raising student achievement and closing achievement gaps.

Section 10. **Rewards and Consequences.** The state shall have a system of rewards and consequences for every public school and public school district, consistent with the requirements of state and federal law. (W.S. 21-2-304(a)(vi)(C)(D) and (E)).

(a) Rewards. Each public school and public school district shall be eligible for rewards based on its annual AYP determination and additional data. Rewards shall be administered by the Wyoming Department of Education and may include:

- (i) Notification to eligible schools and districts, with the option to request further public recognition by the State Department of Education;
- (ii) Encouragement for schools to seek awards (through districts) under Wyoming's Innovative Trust Fund (or other funds established in state law) to support innovative education initiatives that improve student achievement to the extent state funding is available for such purpose;

(iii) Awards for Title I schools (through districts) under the provisions of NCLB to the extent federal funding is available for such purpose;

(iv) Consideration for increased local flexibility, consistent with state and federal law.

(b) Consequences. The state shall have a system of consequences that applies to all public schools and public school districts and that, consistent with state and federal law, are designed to provide options for appropriate interventions, escalating in nature over time, that can help improve student achievement and close achievement gaps. These consequences shall be based primarily on annual AYP determinations with the nature and degree of such consequences informed by subsequent analysis of AYP and additional data.

(i) School-Level Consequences

(A) Year 1. A school that does not meet AYP in any year shall be expected to undertake, with the participation of the school district, an examination of the AYP determination and an identification of reasons for underperformance. The school shall be expected to address identified issues as part of its annual review and School Improvement Plan development process. The school, at the option of the district, may receive targeted technical assistance to be provided by the state, to the extent available given state capacity and funding.

(B) Year 2. A school that does not meet AYP in the same subject for two consecutive years shall be subject to the following improvement consequences:

(1) If the school is a Title I school, the district shall provide written notice to the parents of each student enrolled in the school of the determination and the resulting consequences.

(2) For Title I and non-Title I schools, not later than three months after identification for improvement, the school with broad-based involvement of parents, school staff and others, shall review and revise its School Improvement Plan to address identified issues and shall obtain district approval of the revised plan. The School Improvement Plan shall cover a 2-year period and shall be implemented expeditiously and in no case later than the beginning of the school year following identification.

(3) Targeted technical assistance shall be provided by the Wyoming Department of Education and the district for all schools not meeting AYP.

(4) For Title I schools, consistent with federal law, the school shall target 10% of Title I funds to high-quality professional development. Non-

Title I schools shall be encouraged to make professional development activities a focus of the school improvement plan.

(5) For Title I schools, consistent with federal law, the district shall provide students enrolled in the school the option to transfer to another public school within the district that has not been identified for improvement. The districts may elect to make public school choice available to students enrolled in non-Title I schools, with appropriate limitations established by the district.

(C) Year 3. A school that does not meet AYP in the same subject for three consecutive years shall be subject to all consequences applicable to schools of its type in Year 2 as well as the following requirements:

(1) For Title I schools, consistent with federal law, provide additional tutoring and support services for students, consistent with the supplemental educational services requirements of federal law.

(2) For Title I and non-Title I schools, utilize funds for summer school and remediation efforts to provide additional tutoring and support services for students most at-risk of not achieving proficiency goals.

(D) Year 4. Title I and non-Title I schools that do not meet AYP in the same subject for four consecutive years shall be subject to all consequences applicable to schools of its type in Year 3 as well as the following corrective action requirements:

(1) The district shall take one or more corrective actions consistent with state and federal law that are substantially and directly in response to the academic, staffing, curriculum, or other high-priority areas in the school. Corrective actions shall include an appropriate educational intervention (including the review, revision, or expansion of a prior intervention) selected by the district from the following corrective action options: place an expert in the school; extend learning time; institute a new curriculum; decrease school management authority; restructure the school's internal organization; replace appropriate staff.

(2) The district shall publish and disseminate, to parents and to the public, information regarding the corrective action taken at each school.

(E) Year 5. Title I and non-Title I schools that do not meet AYP in the same subject for five consecutive years shall be subject to all consequences applicable to schools of its type in Year 4 as well as the following requirements:

(1) For Title I and non-Title I schools, the district shall undertake a review and revision of the corrective actions undertaken in Year 4, as appropriate, and continue with implementation of the corrective actions.

(2) For Title I schools, the district shall develop a restructuring plan for the school. The School Restructuring Plan shall follow NCLB guidelines and shall include a fundamental reform at a systemic, governance level that is to be taken by the district to improve student achievement. The district shall obtain approval of the School Restructuring Plan from the State Board of Education and shall prepare to implement the plan at the start of the next school year.

(3) For Title I and non-Title I schools, the district shall undertake a review and revision of the corrective actions undertaken in Year 4, as appropriate.

(F) Year 6. A school that does not meet AYP in the same subject for six consecutive years shall be subject to all consequences applicable to schools of its type in Year 5 as well as the following requirements:

(1) For Title I schools, the district shall implement the School Restructuring Plan developed and approved in Year 5.

(2) For non-Title I schools, the district shall review, revise, and expand, as appropriate, the corrective actions undertaken in previous years.

(ii) District-Level Consequences.

(A) Year 1. A district that does not meet AYP in any year shall be expected to undertake an examination of its AYP determination and an identification of reasons for not meeting AYP. The district shall have the option of receiving targeted technical assistance to be provided by the Wyoming Department of Education to the extent available given state capacity and funding.

(B) Year 2. A district that does not meet AYP in the same subject in any two consecutive years shall be subject to the following improvement consequences:

(1) Not later than 3 months after identification for improvement, the district, with broad-based involvement of parents, staff, and others, shall develop or revise a District Improvement Plan and shall obtain approval of the plan from the Wyoming Department of Education. The District Improvement Plan shall cover a two-year period and shall be implemented expeditiously and in no case later than the beginning of the school year following identification.

(2) The district shall receive targeted technical assistance provided by the Wyoming Department of Education to the extent available given state capacity and funding.

(C) Year 3. A district that does not meet AYP in the same subject for three consecutive years shall, if not already undertaken, begin implementation of the District Improvement Plan developed and approved in Year 2.

(D) Year 4. A district that does not meet AYP in the same subject for four or more consecutive years shall be subject to the consequences applicable to districts in Year 3 as well as the following requirements:

(1) For Title I districts, the state shall take one or more corrective action, as required by federal law and acting consistent with state law, from a menu of possible corrective actions.

Section 11. **School Improvement.** The district shall monitor school improvement planning of its schools and coordinate activities in support of implementing these plans. (W.S. 21-2-304(a)(v)). This process shall include:

(a) Identification of district targets for improvement that reflect the common goals of individual school improvement plans based on state assessment system results in conjunction with the districts' assessment results.

(b) Coordination of district instructional, human and fiscal resources in support of school improvement plans.

(c) Oversight of school improvement goals and activities, including technology, to verify coordination and consistency with the district's technology plan. Each school improvement plan shall include:(i) Improvement goals derived from WyCAS and district annual assessments;

(ii) Strategies for all students and specific strategies for student subgroups failing to meet the standards;

(iii) Strategies for student learning uses of technology;

(iv) Designated resources in support of the plan; and

(v) Evaluation of student results related to the goals.

Section 12. **Professional Development.** The district shall demonstrate that professional development relates to student performance.(W.S. 21-2-202(a)(i) and (xx), W.S. 21-2-304(a)(ii), W.S. 21-2-304(a)(v), W.S. 21-3-110(a)(xix), W.S. 21-9-101(b), and W.S. 21-9-101(c)). Professional development shall focus on:

(a) The development and implementation of standards and standards-based assessments;

(b) The instructional and student learning uses of technology;

- (c) Individual school improvement goals;
- (d) Assessed needs based on documented student results; and
- (e) Individual professional development goals for teachers in need of improvement.

Section 13. **Parent and Community Involvement**. The district shall have procedures for involving school personnel, parents and community in decision-making (W.S. 21-2-202(a)(ii)). Procedures shall include:

- (a) Strategies for implementing standards;
- (b) Goal setting and planning for school improvement; and
- (c) Identification of budget priorities based on student performance standards,

Section 14. **At-Risk Students**. The district shall have policies and procedures for every school in the district to identify and intervene with at-risk students. In addition, all schools shall provide instruction as appropriate through the school curriculum directed at the prevention of at-risk behavior. (W.S. 21-2-202 (a)(xix), W.S. 21-2-304(a)(ii) and W.S. 21-9-101(c)). These policies and procedures, at a minimum, shall include:

(a) Mechanisms for coordinating efforts across programs to maximize their effectiveness in preventing academic failure and for accessing the most appropriate program services for each student who exhibits behavior that places the child at risk for school failure. These mechanisms shall include:

- (i) An at-risk committee which:
 - (A) Consists of at least two certified regular education teachers, at least one of which is the student's classroom teacher, and the school principal with other staff knowledgeable of at-risk programs and strategies acting as consultants to the committee according to the needs of the individual student.
 - (B) Communicates with and includes, to the extent practical, parent(s) of the student discussed.
 - (C) Documents proceedings and communications with parents, and the student's teacher(s), to the extent required by the programs under consideration.
 - (D) Directs, evaluates, and documents the success or failure of the interventions to the extent required by the program for which a student is being

considered, prior to making referrals for services outside the regular classroom. Title I student identification may occur with its own set of criteria.

(E) Ensures all relevant routine screening procedures, especially hearing and vision, have been completed on a regular basis and results are current for the school year.

(b) Rules for programs that address the needs of students with disabilities.

(c) Provision of strategies for students who consistently fail to meet or who exceed standards including:

(i) Expeditious referral of students to at risk programs.

(ii) Oversight of efforts to increase access of students to corrective and enrichment instruction in addition to that routinely provided in the regular classroom.

(d) Methods by which the district and schools monitor student learning results, based on student performance standards, for those groups who receive program services.

(e) Procedures for the district in consultation with the schools to decide whether a program shall continue based upon those results.

Section 15. **School Climate**. The district shall adopt a procedure for assessing and reporting school climate on a regularly scheduled basis for school improvement planning purposes. The procedures shall include, at a minimum, assessment of students and staff at all grade levels, and of parents that include the following aspects of school climate:

(a) School mission and student learning;

(b) School safety;

(c) Service provision;

(d) Equity; and

(e) Opportunity to learn.

Section 16. **Facilities and Budget**. The district shall adopt board of trustee policies that specify how state and district student performance standards have affected planning for facilities and annual budget priorities beyond fixed costs.

(a) The programs provided shall be sufficient for students to meet state and district content and performance standards. (W.S. 21-9-101(b)). Provisions for these programs shall include:

(i) Provisions to implement educational technology per the district technology plan and as necessary for delivery of instruction in the standards. (W.S. 21-9-101(b)(i)(M); (W.S. 21-9-101(b)(iii)(C); and W.S. 21-15-115(a)(vii)).

(ii) Textbooks, supplies and/or instructional materials deemed necessary by the district to deliver instruction on the standards. (W.S. 21-9-201).

(iii) Class size, when practicable, of no more than twenty (20) students per teacher in kindergarten through grade three (3) excluding children with disabilities who spend more than fifty percent (50%) of their time outside of regular class instruction. (W.S. 21-9-101(d) and (f)).

(b) The administration shall monitor building operations to assure all legal requirements, federal, state, and local, are met in each school.

Section 17. **Technology.** The district shall develop and implement a technology plan that follows the guidelines set forth in the statewide technology plan. (W.S. 21-2-202(a)(xx)). The plan will include:

(a) District policies and procedures for accessing, using and sharing technology and information available through technology;

(b) A statement of the district's vision and mission for the integration in the application of technology into teaching and learning.

(c) Strategies for the establishment of formal partnerships among public and private entities to ensure community participation in the creation and implementation of the plan.

(d) Clear objectives for the integration in and application of technology to the acquisition and performance of student standards.

(e) An implementation plan that sets actions and timelines for deployment of necessary fiscal and human resources.

(f) Professional development to ensure that staff is trained to use the technology to enhance instruction and improve student learning.

(g) Evaluation strategies for determining needs and assessing impact of technology on instruction and improvement efforts.

(h) Specific strategies for building and maintaining infrastructure and connectivity over time and provisions for sufficient budget to sustain each element of the plan.

Section 18. **Graduation Requirements**. All students, including an alternative school student, shall master the student content and performance standards aligned to state standards within the common cores of knowledge and skills at the levels set by the State Board of Education. Each student who demonstrates proficiency on the common core of knowledge and skills will be eligible for graduation per the requirements in Wyoming statute. These statutory requirements shall be monitored and enforced through the state accreditation process. (W.S. 21-2-304(a)(iii) and (iv)).

Section 19. **Services**. All districts shall provide support services. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit school districts and/or schools within a district from providing these support services through partnerships with community agencies. The support services provided for students shall include:

(a) **Health/Safety Services**. The district shall ensure that students are educated in a safe environment that meets all applicable building, health, safety and environmental codes and standards required by law for all public buildings. (W.S. 21-15-115(a)(i)).

(i) The district shall provide an organized program provided by qualified personnel to:

(A) Identify potential and existing health problems through routine health screening including:

Hearing screening for acuity and otological problems.

(II) Vision screening for acuity and color blindness.

(B) Immediate and temporary care in case of injury.

(C) Provide procedures for referral to other health care providers and community agencies.

(D) Provide procedures for confidentiality of all health information.

(E) Promote the health and well being of all students.

Provide for the safe handling, storage and administration of both prescription and over-the-counter medications.

(ii) The district ensures that procedures are in place to ensure the following:

(A) Sanitation inspections for kitchens and serving areas are completed by the designated lawful authority and corrective actions required have been completed and documented;

(B) Fire inspections for all buildings and corrective actions required have been completed and documented;

(C) Ensure that eye protection is provided and used according to (W.S. 21-9-203A); and(D) Policies, procedures and practices required by law for the safe operation of student transportation services are adopted and implemented.(W.S. 21-3-131).

(iii) The district shall adopt and implement policies and procedures for managing exposure to common communicable diseases, exposure to blood borne pathogens, implementing Universal Precautions, and maintaining confidentiality of student and employee health information and records.

(iv) The district shall provide annual training to all school personnel concerning discrimination, confidentiality, and occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens. (29 CFR 1910, 1030).

(v) Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that potential crisis situations are addressed at both the district and building levels. Crisis management plans are developed and are practiced on a regular basis.

(b) Media Services. Districts shall ensure that media resources:

(i) Are available and accessible to all students and staff;

(ii) Are available in sufficient quantity and quality to support the achievement of student content and performance standards;

(iii) Are sufficient to support the development of research and information accessing skills; and

(iv) Provide enhanced access to information technology as described in the district's technology plan and on the timeline specified by the plan.

(c) Guidance Services. The district shall ensure that students have access to guidance services which provide all students with assistance in developing and monitoring their educational and career plans through a structured, systematic individual planning system. Districts shall ensure that guidance services:

(i) Provide access to responsive services to address issues and concerns that may affect their educational, vocational and career development;

(ii) Provide assistance to students, beginning no later than eighth grade to develop educational and career plans, and includes assessment and advisement to set short-and long-term goals; and

(iii) Provide information about and assistance in determining post secondary training opportunities.

Section 20. **Verification**. All public school districts and the schools and personnel within those districts shall provide verification of compliance with these rules and regulations to the Wyoming State Board of Education annually.

Section 21. **Accreditation Status**. All public school districts and schools within those districts shall be granted accreditation levels by the State Board of Education. (W.S. 21-2-202(c), W.S. 21-2-203(e)(ii), W.S. 21-2-304(b)(ii), and W.S. 21-2-305(a)(ii)).

(a) One of the following accreditation levels shall be granted by the State Board of Education on an annual basis:

(i) Full Accreditation. The local district and/or the schools within it have met the state accreditation standards in a fully satisfactory manner.

(ii) Accreditation With Follow-up. The local district and/or schools within it have failed to meet one or more of the standards, but the deficiency does not seriously distract from the quality of the school's educational program. Correctives are required but could reasonably be completed within a school year. The district has submitted an acceptable plan for taking corrective action indicating completion within a one-year timetable following the review year. Districts that complete all corrective actions by the end of the school year during which they are reviewed will be recommended for full accreditation upon Department verification of satisfactory completion.

(iii) Accreditation With Deficiencies. The local district and/or schools within it have failed to take corrective actions required and/or deficiencies persist over more than one year.

(iv) Conditional Accreditation. The local district and/or the schools within it have met the state accreditation standards in less than a fully satisfactory manner on half or more of the accreditation standards. Corrective actions cannot reasonably be completed within a school year.

(v) Non-Accreditation. The local district and/or the schools within it have not met the state accreditation standards. The State Board may attach penalties on an individual basis. The local district and/or the schools within it have:

(A) Consistently failed to complete or make substantial progress towards completing corrective actions on the schedule proposed by the district and accepted by the State Board at the time of citing;

(B) Consistently violated regulations; and/or

(C) Consistently filed delinquent reports required by statute or regulation.

(vi) Emergency Change of Accreditation Status. If the local district and/or the schools within it violate State law and/or regulations which are detrimental to the health, welfare, or safety of students, and the conditions are not immediately corrected upon notice of their existence to local officials, the State Board may place the school district or school on Non-Accredited status until these conditions are corrected. Upon correction of these conditions and submission and approval of a plan to prevent a recurrence, the State Board may revise the district or school's accreditation status to Conditional for a period of time sufficient to verify implementation of the plan to prevent recurrences of the conditions.

(b) A school district may appeal a status of Non-Accreditation awarded it by the State Board of Education. A district may appeal for a reconsideration of that status to the State Board of Education within 30 days of the receipt of written notice of Non-Accreditation status.

CERTIFIED PERSONNEL EVALUATION SYSTEMS

June 2012

“Other Personnel”

Audiologists

Central Office Directors

Counselors/Social Workers

Instructional Facilitators

Library/Media Specialists

Nurses

Occupational Therapists/Physical Therapists

School Psychologists

Special Education/Title I Directors

Special Teachers – Special Education, Title I, Vocational, etc.

Speech Pathologists

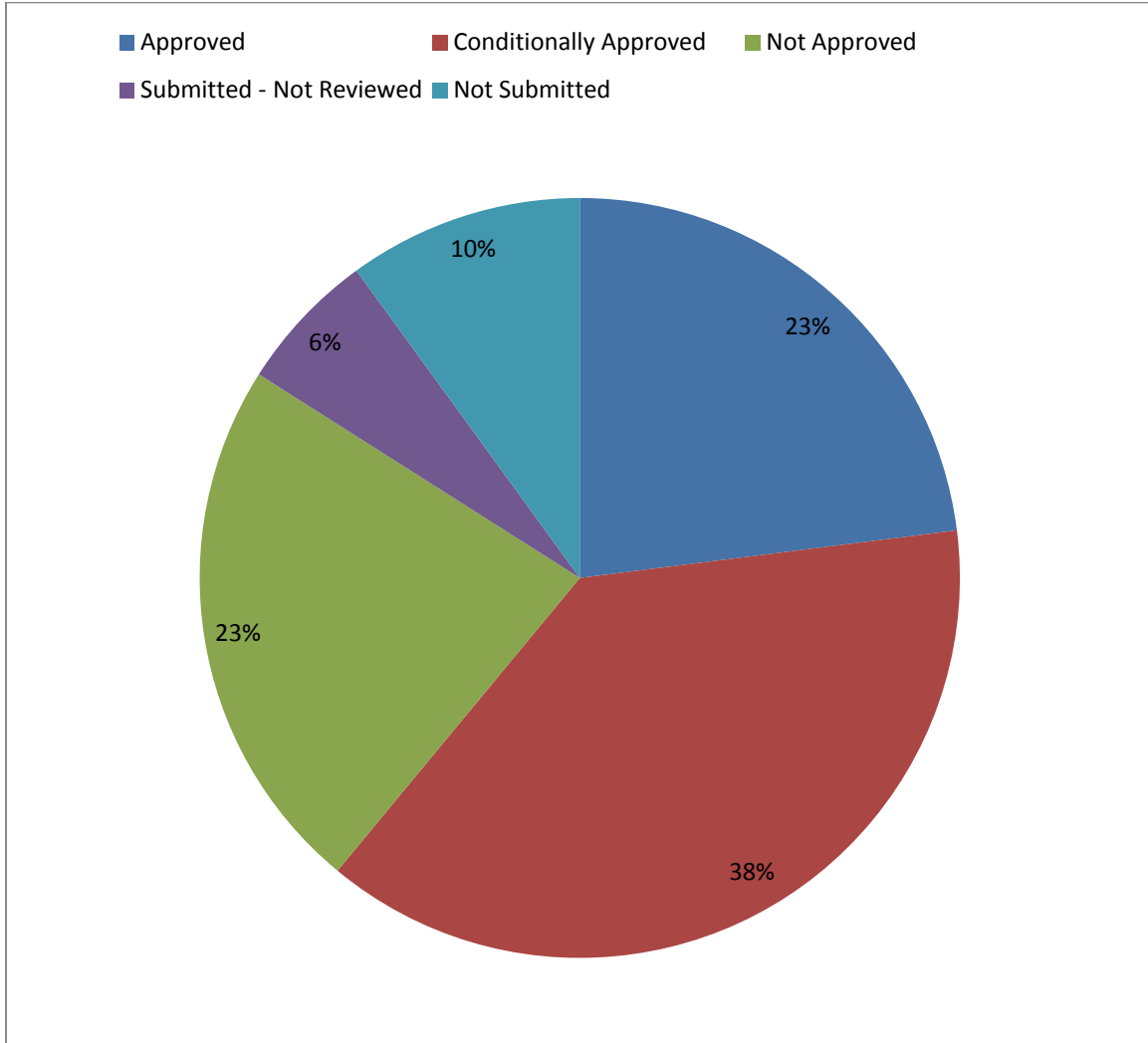
Other – Job Title Required

Presented to the State Board of Education
Carol Illian, Supervisor of Teacher/Leader Quality – WDE

June 11, 2012

carol.illian@wyo.gov or 307-777-8715

Certified Personnel Evaluation Systems “Other Personnel” Initial Review Status



Number of Districts	Approval Rating	Percentage of Total
11	Approved	23%
18	Conditionally Approved	38%
11	Not Approved	23%
3	Submitted – Not Reviewed	6%
5	Not Submitted	10%

DISCUSSION

Celebration:

- All educators in Wyoming school districts are working together to improve their practice, and ensure that evaluation of their practice is meaningful and valid; student performance growth data is included in evaluation and the determination of professional growth goals.
- Most districts have adapted or adopted evaluation models that are strongly supported by research.
- Districts have developed or are developing a system-wide evaluation process that supports equitable evaluation of all certified employees.
- Districts have worked, and continue to work, with specific professional organizations in the development of evaluation systems.

Opportunities:

- The evaluation documentation submitted does not describe a process that appears to be equitable with the teachers' and principals' process submitted and approved in 2011.
- Some submissions did not include a description of the research base or the research referenced is questionable.
- Performance level descriptors are not fully developed in several systems.
- Some districts indicated that they will be using the McREL system for all certified employees, but did not explain how that system will be adapted for the "other" certified employees.
- Some systems for these employees have not clearly connected the student performance growth data to employee evaluation.
- WDE will need to provide support and technical assistance to those districts that have made very little or no effort to develop or adopt evaluation systems for the "other" certified personnel.
- 2011 and 2012 legislation requires the development and implementation of teacher and leader evaluation systems based in part upon defined student academic achievement; the systems shall clearly prescribe standards for highly effective, effective, and ineffective performance.

Chapter 29 Rules and Regulations for Certified Personnel Evaluation Systems attached for reference.

Chapter 29

CERTIFIED PERSONNEL EVALUATION SYSTEMS

Section 1. **Authority.** These rules and regulations are promulgated pursuant to the Wyoming Education Code of 1969 as amended, W.S. 21-2-304.

Section 2. **Applicability.** These rules and regulations pertain to the development, assessment and approval of Certified Personnel Evaluation Systems.

Section 3. **Promulgation, Amendment, or Repeal of Rules.** Any amendments to these rules shall become effective as provided by the Wyoming Administrative Procedure Act (W.S. 16-3-101 through W.S. 16-3-115) and when signed by the Governor and filed with the Secretary of State's Office.

Section 4. **Definitions.**

(a) Best Practice – means practices that have produced outstanding, documented results in a similar situation and could be replicated.

(b) Certified Personnel – means all personnel, including classroom teachers and others who are required by the State of Wyoming to hold licensure through the Wyoming Professional Teaching Standards Board or a Wyoming professional licensing agency (counselors, media specialists, principals, etc., exclusive of extra-duty positions).

(c) Department – means the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE).

(d) Equitable – means dealing fairly and equally with all concerned.

(e) Evaluation Cycle – means the timelines and timeframes under which the various components of the evaluation process occur. Also included in the cycle will be the different activities and responsibilities that may occur in various stages of the Certified Personnel's career (such as action research one year, intensive assistance, clinical supervision cycles, etc.).

(f) Evaluation System – means a standard structure and set of procedures by which a school district initiates, designs, implements and uses evaluations of its Certified Personnel for the purposes of professional growth and continued employment.

(g) Performance Criteria means the areas on which Certified Personnel are to be evaluated.

(h) Reliable – means dependable; obtaining the same results in successive trials.

(i) Research Based – means basic or applied research that:

(i) Has been published in a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of experts;

(ii) Has been replicated by other researchers; and

(iii) Has a consensus in the research community that the study's findings are supported by a critical mass of additional studies.

(j) Significantly Amended – means an Evaluation System that replaces in whole or in part an existing system or plan.

(k) Stakeholder – means an individual who will be directly impacted by the Evaluation System.

(l) “Student Performance Growth Data” means data which shows outcomes for students. This data may be student achievement test scores and other non-academic measures of student outcomes.

(m) Summative Evaluation – means the written summary of performance based on data collected during the Evaluation Cycle.

Section 5. Certified Personnel Evaluation System. The Evaluation Systems for each of the major certified job categories shall be designed to measure the effectiveness with which Certified Personnel in those categories perform their roles. Criteria on which these positions are evaluated shall be reflective of the nature of these positions. The Department shall review each Evaluation System on the criteria identified below:

(a) Was developed and/or adopted with the involvement of stakeholders;

(b) Defines the Performance Criteria on which Certified Personnel are evaluated and that the criteria are Research-Based and/or considered Best Practice;

(c) Facilitates professional growth and continuous improvement;

(d) Is Reliable and Equitable;

(e) Includes evaluation instruments and processes that support the ability to generate the required documentation to make employment decisions;

(f) Provides a description of evaluation procedures including how data will be collected to complete the Summative Evaluation. This may include analysis of observations of job performance, use of various types of data, employee-produced artifacts, etc;

(g) Includes Student Performance Growth Data, relevant to the nature of each Certified Personnel's position which is a measure of a significant function of the position,

and indicates how it is used by the Certified Personnel to improve teaching and/or learning; and

(h) Provides a description of the district's complete Evaluation Cycle, which includes frequency of evaluations for initial and continuing contract teachers and other Certified Personnel and may include cycles of clinical supervision, action research, intensive assistance, etc.

Section 6. Submission of Certified Personnel Evaluation Systems. Each school district within the state shall submit a copy of its Evaluation Systems for all Certified Personnel to the Department. Once established and filed with the Department, the Evaluation System will stand unless changed or Significantly Amended by the district at which time the new system or Significantly Amended system must be resubmitted. Each district shall include in its submission the following documentation, corresponding to each criteria described in Section 5:

(a) A list of members of the committee that was used to develop and/or adopt the Evaluation System. The list contains appropriate representation of Stakeholders;

(b) A list of Performance Criteria on which the Certified Personnel are evaluated. The criteria are defined sufficiently so that an outside reader will clearly understand each criterion. Evidence is provided that each criterion is Research-Based or reflective of Best-Practice;

(c) A description of how the evaluation process is linked to individual and collective professional growth. The description must also include how and when the system provides feedback to each Certified Personnel member and provides opportunities to identify area(s) for improvement and suggestions for how improvement can occur;

(d) Evidence that evaluators are trained on the evaluation process and trained to view criteria similarly so that Certified Personnel across the district are evaluated with consistency;

(e) A description of how the Evaluation System provides for collection of data critical for use in making employment decisions, such as retention or termination. The evaluation instruments and types and amount of data to be collected must be sufficient to provide the required documentation;

(f) A list that details the types of data and how it will be collected in order to make decisions about the Summative Evaluations;

(g) Identification of the types of Student Performance Growth Data, specific to each Certified Personnel's position, that is used in the evaluation process. The Summative Evaluations will identify the outcome of reviewing Student Performance Growth Data, such as identification of a professional development goal, modification of instructional practice, or identification of groups of students that need remediation or enrichment; and

(h) The details of the Evaluation System include the differentiation in evaluations between initial-contract and continuing-contract teachers; the frequency of observations during

Evaluation Cycles; any type of assistance or remediation that is provided; and any other requirements of the Evaluation Cycles used by the district, such as action research or portfolios.

Section 7. **Approval Criteria.** The department shall determine the approval of the Evaluation System based upon the previous stated criteria. Approval shall be at the following levels:

- (a) Full approval;
- (b) Conditional approval with conditions noted for remediation;
- (c) Disapproval with deficiencies noted; and
- (d) Non Compliance.

Section 8. **Technical Assistance.** It is recognized that some districts may already have systems which are fully compliant. These may be submitted to the Department for assessment and consideration. Technical assistance will be made available to school districts by the Department to help them develop Evaluation Systems that comply with the requirements of this chapter.

**ACTION SUMMARY SHEET
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

DATE: June 12, 2012

ISSUE: Approval of Agenda

BACKGROUND:

SUGGESTED MOTION/RECOMMENDATION:

To approve the Agenda for the June 12, 2012 State Board of Education Meeting

SUPPORTING INFORMATION ATTACHED:

- Agenda

PREPARED BY: *Chelsie Bailey*
Chelsie Bailey, Executive Assistant

APPROVED BY: _____
John Masters
State Board of Education Liaison

ACTION TAKEN BY STATE BOARD: _____ **DATE:** _____

COMMENTS:

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Days Inn
115 E. Park Street
Thermopolis, Wyoming
BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

June 12, 2012

	BREAKFAST			8:00 a.m.
	BOARD MEETING			8:30 a.m.
1.	Call to Order – Joe Reichardt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pledge of Allegiance • Roll Call 		Action	
2.	Approval of Agenda – Joe Reichardt	Tab C	Action	
3.	Approval of Minutes – Joe Reichardt Approval of Minutes from May 7, 2012 Approval of Minutes from May 17, 2012	Tab D	Action	
4.	Approval of Treasurer’s Report – Pete Gosar Approval of Treasurer’s Report Ending May 31, 2011	Tab E	Action	
5.	Board Updates, Public Comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NASBE New Member Institute • NASBE Annual Conference 		Information	8:45 a.m.
6.	Accreditation – Dianne Frazer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Districts • Institutional Programs 	Tab F	Action	9:15 a.m.
	BREAK			10:15 a.m.
7.	Alternative School Schedules –Dianne Frazer	Tab G	Action	10:30 a.m.
8.	Professional Judgment Panel Subcommittee- Kathy Coon		Action	11:30 a.m.
	LUNCH			12:15 p.m.
9.	Hathaway Scholarship Update- Julie Magee & Geir Solvang	Tab H	Information	12:45 p.m.
10.	Legislative Subcommittee- Ron Micheli		Information	1:45 p.m.
	BREAK			2:00 p.m.
11.	Action Planning Subcommittee- Belenda Willson		Information	2:15 p.m.
12.	Wyoming Foreign Language Content and Performance Standards- Robin Holbrook	Tab I	Action	2:45 p.m.
	Adjournment			3:30 p.m.

**ACTION SUMMARY SHEET
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

DATE: June 12, 2012

ISSUE: Approval of Minutes

BACKGROUND:

SUGGESTED MOTION/RECOMMENDATION:

To approve the minutes from the May 17, 2012 State Board of Education teleconference meeting.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION ATTACHED:

- Minutes of May 17, 2012

PREPARED BY: *Chelsie Bailey*
Chelsie Bailey, Executive Assistant

APPROVED BY: _____
John Masters
State Board of Education Liaison

ACTION TAKEN BY STATE BOARD: _____ **DATE:** _____

COMMENTS:

WYOMING STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
May 17, 2012
Teleconference

Wyoming State Board of Education members present: Dana Mann-Tavegia, Ron Micheli, Pete Gosar, Matt Garland, Hugh Hageman, Scotty Ratliff, Joe Reichardt, Belenda Willson, Kathy Coon, Cindy Hill, represented by John Masters, and Sue Belish

Members Absent: Walt Wilcox

Also present: John Masters; WDE; Chelsie Bailey, WDE; Paul Williams, WDE; Sam Shumway, WDE; Kathy Scheurman; WEA, Mike Flicek, LSO; and Mackenzie Williams, Attorney General's Office (AG)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Joe Reichardt called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Chelsie Bailey conducted roll call and established that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Dana Mann-Tavegia moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Sue Belish; the motion carried.

Hugh Hageman moved to amend the agenda by moving agenda item number 7 between agenda items 3 and 4. Sue Belish seconded; the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the April 27, 2012, State Board of Education meeting were presented for approval.

Sue Belish moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Kathy Coon, the motion carried.

Sue Belish requested that the WDE present the Wyoming Department of Education's strategic plan at the Board's June meeting, specifically what is in place for the supporting of instructions and the alignments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mackenzie Williams notified that Board that state statute permits the Board to enter into executive session when discussing the appointment of personnel, if the Board so chooses to do so.

Sue Belish made a motion for the Board to go into executive session to discuss the employment of personnel, Dana Mann-Tavegia seconded; the motion carried.

The Board entered executive session at 1:39 p.m.

Dana Mann- Tavegia moved to exit executive session, seconded by Sue Belish; the motion carried.

The Board exited executive session at 2:02 p.m.

Chelsie Bailey conducted roll call and established that a quorum was present.

SBE HIRING DECISION

John Masters was appointed by Cindy Hill to represent her during this meeting.

Sue Belish moved that after reviewing more than thirty applications and interviewing five candidates the hiring subcommittee, Pete Gosar, Scotty Ratliff, and Sue Belish recommend Dr. Paige Fenton-Hughes for the position of the State Board of Education Coordinator. Pete Gosar seconded. Dana Mann- Tavegia requested a roll call vote be taken.

Joe Reichardt- Yes
Ron Micheli- Yes
Pete Gosar- Yes
Matt Garland- Yes
Sue Belish- Yes
Kathy Coon- Yes
Belenda Willson- Yes
Hugh Hageman- No
Dana Mann-Tavegia- Yes
Scotty Ratliff-Yes
John Masters on the behalf of Cindy Hill- No

The motion carried.

Sue Belish suggested that a subcommittee be appointed for supervision. Chairman for the Board, Joe Reichardt, is going to take the suggestion under advisement and requested that several members be on the committee. If any Board member wished to be on the supervision subcommittee he/she should send Joe Reichardt an email and he would let the Board know in a couple days who will be on the subcommittee.

Sue Belish noted that the start date is contingent on the contract being offered and signed. This process would take a week or more, she said. The SBE hiring committee is responsible for seeing that process through.

CONTRACT AMENDMENT PREPERATION FOR THE ETS CONTRACT

John Masters reviewed the packet materials with the Board.

John Masters, on behalf of Cindy Hill, moved that the Wyoming Department of Education engage in negotiations with Educational Testing Service (ETS) to amend the existing contract for purposes of increasing the scope of work to include a re-evaluation of performance standards for all grades consistent with the adoption of new content and performance standards by the Wyoming Board of Education. Sue Belish seconded; the motion carried.

John Masters, on behalf of Cindy Hill, moved that the Wyoming Department of Education engage in negotiations with Educational Testing Service (ETS) to amend the existing contract for purposes of increasing the scope of work to include a review and development if necessary of item types and test blueprint for the Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students. Sue Belish seconded; the motion carried.

Sue Belish moved that the State Board of Education direct the Wyoming Department of Education to amend the contract with ACT prior to its expiration on June 30, 2012, to provide services that fulfill the requirements as statutory language in SF00057 pursuant to the college readiness and entrance exams. Scotty Ratliff seconded.

Sue Belish outlined her reasoning for her proposed motion. John Masters discussed the possible paths of an RFP or an amendment to the ACT contract. Paul Williams noted that he believed the way to get the best instrument was to do a request for proposal. Sue Belish would like to continue with the ACT for the upcoming year and then do a request for proposal.

The motion was amended to include a one year extension for the ACT. Seconded by Dana Mann-Tavegia; the motion carried.

John Masters, on behalf of Cindy Hill, moved that consistent with Chapter 101, Session laws 2012 (Enrolled Act 65), the Wyoming Department of Education engage in negotiations with Educational Testing Service (ETS) to amend the existing contract for purposes of increasing the scope of work to create an assessment tool consistent with law, including without limitation, the development of the State-wide Assessment of Student Writing (SAWS) consistent with Wyoming content and performance standards, the development of multiple measures and item types, the assessment of writing and language, the creation of trend data, the establishment of standards for the single-prompt writing assessment, and the redesign of score reports. Dana Mann-Tavegia seconded; the motion carried.

John Masters, on behalf of Cindy Hill, moved that consistent with Section 3 of Chapter 101, Session laws 2012 (Enrolled Act 65), once a college entrance examination vendor is identified and under contract, then the Wyoming Department of Education take such steps as are required by the United States Department of Education to amend its accountability workbook, including peer review process and, if required, negotiation and contracting with content a validity specialist to analyze, determine and report on whether the college entrance examination procured by the state aligns with the content and performance standards of the State Board, and to identify and formulate a recommendation for addressing gaps between the assessment tool and the standards. Further, that the Wyoming Department of Education continue to administer the 11th grade portion of PAWS until the accountability workbook is approved without that test. Sue Belish seconded.

Sue Belish moved to amend the motion. Sue Belish moved that consistent with Section 3 of Chapter 101, Session laws 2012 (Enrolled Act 65) The WDE take such steps as required by the United States Department of Education to amend its accountability workbook, including peer review process and engage a content validity specialist to analyze, determine and report on

whether the ACT examination aligns with the content and performance standards of State Board, and to identify and a formulate recommendation for addressing gaps between the assessment tool and the standards. Further, that the Wyoming Department of Education continue to administer the 11th grade portion of PAWS until the accountability workbook is approved without that test. Kathy Coon seconded; the motion carried.

John Masters, on behalf of Cindy Hill, moved that consistent with Section 3 of Chapter 101, Session laws 2012 (Enrolled Act 65), and upon completion of the content validity analysis, and if necessary, then the Wyoming Department of Education engage in negotiations with Educational Testing Service (ETS) to amend the existing contract for purposes of increasing the scope of work to include a Wyoming assessment supplement to be administered with the college entrance examination to augment the standardized examination so that Wyoming will remain in compliance with federal law. Dana Mann-Tavegia seconded; the motion carried.

John Masters, on behalf of Cindy Hill, moved that the Wyoming Department of Education, if recommended by the Wyoming Attorney General for compliance with law, engage in negotiations with Educational Testing Service (ETS) to amend the existing contract for purposes of increasing the scope of work to include development of a general and a writing assessment consistent with requirements of federal law for assessing the alternative population of Wyoming students. Pete Gosar seconded, Scotty Ratliff opposed; the motion carried.

REQUEST FROM SBE TO AG REGARDING GUIDANCE ON ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Joe Reichardt proposed to approve authorization requesting the Wyoming Department of Education to seek advice on the Alternative Assessment requirements and contract (s) from the Attorney General and request the Wyoming Department of Education to develop a plan of action based on the recommendation from the Attorney General. Sue Belish moved the motion, Pete Gosar seconded; the motion carried.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION RFP

John Masters stated the agenda item was no longer necessary because of a previous motion and vote in agenda item number 4.

The State Board of Education adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

The next State Board of Education meeting will be on June 11 and 12, 2012 in Thermopolis, Wyoming.

**ACTION SUMMARY SHEET
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

DATE: June 12, 2012

ISSUE: Approval of Treasurer's Report

BACKGROUND: The State Board of Education budget for the period ending May 31, 2012 shows a balance of \$79,887.41

SUGGESTED MOTION/RECOMMENDATION:

To approve the Treasurer's Reports as submitted.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION ATTACHED:

- State Board Budget Summary from July 1, 2010 through May 31, 2012
- State Board Budget Expense Report from April 1, 2012 through May 31, 2012

PREPARED BY: *Chelsie Bailey*
Chelsie Bailey, Executive Assistant

APPROVED BY: _____
John Masters
State Board of Education Liaison

ACTION TAKEN BY STATE BOARD: _____ **DATE:** _____

COMMENTS:

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
State Board of Education
FY11 Budget
July 1, 2010 thru May 31, 2012

DESCRIPTION	BUDGETED	EXPENDED	REMAINING BALANCE
Supportive Services (200 series)			
Teleconference (0203)	1,300.00	1,031.43	268.57
Communications (204)	5,625.00	822.52	4,802.48
Professional Development & Training (207)	43,558.00	33,676.98	9,881.02
Encumbrance (\$25,072.00)			
Advertising (208)	3,700.00	5,879.09	(2,179.09)
State Employee In-State Travel Reimbursement (221)	51,127.00	42,677.59	8,449.41
State Employee Out-of-State Travel Reimbursement (222)	28,474.00	11,603.72	16,870.28
Supplies (230-239)	4,083.00	4,353.02	(270.02)
Computer Equipment (242)	2,200.00	2,599.87	(399.87)
Education, Recreational & Technical Equipment (246)	500.00	200.09	299.91
Awards, Prizes (257)	1,184.00	357.55	826.45
Room Rental (251)	200.00	90.00	110.00
Data Processing Charges (400 series)			
Data Processing (400-440)	2,432.00	1,420.33	1,011.67
Professional Services (900 series)			
Professional & Consulting Services (901)	56,091.00	15,874.40	40,216.60
TOTAL	200,474.00	120,586.59	79,887.41

State Board of Education Expenditures
April 1, 2012 through May 31, 2012

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF EXPENSES	AMOUNT
4/5/2012	Mileage/Cheyenne- Joe Reichardt	\$77.70
4/9/2012	Mileage/Cheyenne- Joe Reichardt	\$155.40
4/12/2012	Supplies	\$313.55
4/12/2012	FedEx Shipping	\$165.13
4/12/2012	Telecommunication Charges	\$257.01
4/16/2012	Media Notices for Public Hearings Chapter 31 Rules	\$2,560.00
4/25/2012	Telecommunicaton Charges	\$78.98
5/10/2012	Lodging, M&IE and Mileage Gillette- S.Ratliff	\$560.23
5/10/2012	FedEx Shipping	\$150.50
5/10/2012	Lodging, M&IE and Mileage Gillette- J.Reichardt	\$478.10
5/10/2012	Lodging, M&IE and Mileage Gillette- S.Belish	\$417.04
5/10/2012	Lodging, M&IE and Mileage Gillette-K.Coon	\$460.33
5/10/2012	Wyoming Trophy and Engraving- Name Plates and Plaque	\$119.81
5/10/2012	Lodging, M&IE and Mileage Gillette-P.Gosar	\$562.45
5/10/2012	Walmart- Snacks for Meeting	\$33.58
5/10/2012	Teleconference Charges	\$63.57
5/10/2012	Lodging, M&IE and Mileage Gillette- Dana Mann-Tavegia	\$355.99
5/10/2012	Decorations	\$209.00
5/10/2012	Walmart- Office Supplies	\$6.37
5/10/2012	Lodging, M&IE and Mileage Gillette-Hugh Hageman	\$503.66
5/10/2012	Lodging, M&IE and Mileage Gillette-Walt Wilcox	\$437.02
5/16/2012	Amazon- iPad assesscories	\$283.78
5/16/2012	Target- iPad	\$399.99
5/17/2012	Lodging, M&IE and Mileage Gillette-Belenda Willson	\$500.29
5/23/2012	Telecommunicaton Charges	\$65.26
5/31/2012	Mileage/Cheyenne- Joe Reichardt	\$77.70

TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$9,292.44

**ACTION SUMMARY SHEET
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

DATE: June 12, 2012

ISSUE: District Accreditation

BACKGROUND: Each year the SBE accredits all K-12 school districts in Wyoming. The components of accreditation are monitored and evaluated by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA) in cooperation with the Wyoming Department of Education. This year four Wyoming districts were evaluated using the NCA district model. The areas reviewed in accreditation include Vision and Purpose, Governance and leadership, Teaching and Learning, Documenting and Using Results, Resources and Support Systems, Stakeholder Communications and Relationships, and Commitment to Continuous Improvement. All Wyoming schools are required to focus on student performance and improve student achievement through their school improvement plans. Quality contacts are made annually with each school or district, and accreditation visits are conducted on site using a five-year cycle. All schools or districts must complete a two-year progress report following the on-site visits on each overall recommendation within their accreditation reports, even if they have received a passing score of 3 or 4. It is a process which reflects true continuous improvement as we work with each school or district throughout the school year. As part of this continuous improvement process, NCA has made progress monitoring visits with each school that received a score of 2 in any standard during their 2010-2011 on-site visits and with one school that had continuing work from their 2009-2010 visit.

Findings: The following school districts have accomplished the tasks required of them for the 2011-2012 school year and have been evaluated in accordance with the evaluative criteria associated with those tasks. In addition, the WDE has completed a review of school district systems and state assurances. Districts with ongoing issues in any systems area or significant issues in assurances, including staffing, will be required to develop and implement a corrective action plan.

SUGGESTED MOTION: I move that the following Wyoming school districts be granted full accreditation:

Albany CSD #1	Crook CSD #1	Goshen CSD #1	Park CSD #16	Sweetwater CSD #2
Big Horn CSD #1	Fremont CSD #1	Johnson CSD #1	Platte CSD #1	Teton CSD #1
Big Horn CSD #2	Fremont CSD #2	Laramie CSD #2	Platte CSD #2	Uinta CSD #1
Big Horn CSD #3	Fremont CSD #6	Lincoln CSD #1	Sheridan CSD #1	Uinta CSD #4
Big Horn CSD #4	Fremont CSD #14	Lincoln CSD #2	Sheridan CSD #2	Uinta CSD #6
Campbell CSD #1	Fremont CSD #21	Natrona CSD #1	Sheridan CSD #3	Washakie CSD #1
Carbon CSD #1	Fremont CSD #24	Niobrara CSD #1	Sublette CSD #1	Washakie CSD #2
Carbon CSD #2	Fremont CSD #25	Park CSD #1	Sublette CSD #9	Weston CSD #1
Converse CSD #1	Fremont CSD #38	Park CSD #6	Sweetwater CSD #1	Weston CSD #7
Converse CSD #2				

SUGGESTED MOTION: I move that the following Wyoming school districts be granted accreditation with follow-up:

Hot Springs CSD #1
Laramie CSD #1

SUPPORTING INFORMATION ATTACHED:

- a. Accreditation Recommendation Process
- b. Chapter 6 Excerpt
- c. WDE 2011 and 2012 Accreditation Recommendations
- e. NCA Accreditation Standards
- f. NCA Accreditation Visitation Schedule
- g. Accreditation Progress Reports

PREPARED BY: Dianne Frazer
Education Program Consultant, Standards and Learning Division

APPROVED BY: _____

ACTION TAKEN BY STATE BOARD: _____ **DATE:** _____

Accreditation Recommendation Process

The Wyoming State Board of Education determines the accreditation status of every Wyoming school district. The Wyoming Department of Education brings recommendations to the Wyoming State Board of Education based on the following factors:

1) Assurances

- Annual review of staff certification
 - Personnel can only be paid with public funds if their certification is appropriate for their assignment. (Note: this is followed up by the state auditors)
 - Accreditation can be lowered if a district has had misassigned staff for 2 or more years out of the last 5.
 - Districts with misassignments create a Corrective Action Plan that is reviewed by WDE personnel for approval, with interaction with the District if revisions are needed.
 - WDE provides follow-up and technical assistance to the District on the plan.
- Calendars
 - All districts scheduled for QAR visits during the year have their calendars reviewed to assure they meet the required number of days and hours.
- On-site Assurances check
 - During the year of the QAR visit, a district participates in an Assurances check on-site. WDE uses a checklist developed for this purpose.
 - A single Assurances element will not cause an impact on accreditation, however, if a pattern of missed assurances emerges, accreditation may be lowered.
 - All districts and schools submit assurances annually with their improvement plans. WDE reviews submissions for completeness.

2) NCA Accreditation Process.

- For school year 2011-2012, all districts scheduled for QAR visits were evaluated using the Wyoming NCA accreditation district model.
- WDE will recommend a lowered state accreditation status when any district receives a score of “Emerging” or “Not Evident” in any NCA Standard.
- WDE collaborates with NCA to follow-up with each district visited and provide a written report with an accreditation recommendation based on



Chapter 6

Accreditation Status

Section 21. All public school districts and schools within these districts shall be granted accreditation levels by the State Board of Education.

(a) One of the following accreditation levels shall be granted by the State Board of Education on an annual basis:

(i) **Full Accreditation.** The local district and/or the schools within it have met the state accreditation standards in a fully satisfactory manner.

(ii) **Accreditation With Follow-up.** The local district and/or schools within it have failed to meet one or more of the standards, but the deficiency does not seriously distract from the quality of the school's educational program. Correctives are required but could reasonably be completed within a school year. The district has submitted an acceptable plan for taking corrective action indicating completion within a one-year timetable following the review year. Districts that complete all corrective actions by the end of the school year during which they are reviewed will be recommended for full accreditation upon Department verification of satisfactory completion.

(iii) **Accreditation With Deficiencies.** The local district and/or schools within it have failed to take corrective actions required and/or deficiencies persist over more than one year.

(iv) **Conditional Accreditation.** The local district and/or the schools within it have met the state accreditation standards in less than a fully satisfactory manner on half or more of the accreditation standards. Corrective actions cannot reasonably be completed within a school year.

(v) **Non-Accreditation.** The local district and/or the schools within it have not met the state accreditation standards. The State Board may attach penalties on an individual basis. The local district and/or the schools within it have:

(A) Consistently failed to complete or make substantial progress towards completing corrective actions on the schedule proposed by the district and accepted by the State Board at the time of citing;

(B) Consistently violated regulations; and/or

(C) Consistently filed delinquent reports required by statute or regulation.

(vi) **Emergency Change of Accreditation Status.** If the local district and/or the schools within it violate State law and/or regulations which are detrimental to the health, welfare, or safety of students, and the conditions are not immediately corrected upon notice of their existence to local officials, the State Board may place the school district or school on Non-Accredited status until these conditions are corrected. Upon correction of these conditions and submission and approval of a plan to prevent a recurrence, the State Board may review the district or school's accreditation status to Conditional for a period of time sufficient to verify implementation of the plan to prevent recurrences of the conditions.

(b) A school district may appeal a status of Non-Accreditation awarded it by the State Board of Education. A district may appeal for a reconsideration of that status to the State Board of Education within 30 days of the receipt of written notice of Non-Accreditation status.

progress. All districts have a 2 year period to complete required actions. All submit an Accreditation Progress Review (APR) report within those 2 years. Only those with scores below “3” have follow-up visits during which APR reports are completed by the visiting team.

- Of the districts with QAR’s in the 2010-11 school year, one district received a one year APR visit: Fremont #1. One district with a QAR in the 2009-2010 school year received a 2 year APR visit: Sweetwater #1. Both of these districts are recommended for Full Accreditation.
- Institutional schools were also visited that had QAR visits in 2009-10, received a “2” in any NCA Standard, and had lowered accreditation due to uncompleted requirements. These were: Wyoming Behavioral Institute, Yes House, and Southeastern Wyoming Juvenile Center. Wyoming Behavioral Institute and Southeast Wyoming Detention Center are both recommended for Full Accreditation. Yes House is recommended to continue with Accreditation with Follow-up as NCA reports this institution is still “In Progress” toward completing all requirements.

3) Systems issues.

- Districts that have major systems issues with their operations such as budget and fiscal procedures, federal programs, special education monitoring, etc., will have these factors considered in WDE’s district accreditation recommendations.

All Wyoming school districts will be reviewed on the above factors. WDE will make accreditation determinations by the end of May 2012 and districts will be notified of their recommended status. A formal recommendation will be made to SBE at the June 2012 meeting. Any school districts that would like to attend the SBE in June 2012 will be welcome to do so.

Wyoming District Accreditation 2011 and 2012

DISTRICT	2010-11 ACCREDITATION STATUS	STATUS BASED ON:	2011-12 ACCREDITATION RECOMMENDATION	RECOMMENDATION BASED ON:
Albany #1	Full		Full	
Big Horn #1	Full		Full	
Big Horn #2	Full		Full	
Big Horn #3	Full		Full	
Big Horn #4	Full		Full	
Campbell #1	Full		Full	
Carbon #1	Full		Full	
Carbon#2	Full		Full	
Converse #1	Full		Full	NCA QAR: #1 Highly Functional; #2 Operational; #3 Operational; #4 Operational; #5 Highly Functional; #6 Operational; #7 Operational
Converse #2	Full		Full	NCA QAR: #1 Highly Functional; #2 Highly Functional; #3 Operational; #4 Highly Functional; #5 Highly Functional; #6 Highly Functional; #7 Operational
Crook #1	Full		Full	
Fremont #1	Follow-up	NCA School Model – Emerging scores in 2 schools for standards 4 & 7	Full	NCA APR, completed all requirements, granted Full Accreditation
Fremont #2	Full		Full	
Fremont #6	Full		Full	
Fremont #14	Full		Full	
Fremont #21	Full		Full	
Fremont #24	Full		Full	
Fremont #25	Full		Full	
Fremont #38	Full		Full	
Goshen #1	Full		Full	

Wyoming District Accreditation 2011 and 2012

DISTRICT	2010-11 ACCREDITATION STATUS	STATUS BASED ON:	2011-12 ACCREDITATION RECOMMENDATION	RECOMMENDATION BASED ON:
Hot Springs #1	Full		Follow-up	NCA QAR: Emerging in Standard #1; All other standards Operational
Johnson #1	Full		Full	
Laramie #1	Full		Follow-up	Staffing (2 of 5 years)
Laramie #2	Full		Full	
Lincoln #1	Full		Full	
Lincoln #2	Full		Full	
Natrona #1	Full		Full	NCA QAR: #1 Operational; #2 Operational; #3 Operational; #4 Operational; #5 Operational; #6 Operational; #7 Operational One staffing issue, first in 5 years
Niobrara #1	Full		Full	
Park #1	Full		Full	
Park #6	Full		Full	
Park #16	Full		Full	
Platte #1	Full		Full	
Platte #2	Full		Full	
Sheridan #1	Full		Full	
Sheridan #2	Full		Full	
Sheridan #3	Full		Full	
Sublette #1	Full		Full	
Sublette #9	Full		Full	
Sweetwater #1	Full		Full	
Sweetwater #2	Full		Full	
Teton #1	Full		Full	
Uinta #1	Full		Full	
Uinta #4	Full		Full	

**Wyoming District Accreditation
2011 and 2012**

DISTRICT	2010-11 ACCREDITATION STATUS	STATUS BASED ON:	2011-12 ACCREDITATION RECOMMENDATION	RECOMMENDATION BASED ON:
Uinta #6	Full		Full	
Washakie #1	Full		Full	
Washakie #2	Full		Full	
Weston #1	Full		Full	
Weston #7	Full		Full	

Standard 1: Vision and Purpose

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

QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEM INDICATORS

In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

- 1.1** Establishes a vision for the system in collaboration with its stakeholders
- 1.2** Communicates the system's vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support
- 1.3** Identifies system-wide goals and measures to advance the vision
- 1.4** Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the system, its students, and the community
- 1.5** Ensures that the system's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of schools, departments and services
- 1.6** Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate

IMPACT STATEMENT

A system is successful in meeting this standard when it commits to a purpose and direction that is shared system-wide. The leadership establishes expectations for student learning aligned with the system's vision that is supported by system and school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and district effectiveness. The system's vision guides allocations of time and human, material, and fiscal resources.

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

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

GOVERNANCE - QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEM INDICATORS

In fulfillment of this standard, the system operates under the jurisdiction of a governing board that:

- 2.1** Establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the system
- 2.2** Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership authority of the administrative head of the system
- 2.3** Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations
- 2.4** Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board
- 2.5** Builds public support, secures sufficient resources, and acts as a steward of the system's resources
- 2.6** Maintains access to legal counsel to advise or obtain information about legal requirements and obligations
- 2.7** Maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations

LEADERSHIP - QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEM INDICATORS

In fulfillment of this standard, the system has leadership that:

- 2.8** Provides for systematic analysis and review of student performance and school and system effectiveness
- 2.9** Creates and supports collaborative networks of stakeholders to support system programs
- 2.10** Provides direction, assistance, and resources to align, support, and enhance all parts of the system in meeting organizational and student performance goals
- 2.11** Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership
- 2.12** Assesses and addresses community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction
- 2.13** Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel

IMPACT STATEMENT

A system is successful in meeting this standard when it has leaders who are advocates for the system's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction and allocate resources to implement curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders function with clearly defined authority and responsibility and encourage collaboration and shared responsibility for system and school improvement among stakeholders. The system's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation.

Standard 3: Teaching and Learning

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

QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEM INDICATORS

In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

- 3.1** Develops, articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly-defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills
- 3.2** Establishes expectations and supports student engagement in the learning process, including opportunities for students to explore application of higher order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning
- 3.3** Ensures that system-wide curricular and instructional decisions are based on data and research at all levels
- 3.4** Supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice
- 3.5** Supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity
- 3.6** Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning
- 3.7** Maintains articulation among and between all levels of schooling to monitor student performance and ensure readiness for future schooling or employment
- 3.8** Supports the implementation of interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning
- 3.9** Maintains a system-wide climate that supports student learning
- 3.10** Ensures that curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals
- 3.11** Coordinates and ensures ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials needed for effective instruction

IMPACT STATEMENT

A system is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The system ensures that teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process; provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations; and give students feedback to improve their performance.

Standard 4: Documenting and Using Results

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

QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEM INDICATORS

In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

- 4.1** Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system's expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and free of bias
- 4.2** Ensures that student assessment data are used to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning
- 4.3** Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance
- 4.4** Provides a system of communication which uses a variety of methods to report student performance and system effectiveness to all stakeholders
- 4.5** Uses comparison and trend data from comparable school systems to evaluate student performance and system effectiveness
- 4.6** Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance that is supported by multiple sources of evidence
- 4.7** Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations

IMPACT STATEMENT

A school system is successful in meeting this standard when it uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly-defined performance measures. The assessment system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, identify gaps between expectations for student learning and student performance, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions to improve student performance. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to system and school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, system and school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts.

Standard 5: Resources and Support Systems

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

QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEM INDICATORS

In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

HUMAN RESOURCES

- 5.1** Establishes and implements processes to recruit, employ, retain, and mentor qualified professional and support staff to fulfill assigned roles and responsibilities
- 5.2** Establishes and implements a process to assign professional and support staff based on system needs and staff qualifications as may be required by federal and state law and regulations (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience)
- 5.3** Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff
- 5.4** Ensures that staff are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school system and to meet federal and state law and regulations, if applicable

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- 5.5** Engages in long-range budgetary planning and annually budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement
- 5.6** Ensures that all financial transactions are safeguarded through proper budgetary procedures and audited accounting measures

PHYSICAL RESOURCES

- 5.7** Maintains sites, facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, orderly, and healthy environment
- 5.8** Establishes and implements written security and crisis management plans with appropriate training for stakeholders
- 5.9** Implements processes and plans for maintaining and improving sites, facilities, and equipment
- 5.10** Provides technology infrastructure and equipment that is up-to-date and sufficient to accomplish the system's goals

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

- 5.11** Provides and coordinates support services that meet the health, counseling, nutrition, safety, co-curricular, transportation, and special learning needs of all students
- 5.12** Provides student support services coordinated with the school, home, and community

IMPACT STATEMENT

A system is successful in meeting this standard when it has sufficient human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that: enables students to achieve expectations for student learning, meets special needs, and complies with applicable regulations. The system employs and allocates staff well-qualified for their assignments. The system provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness. The system ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

Standard 6: Stakeholder Communication and Relationships

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

QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEM INDICATORS

In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

- 6.1** Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning
- 6.2** Uses system-wide strategies to listen to and communicate with stakeholders
- 6.3** Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the system
- 6.4** Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders
- 6.5** Provides information that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders

IMPACT STATEMENT

A system is successful in meeting this standard when it has the understanding, commitment, and support of stakeholders. System and school personnel seek opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership among stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts.

Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEM INDICATORS

In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

- 7.1** Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)
- 7.2** Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement
- 7.3** Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement is aligned with the system's vision and expectations for student learning
- 7.4** Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement includes a focus on increasing learning for all students and closing gaps between current and expected student performance levels
- 7.5** Provides research-based professional development for system and school personnel to help them achieve improvement goals
- 7.6** Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders
- 7.7** Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement
- 7.8** Allocates and protects time for planning and engaging in continuous improvement efforts system-wide
- 7.9** Provides direction and assistance to its schools and operational units to support their continuous improvement efforts

IMPACT STATEMENT

A school is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the school with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained and the school demonstrates progress in improving student performance and school effectiveness. New improvement efforts are informed by the results of earlier efforts through reflection and assessment of the improvement process.

**NCA Accreditation Visitation Schedule
Quality Assurance Review**

School Year 2007-2008	School Year 2008-2009	School Year 2009-2010	School Year 2010-2011	School Year 2011-2012
Sheridan #2	Niobrara #1	Sweetwater #1	Fremont #1	Hot Springs #1
Sheridan #3	Albany #1	Sweetwater #2	Fremont #14	Natrona #1
Johnson #1	Platte #1	Unita #1	Fremont #2	Converse #1
Campbell #1	Platte #2	Uinta #4	Fremont #21	Converse #2
Crook #1	Goshen #1	Uinta #6	Fremont #24	
Weston #1	Carbon #1	Lincoln #1	Fremont #25	
Weston #7	Carbon #2	Lincoln #2	Fremont #38	
	Institutions	Sublette #1	Fremont #6	
	Laramie #2	Sublette #9	Park #1	
	Saint Mary's Elementary	Teton #1	Park #16	
		Laramie #1 (District Model)	Park #6	
			Big Horn #1	
			Big Horn #2	
			Big Horn #3	
			Big Horn #4	
			Washakie #1	
			Washakie #2	
			Saint Stephen's Indian and High School	



Accreditation Progress Report

Jeffrey City Elementary

Dr. Kathy Hitt, Principal

375 Bob Adams Avenue
Jeffrey City, Wyoming, United States 82310

Prepared for the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review

Report Status : Accepted

Report Open Date : December 1, 2010

Report Due Date : February 10, 2012

Report Submitted Date : May 28, 2012

Report Accepted Date : May 28, 2012

Accreditation Progress Report

Contents

1.0 About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI	3
2.0 Introduction to the Accreditation Progress Report	4
3.0. Summary	5
4.0. Required Action 1	6
4.1. School Response	6
4.2. Reviewer Response	7
5.0. Required Action 2	7
5.1. School Response	8
5.2. Reviewer Response	9
6.0. Required Action 3	9
6.1. School Response	10
6.2. Reviewer Response	10

1.0 About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

Background. Dedicated to advancing excellence in education worldwide, AdvancED provides accreditation, research, and professional services to 27,000 schools in 65 countries. AdvancED provides accreditation under the seals of 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).

The Accreditation Process.

To earn and maintain accreditation, schools must:

1. Meet the AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems.

Schools demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school systems to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.

2. Engage in continuous improvement.

Schools implement continuous improvement focused on improving student performance and school effectiveness.

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 required actions to help the school improve. The school acts on the team's required actions and submits an Accreditation Progress Report at prescribed intervals following the Quality Assurance Review.

The AdvancED accreditation process 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.

2.0 Introduction to the Accreditation Progress Report

Purpose

The Accreditation Progress Report (APR) is a critical component of the AdvancED accreditation process. It engages the school in a detailed review and analysis of the steps it has taken to address the required actions made by the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review (QAR) team. Completing the report helps the school focus and reflect on its continuous improvement efforts.

It is the responsibility of the school to address each of the QAR report's required actions within the 5-year term accreditation. Deadlines for completion of the report are based on the school's accreditation status and must be met to maintain accreditation. Some schools may complete multiple reports during the 5-year term to demonstrate that they have fully addressed the required actions.

Structure of the Report

The APR is organized around the required actions in the school's QAR team report. The APR lists the required action from the report along with the rationale and evidence supporting the required action. The school then indicates the progress that it has made toward meeting the required action and provides a more detailed response describing the actions it has taken and the results obtained. The school provides a response for each of the QAR team required actions.

Following the school's response is the reviewer's response. Each APR is read by an AdvancED reader in the state or regional office who reviews the school's response to determine if the required action has been met. The reader provides his/her assessment of the progress the school has made and then offers comments to the school. If required actions remain in progress or not addressed, a new APR will be created with a new deadline for completion. As noted earlier, the school must address the required actions within the 5-year accreditation term.

Conclusion

The Accreditation Progress Report is a useful report for members of the school and broader community. It helps community members see and monitor the ongoing improvement efforts of their school. It demonstrates how the school uses its accreditation for the ongoing benefit of the students it serves.

3.0. Summary

1.1. Based on the actions taken by your institution to address the required actions provided by the QAR team, what has been the impact on your institution's overall effectiveness?:

Because of the rural nature of Jeffrey City Elementary, the required actions provided by the QAR team have had minimal impact on the overall effectiveness for this school. The original QAR visit was done under the North Elementary umbrella because the principal at North was also the principal at Jeffrey City. That has since changed because of reconfiguration within the district.

With four students, all of them Caucasian, not on free lunch and with a small teacher to student ratio, the issues are minimal at this school. Students generally do well on district and state level assessments. Their attendance is fine and behavioral issues are practically nonexistent.

1.2. What would you consider to be challenges that still lie ahead and how do you plan to address those challenges?:

As enrollment numbers decrease (1 student is transferring to town in January and two other students plan to attend school in town next year) the future of Jeffrey City Elementary school is dependent upon any future economic opportunities in the area which may draw families to the school. There is no way for the school or the district to anticipate what those options might be and who would then live in Jeffrey City.

In addition, the teacher is retiring in May, so hiring for such a rural position is a challenge. Administrators will be attending job fairs this year and we can advertise this position early in the hiring season.

1.3. How will you use the insights gained from your accreditation activities to inform and enhance your quality assurance and school improvement efforts?:

While the accreditation activities are loosely tied to Jeffrey City as indicated above, it has supported the continuation of systematic data analysis to guide the vision for the school. The school improvement goals this year are directly tied to the district vision with an emphasis in preparing students for graduation, providing remediation when necessary and maintaining a safe school environment. Currently the teacher at Jeffrey City travels into Lander every Wednesday to participate in weekly professional activities at Baldwin Creek Elementary. This group has formed a Professional Learning Community with the goals of increased student achievement.

Jeffrey City Elementary hosted a Quality Assurance Review team on 10/19/2010 - 10/20/2010. Through interviews with school stakeholders, classroom observations, and a review of school documents and student performance results, the team developed a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) report detailing its findings from the visit. The full report can be viewed at www.advanc-ed.org.

The QAR report contained commendations and required actions for the school. The school is responsible for addressing each of the required actions in the report. At prescribed intervals based on the school's accreditation status, the school must complete an Accreditation Progress Report. Below, please find the required actions from the QAR report and the school's response to each required action. Following the school's response is the reviewer's progress response and comments.

4.0. Required Action 1

Source: QAR

Date: 2010-11-23

Required Action:

Establish a process for thoroughly and systematically analyzing data, particularly in identifying reasons for lack of student progress. Provide support and assistance as teachers respond to data to meet student needs, both collectively and on an individual basis.

Evidence:

Although much assessment data is collected, evidence of thorough analysis is sporadic. There is little evidence of correlation among the multiple sources of data. Teachers and administrators cannot identify reasons for student success or lack of success.

Rationale:

Analyzing data from multiple sources allows for triangulation as well as investigation of patterns of success and areas of need. It is imperative that identified areas of need are verified, based on student achievement data, before significant resources are devoted to improvement efforts.

4.1. School Response

Progress Status: Completed

Response: We have an district level process for analyzing data. Our Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Assessment is in charge of that process and he presents multiple data pieces to teachers. That process includes beginning of year review of student data including PAWS, MAP, DIBELS, District Writing Assessment. Teachers are asked to

include this data in their evaluation documentation and it is used to guide instruction. For example, if a student is struggling in division as evidenced in all the data sources for that student, the teacher can dedicate appropriate time for reteaching in a remediation process. As mentioned previously, this is a rural school with one teacher and four students. The data generated for each student does guide daily and long term instruction.

4.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response: Completed

Comments for Institution: After reviewing the school's thorough response and conducting an APR visit, AdvancED concurs with the school's assessment that this required action has been completed. The school and the district have taken steps to establish a process for thoroughly and systematically analyzing data and provide support and assistance to teachers as they respond to data to meet student needs as required by the Quality Assurance Review team.

The process for thoroughly and systematically analyzing data at the school is outlined by the Curriculum Coordinating Committee (CCC). The CCC controls the process and specifies what interventions can be utilized in each core subject area in the district wide Instructional Differentiation Plan. The school and district have taken the necessary steps to address the required action made by the Quality Assurance Review team. The school is encouraged to monitor its ongoing activities to ensure that the actions taken to address this required action are sustained over time.

The APR team reviewed the Documenting and Using Results Standard indicators and interviewed the school improvement leadership team. The APR team determined the school uses a comprehensive assessment system which includes Reading Street, Everyday Math units, MAP assessments, PAWS, DIBELS assessment and the District Writing Assessment, common local assessments, and perception data from surveys. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts. The team noted evidence to indicate the school is now meeting the standard at the Operational level, in accordance with the standard rubric.

5.0. Required Action 2

Source: QAR

Date: 2010-11-23

Required Action:

Implement a plan to increase staff understanding and participation in each element of the continuous improvement process. This would include but not be limited to:

- establishing a vision for student performance,
- maintaining a current profile (including instructional and community data as well as follow up data on students at the next level),
- analyzing data and information thoroughly,

- creating an improvement plan that ensures fidelity in implementation and contains aligned assessments,
- implementing a comprehensive and aligned professional development plan, and
- establishing timelines for regularly measuring progress throughout the school year.

Evidence:

Understanding the improvement model of Vision-Profile-Plan-Results, particularly at the school level, is inconsistent. A vision for the school has not been clearly articulated nor could a vision for the identified goals be described. Although multiple assessments are used, data from the Wyoming state assessment, Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming Students (PAWS), is the only measure used to determine school improvement process growth. Professional development offered at the building and district level appears to only introduce programs or initiatives with no evidence found for follow-up or maintenance plans. Fidelity of implementation of action plan interventions is questionable, as evidenced in teacher and leadership team conversations.

Rationale:

A school staff that understands and is involved in a continuous improvement process ensures maximum potential for student growth and overall school effectiveness.

5.1. School Response

Progress Status: Completed

Response: Vision of Student Performance: The vision at Jeffrey City Elementary continues to be to provide students with a safe learning environment where every child is prepared to successfully participate their current education with the aim of attending grade 6-12 in Lander. The attention to basic skills in the four core area continues to be a major focus for instruction. The performance is measured by several assessments including DIBELS, MAP and District Writing Assessments. This allows the school and district to track the progress of students in the primary and intermediate grades.

Current Profile: The profile for Jeffrey City Elementary has not changed as the same population of students are served. The principal has changed because of reconfiguration at the other elementary schools in the district.

Analyzing Data We will continue to track and analyze student data to assure progress and to provide interventions as needed. The assessments described above will be the data source that monitors student achievement.

Improvement Plan: A revised Executive Summary and the 2011-2012 School Improvement Plan was written and reviewed by the teacher and the principal with a final edit from the Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent. The final version was submitted by November 1, 2011.

Professional Development Plan: Over the last several months the teacher at Jeffrey City

has participated in the targeted professional development provided by the district and individual schools. For this current school year, the teacher is participating weekly with Baldwin Creek Elementary in their professional learning community activities. She will also be attending several district level activities beginning with all district professional development on January 16th. The complete district plan is available upon request. The teacher has also participated in SuccessMaker Training and is scheduled for follow up training in December, 2011.

Establish Timelines: The Director of Curriculum creates a district assessment schedule for DIBELS, MAP, and the DWA which is adhered to by teachers and staff. DIBELS progress monitoring is completed every two weeks for any student who might score in the "intensive" range. All of these calendars/schedules are available upon request.

5.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response: Completed

Comments for Institution: The school has sufficiently addressed the required action of the Quality Assurance Review team. As detailed in the school's response the school has established a vision in alignment with the district vision. The school has established a school improvement plan in AdvancED's Adaptive System of School Improvement Tools (ASSIST), and the implementation of the plan is continuously monitored. Staff development opportunities have been scheduled and committed to by the teacher pertaining to all of the school's adopted instructional strategies. The district has created an assessment schedule which is followed by the teacher. The school has taken the necessary steps to address the required action made by the Quality Assurance Review team. The school is encouraged to monitor its ongoing activities to ensure that the actions taken to address this required action are sustained over time.

The APR team reviewed the Commitment to Continuous Improvement indicators. Evidence indicates the school is meeting the Commitment to Continuous Improvement standard at the Operational level in accordance with the standard rubric.

6.0. Required Action 3

Source: QAR

Date: 2010-11-23

Required Action:

Develop and implement a long range professional development plan to

- increase teacher and staff understanding of the difference between formative and summative assessments, and
- provide time to increase staff knowledge of all assessments used by the school or district to measure overall student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Evidence:

Teacher interviews and conversations indicate a need for a thorough understanding of the assessments being used, especially as they impact the school as a whole. Evidence is lacking that the school has identified characteristics of effectiveness and ways to measure effectiveness. Evidence of regular data sharing and analysis is not consistent vertically or horizontally. The school is relying heavily on PAWS to make decisions related to growth. The school is at a primary stage in using and understanding the RtI framework.

Rationale:

As student populations become more diverse and demands for meeting the needs of all students increases, the need for the use of data rather than intuition, tradition, and convenience, to guide administrative and educational decisions will become increasingly more important.

6.1. School Response

Progress Status: Completed

Response: As mentioned previously in this document, this is a rural school with one teacher and four students. This teacher has been teaching at this site for 5 years and continues to use formative assessments daily as the classroom teacher. These include, but are not limited to running record, writing conference logs, anecdotal notes, verbal student responses, and teacher/student communications and discussions. These formative assessments are used to guide daily instruction, monitor progress and re-teach as needed. Summative assessments, as discussed above, continue to be DIBELS, MAP, PAWS, DWA and end of unit tests provided within the Reading Streets and everyday Math curricula.

Over the last several years, the teacher at Jeffrey City has participated in many varied professional development opportunities including Response to Intervention Training, Step Up to Writing Training, Writing Workshop, Education City, Title 1 Summer Technology Academy, Successmaker training, Practical Behavior Management. A complete list of training dates and titles are available upon request.

6.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response: Completed

Comments for Institution: The school has sufficiently addressed the required action of the Quality Assurance Review team. As detailed in the school's response, this is a rural school with 3 students and one teacher. The teacher has been at the school for five years. Summative assessment results are gathered using DIBELS, MAP, PAWS, DWA and end of unit tests provided within the Reading Streets and everyday Math curricula. The teacher has participated in many of the districts sponsored staff development opportunities including Response to Intervention Training, Step Up to Writing Training, Writing Workshop, Education City, Title 1 Summer Technology Academy, Successmaker training, and Practical Behavior Management. The district has developed a district wide staff development calendar which includes training on the full range of district wide

assessments. The school has implemented a range of strategies that attend to the understanding and use of assessments and their results as noted in the QAR team's required action. The school is encouraged to embed and sustain these strategies to ensure continued results.



Accreditation Progress Report

North Elementary

Ms. Yvette Majerus, Principal

626 Washington
Lander, Wyoming, United States 82520

Prepared for the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review

Report Status : Accepted

Report Open Date : November 30, 2010

Report Due Date : December 1, 2011

Report Submitted Date : May 28, 2012

Report Accepted Date : May 28, 2012

Accreditation Progress Report

Contents

1.0 About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI	3
2.0 Introduction to the Accreditation Progress Report	4
3.0. Summary	5
4.0. Required Action 1	6
4.1. School Response	6
4.2. Reviewer Response	8
5.0. Required Action 2	8
5.1. School Response	9
5.2. Reviewer Response	10
6.0. Required Action 3	10
6.1. School Response	11
6.2. Reviewer Response	11

1.0 About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

Background. Dedicated to advancing excellence in education worldwide, AdvancED provides accreditation, research, and professional services to 27,000 schools in 65 countries. AdvancED provides accreditation under the seals of 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).

The Accreditation Process.

To earn and maintain accreditation, schools must:

1. Meet the AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems.

Schools demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school systems to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.

2. Engage in continuous improvement.

Schools implement continuous improvement focused on improving student performance and school effectiveness.

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 required actions to help the school improve. The school acts on the team's required actions and submits an Accreditation Progress Report at prescribed intervals following the Quality Assurance Review.

The AdvancED accreditation process 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.

2.0 Introduction to the Accreditation Progress Report

Purpose

The Accreditation Progress Report (APR) is a critical component of the AdvancED accreditation process. It engages the school in a detailed review and analysis of the steps it has taken to address the required actions made by the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review (QAR) team. Completing the report helps the school focus and reflect on its continuous improvement efforts.

It is the responsibility of the school to address each of the QAR report's required actions within the 5-year term accreditation. Deadlines for completion of the report are based on the school's accreditation status and must be met to maintain accreditation. Some schools may complete multiple reports during the 5-year term to demonstrate that they have fully addressed the required actions.

Structure of the Report

The APR is organized around the required actions in the school's QAR team report. The APR lists the required action from the report along with the rationale and evidence supporting the required action. The school then indicates the progress that it has made toward meeting the required action and provides a more detailed response describing the actions it has taken and the results obtained. The school provides a response for each of the QAR team required actions.

Following the school's response is the reviewer's response. Each APR is read by an AdvancED reader in the state or regional office who reviews the school's response to determine if the required action has been met. The reader provides his/her assessment of the progress the school has made and then offers comments to the school. If required actions remain in progress or not addressed, a new APR will be created with a new deadline for completion. As noted earlier, the school must address the required actions within the 5-year accreditation term.

Conclusion

The Accreditation Progress Report is a useful report for members of the school and broader community. It helps community members see and monitor the ongoing improvement efforts of their school. It demonstrates how the school uses its accreditation for the ongoing benefit of the students it serves.

3.0. Summary

1.1. Based on the actions taken by your institution to address the required actions provided by the QAR team, what has been the impact on your institution's overall effectiveness?:

We made AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) for the 2010-2011 school year. We met the Wyoming Department of Education's goals for the WDE 626 Early Literacy report. We sent two students to the National History Day competition in Washington DC.

1.2. What would you consider to be challenges that still lie ahead and how do you plan to address those challenges?:

We are aware that the Free and Reduced and Native American populations will continue to be our biggest challenges. Two additional Kindergarten sections were added to create a ratio of 16/17 to 1. First grade added one section to create a student-to-teacher ratio of 18-1. We have built a strong working partnership with the Lights On/Bridges Afterschool Alliance. Our summer pre-school program increased from a two-week program to a seven-week program and has incorporated the Zoo Phonics program used in all Kindergarten classes as well as the PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions Supports) and the district social skills program, Stop & Think curriculum. CDS (Child Development Services) uses the Zoo Phonics program to prepare their student population, which feeds into our district Kindergarten. The on-going partnership with Headstart and CDS, which participates in Kindergarten screening and transition meetings, has assisted in identifying incoming student challenges. The district adopted program, Check & Connect, has been integrated into the BIT (Building Intervention Team) process to address attendance, tardy and truancy issues. A review of incoming first grade attendance records supported this need. Our school employs a fulltime counselor and the district has a drop-out prevention coordinator who visits North on a weekly basis or as needed.

1.3. How will you use the insights gained from your accreditation activities to inform and enhance your quality assurance and school improvement efforts?:

The insights gained from our accreditation activities have guided us to establish a process for a thorough and systematic analysis of data. We have made deliberate and conscious efforts to increase staff understanding and participation in all elements of the improvement process by establishing a vision consistent with the district vision. We have begun a new profile based on our new student population and have created and submitted a new school improvement plan aligned with professional development opportunities and assessments. The timeline of these actions will support and sustain consistent student progress through the year. Formative assessments guide instruction and provide student data for implementing interventions and tracking student progress. Summative assessments measure student learning. Increased staff knowledge of formative and summative assessments helps measure the overall student performance and organizational effectiveness.

North Elementary hosted a Quality Assurance Review team on 10/19/2010 - 10/20/2010. Through interviews with school stakeholders, classroom observations, and a review of school documents and student performance results, the team developed a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) report detailing its findings from the visit. The full report can be viewed at www.advanc-ed.org.

The QAR report contained commendations and required actions for the school. The school is responsible for addressing each of the required actions in the report. At prescribed intervals based on the school's accreditation status, the school must complete an Accreditation Progress Report. Below, please find the required actions from the QAR report and the school's response to each required action. Following the school's response is the reviewer's progress response and comments.

4.0. Required Action 1

Source: QAR

Date: 2010-11-05

Required Action:

Implement a plan to increase staff understanding and participation in each element of the continuous improvement process. This would include, but not be limited to, 1) establishing a vision for student performance, 2) maintaining a current profile (including instructional and community data as well as follow up data on students at the next level), 3) thoroughly analyzing data and information, 4) creating an improvement plan that ensures fidelity in implementation and contains aligned assessments, 5) implementing a comprehensive and aligned professional development plan, and 6) establishing timelines for regularly measuring progress throughout the school year.

Evidence:

Understanding the improvement model of Vision-Profile-Plan-Results, particularly at the school level, was inconsistent. A vision for the school has not been clearly articulated nor could a vision for the identified goals be described. Although multiple assessments are used, data from the Wyoming state assessment, Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming Students (PAWS), was the only measure used to determine school improvement process growth. Professional development offered at the building and district level appears to only introduce programs or initiatives, with no evidence found for follow-up or maintenance plans found. Fidelity of implementation of action plan interventions was questionable, as evidenced in teacher and leadership team conversations.

Rationale:

A school staff that understands and is involved in a continuous improvement process ensures maximum potential for student growth and overall school effectiveness.

4.1. School Response

Progress Status: Completed

Response: 1) **Establishing a vision for student performance:** Our school vision is, "We pledge every child in our school will learn in a safe, respectful, and caring environment where he/she is treated as an important and valuable person, every child in the school is

prepared to successfully participate in higher education, every child will learn from highly trained, highly motivated teachers, staff and administrators, every child will learn in a clean and healthy school environment, and every child at North is provided a wide variety of extra-curricular activities to broaden their educational experience." This vision is aligned with the District's vision in order to sustain consistency and longitudinal progress at all kindergarten through 12th grades.

2) Maintaining a current profile (including instructional and community data as well as follow up data on students at the next level): Due to the recent reconfiguration of all district elementary schools we are presently writing a new school profile to accurately reflect our new student population comprised of all the district's kindergartners and 1st graders. Data from the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills), MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) and the DWA (District Writing Assessment) assessments allow student progress to be tracked throughout their school years in both the primary and intermediate grades.

3) Thoroughly analyzing data and information: We are continuously tracking and analyzing student data to assure progress and prescribe additional interventions and enrichments to students in need. Initially, Kindergarten screening is conducted on all incoming Kindergarten students to discover the students' strengths and weaknesses and plan/staff for the incoming class. The Kindergarten and First Grade teams schedule and attend weekly PLC (Professional Learning Community) meetings and bi-weekly RtI meetings where MAP, DIBELS and Reading Recovery data is reviewed, teacher input is given and additional strategies and programs are implemented for students showing the need for additional intervention. These meetings are scheduled so teachers can compare instructional strategies and techniques in order to provide the best education and instruction for all students. One meeting a month is dedicated to cross-grade discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of vertical alignment in the district curriculum. These collaborative meetings have been extremely beneficial to even the most experienced teachers as best practices in education continually change. Also teachers who have attended various in-district and out-of-district professional development opportunities share newly learned information and ideas so all staff may benefit.

4) Creating an improvement plan that ensures fidelity in implementation and contains aligned assessments: A new Executive Summary and 2011-2012 School Improvement Plan was collaboratively written by North's School Improvement team and the staff, was submitted to the Superintendent and the Director of Curriculum and then submitted to AdvancEd on November 1, 2011.

5) Implementing a comprehensive and aligned professional development plan: In preparation of our school district restructuring and in response to this Required Action, we have implemented targeted professional development over the last eleven months and in the future of this school year. In January of 2011, the district adopted PD360, an on-line professional development program, to provide access for all staff to all district and/or school required PD without travel and time away from the students and classrooms during the trainings. The 2010-2011 North Staff participated in PD360 on-line poverty training. Due to our Title 1 status and knowledge that this status will continue, a poverty recognition and training class was held for all current North Elementary staff and new K-1 school configuration staff during the Spring 2011. During the Summer of 2011, many professional development opportunities were attended by

staff in the areas of Math Connections, Math Recovery, MAP assessment, Step-Up-to-Writing and other literacy education trainings. The Fall of 2011 brought a Six-Traits of Writing trainer from Houghton Mifflin who was scheduled in all classrooms during a day to model an effective standard-based strategy to students and teachers. A debriefing session was held at the end of the day that allowed teachers to gain clarification of information presented from the trainer. Presently, there are professional development opportunities scheduled and/or commitment for attendance in additional Math Connections/Recovery, Lego Robotics, Brain Gym, a 3+8 Reading Success Workshop, Reading Recovery Conference and a National Literacy Conference. Our staff is made up of "life-long" learners so as new opportunities arise, staff member take advantage of these opportunities, attends workshops and seminars and bring this newly learned knowledge back to North where it is shared with all.

6) Establishing timelines for regularly measuring progress throughout the school year: The Director of Curriculum creates a district assessment schedule for DIBELS, MAP and the DWA which is adhered to by teachers and staff. DIBELS progress monitoring is completed every two weeks on any students who score in the "intensive" range. All of these calendars/schedules are available upon request.

4.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response: Completed

Comments for Institution: After reviewing the school's thorough response and conducting an APR visit, AdvancED concurs with the school's assessment that this required action has been completed. The school has established a vision in alignment with the district vision. The school has reconfigured from a K-6 school to a K-1 school and is in the process of gathering data and developing a new profile to reflect the current student population. The school has high quality Professional Learning Community processes in place to collect and analyze student achievement data and then to collaborate on appropriate responses to the data. The school has established a school improvement plan in AdvancED's Adaptive System of School Improvement Tools (ASSIST), and the implementation of the plan is continuously monitored. Staff development opportunities have been scheduled and committed to by all staff pertaining to all of the school's adopted instructional strategies. The district has created an assessment schedule which is followed by all teachers. The school has taken the necessary steps to address the required action made by the Quality Assurance Review team. The school is encouraged to monitor its ongoing activities to ensure that the actions taken to address this required action are sustained over time.

The APR team reviewed the Commitment to Continuous Improvement indicators. Evidence indicates the school is meeting the Commitment to Continuous Improvement standard at the Operational level in accordance with the standard rubric.

5.0. Required Action 2

Source: QAR

Date: 2010-11-05

Required Action:

Develop and implement a long-range professional development plan to 1) increase teacher and staff understanding of the difference between formative and summative assessments and 2) provide time to increase staff knowledge of all assessments used by the school or district to measure overall student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Evidence:

Teacher interviews and conversations indicated a need for a thorough understanding of the assessments being used, especially as they impact the school as a whole. Evidence was lacking that the school had identified characteristics of effectiveness and ways to measure effectiveness. Evidence of regular data sharing and analysis was not consistent vertically or horizontally. The school is relying heavily on the Proficiency Assessment of Wyoming Students (PAWS) to make decisions related to growth. The school is at a primary stage in using and understanding the Response to Intervention (RtI) framework.

Rationale:

As student populations become more diverse and demands for meeting the needs of all students increases, the need for the use of data (rather than intuition, tradition, and convenience) to guide administrative and educational decisions will become increasingly more important.

5.1. School Response

Progress Status: Completed

Response:

1) **Increase teacher and staff understanding of the difference between formative and summative assessments:** The topics of formative and summative assessments is discussed regularly by all staff. Formative assessment is utilized daily by teachers using the strategies of running records, writing conference logs, anecdotal notes, verbal student responses, individual white board assessments, interactive white board clickers and teacher/student communications and discussions. These formative assessments are used to guide instruction, discover student progress and align re-teaching of any materials not mastered by students. All teacher formative discoveries are discussed at bi-monthly RtI meetings. Summative assessment results are discovered during End-of-Unit tests in Reading Street, Everyday Math units, MAP assessments, DIBELS assessment and the DWA. In addition, the principal's CWT (Classroom Walk-Throughs) address both forms of assessment and what type is observed in the classroom creating an on-going discussion format of assessment types and their purposes. The principal meets monthly with initial contract teachers where each domain of the Charlotte Danielson Evaluation tool is discussed, which includes assessment types and purposes. In addition, a January Wednesday Early Out session will be devoted to the Formative/Summative Assessment coverage and discussion.

2) **Provide time to increase staff knowledge of all assessments used by the school or district to measure overall student performance and organizational effectiveness:** Many staff members have attended the National MAP conference in Portland, Oregon over the last several years and brought back information that has been shared with staff on the administration, analysis, and interpretation of data to drive instruction and student learning. Two staff members attended the "MAP: Climbing the Data Ladder & MAP:

"Stepping Stones" professional development in Riverton, Wyoming last month and presented to the staff at a Wednesday Early-Out session, the MAP Dynamic Reporting Suite and how to utilize the reports to differentiate instruction as well as specifically identify skills to target for each student. At the beginning of the year, the district's Curriculum Director presented staff with data from last year's MAP and PAWS assessments and outlined goals in the core curriculum areas. Another meeting was held to present last year's DIBELS and MAP data to complete the triangulation of data. The Director of Special Education also outlined the district's RtI process, summarized the BIT (Building Intervention Team) procedures and described the Tier Interventions that are identified in the Instructional Differentiation Plan.

5.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response: Completed

Comments for Institution: The school has sufficiently addressed the required action of the Quality Assurance Review team. As detailed in the school's response, all teacher formative measures and results are discussed at bi-monthly RtI meetings, and summative assessment results are gathered using end-of-unit tests in Reading Street, Everyday Math units, MAP assessments, DIBELS assessment and the District Writing Assessment. The principal conducts Classroom Walk-Throughs (CWT) to address both forms of assessment and what type is observed in the classroom creating an on-going discussion format of assessment types and their purposes. The principal also meets monthly with initial contract teachers where each domain of the Charlotte Danielson Evaluation tool is discussed, which includes assessment types and purposes. Staff members have attended conferences and workshops regarding both summative and formative assessments. The district has developed a district wide staff development calendar which includes training on the full range of district wide assessments. The school has implemented a range of strategies that attend to the understanding and use of assessments and their results as noted in the QAR team's required action. The school is encouraged to embed and sustain these strategies to ensure continued results.

6.0. Required Action 3

Source: QAR

Date: 2010-11-14

Required Action:

Establish a process for thoroughly and systematically analyzing data, particularly in identifying reasons for lack of student progress. Provide support and assistance as teachers respond to data to meet student needs, both collectively and on an individual basis.

Evidence:

Although much assessment data is collected, evidence of thorough analysis was sporadic. There is little evidence of correlation between the multiple sources of data. There is little evidence that teachers and administrators can identify reasons for student success or lack of success.

Rationale:

Analyzing data from multiple sources allows for triangulation as well as investigation of patterns of success and areas of need. It is imperative that identified areas of need are verified before significant resources are devoted to improvement efforts.

6.1. School Response

Progress Status: Completed

Response: The process for thoroughly and systematically analyzing data at our school has been outlined by the Curriculum Coordinating Committee. This committee controls the process and specifies what interventions can be utilized in each core subject area in the Instructional Differentiation Plan. Student data and progress is tracked and analyzed using all formats previously listed in Required Actions 1-2 and are discussed with grade level team members, intervention specialists and principal at bi-monthly RtI meetings. A quarterly RtI meeting is dedicated to discussing success of interventions, student progress and the need to adjust interventions for any students not making adequate progress and success. As North is now a kindergarten through 1st grade campus, conversation includes collaboration with the Reading Recovery teachers to analyze data on current RR students and decide on dismissal or discontinuing as well as identifying second round student. All exited Reading Recovery students will be continually monitored and placed into additional intervention groups to support progress made during the one-on-one Reading Recovery program.

Based on data gathered from DIBELS, MAP, Reading Street assessments and teacher observation, small intervention groups are created in both the kindergarten and first grade classrooms. Title One personnel provide targeted skill review and practice. As previously stated in Required Action #1, monthly cross-grade meetings are scheduled to provide an opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses in the vertical alignment of the district adopted curriculum.

An in-depth vertical alignment piece has been developed by our District Curriculum Director, which begins in January 2012.

6.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response: Completed

Comments for Institution: AdvancED commends the school and the district for the steps they have taken to establish a process for thoroughly and systematically analyzing data and provide support and assistance to teachers as they respond to data to meet student needs as required by the Quality Assurance Review team. The process for thoroughly and systematically analyzing data at the school is outlined by the Curriculum Coordinating Committee (CCC). The CCC controls the process and specifies what interventions can be utilized in each core subject area in the district wide Instructional Differentiation Plan. As outlined in the school's response, the school has demonstrated its ability to effectively mobilize its efforts to respond to external direction for the benefit of the school and its students.

AdvancED concurs that this required action has been completed and encourages the school to continue its work in this area.

The APR team reviewed the Documenting and Using Results Standard indicators and interviewed the school improvement leadership team. The evidence gathered indicates the school uses a comprehensive assessment system which includes end-of-unit tests in Reading Street, Everyday Math units, MAP assessments, DIBELS assessment and the District Writing Assessment, common local assessments, and perception data from surveys. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts. The team noted evidence to indicate the school is now meeting the standard at the Operational level, in accordance with the standard rubric.

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Converse County School District #1
615 Hamilton
Douglas, Wyoming, United States 82633**

**Dr. Dan C. Espeland, Superintendent
Dr. Steve Epperson, Chair/Lead Evaluator, Quality Assurance Review Team**

Review Dates: 10/09/2011 - 10/12/2011



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 6

 Required Actions 7

 Next Steps 8

Standards for Accreditation 10

 Standard 1: Vision & Purpose 10

 Standard 2: Governance & Leadership 14

 Standard 3: Teaching & Learning 16

 Standard 4: Documenting & Using Results 23

 Standard 5: Resource & Support Systems 27

 Standard 6: Stakeholder Communications & Relationships 30

 Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement 31

Quality Assurance Findings 36

Schools Visited 38

Conclusion 39

Appendix 40

 Quality Assurance Review Team Members 40

 AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems 40

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 Schools (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, school districts, and educational service agencies continuously improve.

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

1) Meet the AdvancED Standards and Policies for Quality School Systems. School districts demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards and policies which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school districts to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.

2) Engage in continuous improvement. School districts and their schools implement a continuous improvement process that articulates the vision and purpose that the school district is pursuing (vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school and district 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. School districts and schools engage in a planned process of ongoing internal review and self-assessment. In addition, school districts host an external quality assurance review team once every five years. The team evaluates the school district's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards, assesses the efficacy of the school district's improvement process and methods for quality assurance, and provides commendations and required actions to help the school district improve. The team provides an oral exit report to the school district and a written report detailing the team's required actions. The school district acts on the team's required actions and submits a progress report two years following the review.

NCA CASI and SACS CASI accreditation engages the entire school district community in a continuous process of self-evaluation and improvement. The overall aim is to help school districts and their schools maximize student success and improve organizational effectiveness

Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review

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

1. Evaluate the school district's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards and policies.
2. Assess the efficacy of the district's improvement process and methods for quality assurance.
3. Identify commendations and required actions to improve the district and its schools.
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 district is operating with institutional integrity - that it is fulfilling its vision and mission for its students.

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

Summary of Team Activities. The Quality Assurance Review Team is led by an AdvancED certified District Lead Evaluator and comprised of professionals from outside the school district. The team reviews the findings of the school district's internal self-assessment, conducts interviews with representative groups of stakeholders, reviews student performance data and other documentation provided by the school district, and observes practices and daily operations. The team engages in professional deliberations to reach consensus on the school district'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 district and its schools 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 district. The report contains commendations and required actions for improvement.

Using the Report - Responding to the Required Actions. The school district uses the report to guide its improvement efforts. The school district is held accountable for addressing the required actions identified in the report. The AdvancED State Office is available to assist the school district in addressing the required actions. Following the Quality Assurance Review Team visit, the school district must submit a progress report detailing the actions and progress it has made on the team's required actions. The report is reviewed at the state and national level to ensure the school district is addressing the required actions.

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

Summary of Findings

A Quality Assurance Review Team representing the NCA CASI Wyoming State Office (NCA-CASI-WY), a division of AdvancED, visited Converse County School District #1 on 10/09/2011 - 10/12/2011.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 11 administrators, 104 teachers, 42 support staff, 70 parents and business partners, 94 students, and 6 Board of Education members for a total of 327 stakeholders. In addition to meeting with district personnel and stakeholders, the team visited 9 schools within the school district. During the school visits, team members interviewed school stakeholders, observed classrooms, and reviewed relevant school artifacts. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by the district. Specifically, the team examined the district's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

1. Vision and Purpose
2. Governance and Leadership
3. Teaching and Learning
4. Documenting and Using Results
5. Resource and Support Systems
6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships
7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The AdvancED standards focus on systems with a school district 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 district, looking not only for adherence to individual standards, but also for how the school district and its schools function as a whole and embody the practices and characteristics of a quality school district.

Through its examination of the school district's adherence to the standards, the Quality Assurance Review Team prepared reports on each standard, highlighting strengths and suggestions for improvement specific to each standard. These reports can be found following this summary.

The Quality Assurance Review Team also examined the effectiveness of the district's methods for quality assurance. The team reviewed the district's practices and methods to monitor and document improvement, provide meaningful feedback and support across the district, ensure that AdvancED standards are met and strengthened, and regularly collect, use, and communicate results. The team's findings in this area can be found following the standard reports.

The team used the standard reports and quality assurance findings to identify common themes, significant accomplishments, and pressing needs facing the district. These became the basis for the overall commendations and required actions that are provided below. The commendations and required actions should serve as the focus for the district as it acts on the team's findings. They represent the areas that the team believes will have the greatest impact in helping the district further its improvement efforts. The standard reports and quality assurance findings can be used to help reinforce and enrich the district's understanding of the commendations and required actions.

Commendations

The Quality Assurance Review Team commends the Converse County School District #1 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.

Commendation 1

Commendation Statement:

The staff, both certified and non-certified, are passionate, caring professionals who are remarkably collegial and dedicated to assisting each student to become successful.

Evidence:

During interviews, all stakeholder groups mentioned the quality of the staff as one of the most important strengths of the district. The QAR team also observed professionalism of the staff during school visits.

Rationale:

A quality staff is essential for districts to meet organizational goals and strive for continuous improvement.

Commendation 2

Commendation Statement:

The district places an emphasis on identifying the individual needs of students and implementing interventions to meet those needs.

Evidence:

During interviews and reviews of artifacts, the QAR team validated the district's focus on using assessment data to identify individual student strengths and deficits. Classroom teachers were also observed using student-centered instructional strategies.

Rationale:

Identifying the specific needs of students and providing interventions to meet those needs are important characteristics of a district committed to continuous improvement.

Commendation 3

Commendation Statement:

The district implements a systematic process for the development and review of a vision that is supported by stakeholders and implemented throughout the district.

Evidence:

Inspection of artifacts revealed a detailed flowchart that described the process used to review the vision. The QAR team also validated that each school has adopted a mission statement that is consistent with the overall district vision.

Rationale:

The development and review of the vision and purpose of a district provides direction for improvement initiatives.

Commendation 4

Commendation Statement:

The district implemented an ongoing process to align the curriculum that leads to clearly defined student learning expectations and encourages dialog between teachers.

Evidence:

The QAR validated the use of Atlas curriculum mapping software by examining curriculum guides and reviewing the use of Atlas with administrators and teachers.

Rationale:

An aligned curriculum is important to avoid gaps and overlaps in instruction.

Commendation 5

Commendation Statement:

The district utilizes available resources to actively recruit quality staff members, provide meaningful professional development, integrate technology, and maintain up-to-date facilities.

Evidence:

The superintendent described the aggressive approach used by the district to recruit the best staff members available. Professional development opportunities, including the use of technology as an instructional tool, are offered to teachers. During school visits, the QAR validated that the district's facilities are in excellent condition.

Rationale:

Sufficient resources are necessary for district's to sustain improvement efforts.

Required Actions

In addition to the commendations, the Quality Assurance Review Team identified the following required actions for improvement. The team focused its required actions on those areas that, if addressed, will have the greatest impact on improving student performance and overall effectiveness of the school district. The Converse County School District #1 will be held accountable for making progress on each of the required actions noted in this section. Following this review, the school district will be asked to submit a progress report on these required actions. The district should refer to the detail provided in the standard reports for guidance and greater depth on the required actions.

Required Action 1

Required Action:

Expand analysis of student performance data, using multiple indicators of achievement, to disaggregate for subgroups and utilize this information to implement targeted intervention strategies.

Evidence:

During interviews, the QAR team confirmed that the district does not currently disaggregate for subgroups such as students from low income families and students from families who have moved into the district and do not speak English at home.

Rationale:

Disaggregation of data by sub-group can yield trends to help identify effective intervention strategies for these students.

Required Action 2

Required Action:

Identify specific data points to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of district programs and initiatives.

Evidence:

During interviews and a review of artifacts, the QAR team confirmed that an abundance of data has been collected. However, the QAR team did not find evidence of a structured process to use data for the measurement of overall district effectiveness.

Rationale:

Targeted data points provide district leaders with specific measures to evaluate the effectiveness of improvement initiatives.

Review of AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools: The team reviewed the district'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 district 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 district.
3. Develop action plans to address the required actions made by the team. Include methods for monitoring progress toward the required actions.
4. Use the report to guide and strengthen the school district's efforts to improve student performance and district effectiveness.
5. Two years following the Quality Assurance Review, submit the Accreditation Progress Report detailing progress made toward addressing the required actions. The report will be reviewed at the state and national level to ensure that significant progress is being made toward the required actions. 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.

Celebrating Accreditation

Following the visit, the Quality Assurance Review Team submits an accreditation recommendation to AdvancED for review and action at the national level by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, which confers accreditation and communicates it to the school district. Upon receiving its accreditation, the school district

should celebrate its achievement with the community. Flags, door decals, diploma seals, and other related items can be ordered from the website to help you share your accomplishment with your community.

Summary

The accreditation process engages the school district, its schools, and community in an ongoing journey of continuous improvement. The next steps in this journey are to build on the commendations and address the required actions noted in this report. Doing so will enable the school district 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 district 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.

The Quality Assurance Review Team divided into standard teams to review each standard and prepare a standards report summarizing the team's findings. These standard reports, along with the quality assurance findings that follow these reports, provided the basis for the team's identification of over-arching commendations and required actions presented earlier in this report. The reports submitted by each team are provided on the following pages for the district's review and use. Each report reflects its respective team's unique voice, perspective, and deliberations. The reports can be used to help enrich and deepen the district's understanding of the overall commendations and required actions.

Standard 1: Vision & Purpose

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

Description:

Converse County School District #1 has a well-developed vision to promote student learning. Through examination of artifacts, the QAR team validated that the district has a clearly written system in place to regularly review district vision and goals. District leaders have created a flowchart that outlines the process in place to review goals, analyze student achievement results, and revise the vision and goals each year.

The district, through the Teacher, Administrator, Board Member and Support Staff (TABs) committee, examines data and develops possible goals to advance the vision. While all stakeholder groups were able to articulate their roles in promoting the district vision and goals, external stakeholder involvement was limited to the school level. Each building administrator presented a draft of the vision and goals, and sought input from staff, students, parents, and community members before reporting back to the school board for approval.

Schools and departments have created mission statements that support the vision of the district to "... ensure a high quality education and inspire all students to become life-long learners by providing a safe, supportive learning environment" by including the key elements, "safe and life-long learners" from the vision. The district vision and school/department missions are communicated through a variety of sources such as handbooks, newsletters, website, and other media. The QAR team reviewed several artifacts including the district profile, accountability report, annual reports to the school board and community, and meeting minutes. Examination of these artifacts provided evidence that the district maintains a detailed profile that includes information about the community, district, and schools.

The district has developed five goals to support student needs: 1) increase student achievement in reading and writing, 2) provide a safe and supportive learning environment, 3) support technology integration, 4) improve curriculum alignment and staff development, and 5) recruit and retain excellent staff. The QAR

team examined the district strategic plan which provides a list of strategies and performance measures to address each goal. Based on the district plan, each school and department has developed an improvement plan that includes a mission, motto, goals, strategies, and performance measures.

During interviews, stakeholders agreed that opportunities available for students throughout their educational career are areas of strength. The district offers a diverse curriculum that provides a variety of opportunities for students to maximize their education. High school students are able to acquire 20 college credits through concurrent classes with Eastern Wyoming College. The district also maintains a robust vocational education program with classes such as auto mechanics and welding. Stakeholders were consistent in expressing their concern over student attendance and the graduation rate; a new attendance policy has been implemented to address this issue.

The TABS committee reviews the district vision and goals bi-annually to insure a high level of continuous improvement and address student needs. It was evident through interviews that all stakeholder groups are invested in the district vision and school/department missions, as well as district and school goals.

Douglas High School – Highly Functional

The staff at Douglas High School has developed a clear mission that advances the district vision: “Our mission is dedicated to preparing all students to become accountable life-long learners.” Through an investigation of artifacts and during interviews, stakeholders were able to articulate the process for adopting their mission and school improvement goals. In addition to the district goals, staff members have dedicated themselves to improving student achievement in mathematics and student behavior. All stakeholder groups stated during interviews that accountability was an important part of their mission.

Douglas Middle School – Highly Functional

Douglas Middle School (DMS) has a mission statement that aligns well with the district vision while maintaining a middle school perspective. The mission statement identifies the special needs of early adolescents becoming lifelong learners. The mission statement seems to capture the ideals of the middle school staff including the importance of life skills and the core curriculum. The mission statement is clearly visible in common areas and classrooms.

The DMS slogan of “Caring to Learn, Learning to Care” exemplifies the concern the staff have for each and every student. The slogan posters are posted in the common areas and classrooms. Additionally posted are the “Ride for the Brand” posters emphasizing the building’s positive behavior supports initiative. At-risk students participate in “Check and Connect” at least weekly for a positive interaction with a caring adult to check on grades, academic progress, concerns from home or school, and to verify attendance.

Douglas Intermediate School – Highly Functional

Douglas Intermediate School has established a mission and purpose in collaboration with the school’s stakeholders and has communicated and sought support for that mission. The school’s approach to this process is commendable. The school’s leadership team described this process which included a series of steps from the central office down to the school level. At the school level, staff members decided that the district vision statement was somewhat complicated for students to understand so they decided to develop a motto that was “kid friendly.” Students, parents, and staff members engaged in activities in the school gymnasium where mission ideas were generated and collaboratively narrowed to the existing motto, which reads, “The more we R.O.A.R., the more we’ll soar.” The letters in ROAR stand for Respect,

Organization, Academics, and Responsibility. During interviews with students, parents, and staff the “ROAR to Soar” motto was referred to and all groups understood and supported the motto and mission. Although specific examples of using the mission to guide decisions about teaching and learning were not shared in any of the interviews, the leadership team felt that the mission captured the essence of the school’s culture and what the school is trying to accomplish. The QAR team observed agendas, newsletters, photos, and ballots related to the development of the school motto.

Douglas Primary School – Highly Functional

Douglas Primary School has created an environment of caring and responsible educators who work collaboratively to support the school’s mission. The mission “to provide each student appropriate learning opportunities in a safe, positive environment to build a foundation for lifelong learning, success and responsibility in an ever changing world.” is reflected by the emphasis teachers place on enriching the whole child. Interviews with stakeholders revealed that the establishment of the school’s mission was a collaborative effort by many stakeholders. The mission is publicized through many venues, including the school website, parent-student handbook, hallways, and classrooms. Administrators, teachers, and students understand the expectations for student learning as demonstrated by their responses in interviews with the QAR team members. However, parent interviews revealed that few parents participated in the building of the school’s mission.

Dry Creek Elementary School – Highly Functional

While the teacher and facilitator were both new to this school site, they were appreciative of the work left by the previous staff related to the development of processes and evidence to include the school in the district improvement process. Building on that work, the current staff is now involved in the rural school combined planning and implementation efforts. The school mission includes components aligned with the district vision. Students proudly shared the school mission and even the kindergarten children were aware of the “4 L’s.” (Listen, Learn, Lend, and Lead) One student said, “It’s kinda like our goal—how we need to behave.” An even younger child agreed and added, “It’s easy to remember!” A sixth-grade student explained the Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) process and the district and school goals. The profile of the school has been shared with the community. Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting announcements were posted at the door and parents reported they had received invitations to the upcoming meeting and were aware that the PAC was their conduit to providing input on the school mission, decisions, and important issues to the rural community. District support has increased the identity of the rural schools as a group by increasing consistencies in curriculum and the services provided.

Moss Agate Elementary School – Highly Functional

Moss Agate stakeholders have established a mission for the school and work collaboratively to insure a high quality learning environment for all. Evidence found in artifacts, interviews, and the school site visit demonstrated collaboration. Students embraced the mission of incorporating “listening, learning, lending, and leading,” and these traits are integrated into the daily school routine. The parents and community are committed to the mission and support individualized education for their students to become life-long learners.

Rural schools have representation in the district on both the development and revision of the district vision to which the rural school mission is aligned. The students, staff, and parents all fully understood the vision of the district. The mission is posted throughout the school, located in the student handbook, in the report to the community, and posted on the website. The annual report to the community demonstrates the alignment of the rural school mission to the district vision. Rural school academic goals are consistent

with those established for other district schools. School stakeholders are excited to be part of the district family and feel included in the larger district processes, initiatives, and programs.

Shawnee Elementary School – Highly Functional

Teachers described how stakeholders were actively involved in creating the school mission statement and motto and how these align with the overall district vision and strategic plan. During interviews, students described, in their words, the mission or the motto: “Listen, Learn, Lend, and Lead.” Staff members noted how the mission statement and motto were developed among the five rural schools’ faculties, students, and parents. Shawnee School’s mission statement and school improvement goals are aligned to the district’s vision statement. Implementation of strategies, including specific academic goals, identified in the school improvement plan and the district improvement plan, were observed being used in classrooms. Even students discussed how their achievement results fit within the school’s overall goal. One student pointed to a chart on the wall and stated: “This one [poster] shows where we were last fall in reading, writing, and math and this one shows where we want all of us to be this spring.”

Shawnee School’s mission is communicated through multiple methods including the PAC meetings, newsletters, and within the school building. One of the rural schools’ teachers described how the shared mission statement is blended with PDSA as lessons are planned on a daily basis. These comments illustrated an alignment from mission and purpose to school improvement planning to day-to-day instruction with students. Additionally, a poster with the PDSA in student friendly language was observed on a classroom wall. This indicates that the process is being extended not only to involve adults but also students. The school’s stakeholders recently revisited its mission statement and there is a defined process in place to revisit it again in the future. It is evident that the students, teachers, support staff, and parents have developed a strong commitment towards improving all students’ academic achievement.

Walker Creek Elementary School – Highly Functional

Walker Creek Elementary School is new to the district for the 2011-2012 school year, serving students in grades K-8. As part of the academic rural community of schools, Walker Creek is committed to a shared purpose and direction to improve student learning through the district’s rural school mission, which is shared among the rural schools to work cooperatively with parents and community and target individualized education that “...empowers students to be respectful and responsible participants in their own life-long learning.”

As a new member of the rural schools community, Walker Creek has clearly defined expectations for student learning. These expectations guide academic instruction and effectiveness, are aligned with the mission with support from the teacher and parents, and have full support at the administrative level. Students model the mission with responsible behaviors and outward enthusiasm toward learning. The school is in the beginning stages of developing a profile to identify the school’s purpose and direction and to improve student academic achievement.

White Elementary School – Highly Functional

The school has developed and implemented a focused and well-articulated mission that clearly aligns with the district vision. The mission is prominently displayed throughout the school and provides a clear focus for the instructional staff and all stakeholders of the school as evidenced through stakeholder interviews and the artifacts provided. A complimentary set of expectations “Listen, Learn, Lend, Lead” is emphasized by the instructional staff and modeled on a consistent basis by students. Additionally, the visiting team was presented documentation of student accountability for these expectations by school staff

and leadership.

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

- The district has established a bi-annual, systematic approach to reviewing and revising the vision and goals.
- Each school has developed a mission and goals specific to student needs that support the district vision.
- The district uses its vision to guide instructional strategies and interventions to improve student achievement and provide a variety of diverse educational opportunities.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and policies to improve student attendance, achievement, and graduation rate to advance the district vision.
- Integrate all stakeholder groups in drafting and revising the district vision.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional," indicating that the Converse County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Vision & Purpose" standard.

Standard 2: Governance & Leadership

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

Description:

The school board consists of nine at-large elected members who serve four year terms. The board is responsible for hiring a superintendent as the administrative head of the district. The board develops policies and processes to operate the district; a formal process is used to review, revise, and adopt policies. The policy includes several opportunities for stakeholder input with three formal readings at board meetings. During board retreats, district and building administrators provide board members with information including district and school data. The board then sets goals for the district. Individual school building committees align their mission and goals to those of the district.

During interviews, the board expressed a belief that the board and superintendent are partners in operating the district. A clear and well-defined organizational chart shows the implementation of chain of command with the district superintendent clearly in a position of authority. Support staff members confirmed the organizational chain of command by stating "We go to the superintendent if we need something. Then he'll take it to the school board."

Artifacts and interviews verified that the district complies with all applicable laws, standards, and regulations. This is validated by the district's assurances - both state and federal.

The district has developed a new board member handbook as a reference tool for the new board members. New board members attend a training sponsored by the Wyoming School Boards Association. The superintendent mentors new board members and provides assistance in learning their new role.

Survey data indicate a broad level of public support. Board members and administrators serve on multiple committees. Those serving on committees report to the full board regarding needs and further direction.

These reports and data derived from student assessment drive the board's budget-setting process. The district recently purchased an additional building to meet needs within the district. The purchase saved money in comparison to adding on to the existing high school. Board minutes and financial reports show fiscal responsibility and sufficient resources. Every stakeholder group interviewed indicated a high level of satisfaction with district financial spending and resources available to meet student needs.

Board minutes refer to legal counsel retained by the district; references to legal counsel are also included in the district Self Assessment Report (SAR). The district superintendent also referred to legal counsel during the interview process. The district complies with requirements for insurance to protect its financial stability and administrative resources.

Student performance data are shared with stakeholders at PAC meetings, school board meetings, and board retreats. The data appear to be primarily confined to the first year implementation of the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) data. Due to the recent implementation of MAP testing, the district does not have longitudinal MAP data available for trend analysis. The district analyzes Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming Students (PAWS) assessment data on a limited basis. When asked why the district did not utilize PAWS data more, the director of curriculum indicated that the data are received too late for school improvement planning purposes or for informing classroom instruction.

Stakeholder interview responses indicated a sense of belonging and engagement with the school district. District and building committees were comprised of various stakeholders. Committees report to the district administration and at board meetings. The TABS committee addresses district level issues. Building level issues are addressed by building committees and the PACs.

The rural school leadership has unified the five schools into a collaborative community with engaging opportunities for the rural school students. Examples include rural days, student government, field trips, swimming, media center, and health resources and other activities available to students in town.

The district has allocated funds to meet the needs of students based on performance targets and student performance data. Through grant funding, an alternative core reading program was purchased to bolster the reading scores of special education students on the PAWS test. The district has also committed funds to the Atlas curriculum mapping and pacing program. The purchase of Inform to house all student data in one location has also met a district goal. The staff has received in-service training in Atlas and Inform to better utilize the programs.

The district has many different roles for internal stakeholders. The TABS committee is one example of internal stakeholders having ownership of decisions. The curriculum adoption committee and others also allow different stakeholders to take part in the decision-making process. Each building has a PAC in place to review issues at the school level. A parent participates on the interview team when hiring new staff. Through interviews, the QAR team learned that external stakeholders tend to be included in the decision-making process after much of the preliminary discussion has occurred.

The district conducts periodic climate surveys with parents and internal stakeholders. Satisfaction levels are high and comments typically contain positive feedback about the schools. During student and parent interviews, stakeholders indicated they were informed, able to discuss any issues with the superintendent, principal or other personnel, and that the district was handling financial and academic matters in a capable fashion.

The district has implemented the McREL teacher evaluation system. Individual professional development plans will be developed after the compilation of evidence during the McREL review process.

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

- The district has implemented a clearly defined chain of command with the district superintendent in a position of authority.
- The board and administration utilize a formal process to review, revise and adopt policies.
- The district has demonstrated fiscal responsibility and acts as steward of the district's resources.
- The rural schools have been unified into a collaborative system to enhance student learning opportunities.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Develop and implement a systematic process for analyzing longitudinal MAP and PAWS data for continuous improvement planning.
- Include external stakeholders in all stages of the decision-making process.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Converse County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Governance & Leadership" standard.

Standard 3: Teaching & Learning

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

Description:

The district has implemented a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations and demonstrates evidence of alignment between the curriculum and instructional practices. The director of curriculum indicated that the district recently implemented an electronic curriculum mapping program called Atlas. Using the Atlas program, teams of teachers representing all grade levels have articulated and coordinated a clearly defined core curriculum and developed pacing guides in the nine content areas. Principals and teachers indicated that prior to the use of Atlas, schools used different programs and congruence across the district was lacking. The director of curriculum explained, and the QAR team observed, the curriculum maps and pacing guides generated by the Atlas program. The curriculum maps show suggested quarterly allotments for instructional time in each content area as well as technology integration. The director of curriculum stated, "The teachers have the framework and the expectations. They have the latitude to add more to the units, but they need to meet the expectations." The director of curriculum also stated that teachers have said they now know the curricular expectations before and after their assigned grade level. Interviews with principals and teachers confirmed that teachers are now well aware of vertical alignment. A parent was aware of the Atlas program and the help that it has been for teachers. The director of curriculum also noted that principals are able to monitor curriculum and assessment implementation through the Atlas program. The degree to which this process is systemic and sustainable is difficult to ascertain due to the fact that Atlas has only been used for two years.

The district provides supports for student engagement in the curriculum. Central office leaders, principals,

and teachers described the Response to Intervention (RtI) process as an effective means of meeting student needs for mastery of the adopted curriculum. The QAR team reviewed the Douglas Advanced Learning Plan (DALP) program overview, which described opportunities for gifted students to explore application of higher order thinking skills. Two parents commented that the gifted program lacked consistency between schools and does not engage their students at an acceptable level. The team also reviewed a number of documents describing interventions and remediation programs such as Reading Rocks, Check and Connect, K-6 home reading, and Extra Innings. The director of curriculum and teachers explained that results of the PAWS are used to design the initial round of interventions in the fall. In addition, the team noted several documents that encouraged parent and student engagement with the curriculum outside of school hours. The principals described a Jump Start program for needy incoming kindergarten students that provides these students with opportunities to engage in the curriculum before school starts. Students and parents were able to describe a variety of extracurricular and academic support programs sponsored at the schools to help engage students in the curriculum. However, the extent to which remediation and interventions engage students in higher order thinking was unclear.

The superintendent described opportunities for students to apply their learning to real-life situations. These included field trips, community-based work experience for some high school students, and the use of technology. On the other hand, a focused system for authentic application of learning was not articulated in any of the interviews. In the stakeholder interview, one parent mentioned that the school provides good options for high school graduates such as the Hathaway Program and Wyoming Technical School. A significant strength of the district is the high school's concurrent enrollment and vocational education programs which offer quality job-based skills and college preparation opportunities.

The district uses common assessments at each grade level to ensure alignment among and between all grade levels to monitor student performance. These assessments are embedded within the curriculum alignment framework and provide opportunities for reviewing the success of the curriculum across grade levels. Teachers described the process of aligning the common assessments to the units in the Atlas software. The director of curriculum stated that common assessments at the secondary level are evaluated in terms of cognitive demand and have been reviewed for reliability and validity as part of the Body of Evidence process used in the state of Wyoming.

The superintendent and director of curriculum stated that the district uses research-based instructional strategies based on the work of Robert Marzano. However, few teachers were aware of and could articulate the research-based strategies being emphasized by the district. The principals and teachers described their use of PD 360, a professional development software package that provides teachers with online, research-based instructional strategies. Two research-based programs, Wilson Reading and Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS), were also mentioned as strategies being used to differentiate instruction.

The superintendent indicated that when it comes to targeting instruction, the district has more of an individual student focus rather than designing plans for subgroups due to the small size of these subgroups. Data indicated that the district has not met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the subgroup of students with Individual Education Programs (IEP) and it was not clear, nor was there evidence to support, how the general curriculum and instructional practices are being adjusted to ensure equity for students in this subgroup as well as other subgroups such as students from low socioeconomic, minority, or highly mobile households. Board members indicated that they hire staff to assist with the minority populations. The special education director described the two programs that have been implemented to address the AYP concerns for the special education population. The success of the interventions, however, could not be demonstrated because the programs have not been implemented long enough to provide trend data.

The director of curriculum reviewed the district technology and media plan and described the process for assessing technology and media standards in three different grade levels. The director also described how the technology plan was embedded within the curriculum alignment conducted through Atlas. One parent stated that, although there are districts in Wyoming with more money, this district does have adequate technology. Another parent stated that she can tell how technology education naturally increases at each grade level and that technology is embedded in the curriculum. QAR team members reviewed the technology plan, a sample job description for media services, the media center budget, and a lesson outline for media services.

When asked about a curriculum review cycle, the director of curriculum indicated that a review was conducted a year ago. The review that involved Atlas covered all content areas and district staff members view this process as a comprehensive review of all content areas. Thus, the district has decided to begin afresh with curriculum review next year. This review will be needs-based through a process of analyzing student achievement data and determining which curricular area may need adjustment. No formal document describing this process has been created at this point in time.

During board member interviews, it was evident that they were familiar with the district's curriculum and each board member serves on a curriculum committee. In addition, each board member is assigned to one of the schools in the district and they serve as the board expert for that particular school. Several parents indicated that they knew who the board member was that was assigned to their school. The board described their roles on the curriculum committees and indicated that the district fosters a favorable climate that supports student learning. Principals described in detail their concern for students when making transitions from one school to another and provided descriptions of their transition plans. Some students verified having participated in these transition activities. Parents, board members, and stakeholders also stated that one of the strengths of the district is the school employees and the positive, supportive culture that they promote.

Douglas High School – Operational

Staff members at Douglas High School (DHS) have effectively aligned the curriculum, both vertically and horizontally, through academic department meetings and collaboration with other grade levels. The Atlas curriculum mapping program is a great tool for new teachers to the district as well as teachers new to a particular subject area. Staff members also recognize the importance of Atlas in encouraging development of cross-curricular units. Staff members have also used the Atlas program to align district curriculum to state standards. DHS offers 20 concurrent enrollment classes associated with Eastern Wyoming College, providing students opportunities to enter college as a sophomore; during interviews, students expressed appreciation for the concurrent class opportunity. Vocational programs have been protected and students are able to continue acquiring skills in agriculture, welding, auto mechanics, and drafting. Students are provided interventions for thirty minutes Monday through Thursday and 1.5 hours on Fridays based on MAP and PAWS test scores. Individual growth plans are created through teacher/student conferencing and progress is monitored through the Inform computerized tracking program. Students articulated the value of the intervention time and recognized the importance of improving their academic skills.

Douglas Middle School - Operational

The teaching staff indicated through interviews that they use the Atlas program recently purchased by the district to align and map the curriculum. Teachers are utilizing the lesson planning section of the program to keep all information in one central location. Professional development related to the use the program has been provided by the district. Staff members have also participated in professional development for using writing rubrics and scoring constructed-response items. Teachers in all content areas assign a written

constructed-response assignment monthly and score it using the same rubric.

During team meetings, staff members review data and determine student needs. Evidence confirmed that staff members are developing common assessments during collaborative meeting time. Although Professional Learning Communities (PLC) are a new initiative, the building team meeting agendas indicate that the PLC time is being used effectively. Middle school support staff members and teachers confirmed in interviews that the school protects instructional time. A staff member stated, “We honor that every class needs to meet every day.”

The building administration has developed a template for classroom walkthroughs which correlates with the McREL evaluation tool. Data gathered from these walkthroughs will be used during the evaluation evidence gathering process.

Through observations, interviews, and artifacts, QAR team members confirmed that the building has implemented the Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) system. Students are engaged in the incentive programs and exhibit proficiency in the two building goals: common hallway behaviors and common classroom behaviors.

Douglas Intermediate School – Operational

Douglas Intermediate School has developed, articulated, and coordinated the curriculum as part of the district’s process using the Atlas software. Teachers new to the school this year stated that this articulation has been a valuable resource as they have transitioned into the school. Other teachers and staff members indicated that the curriculum alignment has put everyone “on the same page” and empowered teachers to begin grade level dialogs regarding curricular expectations. The school provides numerous opportunities for students to engage in the curriculum outside of school hours. Students described these activities, which include Signing Heroes, Sunny Singers, Computer Club, Afterschool Art, Yearbook Club, Extra Inning, and Fast Math. The QAR team verified that there is an extended curriculum for the identified gifted and talented group of students; however, some parents indicated a need to design and implement a more rigorous and challenging curriculum that stimulates and promotes problem-solving and higher order thinking skills.

The school supports research-based instruction and has begun providing teachers with professional development in this area. Although all teachers are not fully aware of and implementing research-based strategies in a formal school-based approach, the QAR team observed some teachers using techniques such as music, visual stimuli, small groups, academic games, active engagement, technology, and hands-on experiences. A focused emphasis on implementing the research-based strategies adopted by the district in conjunction with the use of instructional coaching might allow the school to make significant advances in student achievement.

Douglas Primary School - Operational

The school implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Classroom observations by the QAR team found that teachers were generally following the established curriculum and using approved curricular materials. Implementation of the RtI process has focused the school’s efforts to ensure that all students are mastering the curriculum. The QAR team observed interventions that were generally aligned with the regular classroom curriculum. While goals, with related school improvement interventions, have been established, the implementation is not yet systemic across the school. The QAR team observed some of the group instruction for non-intervention students and noted that

objectives for the groups sometimes appeared unclear. Interviews with staff members also indicated that effective interventions for mathematics and writing are still being explored.

Staff members and parents reported that the school has a curriculum that meets students' needs. The QAR team observed a great focus on more time for mastery of the curriculum, teacher collaboration, and remediation. Teachers and administrators described curriculum pacing guides in Atlas as driving instruction. Generally speaking, the school demonstrates evidence of alignment between the curriculum and instructional practices with systematic implementation across the school. During classroom visits the team noted that individualization of student work during RtI was limited.

All classrooms have SmartBoard technology and the team observed teachers using the boards in a variety of ways. Active engagement of learners in rigorous thinking and processing was limited to participation in teacher-lead whole group activities and the use of lessons on the SmartBoard. Proven instructional strategies for student engagement were observed in some classrooms. These strategies included the use of higher level questioning and soliciting answers from partners. Parent interviews revealed concerns with the lack of acceleration for students. Parents also commented that all teachers should have up-to-date websites.

The school focuses time and talent on instruction. The teaching staff is highly professional with three National Board Certified Teachers, several teachers with doctorates, and many teachers with masters degrees. The school also uses highly qualified paraprofessionals to assist in instructional delivery during RtI and to enhance student engagement. The school intentionally protects instructional time. Teachers reported that the administration "will not make an announcement during instructional time unless it is an emergency."

Dry Creek Elementary School – Operational

Students enter a colorful and well-organized building at Dry Creek School. Because all K-6 students are in one room this year, additional space is available for library and activities. Student work is in evidence - because a refrigerator is in the entryway, it has become a creative display space where best work has "Made the Fridge!" Students proudly led a tour of each area of their classroom and explained why they do these activities and what they are learning. They described the work as "not too hard and not too easy." Every student has a computer and uses them for learning keyboarding skills, research, and to access learning programs. Even the youngest students knew the procedures to reboot the computer if satellite service was lost. The district goal of technology integration was apparent with students using supportive programs when not working directly with the teacher. The facilitator for technology was in residence working with individual students. The teacher approved the development of the curriculum on the Atlas system which she found very helpful in planning for multiple grades as a teacher new to the rural environment. She indicated that she has ample resources to use with the students and is taking time to prioritize the resources with the strongest research base and tightest connection to student needs. Specialists have helped to determine interventions to use during the acceleration block. The teacher provides individualized direct instruction with some students while others work on computerized programs. Parents were amazed at their students' technology skills and were very pleased with the addition of expertise in physical education, art, and music. The fact that rural students can now have advanced instrumental skills when they "go to town schools" was commended. The district is increasing the consistency of services and curriculum across all of the schools in the district.

Moss Agate Elementary School - Operational

Rural school students are afforded the same curriculum as other students in the district. Rural school teachers have access to Atlas and all district adopted curriculum resources and materials. In addition,

students are provided an abundant amount of technology resources such as SmartBoards, Kindles, iPads, and classroom computers. Media materials, including library resources, are utilized on a regular basis and accessed from other district resources as needed. Twice per week, students receive instruction in art, drama, health, physical education, and music from highly qualified staff. Students participate in rural days at the town recreation center which provides opportunities for swimming, fitness, and units of study revolving around science and social studies curriculum. Students indicated that they would like additional science opportunities because this would especially benefit upper level students in preparing for high school. The individualized curriculum affords both enrichment and remediation to students allowing them to work at their own level. Moss Agate Elementary School uses the RtI model to ensure that all students are achieving at their own level in reading, writing, and mathematics. Staff members use data from MAP and PAWS to drive instructional decisions and collaborate with RtI staff to refine instruction. The QAR team encourages the continued incorporation of opportunities for students to experience project-based learning and engaging activities, as well as continued development of research-based best practice strategies. Instructional resources are used that support a curriculum that is challenging, addresses diversity, and meets the needs of all students. Guarding instructional time helps to support student learning and ensures academic and career readiness.

Shawnee Elementary School - Operational

Shawnee Elementary School and the other four rural schools work together to provide a quality and defined curriculum for their students as illustrated by their shared curriculum maps. The incorporation of curriculum mapping software helps teachers and the principal address the challenges of distance and time between different schools. During interviews, teachers indicated that the curriculum maps, combined with easy online access, enable all certified staff members to see what is occurring at multiple grade levels across the district.

Staff members and students demonstrate a commitment to and an understanding of the achievement expectations as a whole school. Several posters were observed that show how students performed the previous year and the target goal for the 2011-2012 school year. Each student has a data notebook with multiple assessment results including formative test results. The students, on multiple occasions during the visit, stated what their individual data and group data indicates what they are doing to improve their learning.

Instructional strategies and resources that are components of the district's strategic plan, such as direct and explicit instruction, were observed being utilized with students. The school is very similar to the "one-room" school house in which there is a small number of students at different grade levels. An observed strength is that the teachers and the paraprofessional utilize advance planning, instructional routines, and centers to help ensure that each student receives instruction for their grade level curriculum including individualized interventions and attention. The five parents interviewed stated that they perceive that their students receive high quality instruction that is individualized to meet their children's needs in a safe environment.

Individualization to meet student needs is a school strength area and a strength area of the rural schools as they work together. They have a defined an RtI process to identify student needs, make instructional and program decisions, and to monitor student progress in goal areas. The schools have multiple interventions to utilize with students including the use of technology. The school also has deliberate structures, such as Rural Days, to assist students in future transitions. Rural Days involve bringing the rural school students to Douglas High School and the recreation center where the students engage in a range of different activities. The purpose is to provide equitable access for the rural school students, build a sense of community between the schools, and to assist in the future transition to middle school or high school in Douglas.

The school's staff described how they utilize research, contacting other schools and districts, and review of student need in the selection of instructional resources and professional development. Student data are abundant and actively analyzed at the school level with the intent to improve student achievement; however these structures and some assessments have only been used for one to two years. While there are positive indicators that the curricular resources including specific intervention programs and the instructional strategies are helping students, trend data was not presented.

Walker Creek Elementary School - Operational

Walker Creek Elementary School articulates clear expectations for student learning; these expectations are aligned with the district vision. The school utilizes Atlas, a program the district selected to horizontally and vertically align the curriculum for all the schools. The teacher demonstrates a commitment to the district curriculum and individualizes student learning activities to implement this curriculum. Each student receives a minimum of 30 minutes of individualized instruction in reading and 30 minutes in mathematics from the teacher every day. Reading Street is the basis of the reading program and Harcourt School Publishers (HSP) Math is the foundation of the mathematics program. Instructional practices observed by the QAR team support student-focused engagement. Technology is used as a tool for delivering some individualized instruction. Opportunities for learning beyond the core subjects are available one or two times a week from itinerant teachers (music, physical education, art) and on Rural Days (ten Fridays per year). During Rural Days, the teacher participates in professional learning community activities which include training on district initiatives.

White Elementary School - Operational

The staff reported the implementation of a systemic process of PLCs is highly beneficial for focusing on an overall program of continuous school improvement. Based on interviews with the instructional staff and the administrator, the team identified the absence of a clear focus on the assessment of learning as a critical element in the initial development of the PLC model.

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

- The district has aligned curriculum and embedded assessments using a comprehensive, collaborative process.
- The district's use of curriculum alignment software has energized teachers to evaluate and share instructional resources with one another.
- Technology has been embedded within the instructional program and includes specific technology assessments in three grade levels.
- The district staff, both certified and non-certified, are dedicated professionals who have created a positive learning climate for students.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Construct remediation and intervention strategies that intentionally incorporate higher order thinking skills and allow students to explore new approaches to applying their learning.
- Design a system across grade levels that promotes and documents opportunities for students to purposefully apply their learning to real-life situations.
- Formalize a strategy for the review of the district curriculum in the context of the Atlas curriculum alignment process.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall

assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Converse County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Teaching & Learning" standard.

Standard 4: Documenting & Using Results

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

Description:

The district has implemented a comprehensive assessment system to monitor student performance. The evidence, as documented by interviews, artifacts, and site visits to the district and schools validated that the district has established procedures to authenticate progress on district academic goals and to monitor student learning. An assessment schedule for testing is provided to all schools and to the wider community via the district website. The QAR team found evidence that the district maintains a secure, accurate and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations.

Two years ago, the district adopted the NWEA MAP assessment system to inform decisions at both the district and school level. The test is reliable, valid and bias free. Professional development is provided to all teachers to foster an understanding of using MAP; however, the QAR team documented in interviews that training was not in-depth. Concurrently, other measurements are available to assess student progress in academic areas. These assessments include district common assessments, AIMSweb, writing assessments, and PAWS. Also, behavior can be tracked using the School Wide Information System (SWIS). Student progress in math, reading, writing and daily school work can be recorded and tracked using PowerSchool. Information placed in PowerSchool can be accessed on the internet by teachers and parents and provides a constant feedback cycle for homework, projects, grades, and assessments.

The QAR team found ample evidence that student assessment data are used to make decisions for instructional delivery and curriculum development. Interviews and a review of artifacts validated that all schools meet on a regular basis to discuss student progress. A PLC or similar format is in the process of being implemented throughout the district to review data and make decisions concerning appropriate interventions for students.

The district is in the second year of using the MAP assessment system. Therefore, trend data is limited, but over time trend data will be available for grade levels as well as to monitor student growth and progress toward meeting improvement goals. Evidence of MAP data was present at all schools and interviews documented the use of the data in making instructional decisions. The QAR team found the data analysis of MAP was limited to charts and graphs with no written analysis provided. Similarly, PAWS data was found, but no written analysis of the correlations or findings was evident.

Using data to make decisions has become a part of the district's culture. The leadership is in the process of implementing a systematic process to analyze organizational and instructional effectiveness. In regard to organizational effectiveness, the district collects data in a variety of forms. The QAR team did not find evidence of a clear set of identified data points that could be used to assess success in meeting some district goals.

Instruction is systematically analyzed weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly at all school levels. The team found assessment calendars and assessment notebooks with data from MAP and the PAWS. Assessment

notebooks have a wealth of information, but little or no written analysis is evident. Teachers review assessment data provided by MAP three times a year, as well as meeting in grade levels to determine interventions or enrichments. They progress monitor every two weeks and then determine next steps for students. While PAWS assessment information is available, it is not analyzed consistently throughout the district. The QAR team did not find evidence that assessment data is disaggregated to identify strengths and weaknesses of the various subgroups within the district. A booklet of assessment data provided evidence that the district collects comparison data from other schools with similar demographics. It was not evident how the district uses this information.

During interviews, the QAR team confirmed the use of data in support service areas in addition to instructional areas. The maintenance and transportation directors explained the process they use to monitor work orders and track preventative maintenance. The nutrition director also uses data to monitor the effectiveness of the student lunch program. The data collected assists these departments in setting new goals and developing work plans. Interviews with administrators and teachers confirmed that work orders are filled quickly and efficiently and that equipment is generally available and ready to use.

Stakeholders are provided student performance information via the district's website, e-mails, the state report card, the school district report card, school report cards, student report cards, press releases, and parents have access to web-based portals unique to individual classrooms. During interviews, parents were complimentary of the open door policy of the schools, allowing them easy access to teachers, principals, board members, and other staff to discuss concerns or issues.

Douglas High School – Operational

Through examination of artifacts and the interview process, the QAR team determined that Douglas High School (DHS) is clearly a data driven school. Staff members, using Inform, can access individual student achievement results from the PAWS, MAP, and Body of Evidence projects. Based on performance data, students conference with teachers and create individual growth plans to address remediation needs and enrichment opportunities. Students were able to explain how assessment data was used to develop their personal enrichment or remediation plans in reading, writing, and math. Data indicated that a new attendance policy implemented at DHS has already begun to impact attendance and behavior. During interviews, stakeholders expressed expectations that the new attendance policy will have a positive impact on academic achievement. Teachers stated the policy has already affected academic performance in the classroom.

Douglas Middle School – Operational

Interviews with school personnel and a review of artifacts validated that Douglas Middle School (DMS) has established and implemented a comprehensive assessment system which is aligned with school and district expectations for student learning. The assessments include MAP and PAWS which are analyzed and used to develop strategic instructional goals and the continuous improvement plan. Evidence confirmed that accurate student assessment records are kept in a confidential and secure manner. The school uses the Atlas curriculum mapping program to align the curriculum with assessments.

Artifacts and interviews with stakeholders indicated that the DMS staff communicates the results of their assessments to parents and community stakeholders in a variety of methods including parent meetings, e-mail, individual mailings, newsletters, and the DMS website. The school is using the MAP program only for the second year; however, school personnel are in the process of developing trend data to analyze the effectiveness of this program to assess student learning.

Douglas Intermediate School – Operational

Douglas Intermediate School has aligned the curriculum using the Atlas software and identified common assessments to be used to monitor student achievement. Teachers reported that the school uses data from these common assessments, PAWS, and MAP as agenda items for their monthly data meetings during which they make instructional decisions and identify interventions for individual students. The instructional facilitator maintains a “data wall” for each grade level and the wall is part of the school’s process for looking at trends and evaluating the school’s effectiveness. The QAR team noted a lack of focus on results of the PAWS test to impact instructional decisions. A concerted effort to utilize these reports and address subgroup performance, particularly the special education subgroup that impacts AYP, should provide valuable leverage in making instructional decisions.

Douglas Primary School – Operational

Douglas Primary School utilizes data results from nationally recognized, scientifically researched assessments, along with state and program assessments for mathematics and reading. This comprehensive assessment system includes AIMSweb, MAP, and PAWS. The Inform program is used as a data warehouse. Teachers reported using anecdotal evidence from classroom observations and informal student assessments to assist in making decisions about student placement. The school’s PLC uses the data along with teacher input and performance indicators to triangulate and determine student needs.

Students are placed in reading intervention programs according to their need and progress-monitored to check for improvement. This data-gathering process is performed three times each year for each student and the results are shared with parents at parent-teacher conferences. The school PLC bi-weekly reviews the assessment data and evaluates the effectiveness of improvement initiatives. Student placement is continually adjusted to meet individual needs.

Dry Creek Elementary School - Operational

The rural school staff has been diligent in documenting and analyzing individual student results from testing and other forms of assessment. The school district uses MAP, AIMSweb, PAWS, and a writing assessment to measure student performance. Disaggregated data for subgroups was not available. Students at Dry Creek could explain the processes of participating in assessments. They are each keeping a folder with their initial scores, charting progress, and developing personal academic goals. The process they described is consistently used throughout the district. The RtI system includes screening, progress monitoring, and input from the district specialists to assist the teacher in selecting and implementing appropriate remediation, practice, or acceleration for each student. Parents were aware of the rural school annual report and had received mailings of state assessment results. Parents were adamant that the informal, personal communication directly with the teacher and principal was most valuable, especially in regard to student progress.

Moss Agate Elementary School - Operational

Moss Agate Elementary School follows the district and state assessment guidelines. Students are assessed in reading and math using MAP three times per year. This data is tracked by students and used by staff to make instructional decisions. All students have an awareness of their individual skill levels and reflect academic growth goals. All rural students participate in the PAWS assessment each spring. Data from PAWS, district common summative and formative assessments, and MAP is used to set both individual student and school-wide achievement goals. Providing students frequent opportunities to apply knowledge and skills with specific feedback from teachers helps to foster a link between the curriculum and high

expectations for learning. Most parents meet with the teachers and staff to discuss behavioral and academic issues on a daily basis. The faculty and parents have a strong working relationship that allows for a continual flow of dialog regarding student performance and school effectiveness. Records are maintained according to district, state and federal regulations and are shared with parents and stakeholders on a regular basis.

Shawnee Elementary School - Operational

Shawnee Elementary School assesses student progress using both formative and summative assessment data. They have a defined purpose for the assessments they administer to students whether it is for the purpose of screening, additional diagnostic information, progress monitoring, or evaluation. Key assessment data presently used includes MAP, PAWS, AIMSweb, program specific benchmark assessments, and common assessments. Additional data such as student attendance, perception surveys, and teacher observation data is also used. The principal and teachers have ready and secure access to snapshots of students' data using Inform, a data warehouse system. The school uses data comprehensively and it is also reported to the district administration, school board, and community through multiple means including the district website, parent newsletters, and parent meetings. Parents noted that they were well informed about their student's academic and social-emotional progress through easy access to teachers, home communications, and parent teacher conferences. This was a strength noted by parents for the school.

An observed strength is how teachers and students utilize their assessment data to develop goals and strategies to improve their learning. Each student has a data notebook that is used by the student and the teachers. The students are involved in actively tracking their progress as individuals and also as a school to meet target outcomes. Students shared how they are a community of learners and are responsible for their learning and the learning of other students. This creates a strong sense of community including a culture of leadership and responsibility in relation to the schools' mission statement. Multiple interviews with different stakeholders, observations, and documents supported the alignment between purpose, learning, and the use of data. Teachers and the principal use student data to monitor and adjust student learning programs in response to their needs based upon interviews and documents. They collaborate with each other on a regular basis to use the available information to improve each student's learning in relation to school and district goals.

The school is implementing several changes in processes, assessments, curriculum, and instructional resources. The principal, teachers, instructional facilitator, special education teacher, and reading specialist gather and use assessment data at the individual student level effectively to make changes in programs and interventions. An opportunity exists to analyze multiple assessment results over time to evaluate, monitor, and adjust curriculum, programs and instructional strategies to help achieve school and district improvement goals. The school is working with the other rural schools to compare results, especially in the area of writing, with each other and to the schools in Douglas to improve results.

Walker Creek Elementary School - Operational

Walker Creek Elementary School follows district procedures for assessment and data collection in order to plan for student instruction. MAP is administered three times a year to identify students needing interventions. The teacher, with assistance from the instructional facilitator and the special education facilitator, selects a program for focused intervention. Students identified as requiring assistance are progress monitored every two weeks using AIMSweb. Other students are monitored monthly. With the MAP results in hand, the teacher has created a folder for each student which includes his/her learning goals and a plan for continuous learning.

The calendar for Walker Creek is a variation of the district calendar. Because of the rural location of the school, the school operates on an extended day schedule and generally a four-day week. This format is the result of the district administration examining the school's location and the distance parents must drive to deliver their children to school each day. Parent stakeholders expressed their appreciation that the district took their situation under consideration in designing the calendar.

White Elementary School – Operational

White Elementary School utilizes a multiple-tiered assessment system that involves the analysis of critical areas of the school's overall progress and individual student performance relative to research-based standards of school operation and performance. School leadership effectively engages with staff to develop an on-going process to track student academic performance data and design and implement targeted interventions and enrichment plans based upon the analysis of these data. The data tracked includes both summative assessment results from the state testing program, as well as appropriately aligned formative benchmark assessments.

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

- The district collects and disseminates large amounts of informational data to all schools.
- Data are used to make decisions at both the school and district levels.
- The district has implemented a variety of methods to communicate student performance to all stakeholders.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Provide in-depth written analysis of PAWS and MAP data, related to trends, subtest scores, and subgroup configurations to allow for greater use and understanding by administrators and teachers.
- Identify specific areas for data collection and analysis to measure overall organizational effectiveness.
- Study the correlations between MAP and PAWS data to determine appropriate levels of MAP growth required for a proficient performance on PAWS.
- Provide in-depth training specific to data analysis for all district administrators and teachers.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Converse County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Documenting & Using Results" standard.

Standard 5: Resource & Support Systems

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

Description:

The district has established a goal to hire quality staff and implements a process to recruit, employ, retain, and mentor qualified professional and support staff to fulfill assigned roles and responsibilities. Several examples, including flyers, pamphlets, and advertisements, were provided by the superintendent, principals, and central office staff to validate that the hiring and retention of highly qualified staff is a

priority of the district. All teaching staff members have achieved highly qualified status, which is evidence of a process ensuring teachers are placed appropriately and within state certification guidelines. Currently, the district boasts an 11:1 student to teacher ratio which confirms that there is a sufficient number of staff members to meet the vision and purpose of the school system and to meet federal and state laws and regulations.

Once hired, teachers and support staff members are given several opportunities for professional development based on the district professional development plan. Staff development is more completely prescribed for teachers and paraprofessionals to meet the needs of special needs and at-risk students as indicated by district-wide training related to programs such as Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS), a reading intervention, and Wilson Reading, a parallel core reading program. The district recognizes that around 70% of special needs students are served in traditional classrooms, creating the need for increased professional development for regular education teachers to differentiate instruction. Due to the fact that the district has not made AYP in the area of special education for the past several years, special education and regular education teachers have begun to look at research-based programs to address additional ways to improve the performance of special needs students. The new teacher evaluation system includes components to support teacher learning because all staff members develop personal professional growth plans aligned with documented needs. Instructional facilitators provide professional development by assisting teachers with assessments, data analysis, classroom strategies, modeling, and by monitoring implementations. The district had an opportunity to provide facilitators with a staff development tool, PD360, at no cost, which has the potential to provide examples of new instructional strategies for teachers. Transportation, maintenance, and food service staff also have a planned training regimen. The district offers stipends for teachers to encourage participation in summer trainings. Outstanding or high-demand teachers are given a stipend of \$2,000 to continue teaching in the district. Conversely, teachers are encouraged, with a 1.5% stipend, to let the district know early if they plan to leave the district; this is done to ensure the district has ample time to recruit new teachers to the district.

The district has multiple student supports. Programming for English Language Learners (ELL) has been developed. The board and community are aware of changing community demographics and the need to adapt to the increasing diversity resulting from such changes. The district assessment system indicates that student performance seems to decline during the transition years from one building to another. For this reason, the district has implemented strategies to address this concern (i.e., kindergarten jumpstart program, transition meetings, student socials, classroom visitations to the next grade, freshman mentors, special education specific transitions, academic coaches for students who are at-risk). The K-12 vertical curriculum alignment initiative and instructional interventions across buildings were also implemented to support student transitions. Extended learning time is provided through after-school programs, summer school, and credit recovery. Dual credit offerings have also increased. A new attendance policy is currently being piloted at the high school aimed at increasing both attendance and the graduation rate. The board supports dual credit courses by encouraging secondary teachers to obtain the necessary master's degree to be eligible to teach college coursework at the school.

Use of tiered systems to support student learning such as RtI and PBIS have been planned and implemented K-12. Use of frequent progress monitoring for reading, mathematics, and behavior has begun. Time is set aside for all students to receive enrichment, acceleration, or remediation.

The district effectively uses and allocates human, material, and fiscal resources to implement the district vision and the school/department missions that enable students to meet expectations for student learning and to comply with applicable regulations. Through interviews and a review of artifacts, the QAR team validated that the district adjusts and prioritizes funding to ensure that all departments have sufficient

resources. The district has various teams/committees in place to ensure the district follows all procedures and safeguards and that the students' best interest is at the forefront. All schools and departments, including maintenance, food service, recreation, technology, and transportation, have mission statements and goals, which are backed by data to show improvement towards these performance indicators. The data is reported to the board on a monthly basis and at the annual board retreat. The district employs several staff members to oversee the short and long range budget plans as well as to ensure the district follows state protocol when dealing with finances.

The district is working to make technology more readily available to students and staff. Surveys are given to staff and students and adjustments are made to ensure both groups have skills and are utilizing technology to its fullest potential. For example, the district utilizes satellite systems to provide Internet access to its five rural schools. Available technology equipment is utilized by staff members for data accessibility, curriculum mapping, and student information management. Interventions for RtI are often delivered via a computer format.

School facilities are well-maintained and secure. Facility and transportation departments stress safety as their priority. Schools are locked during the school day. Most schools provide access permitted through the use of electronic keys or through one main door leading to the office. The only exception would be the high school which has multiple entries. At this building, a school resource officer is available to monitor access to the school. The district has developed long- and short-term facility plans and will begin the construction of a new elementary school in 2012. The QAR team reviewed comprehensive emergency procedure documents and policies ranging from lock down drills to student health issues. During interviews, students were able to describe the protocol for fire drills and building evacuation.

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

- The district has recruited and retained a highly qualified staff who are committed to the success of each student.
- The district has used state and local support and materials for teacher training, technology integration, and research-based interventions.
- Support staff members are integral to the success of school systems; they are involved, informed, and focused on students and student safety.
- Facilities were clean, well-maintained, and secure.
- Students and teachers have access to and use a variety of technology and programs to enhance learning.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Develop a process to ensure that programs and processes recently implemented (i.e., RtI, PBIS, transitions, PLC, core and parallel programs, interventions, curriculum mapping) are monitored, evaluated, and modified as needed.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional," indicating that the Converse County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Resource & Support Systems" standard.

Standard 6: Stakeholder Communications & Relationships

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

Description:

The district has developed a strong relationship with its various stakeholders through a variety of methods. The district uses various techniques to notify stakeholders on a regular basis. Parents have numerous opportunities to give input regarding district goal selection and directives through PACs, open public school board meetings, and board member direct phone calls.

School and district staff members keep parents and community members well-informed through the use of newsletters, agendas, the school and district websites, the local newspaper and radio station, and the PACs, as well as the annual district and school reports. Stakeholders are provided with vast amounts of district and school information through these media and all stakeholders indicated during their interviews that they feel well-informed about what's going on in the schools. Stakeholders were particularly complimentary of the information they can obtain from PowerSchool and Atlas and feel that the staff and administrators are readily accessible.

The QAR team found the school website to be all encompassing and very informative. It contains detailed information for students (including test preparation information and practice websites, guidance and counseling information, and scheduling information), parents (including PowerSchool links, lunch balances, calendars, activities, and meeting times) and community members (including upcoming events, goals and district and school annual reports). All bus routes and schedules are posted on the website and are easily accessed and readable. The school nutrition site includes menus, nutrition information, and relevant news articles to promote healthy eating and awareness.

The district regularly shares student achievement data with stakeholders using the website, direct mailings to the parents, PowerSchool, the annual accountability report to the community, the district profile, board member newsletter, and parent/teacher conferences. Communication within the district is a systemic two-way process involving an open-door policy in the schools and at the district level. The small town allows for town hall meetings and casual conversations between stakeholders. Stakeholders indicated that board members regularly make themselves available at community events. Board meetings are held in an open agenda forum allowing stakeholders to bring items of interest to the meetings and comment on district issues.

At every school, parents were very complimentary of teacher and administrator availability and all indicated that they felt welcomed at their individual schools. Parents felt that teachers were readily available to discuss their child's progress and did not need a formal invitation to do so. Community members complimented the district administration on their accessibility and availability and also indicated that the district administrators had an open door policy.

Stakeholders have access to and were knowledgeable about the school improvement goals involving student learning and achievement. Individual school improvement goals and plans are published in newsletters and on the website, and district goals are clearly aligned with improving student achievement. Stakeholders were able to articulate each of their own responsibilities in order to support the district vision and student achievement.

Overall, stakeholders indicated they were routinely involved in the district-level decision-making processes; however, evidence seemed to indicate that involvement was sometimes rather late in the decision-making process. Stakeholders were generally satisfied with the opportunities provided and the information disseminated. As one parent commented, “I have never had a communication problem.”

Stakeholders felt that they have a district that collaborates often and effectively. Collaboration happens routinely during PLCs, support staff meetings with administrators, the new teacher mentor program, transition activities such as Check and Connect, PACs, and the TABS committee.

Even though there appears to be diversity in the stakeholders' group, the QAR team noticed that the student voice was not represented in any of the stakeholder interview groups. Students have an opportunity to give opinions during the climate survey process, but do not seem to be included in the decision making processes of the district.

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

- District and school websites are very informative.
- Annual reports to stakeholders are comprehensive.
- An effective process for collaboration has been implemented throughout the district.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Include students as active stakeholders through membership in school and district committees.
- Involve external stakeholders earlier in the decision-making process.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Converse County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Stakeholder Communications & Relationships" standard.

Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

Description:

A systematic continuous improvement process that follows Deming’s Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle is used district-wide. The vision “Converse County School District #1 community will ensure a high quality education and inspire all students to become life-long learners by providing a safe, supportive learning environment” represents the framework upon which improvement initiatives are built. A comprehensive profile provides a current snapshot of the district inclusive of demographics, student enrollment, and test scores. Goals are set, revisited, and revised as necessary by the school board based upon the collection and analysis of PAWS results. In the future, assessment data generated by MAP as well as PAWS will provide the basis for decision-making. To facilitate improved student performance and school effectiveness, the five goals are 1) Increase student achievement in reading and writing; 2) Provide a safe and supportive learning environment; 3) Support technology integration; 4) Improve curriculum alignment and staff development, and 5) Recruit and retain excellent staff.

Building administrators facilitate goal implementation through improvement plans that are created by

individual schools. These plans are aligned with district goals and expectations with an option to personalize and adjust interventions and strategies to meet specific building needs. Each school has developed a mission statement created through collaboration with stakeholders. Banners are posted in visible locations at each building. The context of each, while slightly different in wording, aligns with the district vision to ensure that improvement activities support a shared direction.

System-wide improvement efforts occur through collaboration of a broad representation of stakeholders as evidenced in interviews and artifacts. For example, the TABS committee works in concert to make decisions and share information with its representative groups. Parent feedback is gleaned when information is presented to the PAC at each school. An example of systemic implementation is evidenced by the goals, strategies, and performance measures written and monitored by support staff in the maintenance, transportation, and nutrition departments. Interviews with the directors confirmed that they are included in the overall improvement initiatives and collect data to inform decisions in their support areas. “Placemats” represent artifacts that display the same information for the district and various school levels.

With baseline data in hand, the goal to close the achievement gap of students who meet their individual growth targets on MAP is set at 80%. Data from the first year of MAP testing indicated that 63% of students met their growth target in reading while 67% met their growth target in writing (language arts). There was no evidence that the district has disaggregated the data to examine subgroup performance. Each school authored a school improvement plan to address the specific needs and identify interventions that will support student learning. Numerous research-based interventions and resources are available to teachers through Atlas, the district’s curriculum mapping software.

A professional development committee is made up of the director of curriculum, a school board member, representatives of certified and classified staff, and parents. This group considers the goals, interventions, specific needs of students, and teacher requests to determine professional development activities. Examples of activities currently scheduled include PLC concepts, LETRS to support literacy, and National Education Technology Standards and Performance Indicators for Teachers (NETS-T).

With the availability of software (Inform), teachers and administrators can access data to determine student growth or identify areas of concern. The school board receives data reports from all individual schools twice per year in August and January. Monthly data meetings and PLC sessions also provide opportunities for sharing and discussions related to student performance. Results are communicated to stakeholders via the district website, local newspaper, and newsletters. Individual student information is made available to parents during parent/teacher conferences and through PowerSchool.

A number of programs and strategies have been implemented within the last two years. For example, MAP is in the second year of implementation and the PLC’s are in the infant stages. Additionally, AIMSweb for progress monitoring and the Inform data warehouse system are in the process of being fully implemented. The QAR team did not find evidence of a systematic evaluation process to determine effectiveness of improvement initiatives.

Time is allocated for staff to work on continuous improvement activities through alternative schedules, PLCs and school-specific opportunities. Resources and support, including expectations, are available and offered through the district. The district calendar identifies specific district and school level days for school improvement work.

Douglas High School – Operational

Meetings with stakeholder groups and examination of artifacts provided evidence that the Douglas High School (DHS) staff engages in a continuous process of school improvement. A remarkably collegial attitude among staff and administration promotes collaboration and a proactive approach to student needs. Implementation of the PLC model will allow the staff to add a formal approach to collaboration focusing on school improvement goals and student achievement. The staff recognized attendance was a serious issue and implemented a new attendance policy this school year. The DHS staff is comparing 2010 attendance with 2011 attendance to track the effectiveness of the new policy. An examination of attendance rates for September, 2010 with September, 2011 already indicates a drastic reduction in student absences, which is expected to have a positive impact on student achievement. Continuous improvement efforts are communicated to stakeholders through a variety of documented methods.

Douglas Middle School – Operational

A review of artifacts and stakeholder interviews indicated that the district vision of increased student achievement and improving curriculum alignment drive the school's process of continuous school improvement. Stakeholders are informed of and engaged in the school's progress toward continuous school improvement. MAP and PAWS assessment data are collected; however, efforts have only begun to develop longitudinal MAP data analysis and the disaggregation of data by student subgroup. The district provides research-based professional development for all staff members and provides support to the school in their efforts for continuous school improvement. Instructional time and teacher planning time are protected during the school day.

Douglas Intermediate School – Operational

Interviews with parents, students, and teachers validated Douglas Intermediate School's commitment to continuous school improvement. These groups described the school's culture for high expectations and continuous improvement as well as their involvement in the process. The QAR team observed that the school improvement plan is aligned with the school and district's vision and includes academic as well as behavioral goals. Teachers stated, and the QAR team confirmed, that the school's leadership has intentionally protected instructional time and provided a master schedule that maintains a focus on core instruction.

Douglas Primary School – Operational

Douglas Primary School has a systematic process for continuous improvement in student performance. The mission and goals reflect commitment to the process. The continuous process of improvement also includes annual review of the mission and goals, as well as maintenance of a current student data profile. Teachers and support staff participate in PLCs and meet regularly to review data, discuss student progress, and monitor the effectiveness of the improvement plan. Schedules are arranged to protect learning time and allow for collaboration time for teachers. The school implements programs that include planned strategies for intervening with students who fail to demonstrate proficiency on performance standards. The school implements the district assessment system to measure student performance relative to district content and performance standards. The system is designed to ensure that all students have equal educational opportunities to learn the content and skills represented in state standards.

Dry Creek Elementary School – Operational

Dry Creek Elementary School has improvement goals and a comprehensive school profile. Students could describe the PDSA model used by the district. The Rural School Improvement/Leadership Team includes the facilitator and specialists that serve this school so frequent contacts, awareness of student progress and

available data, and shared responsibility is built into the staffing design. The school's teacher joins that team at the Friday PLC sessions. The facilitators provide technical assistance directly to the teacher to support the implementation of district and school goals and individual interventions for students. The RtI process in use in the school and district shows a focus on continually increasing learning for all students, research-based interventions, and teacher training. Students are also involved in the RtI process where they work with their teacher in goal setting and are consistently informed of progress they are making. Students were proud of their goals. Parents feel they have opportunities to have a meaningful role in supporting the education of their children from direct contact with the teacher, contact with the board representative, and participation on the PAC.

Moss Agate Elementary School – Operational

Moss Agate Elementary School stakeholders engage in a continuous process of school improvement. The process is driven using a combination of the rural school mission and the overall district vision. The stakeholders all work together to review and revise practices that will improve instruction and increase learning and student achievement. Teachers and paraprofessionals are dedicated to utilizing staff development opportunities to continue to grow professionally and to acquire the necessary skills to meet the needs of all students. The school is encouraged to continue developing a system that promotes opportunities for celebrating academic, social, and cultural successes. The school successfully addresses the needs of a diverse group of students with computer software, individualized lesson plans, and theme and interest-based projects and activities. It was not clear to the QAR team that as older students transition through school, individual plans regarding career awareness and goals are embedded into instructional opportunities. The combination of strong parent support, caring staff, and committed district administrators helps the school ensure a high quality education for each child that empowers them to evolve and experience success on a daily basis.

Shawnee Elementary School – Operational

Shawnee Elementary School uses a PDSA process for school improvement. The school utilizes school and student achievement data to identify school improvement goals in relation to the district vision and the school mission and motto. The district has identified reading and writing as a goal area and the school also has a goal with specific strategies related to reading and writing. The school has added a goal area in mathematics based upon their student assessment results.

Teachers and the principal described a collaborative process which was used to develop their school improvement plan. A strength of their process is that they also collaborated with the other rural schools in developing a rural school improvement plan that was then adapted to the individual needs of the school. Parents and community stakeholders were actively involved in the process and are kept abreast of the results as evidenced during parent interviews, newsletters, PAC minutes, and district publications.

The teacher and principal explained that previous student achievement results were utilized in the development of the rural school goals and the school's goals and strategies. This included trend results from the PAWS and other assessments. The school illustrated some additional assessments including MAP and Ascend Math Tests that are being used to measure student growth and progress in relation to the goals.

Walker Creek Elementary School – Operational

Walker Creek Elementary School exercises a process of collaboration between the teacher, the principal, and rural school support personnel to effectively embrace a commitment for continuous improvement.

Each staff member who has direct contact with students has a defined commitment to increase levels of academic achievement and to consistently engage students in learning. Although the school is new to the district, the teacher has established specific targets and expectations for individual student academic growth during the school year. Academic effectiveness is monitored frequently to guide instructional practices to ensure that each student makes progress toward achieving individual goals. Students expressed enthusiasm for learning and referenced activities in reading and math as definite favorites. A creative schedule for the school affords students opportunities to actively participate in authentic learning and to interact with the larger population of rural students within the rural school community.

White Elementary School – Operational

After reviewing the documentation and appropriate artifacts, the QAR team found substantial evidence of the school's engagement in a continuous process of improvement that is aligned with the district's vision. The school maintains a comprehensive profile which includes documentation of student academic performance, school effectiveness, and community demographics. The continuous improvement process is intended to improve student performance, documents results of prior improvement efforts, and informs future improvement efforts. Stakeholders receive timely reports on the results of the continuous improvement efforts and collaboratively evaluate and assess the effectiveness and results of prior improvement plans.

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

- The district utilizes PDSA as its continuous improvement process.
- Support staff members (i.e., maintenance, transportation, nutrition) identify goals, measures, and strategies in their respective departments.
- A broad representation of stakeholders is active in ongoing improvement activities.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Disaggregate student assessment data by subgroup to identify any trends that impact student achievement.
- Allow sufficient time to validate newer initiatives and improvement strategies to determine overall effectiveness.
- Establish an evaluation process to ensure initiatives are fully and properly deployed.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Converse County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Commitment to Continuous Improvement" standard.

Quality Assurance Findings

The Quality Assurance Review Team examined the effectiveness of the district's methods for quality assurance. The team reviewed the district's practices and methods to monitor and document improvement, provide meaningful feedback and support across the district, ensure that AdvancED standards are met and strengthened, and regularly collect, use, and communicate results. The team provides the following findings in this area.

Description

The district systems of alignment related to student performance and district effectiveness function in a variety of department areas. The district developed a definite plan that targeted curriculum and goals, which included all critical processes within the district. Among those processes that are clearly articulated are budgeting, human resources, curriculum planning, professional development, and calendar/school schedules. The district ensures that these processes are aligned and work together to improve student performance and district effectiveness by mapping out performance targets for those critical processes, determining whether those targets are met, and making adjustments to the goals. The QAR team heard from stakeholders that the district utilized PDSA as one of the quality process tools. The district implements an annual or biannual review of the critical processes to evaluate the target goals. The TABS committee, PACs, administrative team, and the governing board work in a cohesive manner to carry out the review process.

The results of the district's continuous improvement process are communicated to all stakeholder groups to provide continuing support and direction for the district's long-range improvement planning goals and measures of progress toward existing objectives. The information is communicated through several systems the district has in place such as the district placemats, website, PowerSchool, curriculum mapping, and annual reports. Evaluation tools for specific programs were not evident.

The results of the state assessment program (PAWS) and school testing initiatives (i.e., NWEA MAPS, other locally-developed assessments) are reported to all stakeholders through a variety of methods on a systematic basis throughout the school year. Evidence and artifacts verified assessment data were communicated through parent newsletters, the district website, building displays, as well as public presentations to the governing board and the site-based PACs. Within the schools, stakeholders make use of perception data, student summative data, and adaptive testing as a basis of conversations within the PLCs and grade level meetings, which leads stakeholders to examine curriculum and develop interventions, and accelerations.

To support the continuous school improvement process, the district maintains a profile, which includes relevant student assessment data, measures of school effectiveness, and community demographics. The district improvement process aligns district goals with its vision, provides direction in the allocation of resources, identifies appropriate district-wide areas of needed professional development, and guides the improvement initiatives. The district compiles stakeholder climate survey data every three years to further provide district and school leaders with information to guide continuous improvement.

With the decision to seek district accreditation, the district began a process of self-evaluation regarding compliance with AdvancEd standards. At the same time, individual schools conducted their own self-assessment of compliance. The process for these self-assessments was systemic and systematic, involving input from internal stakeholder groups. The district provided guidance and support for the schools during the school-level self-examination. The schools used the AdvancED Assist program to compile findings and to create a document that reflected these findings. The district utilized the same tool, identifying strengths and challenges related to the standards and rating themselves on adherence to these standards. Numerous meetings, formal and informal, were

held to ensure consensus related to the outcomes. The QAR team found evidence that these procedures were embedded in the district's operational program and were available for future monitoring of district and school continuous improvement.

Strengths

- District placemats communicate the strategic plan of the district.
- The implementation and utilization of the TABS committee is a vehicle to ensure shared leadership opportunities in the decision-making process.
- The district employs a systematic process for the development and review of the vision statement.

Opportunities

- Identify and implement evaluation tools for specific school improvement initiatives and processes to evaluate the effectiveness of these initiatives.

Schools Visited

The Quality Assurance Review team visited the following schools during the visit to the Converse County School District #1 on 10/09/2011 - 10/12/2011.

Moss Agate Elementary	28 Windy Ridge Rd	Douglas	Wyoming	82633-9287
Douglas Primary School	1705 Hamilton	Douglas	Wyoming	82633
Walker Creek Elementary School	11 Manning Rd	Douglas	Wyoming	82633-9729
Douglas Intermediate School	901 Yellowstone Hwy	Douglas	Wyoming	82633-2345
Douglas High School	1701 Hamilton	Douglas	Wyoming	82633
Shawnee Elementary	1216 US Highway 18-20	Douglas	Wyoming	82633
White Elementary	1641 Esterbrook Rd	Douglas	Wyoming	82633-9592
Dry Creek Elementary	615 Hamilton Street	Douglas	Wyoming	82633
Douglas Middle School	615 Hamilton	Douglas	Wyoming	82633-4

Conclusion

The commendations and required actions in this report are designed to focus the school district on those areas that will have the greatest impact on student performance and system effectiveness. While powerful in potential, the commendations and required actions only have meaning when acted upon by the school district and its schools. The strength of this report lies in the school district's commitment to using the findings to continuously improve. The key is action. The school district 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 required actions for improvement that the school district will need to address. Following this review, the school district will be required to submit a progress report summarizing its progress toward addressing the team's required actions.

The Quality Assurance Review Team expresses appreciation to the district leadership, members of the professional staff, students, parents and other community representatives for hosting the review team. The team wishes the district and its students much success in the quest for excellence through NCA-CASI-WY accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Dr. Steve Epperson, Chair/Lead Evaluator (Ideal Environmental Engineering)
- Dr. Mary Krisko, Vice Chair (Wyoming - NCA CASI)
- Alice King, Team Member (Campbell County High School)
- Mr. Tobey Cass, Team Member (Newcastle Elementary K-2)
- Dr. Charlotte Draper, Team Member
- Mr. Scott James, Team Member (Platte County District No 1)
- Colonel George E. Brick, Team Member (New Mexico Military Institute)
- Ms. Suzi P. Cabe, Team Member
- Dr. Richard L. Ferguson, Team Member (Marshall County Board of Education)
- Mrs. Penny K. Businga, Team Member (Educational Service Unit #13)
- Dr. Don Evans, Team Member
- Ms. Kem Cothran, Team Member (Marshall County Board of Education)
- Mrs. Karen S. Flora, Team Member
- Dr. David E. Spellman, Team Member
- Mrs. Mary Ann DeHaven, Team Member (Park County District No 6)
- Mrs. Kristeen L. Cundall, Team Member (Walnut Elementary School)
- Dr. Kelly D. Tolman, Team Member (Lincoln County School District #2)
- Mrs. Donna Mathern, Team Member (Valley City State University)
- Mrs. Lindy Sorenson, Team Member (Campbell County District No 1)

AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems

The AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems are comprehensive statements of quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school districts to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness. As school districts 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 system establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system.

Governance and Leadership

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

Teaching and Learning

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

Documenting and Using Results

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

Resource and Support Systems

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

Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

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

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Converse County School District #2
PO Box 1300 120 Boxelder Trail
Glenrock, Wyoming, United States 82637-1300**

**Mr. Kirk M. Hughes, Superintendent
Dr. Jerry Griffin, Chair/Lead Evaluator, Quality Assurance Review Team**

Review Dates: 10/09/2011 - 10/12/2011



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 6

 Required Actions 7

 Next Steps 8

Standards for Accreditation 10

 Standard 1: Vision & Purpose 10

 Standard 2: Governance & Leadership 12

 Standard 3: Teaching & Learning 14

 Standard 4: Documenting & Using Results 17

 Standard 5: Resource & Support Systems 20

 Standard 6: Stakeholder Communications & Relationships 21

 Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement 22

Quality Assurance Findings 25

Schools Visited 27

Conclusion 28

Appendix 29

 Quality Assurance Review Team Members 29

 AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems 29

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 Schools (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, school districts, and educational service agencies continuously improve.

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

1) Meet the AdvancED Standards and Policies for Quality School Systems. School districts demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards and policies which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school districts to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.

2) Engage in continuous improvement. School districts and their schools implement a continuous improvement process that articulates the vision and purpose that the school district is pursuing (vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school and district 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. School districts and schools engage in a planned process of ongoing internal review and self-assessment. In addition, school districts host an external quality assurance review team once every five years. The team evaluates the school district's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards, assesses the efficacy of the school district's improvement process and methods for quality assurance, and provides commendations and required actions to help the school district improve. The team provides an oral exit report to the school district and a written report detailing the team's required actions. The school district acts on the team's required actions and submits a progress report two years following the review.

NCA CASI and SACS CASI accreditation engages the entire school district community in a continuous process of self-evaluation and improvement. The overall aim is to help school districts and their schools maximize student success and improve organizational effectiveness

Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review

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

1. Evaluate the school district's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards and policies.
2. Assess the efficacy of the district's improvement process and methods for quality assurance.
3. Identify commendations and required actions to improve the district and its schools.
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 district is operating with institutional integrity - that it is fulfilling its vision and mission for its students.

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

Summary of Team Activities. The Quality Assurance Review Team is led by an AdvancED certified District Lead Evaluator and comprised of professionals from outside the school district. The team reviews the findings of the school district's internal self-assessment, conducts interviews with representative groups of stakeholders, reviews student performance data and other documentation provided by the school district, and observes practices and daily operations. The team engages in professional deliberations to reach consensus on the school district'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 district and its schools 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 district. The report contains commendations and required actions for improvement.

Using the Report - Responding to the Required Actions. The school district uses the report to guide its improvement efforts. The school district is held accountable for addressing the required actions identified in the report. The AdvancED State Office is available to assist the school district in addressing the required actions. Following the Quality Assurance Review Team visit, the school district must submit a progress report detailing the actions and progress it has made on the team's required actions. The report is reviewed at the state and national level to ensure the school district is addressing the required actions.

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

Summary of Findings

A Quality Assurance Review Team representing the NCA CASI Wyoming State Office (NCA-CASI-WY), a division of AdvancED, visited Converse County School District #2 on 10/09/2011 - 10/12/2011.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 12 administrators, 66 teachers, 46 support staff, 21 parents and business partners, 58 students, and 2 Board of Education members for a total of 205 stakeholders. In addition to meeting with district personnel and stakeholders, the team visited 4 schools within the school district. During the school visits, team members interviewed school stakeholders, observed classrooms, and reviewed relevant school artifacts. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by the district. Specifically, the team examined the district's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

1. Vision and Purpose
2. Governance and Leadership
3. Teaching and Learning
4. Documenting and Using Results
5. Resource and Support Systems
6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships
7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The AdvancED standards focus on systems with a school district 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 district, looking not only for adherence to individual standards, but also for how the school district and its schools function as a whole and embody the practices and characteristics of a quality school district.

Through its examination of the school district's adherence to the standards, the Quality Assurance Review Team prepared reports on each standard, highlighting strengths and suggestions for improvement specific to each standard. These reports can be found following this summary.

The Quality Assurance Review Team also examined the effectiveness of the district's methods for quality assurance. The team reviewed the district's practices and methods to monitor and document improvement, provide meaningful feedback and support across the district, ensure that AdvancED standards are met and strengthened, and regularly collect, use, and communicate results. The team's findings in this area can be found following the standard reports.

The team used the standard reports and quality assurance findings to identify common themes, significant accomplishments, and pressing needs facing the district. These became the basis for the overall commendations and required actions that are provided below. The commendations and required actions should serve as the focus for the district as it acts on the team's findings. They represent the areas that the team believes will have the greatest impact in helping the district further its improvement efforts. The standard reports and quality assurance findings can be used to help reinforce and enrich the district's understanding of the commendations and required actions.

Commendations

The Quality Assurance Review Team commends the Converse County School District #2 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.

Commendation 1

Commendation Statement:

The QAR team commends the Converse County School District #2 for its major commitment to the use of data for the improvement of instruction.

Evidence:

Student grades and performance data on various state and local assessments are warehoused in a technology-based system that is easily retrievable in user-friendly formats that serve the needs of instructional personnel, parents, and others. District personnel have developed an assessment system that defines and describes how data and information are used to inform instruction and other district functions, and provides a focus for on-going professional development activities. CCSD#2 has employed a full-time assessment coordinator to oversee the management and use of data and related information for purposes of instructional improvement.

Rationale:

Maintenance of and access to valid and reliable data and information banks and analysis and use of these data and information sources are absolutely essential for decision-making to ensure continuous improvement of instruction and organizational processes related to instruction.

Commendation 2

Commendation Statement:

A high degree of trust and support appears to permeate the culture of the Converse County School District #2.

Evidence:

QAR team members noted frequent references to "trust" or "we trust them" during interviews with external stakeholder groups, an apparent broad-based reference to all district employees. Internal stakeholder groups (i. e., teachers, support staff members) expressed a high degree of trust in district and school-based administrators. Administrators at all levels indicated that they endeavored to employ, develop, and provide on-going support for highly qualified applicants and then trusted them to discharge their duties and responsibilities in a professional manner.

Rationale:

An organizational culture that is built on a foundation of trust and respect by its constituents can more effectively proceed with the important work of improving the teaching and learning process and engage in the active pursuit of its goals and objectives without distraction.

Commendation 3

Commendation Statement:

District leaders sought to include all stakeholder groups in the development of the vision and mission and implementation of the Strategic Plan that focuses and drives educational decision-making and the allocation of district resources.

Evidence:

Many stakeholders, both internal and external, indicated during interviews that they were extended opportunities to participate in the development of both district and school-based vision and mission statements. In addition, many also indicated that they had been invited to participate in some aspect of the development and implementation of the district Strategic Plan.

Rationale:

Opportunities to serve in these important roles was identified as one major reason for the high degree of trust that appears prevalent throughout the district. In addition, broad-based involvement of stakeholder groups continues to build the capacity of the district to more effectively serve the needs of all students.

Commendation 4

Commendation Statement:

A collaborative, data-driven curriculum and assessment process is in place that enables the district to improve student performance.

Evidence:

The CCSD #2 has contracted with the Curriculum Leadership Institute (CLI) to provide on-going curriculum consulting services to the Curriculum Coordinating Committee (CCC), a district-level committee that includes broad-based stakeholder representation. The CCC oversees all curriculum activities and initiatives and communicates with site-based subject area committees (SAC) to ensure effective communications across all subject areas throughout the district. The district assessment coordinator, a member of the CCC, ensures that quantitative and qualitative data and information inform curriculum decision-making to improve student performance.

Rationale:

The development and use of this structured process appears to have positioned CCSD#2 to continually build its capacity to develop a K-12 curriculum that will address the teaching and learning needs of students well into the future.

Required Actions

In addition to the commendations, the Quality Assurance Review Team identified the following required actions for improvement. The team focused its required actions on those areas that, if addressed, will have the greatest impact on improving student performance and overall effectiveness of the school district. The Converse County School District #2 will be held accountable for making progress on each of the required actions noted in this section. Following this review, the school district will be asked to submit a progress report on these required actions. The district should refer to the detail provided in the standard reports for guidance and greater depth on the required actions.

Required Action 1

Required Action:

Utilize authentic student engagement strategies on a continuous basis to improve student achievement.

Evidence:

Evidence gathered from stakeholder interviews and supported by classroom observations indicated that, in many instances, bell-to-bell instruction involving varied instructional strategies was not being implemented effectively, especially at the secondary level. District administrators indicated that this area had been the focus of professional development for the past several years but, to date, had not been institutionalized.

Rationale:

One of three major district goals focuses on improving student achievement. Therefore, in view of this major emphasis, it would appear that maximizing the use of all available instructional time using differentiated instructional strategies tailored to student learning needs would be a significant ingredient toward ensuring sustainable increases in student achievement.

Required Action 2

Required Action:

Establish a district-wide mentor program for employees that is aligned with the Strategic Plan and provides essential professional development in job-related processes and best practices.

Evidence:

Written documentation and some evidence acquired from stakeholders tended to support the existence of mentoring-related opportunities within the district, presumably for employees new to the district with no experience, employees new to the district with prior experience, and for current employees who, for various reasons, need a mentor. What appeared not to be in evidence was a district-wide program that could ensure uniformity and consistency across the district for employees who could benefit from the guidance of a mentor.

Rationale:

The establishment of a district-wide program that is described in written form and well-articulated could be instrumental for ensuring the success of employees in need of mentoring services and contribute to the district's efforts to achieve its three identified goals.

Review of AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools: The team reviewed the district'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 district 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 district.
3. Develop action plans to address the required actions made by the team. Include methods for monitoring progress toward the required actions.
4. Use the report to guide and strengthen the school district's efforts to improve student performance and district effectiveness.

5. Two years following the Quality Assurance Review, submit the Accreditation Progress Report detailing progress made toward addressing the required actions. The report will be reviewed at the state and national level to ensure that significant progress is being made toward the required actions. 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.

Celebrating Accreditation

Following the visit, the Quality Assurance Review Team submits an accreditation recommendation to AdvancED for review and action at the national level by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, which confers accreditation and communicates it to the school district. Upon receiving its accreditation, the school district should celebrate its achievement with the community. Flags, door decals, diploma seals, and other related items can be ordered from the website to help you share your accomplishment with your community.

Summary

The accreditation process engages the school district, its schools, and community in an ongoing journey of continuous improvement. The next steps in this journey are to build on the commendations and address the required actions noted in this report. Doing so will enable the school district 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 district 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.

The Quality Assurance Review Team divided into standard teams to review each standard and prepare a standards report summarizing the team's findings. These standard reports, along with the quality assurance findings that follow these reports, provided the basis for the team's identification of over-arching commendations and required actions presented earlier in this report. The reports submitted by each team are provided on the following pages for the district's review and use. Each report reflects its respective team's unique voice, perspective, and deliberations. The reports can be used to help enrich and deepen the district's understanding of the overall commendations and required actions.

Standard 1: Vision & Purpose

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

Description:

The district used a collaborative process to develop a mission; “In Partnership with students, parents, staff, and community, our purpose is to ensure a safe and orderly environment where all students receive quality educational experiences which empower them to be responsible citizens and lifelong learners.” Artifacts, interviews, and observations indicated staff, students, and parents were involved with the creation and modification of the mission resulting in a multifaceted strategic plan. This process, through consultation with Krenek Consulting, LLC, resulted in a vision statement, “Building bridges to a successful future,” that has created a positive district climate.

The mission and vision are communicated throughout the district on published documents detailing the mission, vision, values, and district goals. The published document also identifies key stakeholder groups responsible for carrying out the district goals. Responsible individuals, including parents and students, were able to articulate the mission and vision and how they relate to daily routines conducted within the district. Throughout all stakeholder interviews three goals; (1) improve student achievement, (2) improve student academic behaviors, and (3) the district will operate efficiently and effectively appear to empower and focus work in the district.

Staff members analyze Proficiency Assessment of Wyoming Students (PAWS), Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), and district assessments to determine remediation programming for students. The district utilizes a wide menu of programs including Read 180, Skills Tutor, reading mastery, flooding, and extended day (9th hour and Friday school) to help students attain necessary skills to improve achievement and academic behaviors. A detailed curriculum and development system guides teaching and learning throughout the district.

School and community demographics are updated regularly as are student characteristics. The mission establishes the expectation to meet the needs of a constantly changing student population.

Staff and stakeholders recognize the need to adjust some of the initial goals.

Grant Elementary School

The Grant Elementary School community is a connected community of teachers, staff, students, and parents that share a vision and purpose. The vision, "All Grant Elementary students will engage in rich and balanced learning experiences that target academic success in preparation for intermediate/middle school," serves to bridge the gap between the district strategic plan, mission, vision, values, and classroom academic goals. The mission and vision were revised during the 2009-2010 school year through a collaborative process that involved all stakeholders. Evidence indicated that the vision and purpose are communicated through handbooks, newsletters, the school website, and at stakeholder meetings.

Goals are updated annually in the School Improvement Plan and are monitored throughout the year with the vision and mission kept at the forefront of all decisions that are made. School goals and measures to advance the vision were evidenced through interviews and the School Improvement Plan. Documentation was provided as evidence of the maintenance of a profile of the school and its students.

Parent stakeholders reported in interviews that opportunities existed for them to provide input. Parents feel welcome at the school and are very comfortable in talking with teachers and the principal as well as the superintendent. In addition, parents felt that their suggestions were valued and their concerns were acknowledged and addressed.

Interviews validated the allocation of time and human, material, and fiscal resources to support pursuit of the school's vision. To further the vision, including preparation for intermediate/middle school, strategies to provide for a smooth transition to intermediate/middle school should be enhanced.

Standard 1, Vision and Purpose, was rated as Operational.

Glenrock Intermediate School and Glenrock Middle School

Glenrock Intermediate School and Glenrock Middle School develop confident, responsible, and skilled students. This vision, along with the mission for both schools, was clearly articulated by students and teachers and expected by parents. The recent development of the mission and vision at these schools has increased excitement and the positive climate at both schools. Students and parents report that the students have more confidence, student behavior has improved, and consequently student achievement gains are noticeable. The QAR team found numerous amounts of data being collected, including data for student academic behaviors, and shared regularly to evaluate progress. The QAR team determined that the school collects and evaluates achievement regularly; however, it is not clear how the data impacts student engagement and classroom instruction for all students. Remedial programs are evident for underachieving students, but many stakeholders requested enrichment opportunities.

Standard 1, Vision and Purpose was rated as Operational for both Glenrock Intermediate School and Glenrock Middle School.

Glenrock High School

Glenrock High School is a professional community of caring and responsible educators who work collaboratively to support the school's vision and mission to provide educational opportunities for students, ensuring "a safe and orderly environment where all students receive quality educational

experiences that empower them to be responsible citizens and lifelong learners.” The vision and mission are widely publicized through a variety of electronic venues, publications, and posted notices. A broad base of stakeholders appears to understand the expectations of student learning as evidenced through their responses during interviews with the QAR team. These shared perceptions and values have been broadly discussed throughout the school’s internal and external communities and have been articulated into a shared vision.

The QAR team was informed that the vision and mission statements were created and adopted with the assistance of Krenek Consulting, LLC. in preparation for the QAR visit. Interviews with stakeholders revealed that broad-based input was provided from stakeholder groups such as students, parents, and community during the vision and mission development process.

Standard I, Vision and Purpose, was rated as Operational.

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

- The district mission, vision, values, and comprehensive strategic plan are highly visible and appear throughout the district on published posters and the district website.
- District goals are specific and data are collected regularly to measure improvement.
- Key stakeholders: students, parents, board members, support staff, community, teachers, administrators, maintenance, food service, special services, and transportation are identified and committed to meeting the goals.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Identify formal opportunities for stakeholders to provide input on school topics, issues, and decisions.
- Create a system that will ensure alignment and determine effectiveness of the vision and mission of each school to the vision and mission of the district.
- Clarify how data are used to inform instructional strategies and practices.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional," indicating that the Converse County School District #2 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Vision & Purpose" standard.

Standard 2: Governance & Leadership

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

Description:

Converse County School District #2 has a formal line and staff administrative organizational chart which clearly delineates the chain of command and responsibility levels for the operation of the district. Policy handbooks are available at each school site, and are reviewed annually for appropriate updating of policies and procedural concerns. The chairman of the board of trustees clearly indicated an awareness of the dangers of micromanagement common in small communities, and described the board’s practice of referring issues to the appropriate level in the chain of command for resolution, after listening to the patrons’ concerns. New board members are encouraged to participate in trainings provided by the

Wyoming School Boards Association, and most attain certification through that organization during their tenure.

The district adheres to all required local, state, and federal laws, standards and regulations; evidence was seen in the packets of required notifications sent to all district parents, and the assurances signed off by the superintendent in the U.S. Office of Education Consolidation Grant application.

Interviews with all stakeholder groups including parents, students, support staff, and faculty indicated a high level of satisfaction with available resources and several comments were made relative to “if we need something, we can always get it.” Careful analysis of results of the AdvancED surveys as well as previous surveys have targeted areas for improvement, and resources have been allocated to address those issues.

The district contracts for legal services with a local attorney and has enjoyed relatively litigation-free activities. All necessary insurance support protects the district from legal challenges to administrative operations and helps ensure financial stability.

In recent years, a major emphasis on the uses of data toward the improvement of instruction has been initiated, stimulated by recognition of unacceptable student performance on State of Wyoming required standardized testing. As a result, the district designated an assessment coordinator whose responsibilities include not only helping interpret student achievement data but also providing training to the instructional staff on how to use the data as a major tool in classroom instruction. Student performance data during the past two years point toward continuing improvement in district test scores, with some of them greatly exceeding expectations. At the same time, there are some areas being targeted for closer study, and incorporated in the establishment of annual School Improvement Goals.

All interviewed groups strongly asserted that they have been closely involved in the development of district goals and programs during recent years, addressing not only core participation in the process of revising the district’s and schools’ mission statements, but also providing input to curriculum development and policy revision. Each building has some type of parent organization, although each expresses the need for exploring ways to get more participation from parents, particularly those whose children are underperforming academically. As a whole, the district appears to have strong community support for its programs and mission, and stakeholders, both internal and external, expressed comments that indicate a strong feeling of ownership.

Along with other Wyoming school districts, the legislature has required each to choose among three avenues to implement a new professional evaluation system, and Converse #2 has chosen the McREL model for use during the coming years.

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

- Major activities involving the use of student performance data for the improvement of instruction have yielded good results toward raising student test scores throughout the core curriculum. Along with this focus, processes have been established to assure K-12 curriculum alignment and enhance communication between buildings and grade levels.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Increase parent involvement as a major component of school improvement activities, particularly for children having academic issues.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional," indicating that the Converse County School District #2 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Governance & Leadership" standard.

Standard 3: Teaching & Learning

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

Description:

CCSD #2 promotes and implements curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning linked to Wyoming's legislatively mandated curriculum standards. The district ensures that the alignment and articulation of curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments are in support of the expectation for student learning through the CCC. The council develops action plans that outline curriculum development within the district. The process is clearly delineated and has a calendar for upcoming events through the 2019-2020 school year. Subject area committees update/review the curricula and ensure that current research and best practices are utilized in each subject area. The curriculum reflects a commitment to equity and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity. Common assessments and observations revealed student involvement in higher-order thinking skills and approaches to apply their learning.

A preponderance of evidence gathered through interviews, artifacts, and observations illustrates the district's involvement in gathering, analyzing, and using data and research in making curricular and instructional choices. District review of data includes the annual statewide PAWS tests which are given to all students in the third through eighth and eleventh grades in reading, writing, and mathematics as well as Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) MAP in grades K-11 and DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy Skills) in K-6, and AIMSweb (Academic Information System). In addition, ACT tests are required for all high school students in their junior year. Documentation and interviews validated the use of data in system-wide curricular and instructional decisions. Program continuation is determined by whether or not the data indicate that the program is positively affecting student achievement. Data analysis is an ongoing process for the staff of Converse #2. Data share-out meetings are held every four and a half weeks to review student progress.

The district allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning. Professional development is afforded staff members regularly on best practices such as brain learning theory, motivating the reluctant learner, engaging students, the use of technology, development of pacing guides, and outcome component plans.

The district supports the implementation of interventions to help students meet expectations for learning. After-school instruction and summer school are also provided for struggling students along with transportation to ensure student access.

Climate surveys as well as observations and interviews, reveal a district-wide climate that supports student learning. Faculty and support staff provide a nurturing climate throughout the district.

The district provides extensive access to instructional technology and has hired a full-time technology person to better serve the needs of the district. The district has one full-time media specialist and three full-time media clerks to enable the media centers to have more open time to serve student needs. Interviews

validated that materials needed for effective instruction are provided.

Grant Elementary School

Grant Elementary School utilizes the CLI model and their consulting services, thereby providing a well-developed research-based curriculum and an effective process for overseeing all phases of student learning. All curricula are aligned to the state standards in all content areas. Teachers work to engage students in learning and implement deepening educational experiences. Data share-out meetings are held every four weeks for the purpose of progress monitoring. Each student's performance is reviewed and strategies for improvement are suggested.

Data from various sources are evident. Teacher interviews validated the use of data to drive instruction. The review of data includes the annual statewide PAWS tests in reading, writing, and mathematics which are given to all students in the third and fourth grades. Grant Elementary also uses MAP in grades K-4 and DIBELS in K-4 as well as the AIMSweb test.

Many intervention programs are implemented depending on student needs. A review of artifacts and interviews revealed programs through technology for at-risk learners such as Headsprout, StudyDog, Skills Tutor, and Reading Counts. Professional development plans are reviewed annually. Student achievement data as well as staff and building needs are assessed through surveys and collaborative meetings. Observations indicated strategies of student engagement such as paired reading, choral reading, and the use of interactive technology. Further student engagement and the development of additional enrichment opportunities to meet the needs of the gifted and talented will enhance opportunities for growth. Students stated that additional opportunities in science, math and foreign language would make their school even more outstanding.

Standard 3, Teaching and Learning was rated as Highly Functional.

Glenrock Intermediate School and Glenrock Middle School

CCSD #2 has a long standing and successful relationship with the CLI to provide curriculum consulting services. Additionally, the CCSD#2 Curriculum Coordinating Council, comprised of teachers, administrators, and a board member, has further defined responsibilities and timelines with input from subject area committees who examine subjects on a three-year rotation.

Evidence was seen of vertical alignment, communication, and planning that has resulted in significant improvements. A district instructional facilitator and a curriculum coordinator work as a very effective team to educate, guide, and advise teachers, administrators, and parents about standardized test scores, intervention efficacy, and relevance.

Students use feedback from PowerSchool, teacher meetings, and weekly "down lists" that identify any threat of academic deficit. After school "9th hour" support helps to remediate student performance, and consequences for being "down listed" have made the students vie to achieve. It is "cool" to be smart at both schools, and enrichment is desired beyond what is already implemented through the flooding program. Additionally, teachers have received professional development to learn about brain-based learning and have become very involved in seeking further professional development in the use of peer review of teaching.

Teachers utilize pacing guides, outcomes, and are gaining proficiency in examining their practice to affect student performance results. Technology has been enhanced with each class having access to interactive

white boards and a recently announced increase of bandwidth is expected to jump significantly in the near future resulting in a high speed system capable of accommodating a higher density of hardware use. Teachers received training over the summer months in the use of this technology and there appears to be a continuing interest in more technology instruction by staff members.

The overall perception is that all stakeholders have high expectations and have accepted academic performance and behaviors as their personal responsibility. This is exceedingly positive, supportive, effective, and appears to hold great promise for increasing student learning outcomes.

Standard 3, Teaching and Learning, was rated as Operational.

Glenrock High School

Glenrock High School promotes clear expectations for student learning based on the Wyoming State Standards. These expectations are shared with students and parents through course syllabi and rubrics. Stakeholders interviewed were able to align expectations for student learning to the school's vision. Students in the school have shown growth in the state accountability program for the most recent school year.

Through classroom observations, the QAR team noted instructional practices consisting of mostly direct instruction with some examples of student-focused engagement. Student interviews verified these instructional practices observed by the QAR team. The block schedule provides opportunities for intervention, remediation, tutoring, and enrichment. Teacher interviews demonstrated an understanding of the need for a variety of instructional approaches and strategies to maximize student engagement in a 90-minute block period; however, classroom observations indicated a need for additional professional development in this area. Teachers review data and make instructional decisions to guide student learning. Media staff members are available to provide comprehensive information and media services for teachers and students. Staff members share resources and effective learning strategies, and were openly enthusiastic about the collaborative culture across content areas.

Standard 3, Teaching and Learning was rated as Operational.

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

- The CCC process is an outstanding process that enables the district to have system-wide curricula, pacing guides, and assessments to ensure a smooth articulation in grades k-12. The process involves district personnel from all grade levels in annual updates and reviews to ensure current content and best practices are used within the district.
- The district has embraced the analysis of data to drive instruction and meet the needs of individual students.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Utilize more active student engagement strategies on a daily basis to enhance student achievement.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Converse County School District #2 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Teaching & Learning" standard.

Standard 4: Documenting & Using Results

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

Description:

CCSD#2 has provided evidence of a systemic culture for collecting student performance data and using assessment results to improve the overall learning system. Included in the many assessment data points are summative assessment, MAP, DIBELS, PAWS and AIMSweb results. Data from the assessment system are reviewed regularly at all grade levels. Interviews with local school principals, assessment specialist and teacher leaders, along with the preponderance of artifacts provided for review demonstrated a meaningful assessment system, allowing for timely and accurate information in understanding summative student performance to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning. Specifically, a clearer understanding of the PAWS and MAP writing results produced measurable growth and improvement in writing scores. Evidence indicates a comprehensive assessment system that is aligned with expectations for student learning, and further evidence that data inform instructional decision making.

Student performance data are securely stored in PowerSchool. Teachers have access to individual student assessment and achievement data through PowerSchool, and rely on the assessment coordinator and central office to produce summary data for trend or comparative analysis at the program or student level. Interviews with teachers demonstrated an operational knowledge of how assessment results inform instruction.

Student performance and system effectiveness are communicated to all stakeholders through parent access to PowerSchool, parent teacher conferences, monthly reports by the principals to the board of trustees, the monthly newsletter, "Perceptions", to all mailbox holders, and the annual Student Data Booklet provided to all stakeholders.

The CCSD#2 employs an assessment system based on clearly-defined performance measures that yield valid and reliable results and the use of summative results and diagnostic measures are readily evident. Interviews with teachers reflected a culture of collaboration and sharing of best practices across contents in order to make decisions regarding instructional strategies and best practices that will make positive impacts in student learning. Professional development was not evident in data analysis to strengthen teachers' ability to verify growth in student performance and identify best instructional practices for further increases in student performance.

Grant Elementary School

The school has a comprehensive assessment system that is aligned to the district's curriculum and Common Core Standards. A combination of summative and formative assessments (PAWS, DIBELS, AIMSweb, MAP) are gathered, analyzed, and used to monitor progress.

A systematic process has been created to bring teachers together at the midterm and end of each quarter to analyze student performance. The instructional facilitator facilitates these meetings and helps guide discussions surrounding strategies for improving student learning. Students performing below expected levels are provided with additional interventions using a tiered intervention model as evidenced through classroom observations.

Student performance results in the area of reading are improving. Trend data displayed on the data wall clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of the intervention model. Teachers describe how they use formative assessment results to guide their instruction. The school is working on designing a systematic behavior intervention process.

In an interview with 3rd and 4th graders, some students reported that their teachers use classroom assessments to help them write performance goals. Students reported they liked writing achievement goals and that their “goal sheets” helped them identify what they needed to learn.

Parents reported that the school and teachers share assessment results with them. Some parents described their experience of how MAP assessment results were explained to them and how interventions have been effective with their child.

Common planning time was found in the master schedule and teachers reported that they use this time for a variety of purposes, including discussions of curriculum, assessment results, instruction, and other school related issues. Additional training was not evident in the area of Professional Learning Communities to help teachers with a clear focus for this common collaborative time.

Standard 4, Documenting and Using Results, was rated as Highly Functional.

Glenrock Intermediate School and Glenrock Middle School

The Glenrock Intermediate School and Glenrock Middle School have implemented a comprehensive assessment system aligned with expectations for student learning, using the MAP coupled with PAWS, to obtain reliable, valid, and bias-free data. Under the direction of a district assessment coordinator, instructional staff members were trained on the interpretation of group and individual data as a tool toward instructional decision-making for continuous improvement

Through collaborative analysis using student performance data, students are placed in instructional groupings established within the three-tiered Response To Intervention (RtI) construct, and monitored using further assessments toward on-going regroupings as appropriate to individual needs and performance.

Stakeholders are provided information relative to the effectiveness of student performance through parent conferences, direct mailings, newsletters, and most importantly, through the use of PowerSchool email and records as a communication tool. Data are compared with similar information provided by the Wyoming Department of Education from all Wyoming school districts, and used to establish performance goals for the school. Longitudinal records for student groups and individuals are maintained through technological applications and storage, including PowerSchool and district software.

The major emphasis of the district on the use of data for instructional design has provided major improvement of student performance in the areas of language arts and mathematics for both schools.

Standard 4, Documenting and Using Results, was rated as Highly Functional.

Glenrock High School

Glenrock High School has provided evidence of a systemic culture for collecting student performance data

and using assessment results to improve the overall learning system. Data from the assessment system is reviewed regularly at all grade levels. Interviews with the principal, assessment specialist, and teacher leaders, along with the preponderance of artifacts provided for review demonstrated a meaningful assessment system, allowing for timely and accurate information in understanding summative student performance to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning. Specifically, a clearer understanding of the PAWS and MAP writing results produced measurable growth and improvement in writing scores. Evidence indicates a comprehensive assessment system that is aligned with expectations for student learning. Interviews with teachers demonstrated an operational knowledge of how assessment results inform instruction.

Student performance and system effectiveness are communicated to all stakeholders through parent access to PowerSchool, parent teacher conferences, monthly reports by the principal to the board of trustees, the monthly newsletter, "Perceptions", to all mailbox holders, and the annual Student Data Booklet provided to all stakeholders.

Glenrock High School employs an assessment system based on clearly-defined performance measures that yield valid and reliable results and the use of summative results and diagnostic measures are readily evident. Interviews with teachers reflected a culture of collaboration and sharing of best practices across contents in order to make decisions regarding instructional strategies and best practices that will make positive impacts in student learning.

Standard 4, Documenting and Using Results, was rated as Highly Functional.

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

- The CCSD#2 has demonstrated a systematic commitment to a program assessment process that promotes critical self-reflection as a result of comprehensive performance data and a culture of continuous improvement.
- A comprehensive system has been developed for collecting summative program data, providing teachers and administrators with access to timely data, and holding high expectations for data-based decision making.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Develop and implement a plan for ongoing professional development to provide all teachers with the tools necessary to effectively inform instructional decisions based on accurate analysis of student assessment data in all content and program areas.
- Explore additional training in the area of Professional Learning Communities to help teachers gain a clear focus for this collaborative time.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional," indicating that the Converse County School District #2 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Documenting & Using Results" standard.

Standard 5: Resource & Support Systems

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

Description:

The Converse County School District #2 recruits and employs qualified professional and support staff necessary to fulfill the vision, mission, and goals of the district. Principals in some schools assign mentors to teachers new to the district on a formal basis but informally in other schools. To meet the needs of all students, academically and socially, the district provides behavioral specialists, counselors, an instructional facilitator, a speech pathologist, teacher assistants, a nurse, and other professionals. The district has a well-developed and efficient transportation system. The full-time director of special education and staff supplement teacher activities for students with special needs in each of the schools.

Teachers and support staff are encouraged to participate in professional development programs to enhance their efforts to increase job performance. Small class size benefits students in that teachers can give each student attention that is more individualized. The district offers 9th hour for students needing additional assistance and academic support for those wanting to enhance their academic endeavors.

The district has sound financial management practices and makes effective and prudent use of school funds. The budget, developed by the superintendent with input from each school administrator, is presented to the board for final approval. An outside firm conducts an annual audit of district finances. The Wyoming legislature has placed high emphasis on education as evidenced by an outstanding level of funding for schools.

The district has written security and crisis management plans and provides schools with copies for each classroom. In addition, the team found the schools to be safe and orderly. Schools are well equipped with modern computer labs and most classrooms have SmartBoards. The QAR team found ample evidence that facilities are well-maintained, attractive learning environment, and are sources of strong community pride. However, there is no written plan for maintaining and improving the facilities.

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

- Funding for district operations is provided at a very high level.
- The appearance of facilities indicates that the district takes pride in its schools.
- The district employs a special education director to oversee the requirements of all special needs students.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Implement a written plan for maintaining and improving facilities in the district.
- Provide the necessary funding for implementing a district-wide mentor plan for new teachers and support staff.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional," indicating that the Converse County School District #2 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Resource & Support Systems" standard.

Standard 6: Stakeholder Communications & Relationships

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

Description:

A variety of modes of communication were evidenced as the Converse County School District #2 uses PowerSchool, email, voicemail, the monthly Perceptions district newsletter, one-on-one meetings, district website, brochures, Parent-Teacher conferences, open board meetings, and presentations to inform and solicit feedback from stakeholders. Further details of district actions are available through documented agendas, minutes, calendars, and stakeholder participation at all levels.

The AdvancED accreditation process appears to have been instrumental in galvanizing stakeholder buy-in to the continuous improvement paradigm to varying degrees among district schools and a valuable result of this outreach has been a sense of personal empowerment and efficacy in advancing the overall quality of academic rigor and climate. This was specifically achieved by the use of various advisory committees, surveys, and a drive to improve professional and personal development of all stakeholders. The ability to achieve has fostered an interest to continually reach for higher levels of achievement and growth on many levels. Stakeholders have reported that they found their suggestions have been implemented and that they feel comfortable to express their ideas for improvement.

The QAR team was pleased to learn that stakeholders articulated that over the past year and a half, they found clarity in communication of targeted academic and behavioral goals, whereas these were not so focused before. The attention to collecting data, realizing the relevance of it, and crafting effective interventions and timely feedback, whether through standardized test scores or PowerSchool, gave them incentive to care and be responsible for achievement.

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

- Stakeholders across all groups indicated a confidence in the district's performance and an openness by district personnel to respectfully receive and consider suggestions.
- Performance expectations for all students are clearly established as they advance from one grade to the next.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Provide enrichment activities for high performing students, particularly in the areas of art and foreign language instruction.
- Enlist the support and involvement of additional parent volunteers, particularly in elementary and intermediate/ middle schools.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional," indicating that the Converse County School District #2 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Stakeholder Communications & Relationships" standard.

Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

Description:

CCSD #2 stakeholders engage in a continuous process of improvement (as evidenced by the Strategic Plan 2011-2013) that aligns with the vision and mission statements developed by administration, board members, teachers, staff, community stakeholders, parents, and students. Stakeholders affirmed their involvement in the continuous improvement process as evidenced by QAR team interviews. Goals to improve student achievement and academic behaviors are clearly delineated in the plan through specific objectives and implementation steps along with timelines, funding and assigned responsibilities.

A broad range of involvement by stakeholder groups in the design, management, and implementation of the district's improvement plan was evidenced by interviews, newsletters, and specific agendas.

CCSD #2 has a variety of baseline and interval data to describe progress toward identified goals as defined in the Strategic Plan. Evidence gathered through artifacts and interviews with stakeholders validated a continuous improvement plan that directly effects student achievement and reduces academic deficiencies.

Professional development is provided to instructional staff members to help them implement interventions specifically designed to target students not achieving academic proficiency. Professional development with research-based programs is provided in the areas of MAP training, DIBELS Next, AIMSweb, PowerSchool, and intervention/testing specific training. Evidence of training in these areas was affirmed by stakeholder interviews and artifacts provided to the QAR team.

A continuous review process to ensure ongoing monitoring and adjustment of the improvement plan is in place. Monitoring progress is shared by the administration, building leadership team and staff. Ongoing adjustments and course corrections to improve student academic performance was noted through interviews with stakeholders and observations.

The district uses a variety of communication techniques to inform stakeholders of district improvement efforts and successes including a comprehensive website accessible to all stakeholders with links that provide information on a wide range of school related areas, policies, annual reports, district committees and information on other schools. Parents are also able to access pertinent information about their child through PowerSchool and the district produces a newsletter, "Perceptions", that is mailed to every resident of Glenrock.

Mentoring of new employees occurs within the district and school cultures at different levels of engagement. The QAR team did not substantiate a formal district process for mentoring that provides new employees with current instructional strategies used within the district.

Glenrock Elementary School

The principal, teachers, parents, and students demonstrate a genuine commitment to the continuous school improvement process. They described their school as a place where student learning is central to each day. Students requested "harder" math and additional science activities. They reported that their teachers help

them and others with their learning.

The school has a detailed written improvement plan developed by teachers. They could describe goals, interventions, and instructional strategies to support ongoing learning. Artifact review found the plan linked to the district's Strategic Plan.

Teachers, support staff, and parents described their involvement in the 2010-2011 process for developing the district's vision, mission, and goals. It was evident through interviews that their input was valued and that they believed the Strategic Plan would have a positive impact on increasing student performance in their school.

Data review indicates increases in student achievement, especially in the area of reading. One teacher reported that the "new" district process has energized their commitment to student learning and believe the district's Strategic Plan and School Improvement Plans will be used as they are intended and not placed on the shelf until the next on-site visit. All stakeholders validated the support they received from their principal and superintendent and felt that they are held to a rigorous curriculum with high expectations.

The school continues to work on designing an effective learning process that supports goals for student learning. This was evidenced through the initial work of the Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS).

Standard 7, Commitment to Continuous Improvement, was rated as Operational.

Glenrock Intermediate School and Glenrock Middle School

Glenrock Intermediate School and Glenrock Middle School engage in a continuous process of improvement based on data related to students and the community. The strategies include curriculum pacing guides, common assessments, infusion of technology and ongoing professional development. Several notable achievements in the past two years show improvement in scores on state assessment results. The school provided the team with data to show that specific targets for continuing achievement have been defined. Interviews with parents and teachers provided evidence that there is a wide commitment to the school's strategic direction.

There is a buy-in by students and other stakeholders to improvement efforts of the school. PowerSchool keeps parents and students informed on grades and attendance. The principal and other staff members seek parent input in all aspect of the school. In addition, the school articulates the vision and mission that utilizes goals and interventions to improve student performance.

Standard 7, Commitment to Continuous Improvement, was rated as Operational.

Glenrock High School

Glenrock High School analyzes results from a variety of sources including MAP and PAWS data. Instructional changes occur within the classroom based on the data. Schedule changes are made to allow remediation to take place during the first block and further remediation is available for students in need during the Academic Plus time on Fridays. Students indicated that they enjoyed the time and it helped them to improve academically. Stakeholders echoed their positive affirmation of the software program PowerSchool. This offered them an excellent opportunity to follow academic progress of their students. Stakeholders interviewed expressed a working knowledge of the strategic plan and specific interventions

within the plan used to improve instruction.

AdvancED climate surveys conducted by the school indicated a positive affirmation of the school's instructional systems with some concerns in the area of bullying. Administration used the data to make positive changes utilizing student council members. Interviews with students overwhelmingly indicated that the issues with bullying had been corrected.

Professional development is being provided to staff in a number of areas including MAP and Skills tutor. The QAR team noted, through observations within the classrooms, instructional time within the 90-minute block may not be utilized effectively.

Technology implementation was a concern noted by students and staff. The district has addressed those issues through the hiring of a full-time technology coordinator. It was noted by the QAR team of the overwhelming pride and support for Glenrock's staff and administration that exists within the culture of the school and community.

Standard 7, Commitment to Continuous Improvement, was rated as Operational.

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

- The district provides many opportunities for stakeholder involvement in the school improvement process.
- Many different means of communicating critical information are used regarding the school improvement process to stakeholders.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Establish a mentor program that inducts new employees to the district/school culture and provides necessary professional development for instructional strategies currently in use.
- Provide on-going professional development and staff collaboration for understanding the complexities of learning in a block.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Converse County School District #2 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Commitment to Continuous Improvement" standard.

Quality Assurance Findings

The Quality Assurance Review Team examined the effectiveness of the district's methods for quality assurance. The team reviewed the district's practices and methods to monitor and document improvement, provide meaningful feedback and support across the district, ensure that AdvancED standards are met and strengthened, and regularly collect, use, and communicate results. The team provides the following findings in this area.

Description

The district completed an Organizational Assessment in an effort to measure their strengths and the challenges they face as a system. Their efforts led them to work with both internal and external stakeholders over the course of an intensive eight days in the spring of 2011 to develop a district vision, mission, beliefs, goals, and action plan based upon the results of the assessment. The district action plan defines goals, objectives, measure of success, implementation steps and strategies, necessary resources, persons responsible for action and timelines. Professional development is embedded in the plan and is data-driven, relevant, and related to improvement efforts. Building leadership teams aligned school action plans to the district plan and teachers and staff in all schools could describe the relationship between building and district goals and their responsibility in meeting the goals and accreditation standards. Teachers reported these documents will guide teaching and learning today and in the future. Parents expressed trust and confidence in the superintendent, building leadership, and the board.

Written processes to assist the district in its efforts to monitor and document improvement are in various stages of development and implementation. A systemic and sustained curriculum process that is representative of all stakeholders through the CCC is fully implemented. A contract with the CLI has worked with the CCC in aligning standards, developing grade and content pacing guides, and writing common summative assessments. In addition, informal department reviews and internal discussions have led to the development of improved processes in some areas. An improved encumbrance process at the district office and a revised Response to Intervention process in each school reveal effective process work at both the school and district level. However, some district departments reported they have not yet identified or developed any processes to improve effectiveness or efficiency in their departments.

The district recently adopted the McRel evaluation system that will provide feedback and support across the district. The evaluation process is aligned to the district's goals and improvement efforts. This instrument will be used by principals to ensure curriculum is implemented by utilization of pacing guides, outcome component plans, and common summative assessments. Principals described how they will use student performance results to support teachers in the teaching and learning process and provide professional development as needed.

Principals are required to report on school goal and objective progress during monthly board meetings. In addition, the superintendent provides the board with progress updates quarterly, or as requested. The results are printed in the district's community newsletter which is delivered to every post office box holder in the community. Parents report that these brochures are designed to keep the community well informed regarding school activities and progress in meeting district and school goals. The team found PowerSchool, parent/teacher conferences, and phone call as the primary mode of reporting achievement progress to parents. All stakeholders report a significant decline in active parent involvement as students move from elementary to secondary.

An instructional facilitator and assessment director support the goals of the district and assist building leadership and staff members in the understanding and use of data to impact teaching and learning in the classroom. These staff members gather data regarding student performance from formative and summative assessments. They facilitate discussions with staff members at building data meetings regarding instruction and interventions. Each

school has designated time within the regular school day and during professional development days to engage in collaborative instructional decision making.

Strengths

- Stakeholders have created and committed to a comprehensive strategic plan to measure improvement. District and building leadership, teachers and staff, and community stakeholders can describe the alignment of their department or school to the vision, mission, and goals of the district.
- A comprehensive and systematic curriculum process is fully implemented. Teachers utilize pacing guides, outcome component plans, and common summative assessments to organize and monitor instruction and student achievement progress.

Opportunities

- Collect, analyze, and monitor trend data to determine effectiveness of strategic plan. Tracking growth over time will increase the success of meeting district goals and objectives to ensure desired results.
- Engage all district departments in collecting and analyzing data and information related to their existing processes to guarantee effective and efficient processes. While this activity is written in the strategic plan, evidence indicated some departments had not yet begun the process for collecting process data in their departments. Identifying and organizing key work processes will increase effectiveness and efficiency in all departments and will keep the district's vision, mission, and goals as the focus.
- Create a parent advisory committee to develop a plan for increasing parent involvement at the secondary level. Utilize the active Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) at the elementary school to begin the process.

Schools Visited

The Quality Assurance Review team visited the following schools during the visit to the Converse County School District #2 on 10/09/2011 - 10/12/2011.

Glenrock Middle School	PO Box 1300 645 S 3rd	Glenrock	Wyoming	82637
Glenrock High School	P.O. Box 1300	Glenrock	Wyoming	82637-1300
Glenrock Intermediate School	PO Box 1300	Glenrock	Wyoming	82637-1300
Grant Elementary School	PO Box 1300	Glenrock	Wyoming	82637-1300

Conclusion

The commendations and required actions in this report are designed to focus the school district on those areas that will have the greatest impact on student performance and system effectiveness. While powerful in potential, the commendations and required actions only have meaning when acted upon by the school district and its schools. The strength of this report lies in the school district's commitment to using the findings to continuously improve. The key is action. The school district 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 required actions for improvement that the school district will need to address. Following this review, the school district will be required to submit a progress report summarizing its progress toward addressing the team's required actions.

The Quality Assurance Review Team expresses appreciation to the district leadership, members of the professional staff, students, parents and other community representatives for hosting the review team. The team wishes the district and its students much success in the quest for excellence through NCA-CASI-WY accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Dr. Jerry Griffin, Chair/Lead Evaluator
- Mrs. Jill J. Bramlet, Vice Chair
- Mr. Richard Schaal, Team Member (Worland Middle School)
- Dr. Robert Krisko, Team Member (RMK Services)
- Dr. Julie S. Von Frank, Team Member
- Ms. Susan M. Labadi, Team Member (Genius School, Inc.)
- Mr. Michael Dellisanti, Team Member (Greenway High School)
- Mr. Billy R. Folkes, Team Member
- Mr. Jason Horsley, Team Member (Star Valley Middle School)

AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems

The AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems are comprehensive statements of quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school districts to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness. As school districts 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 system establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system.

Governance and Leadership

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

Teaching and Learning

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

Documenting and Using Results

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

Resource and Support Systems

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

Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

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

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Hot Springs County School District #1
415 Springview
Thermopolis, Wyoming, United States 82443**

**Mr. Dustin Hunt, Superintendent
Dr. Jerry Griffin, Chair/Lead Evaluator, Quality Assurance Review Team**

Review Dates: 10/16/2011 - 10/20/2011



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 6

 Required Actions 7

 Next Steps 9

Standards for Accreditation 11

 Standard 1: Vision & Purpose 11

 Standard 2: Governance & Leadership 13

 Standard 3: Teaching & Learning 15

 Standard 4: Documenting & Using Results 18

 Standard 5: Resource & Support Systems 21

 Standard 6: Stakeholder Communications & Relationships 22

 Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement 23

Quality Assurance Findings 27

Schools Visited 28

Conclusion 28

Appendix 28

 Quality Assurance Review Team Members 31

 AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems 31

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 Schools (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, school districts, and educational service agencies continuously improve.

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

- 1) Meet the AdvancED Standards and Policies for Quality School Systems.** School districts demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards and policies which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school districts to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.
- 2) Engage in continuous improvement.** School districts and their schools implement a continuous improvement process that articulates the vision and purpose that the school district is pursuing (vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school and district 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.** School districts and schools engage in a planned process of ongoing internal review and self-assessment. In addition, school districts host an external quality assurance review team once every five years. The team evaluates the school district's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards, assesses the efficacy of the school district's improvement process and methods for quality assurance, and provides commendations and required actions to help the school district improve. The team provides an oral exit report to the school district and a written report detailing the team's required actions. The school district acts on the team's required actions and submits a progress report two years following the review.

NCA CASI and SACS CASI accreditation engages the entire school district community in a continuous process of self-evaluation and improvement. The overall aim is to help school districts and their schools maximize student success and improve organizational effectiveness

Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review

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

1. Evaluate the school district's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards and policies.
2. Assess the efficacy of the district's improvement process and methods for quality assurance.
3. Identify commendations and required actions to improve the district and its schools.
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 district is operating with institutional integrity - that it is fulfilling its vision and mission for its students.

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

Summary of Team Activities. The Quality Assurance Review Team is led by an AdvancED certified District Lead Evaluator and comprised of professionals from outside the school district. The team reviews the findings of the school district's internal self-assessment, conducts interviews with representative groups of stakeholders, reviews student performance data and other documentation provided by the school district, and observes practices and daily operations. The team engages in professional deliberations to reach consensus on the school district'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 district and its schools 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 district. The report contains commendations and required actions for improvement.

Using the Report - Responding to the Required Actions. The school district uses the report to guide its improvement efforts. The school district is held accountable for addressing the required actions identified in the report. The AdvancED State Office is available to assist the school district in addressing the required actions. Following the Quality Assurance Review Team visit, the school district must submit a progress report detailing the actions and progress it has made on the team's required actions. The report is reviewed at the state and national level to ensure the school district is addressing the required actions.

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

Summary of Findings

A Quality Assurance Review Team representing the NCA CASI Wyoming State Office (NCA-CASI-WY), a division of AdvancED, visited Hot Springs County School District #1 on 10/16/2011 - 10/20/2011.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 5 administrators, 62 teachers, 37 support staff, 30 parents and business partners, 51 students, and 2 Board of Education members for a total of 187 stakeholders. In addition to meeting with district personnel and stakeholders, the team visited 3 schools within the school district. During the school visits, team members interviewed school stakeholders, observed classrooms, and reviewed relevant school artifacts. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by the district. Specifically, the team examined the district's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

1. Vision and Purpose
2. Governance and Leadership
3. Teaching and Learning
4. Documenting and Using Results
5. Resource and Support Systems
6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships
7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The AdvancED standards focus on systems with a school district 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 district, looking not only for adherence to individual standards, but also for how the school district and its schools function as a whole and embody the practices and characteristics of a quality school district.

Through its examination of the school district's adherence to the standards, the Quality Assurance Review Team prepared reports on each standard, highlighting strengths and suggestions for improvement specific to each standard. These reports can be found following this summary.

The Quality Assurance Review Team also examined the effectiveness of the district's methods for quality assurance. The team reviewed the district's practices and methods to monitor and document improvement, provide meaningful feedback and support across the district, ensure that AdvancED standards are met and strengthened, and regularly collect, use, and communicate results. The team's findings in this area can be found following the standard reports.

The team used the standard reports and quality assurance findings to identify common themes, significant accomplishments, and pressing needs facing the district. These became the basis for the overall commendations and required actions that are provided below. The commendations and required actions should serve as the focus for the district as it acts on the team's findings. They represent the areas that the team believes will have the greatest impact in helping the district further its improvement efforts. The standard reports and quality assurance findings can be used to help reinforce and enrich the district's understanding of the commendations and required actions.

Commendations

The Quality Assurance Review Team commends the Hot Springs County School District #1 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.

Commendation 1

Commendation Statement:

A well developed technology program that provides laptops, ipads and other forms of technology, including SmartBoards, on a 3:1 technology to student ratio.

Evidence:

Written evidence indicated and observations and interviews by QAR team members supported the availability of various forms of technology for student and employee use. In addition, QAR team members observed the use of technology, especially laptops, ipads and SmartBoards, as important learning tools during classroom visits at all instructional and graded levels.

Rationale:

Technology, available to all students and used effectively, can become an important learning tool and immediately expand learning opportunities outside the four walls of the classroom and into the far reaches of time (past, present and future) and space.

Commendation 2

Commendation Statement:

Collaboration of faculty, staff, school board and some external stakeholders through the implementation of the Curriculum Coordinating Council and Subject Area Committees as a major part of the district's work with the Curriculum Leadership Institute.

Evidence:

The creation of a Curriculum Coordinating Committee appears to ensure district-wide curriculum alignment and consistency. Membership on the committee is broad-based, is charged with the stewardship of the district's curriculum and, as a part of that process, communicates and coordinates with building level Subject Area Committees.

Rationale:

The creation and use of the CCC and SAC appear to provide stability for curriculum decision making and represent a most important part of the district's quality assurance process.

Commendation 3

Commendation Statement:

The effective implementation of professional learning communities to facilitate communication and improve instruction and student learning outcomes through collaboration.

Evidence:

A review of written documentation and responses to questions by faculty and administrators during stakeholder interview sessions provided support for the district's claim of implementation of professional learning communities. Based on the depth and breadth of responses to questions, the QAR team concluded that the implementation of professional learning communities meant more than faculty members meeting informally to discuss what they were doing in their classrooms. It was obvious that their meetings and discussions were focused on collaborative efforts to improve instruction and student learning outcomes through the use of differentiated instructional strategies, discussion of individual student needs and, among others, sharing of literature and research.

Rationale:

Effective communication among faculty that focuses on the use of research-based instructional strategies and current best practices to improve student learning is absolutely essential for building and maintain a process that holds promise of ensuring sustainable, long term improvement.

Commendation 4

Commendation Statement:

Clean and attractive facilities that appear to be exceedingly well maintained.

Evidence:

QAR team members visited each of the schools in HSCSD#1 and found them to be safe, attractive, well maintained and conducive for learning and play. The district also has a maintenance and facilities improvement plan in place that will ensure quality facilities well into the future.

Rationale:

Safe, attractive and well maintained facilities are important ingredients for creating a favorable learning environment where students are not distracted by problems created by vandalism, age and, among others, poor up keep.

Required Actions

In addition to the commendations, the Quality Assurance Review Team identified the following required actions for improvement. The team focused its required actions on those areas that, if addressed, will have the greatest impact on improving student performance and overall effectiveness of the school district. The Hot Springs County School District #1 will be held accountable for making progress on each of the required actions noted in this section. Following this review, the school district will be asked to submit a progress report on these required actions. The district should refer to the detail provided in the standard reports for guidance and greater depth on the required actions.

Required Action 1

Required Action:

Develop and implement a clear district vision statement, consistent with the guidelines of Standard I, Vision and Purpose, that directly supports increased student success and is structured with written timelines, procedures, and processes essential for accomplishing the vision.

Evidence:

The Quality Assurance Review Team could not identify any evidence to support the existence of a vision for the Hot Springs County School District #1. The district does have a mission statement that was adopted on 12/20/2001 and, according to district leaders, has been revisited often throughout the past 10 years but with no substantive change. Further, it appeared to members of the QAR team during stakeholder interviews that mission and vision were used synonymously.

Rationale:

In the ordering of AdvancED standards, Vision and Purpose is Standard I. As such, vision gives purpose and meaning to an organization and is the foundation upon which all systems, processes, and activities should be based, including essential decisions related to the allocation of human, material and fiscal resources.

Required Action 2

Required Action:

Develop and implement a process that ensures involvement of all stakeholder groups in both district level and school level decision making and related actions and activities.

Evidence:

During interviews with QAR team members, particularly at the school level, many stakeholders indicated a desire for increased opportunities for involvement in decision making and related activities at all levels within HSCSD#1. While evidence does indicate that district leaders do provide opportunities for internal stakeholder involvement in decision making and, to a lesser degree, the involvement of external stakeholder groups as well, it did not appear that the practice was systemic and followed with consistency to ensure on-going, broad-based, stakeholder representation.

Rationale:

District and school level personnel appear to do an effective job of communicating with stakeholders throughout Hot Springs County. However, of equal importance, is the charge included in Standard VI, Stakeholder Involvement and Communication, to also involve both internal and external stakeholders in the important work and decision making activities at both the district and school levels.

Required Action 3

Required Action:

Develop and implement a system that focuses on district-wide program assessment in order to ensure that resources (human, material and fiscal) are utilized effectively and efficiently to maximize student learning outcomes.

Evidence:

HSCSD#1 has a major curriculum development project underway in collaboration with the Curriculum Leadership Institute and is at the mid-point in the process with 4-5 major curriculum units yet to be developed. In addition, as a result of a Wyoming mandate of all school districts, district personnel selected the McREL personnel evaluation program and, at this point, it is in the early stages of implementation. Central office personnel also provided evidence of many special initiatives underway that are linked to grants and identified district needs. Together, these initiatives and others not mentioned represent major areas of responsibility and accountability that require oversight by one or more district personnel. With a professional staff of less than 100 persons, each new program appears to add to the load without a corresponding reduction in load resulting from

program completion or termination.

Rationale:

A system that focuses on program assessment would ensure that current resource requirements, especially human, would not be spread to a point of reduction in effectiveness and would further ensure that only those programs that hold the most promise for increasing student achievement would be retained.

Review of AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools: The team reviewed the district'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 district 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 district.
3. Develop action plans to address the required actions made by the team. Include methods for monitoring progress toward the required actions.
4. Use the report to guide and strengthen the school district's efforts to improve student performance and district effectiveness.
5. Two years following the Quality Assurance Review, submit the Accreditation Progress Report detailing progress made toward addressing the required actions. The report will be reviewed at the state and national level to ensure that significant progress is being made toward the required actions. 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.

Celebrating Accreditation

Following the visit, the Quality Assurance Review Team submits an accreditation recommendation to AdvancED for review and action at the national level by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, which confers accreditation and communicates it to the school district. Upon receiving its accreditation, the school district should celebrate its achievement with the community. Flags, door decals, diploma seals, and other related items can be ordered from the website to help you share your accomplishment with your community.

Summary

The accreditation process engages the school district, its schools, and community in an ongoing journey of continuous improvement. The next steps in this journey are to build on the commendations and address the required actions noted in this report. Doing so will enable the school district 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 district 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.

The Quality Assurance Review Team divided into standard teams to review each standard and prepare a standards report summarizing the team's findings. These standard reports, along with the quality assurance findings that follow these reports, provided the basis for the team's identification of over-arching commendations and required actions presented earlier in this report. The reports submitted by each team are provided on the following pages for the district's review and use. Each report reflects its respective team's unique voice, perspective, and deliberations. The reports can be used to help enrich and deepen the district's understanding of the overall commendations and required actions.

Standard 1: Vision & Purpose

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

Description:

A statement of mission was developed and approved on 12/20/2001 that focuses the energy and resources of the Hot Springs County School District #1 on engaging in partnership with the family and community to provide a safe, positive and effective learning environment to maximize the potential of each individual. Based on evidence acquired through stakeholder interviews and a review of some written evidence, it appears that the mission statement has been reviewed periodically but no substantive changes have been made since the date of original adoption. Several references in the Standards Assessment Report and during stakeholder interviews led the QAR team to conclude that vision and mission are viewed and utilized synonymously. As a result, no evidence (written, observational or interview) was discovered that supported the existence of a district vision as required by Standard I.

The mission of HSCSD #1 is included in district-level publications and is posted conspicuously throughout district facilities. Stakeholders appeared to be familiar with the mission statement and, in general, knew its fundamental intent. District-wide goals and assessments appear to be linked directly to the mission statement. Based on evidence gathered from stakeholder interviews and evidence reviewed in written form, it appears that the mission statement provided a basis for the development of the district's Strategic Plan and guides decision making and current instructional practices throughout the district.

A profile is maintained and periodically updated that includes student and community demographics, assessment data and information, federal compliance data related to free and reduced meal eligibility and, among others, participation in programs and services for students with special needs.

A process is in place for reviewing the district's mission and evidence indicated that it has been used periodically since adoption of the mission. Presumably that same process will be used to guide the district in the development of a new vision and, if needed, revision of the current mission statement.

Ralph Witters Elementary School

Artifacts, interviews, and observations at Ralph Witters Elementary reveal a school with a shared purpose to provide a quality education for students. The district mission is found throughout the school. However, the evidence also substantiates that there is not a shared vision. Parent interviews indicated that they see the need for formalizing a vision that directs the teaching and learning process. They indicated a need for creating a shared purpose that all stakeholders support. During student interviews, students were articulate about why they were at school and what the essence of a school is. The Quality Assurance Review Team suggests that developing a shared vision with parent and student input will build shared responsibility and communicate a clear purpose.

Standard I, Vision and Purpose, was rated as Operational.

Thermopolis Middle School

Thermopolis Middle School has created a safe, positive environment for student learning. Educators have begun to work in Professional Learning Communities and are being provided with collaborative time to address student learning and ensure student success. The entire staff has worked hard to create “an environment that maximizes the potential of each individual”. The mission appears on the school website and in the school handbook.

The QAR team found evidence that the mission statement is known by staff and other stakeholders, and is used to guide changes in instruction and school environment. Bullying was recently identified in surveys as a school wide problem, and the district and school have used Rachel's Challenge in a move to create a safer environment within the school. Although interviews with student stakeholders indicated bullying may still be occurring, students indicated they felt safe at school.

Changes to instruction to “maximize the potential of each individual” has prompted a change in focus from the administrative level towards ensuring students are learning and making progress through the use of assessment and data analysis that is timely and relevant. In addition, the school has several after school programs: Lights On meets regularly to enrich student learning, and Academic Opportunities provides remediation.

There is a lack of a vision statement, however, from the district and that lack is also evident at the school level. In interviews with a variety of stakeholders, all of them were conversant about the district goal to be the number one district in the state, though none of them were able to articulate a vision statement for the school or district. Though there was an implicit understanding of goals and direction articulated amongst stakeholders, a development of vision will help to further focus the improvement efforts and effectiveness of the school.

Standard I, Vision and Purpose, was rated as Emerging.

Hot Springs County High School

Hot Springs County High School personnel have committed to improving the teaching and learning process. Building wide, the staff has bought into Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and is operating on an effective, collaborative level. Significant efforts to reduce student failure rates, increase curricular rigor, and infuse technology into the classroom have been widely embraced by the teaching staff. However, the absence of clearly defined expectations for student learning reflects the lack of a clear building vision.

Moving forward, emphasis and infusion of a school vision into the building culture will add to the overall purpose and direction of the staff, stakeholders, and students. Articulation of a clear vision will also provide the staff and stakeholders with a more focused ability to prioritize the overall allocation, implementation, and assessment of building resources and initiatives.

Standard I, Vision and Purpose, was rated as Emerging.

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

- A process is in place for reviewing the district's mission and it appears the district's needs have been well-served by and through its use.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Develop and implement a vision that provides a clear, long term focus for the district, guides all aspects of district decision making and informs the revision of the current mission (consistent with focus of Standard I).

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Emerging," indicating that the Hot Springs County School District #1 has not met the accreditation requirements for the "Vision & Purpose" standard.

Standard 2: Governance & Leadership

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

Description:

The Hot Springs County School District #1 is governed by a seven member board of trustees. The members are elected at large from the county electorate and serve four-year terms. The board is responsible for the overall operation of the district, which includes, among others, developing policy, budgets and accountability guidelines for students and staff at all levels. The monthly board meetings are conducted on the fourth Thursday of each month and are open to the public. Based on interview results, district staff members and other stakeholders at large, both internal and external, are very appreciative of the district leadership's initiative and the focus on continuous school improvement.

The Hot Springs Board of Trustees is a member of the Wyoming School Boards Association and seeks to stay abreast of current policies and best practices through various training opportunities and annual board retreats. The board continuously reviews school policy and makes revisions when necessary to align district goals with current practices. Copnehaver, Kath, Kitchen, & Kolpitcke, LLC, Attorneys at Law are on retainer as the legal representative for board hearings and appeals process and other legal matters.

The superintendent and the board of trustees recognize their responsibility to manage public resources and to serve as good stewards. Based on written evidence and interviews, the Business Manager is an active member on the district's leadership team and serves a vital role in keeping the board informed of monthly financials. Upon additional request, the business manager provides board members with current data that reflects up-to-date expenditures and revenue. They have worked collectively to provide students of the

Hot Springs School District #1 with world class facilities and state of the art technology. It was noted in an interview that the current per-pupil expenditure is approximately \$16,300.

Evidence gathered from interviews indicated that the district has adopted the principles of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and has made a commitment to collaborate, both vertically and horizontally, for systemic improvements. Evidence supports that leadership opportunities are distributed throughout the district and internal stakeholders are provided opportunities to participate in professional development and decision making activities and processes. This organizational structure creates a culture that is student-focused and is in the early stages of becoming institutionalized throughout the district. District goals and expectations are communicated at all levels and can be articulated among the various internal stakeholder groups within the school district.

Common curriculum assessments and other assessment strategies have been developed in-house to evaluate curriculum, programs and operations but do not appear to be sufficiently aligned to provide the district with comprehensive and reliable information for decision making. To address this need, an assessment protocol should be developed that can serve as a guide for developing a process to evaluate system effectiveness.

The district has created internal collaborative networks among faculty and staff based on its involvement with the Curriculum Leadership Institute. This has provided opportunities for staff members to serve on the Curriculum Coordinating Council and Subject Area Committees. This collaboration facilitates the alignment of resources and provides vertical support toward meeting student performance outcomes. Furthermore, the district has placed an emphasis on infusing technology into teaching and learning and provided additional collaborative opportunities through the Digital Educators Leadership Team.

A commitment has been made by district leaders to communicate with all stakeholders and seek their input as a part of the decision making process. Community members and parents have participated in surveys and community forums to provide input and guidance which has provided direction to the board and superintendent.

The district is in the beginning phase of implementing the McRel evaluation system to foster a culture of professional growth and to assist in recruitment and retention efforts.

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

- District leaders provide internal stakeholders with opportunities to participate in the decision making process which promotes a culture of shared responsibility and ownership.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Create an assessment protocol that will serve as a guide for developing a process for evaluating system effectiveness.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Hot Springs County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Governance & Leadership" standard.

Standard 3: Teaching & Learning

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

Description:

Evidence supports a strong district commitment to providing a learning environment for students that targets standards and benchmarks, provides assessments to evaluate student learning, and analyzes student data to inform instruction. The Curriculum Leadership Institute (CLI) model is an essential component for how curriculum is developed. There are formal district documents that articulate timelines and procedures for CLI implementation and built in processes for review and evaluation of curriculum. Teacher interviews at all levels substantiated the district focus on developing curriculum that is focused on essential knowledge and skills and providing standards based instruction.

The components of formal professional learning communities (PLCs) are systemic throughout the district. Teachers articulated the district and school expectation that grade/district PLCs have formal structures such as norms, agendas, minutes, and focus on how to improve student success. In interviews, teachers underline how essential the collaborative PLC time is to improving teaching and learning.

In all school sites, the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Team observed an orderly safe learning environment. One student said in the interview; “My school is really organized so it’s easier for me to learn.” The district has communicated the expectation that key instructional times should be protected. A review of schedules indicates schools are systematically reviewing schedules to ensure enough instructional and learning time for teachers and students. Hot Springs School District# 1 implemented a four and a half day school week this year and interviews indicate it is too soon to assess whether this change will actually improve teacher/student contact time.

The district demonstrates a commitment to implementing research based initiatives that will increase student success. However, based on evidence gathered from stakeholder interviews, it did not appear that students were provided opportunities to be involved in analyzing their learning progress or in setting learning goals. Parents and community members discussed the quantity of initiatives being implemented and wondered if teachers would “burn out.” During teacher interviews, teachers sometimes seemed unclear on the why and how of initiative implementation; however, they expressed a willingness to “do what it takes” to improve student achievement. Further, they also indicated a need for more effective alignment between curriculum and assessment to ensure that assessment results are valid, reliable and will produce outcomes that support the continuous improvement process. Teachers and other stakeholders, including parents, also noted a need to track graduates as a way of assessing the district's performance in preparing students for postsecondary success.

Up to date technology tools such as ipads and Promethean boards are readily available to students and staff throughout the district. Infrastructure is in place to support the technology initiative. The QAR Team commends the district for the teacher friendly, research based professional development plan to train teachers in technology use in the classroom. Classroom visits substantiate a wide and varied use of technology to support student learning. The enthusiasm was evident among both students and staff.

Administrators and teachers discussed programs and structures designed to support the at-risk learner. Staff teams are developing assessments and charts to monitor individual student success, and interventions

that address student learning needs. At the elementary level, teachers indicate they have revised the reading instructional block to provide more time for small group and one-to-one instruction. In secondary student interviews, students indicated teachers are willing to give them individual help if they don't understand an assignment or concept. There is evidence that individual differences are respected and diversity is celebrated. Administrative leadership indicated one of the next steps will be to follow up on graduates to evaluate the success of the district in preparing students for the future.

Ralph Witters Elementary School

An instructional tour of Ralph Witters Elementary validates a learning community clearly focused on student success. Observations throughout the day substantiate schedules developed to protect critical learning time. During direct instruction and individual student work time, the expectation is that students will be on task and engaged. Instructional conversations between teachers and students in K-4 classrooms frequently tied classroom learning to life outside of school. For example, in a primary classroom, students were recording the weather according to what they observed on the way to school. In another classroom, students were using the Promethean board with vocabulary words and defining the words by creating sentences from their experience.

Technology is a valuable tool to both students and staff. There is ongoing embedded staff development for using these tools to enhance the student learning environment. Students, staff, and parents described the school environment as being both positive and supportive; however, both parents and students indicated a need to increase rigor.

Teacher interviews indicate an ongoing process to develop and implement curriculum. They appreciate the daily collaborative time to work in professional learning communities where they are adjusting curriculum, analyzing student progress, and creating assessments to validate this progress. As one of the students said in the student interviews, "This is a real school."

Standard III, Teaching and Learning, was rated as Operational.

Thermopolis Middle School

Thermopolis Middle School promotes clear expectations for student learning based on state and national standards. These expectations are shared with students and parents through course syllabi, assessments, and rubrics. Although stakeholders interviewed were conversant with district goals, there is currently an absence of a vision with which to align expectations for student learning. Recent PAWS test results indicate that student scores have shown clear gains in the area of writing and, more recently, reading but lack similar improvement outcomes in mathematics.

Through classroom observations, the QAR team noted instructional practices that included direct instruction as well as student-focused engagement. Students were engaged and participating in the classrooms visited. Student interviews verified that students felt they were receiving a good education. Some scheduling issues are present that involve non-core classes and seminar time that provides intervention for struggling students. Some non-core classes (band and Chorus) meet during the seminar time, but students are pulled out of these classes for remediation, and can lose attendance privileges for too many violations. Students expressed some dismay at this, but there are other opportunities for students to make up lost work that would not impact band and Chorus.

The Google docs feedback, as well as use of MAP and PAWs testing results, have been used to guide, develop, and strengthen instructional practices. Artifacts indicate that all but one staff member is fully

certified in their subject area. All staff members are involved in the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process where they share resources and effective learning strategies. Through the PLCs, teachers review data and make instructional decisions to guide student learning. This vehicle also provides an opportunity for vertical and horizontal planning, collaboration, and sharing of best practice. In addition, CLI curriculum development has also focused on vertical and horizontal planning and alignment within disciplines, but the newness of this approach has not yet allowed for cross-content unit design.

Technology is used throughout the school in classrooms, with smart boards, wireless voice amplification, and student laptops provided for individual classroom use. QAR members noted students and staff using various technologies to increase student engagement. The team noted that Special Ed students were moved more or less as a group from class to class in the upper grades, but this did not seem inappropriate given the small school size where scheduling of students is driven by mathematics and language arts needs. They were in classes which included mainstreamed students, and grouping also allowed for more efficient use of paraprofessional's time and energies.

In interviews with staff, however, there was some concern at the number of new initiatives underway at the Middle School. Some staff were feeling that the work load had increased considerably, and were concerned that they were losing time and energy to concentrate on instruction. Other staff members do not yet have full buy-in for the new initiatives underway. An important concern going forward, the QAR team felt was to continue to communicate and develop a sense of ownership for new initiatives amongst all staff members.

Standard III, Teaching and Learning, was rated as Operational.

Hot Springs County High School

Hot Springs County High School personnel have committed to improving the teaching and learning process. Building wide, the staff has bought into Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and is operating on an effective, collaborative level. Significant efforts to reduce student failure rates, increase curricular rigor, and infuse technology into the classroom have been widely embraced by the teaching staff. However, the absence of clearly defined expectations for student learning reflects the lack of a clear building vision.

Moving forward, emphasis and infusion of a school vision into the building culture will add to the overall purpose and direction of the staff, stakeholders, and students. Articulation of a clear vision will also provide the staff and stakeholders with a more focused ability to prioritize the overall allocation, implementation, and assessment of building resources and initiatives.

Standard III, Teaching and Learning, was rated as Emerging.

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

- Professional learning communities provide support for curriculum development and implementation. Staff collaboration and accountability is the expectation.
- Technology is utilized to support instruction and prepare students to be global citizens.
- The graduation rate has improved to 93.13 per cent and plans are in place to improve this rate.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Develop and implement procedures, processes, and timelines by which initiatives are implemented.
- Ensure that curriculum and assessment are aligned and there is consistent vertical articulation.
- Develop a system to involve students in analyzing their progress and setting and achieving goals.

- Investigate ways to track graduates to assess the success of the district in preparing students for the future.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Hot Springs County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Teaching & Learning" standard.

Standard 4: Documenting & Using Results

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

Description:

Hot Springs School District #1 has done a good job in developing and using data to make decisions about instructional practices. It has yearly comprehensive assessments in the form of PAWS (Wyoming assessment test), MAP testing, DIBELS and Scholastic Reading Inventory as well as other assessments. The district has used these data to prompt changes in instruction at the district level, and is developing processes and procedures for changes in instruction at the school and classroom level.

A few years ago the district embarked on rewriting its curriculum through contract with the Curriculum Leadership Institute (CLI), and is still in the process of doing so. Indications are that this work will still take several years to complete, with the first few subjects (math and language arts) in the initial stages of implementation. The work is intended to help create vertical and horizontal alignment within subject areas. Through this process each subject area has developed its own assessments to ensure student learning. Through the use of Google docs, these assessments now help provide real time feedback to instructional staff about student learning, prompting them to adjust teaching to ensure that student learning is taking place as well as providing opportunities to share best practices. The team has concerns, however, that these in-house developed common assessments may not be reliable or valid in terms of alignment with curriculum goals and broader educational outcomes. Although these tools are evident at the school level, the QAR team recommends that a review process be established at the district level to create transparency between grade levels and ensure the assessment system is providing information at all levels that is reliable, valid and bias free.

There are multiple examples of district use of data to adjust instructional strategies. Some of these are: use of a weekly list of struggling students which has enabled the district to provide these students with remedial intervention to ensure their continued academic success. This intervention is provided in several ways: through the Academic Opportunities program, time within the school day for students to meet with teachers for help, and student tutoring and credit recovery programs which occur at the local learning center. Data presented indicates that in the last year the number of failing students has declined. Another example of data use has been the recognition of poor math scores, which is currently being addressed in a partnership with the University of Wyoming through a program called Ready to Learn Math. This initiative is still too new to provide measurable results. A final example is the district's response to student readiness at the kindergarten level. The district has developed a program with the various private preschool providers in the district to provide guidance in skill development and student preparation that will enable students to enter kindergarten better prepared to succeed. The program's development, in cooperation with the providers, has helped provide a sense of buy in and ownership of results for all parties and

strengthened ties between the district and the community.

The district's technology has advanced rapidly in the past few years, and they have recently implemented a 1 to 1 iPad program at the high school level, with laptops used within various courses at the middle school. Some assessment of the effects of this initiative as to teaching and learning have been developed with staff members by the technology coordinator; however, there is, at present, no overall assessment strategy to judge the effect of this use of technology that has been developed at the district level.

There are many avenues of communication in use throughout the district which enable stakeholders to receive information about student performance, from direct mail, weekly student reports sent home with students, internet, email, and social networking sites. PowerSchool is used to record student scores, and the information is readily available to stakeholders. Regular Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled to provide opportunities to discuss student performance, and parents are encouraged to make contact if they have any concerns about academic issues. In interviews, parents and other stakeholders felt they were well informed as to their student's performance and provided with the information to enable them to interpret score reports.

There is evidence of comparison of school with state levels of student performance, and this trend data shows improvement in the area of writing, which has been a focus for the district in the past two years. Data for mathematics has not shown any growth over time, reading skills have shown scattered improvement (though parent interviewees were pleased with Read 180, a new initiative to improve student reading, and which has begun to show positive results), and ACT scores have demonstrated recent gains. At present the district has no comprehensive tracking for students after graduation.

The district maintains a secure and complete record system in accordance with state and federal guidelines. This system includes the use of Power School as well as DDA for longer term data warehousing. There are plans to make use of the new state system for record storage when it is rolled out in the near future.

System wide surveys are done every three years to get stakeholder feedback as to system and organizational effectiveness. However, board members indicated that it has only been in the last two years or so that they have begun to look at and use data in decision making as to allocation of resources and support for programs. Recently the board has begun to receive reports from each school in the district containing data as to student performance. This has led the team to be concerned that system and organizational effectiveness are only being reviewed and adjustments prompted in an ad hoc way, rather than within the confines of a structured process of review and remediation that occurs at the board level. An established district vision, however, should aid in the development of these protocols for system and organizational effectiveness.

Ralph Witters Elementary School

The administration and staff clearly demonstrated that data is used to guide instruction. The principal provided a compelling example which showed how data from one of the reading assessment tools was used to identify students who are on target and who either need strategic or intensive intervention. During the interview, faculty also confirmed and explained how data is used to drive instruction and to present meaningful lessons which incorporated such research strategies as differentiated instruction and technology. The interview also yielded information which clearly showed that faculty worked together in a collaborative fashion to review data through instruments such as ATLAS Curriculum and Google Docs which are both relatively new concepts.

Standard IV, Documenting and Using Results, was rated as Operational.

Thermopolis Middle School

Thermopolis Middle School has produced a volume of data from which they have based many of the decisions that drive curriculum and instruction. The expectation expressed by the staff and administration and reinforced in interviews with parents and support staff clearly states that data is the basis from which all decisions are made. The data presented to the team was comprehensive and extensive and was derived from a variety of sources, both long-term state and national, as well as local and immediate, all of which was meant to provide information from which instructional decisions were based. The local data was of particular importance to the staff as it yielded timely individual data about students on specific concepts and reflected the effectiveness of the instruction. This was utilized to effect remediation and program decisions.

The data that was generated was available to individual instructors to improve and modify instruction as well as inform the student of the future course of instruction, enrichment or remediation. Grades and performance on individual assessments was available to all stakeholders through the power school web site which facilitated communication between staff and parents. During district presentations state statistics were evident but the team saw no evidence of comparison data with similar districts. As the schools make progress toward the stated goal of being the best in the state, it may be of value to start with a comparison with similar size districts in the basin, with which they can share challenges and successes. With few exceptions the data presented to the visiting team was trending upward in the areas identified for emphasis; however, the real challenge is to have all data points trend up with consistent, long term interventions across the curriculum. The student record system was observed to be well maintained and secured in an appropriate manner.

Standard IV, Documenting and Using Results, was rated as Operational.

Hot Springs County High School

Hot Springs County High School is currently participating in the Curriculum Leadership Institute. This has yielded opportunities to develop aligned curricula in particular content areas and use local and state assessment results to make adjustments to instructional practices. With the available technology, Hot Springs County High School is well into the operational phase of using data to drive the decision making process regarding best teaching practices. Based on the evidence, the staff is analyzing multiple data sources to identify gaps in student performance and providing interventions through revised scheduling practices to focus on student performance.

The staff of Hot Springs County High School has at their disposal a certified Google technician to train staff at all levels to enhance the process of documenting and communicating student assessment results to various stakeholders within the high school and the district. This has promoted a transparent vision of student performance levels and has fostered instructional decisions.

Standard IV, Documenting and Using Results, was rated as Operational.

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

- The district has created and implemented a timely intervention system for struggling students.
- A real time program for assessing student data has been developed that allows changes in instruction which ensure learning outcomes are met.
- A coordinated preschool preparedness program has been developed to ensure that incoming students are ready for success.

- The district has begun to provide monthly data reports from schools for review by the School Board.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Develop assessment protocols for technology, to judge its impact on teaching and student learning.
- Develop a systematic review calendar and criteria for assessing organizational effectiveness.
- Ensure that assessments align to curriculum, are reliable, valid, and bias free.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Hot Springs County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Documenting & Using Results" standard.

Standard 5: Resource & Support Systems

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

Description:

The need to attract, hire, develop and retain quality personnel is a recognized objective of the HSCSD#1 board and district leadership as evidenced by the strategic plan and numerous references to this process in board communications. The challenges of staffing to meet the needs of teaching and learning in compliance with local, state and federal mandates is an ongoing process and the district continues to improvise and innovate to meet this need. Professional development of staff to fully implement the numerous mandates of the board is a priority that has been addressed, and the follow through will be evident as goals are met over time. Staffing requirements needed to meet the challenges of shared staff among schools and reduced student enrollment, in compliance with state and federal regulations, is a need recognized by both the school and community and the process of addressing these identified needs should be prioritized and formalized. In addition, a mentoring program should be developed that addresses the needs of newly hired personnel to ensure long-term staff retention and stability. Mentoring and professional development should also be provided for administrators and faculty on the newly adopted McRel evaluation system to ensure effective implementation.

A facilities and maintenance plan is in place that has addressed anticipated needs and the board has established both long term and short term needs that should be addressed. The business and financial affairs of the district are in compliance with all applicable rules and regulations, and all financial transactions are audited on a regular basis with reports in place. Facilities were clean and well maintained and, based on observations, appeared to contribute to a safe and orderly environment. Personnel responsible for this effort are to be commended for taking pride in their work and maintaining all facilities in an outstanding manner. Written security and crisis management plans are in place and procedures are practiced on a regular basis.

The support services to meet the needs of the students and staff are adequate and well funded and care is taken to insure the accurate and timely delivery of these services. The coordination of support services with the school, home and community is exemplary and the diversity and funding of these offerings are evident to all involved

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

- The procurement and allocation of quality resources was evident throughout the district, particularly in the area of technology.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Implement a mentorship program to facilitate the development of new hires and the retention of a stable staff for the long term.
- Provide logical and consistent professional development on the McRel evaluation program for staff and administrators to effectively implement this program.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Hot Springs County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Resource & Support Systems" standard.

Standard 6: Stakeholder Communications & Relationships

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

Description:

The school district has a clear understanding that continued success relies on collaborative relationships with stakeholders throughout the community. Existing partnerships with the Hot Springs Greater Learning Foundation, Hot Springs County Recreation District, and Fremont County Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) serve as just a few examples of how the district is providing learning opportunities to all students, both in and out of the regular school day.

Active collaboration with local daycare providers, through the advent of an Early Childhood Resource Center and the Early Childhood Liaison have allowed the district to increase the degree of alignment to which early childhood strategies are implemented in local daycare centers, resulting in greater student success at the kindergarten level.

The district's efforts to communicate with its stakeholders appear to have been effective for creating and maintaining a collaborative district culture that is very open to stakeholder input. Disseminating information by mail, email, newspaper publication, and radio demonstrates a concerted effort by the district to keep its stakeholders informed about the happenings of the district.

Faculty and staff members are offered shared leadership opportunities in a variety of different capacities. Becoming involved in the districts strategic planning, sitting on the Curriculum Coordinating Council (CCC), or providing input to district leadership in regards to the allocation of grant dollars are all opportunities for shared leadership within the district. However, it did not appear from written and interview evidence, that the same level of involvement was provided for external stakeholders.

It is obvious that the district maintains a learning environment that is based on standards, benchmarks and student learning expectations. However, a review of district written evidence and evidence acquired during stakeholder interviews did not reveal that student learning expectations are widely disseminated to all stakeholder groups.

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

- District personnel and stakeholders collaborate in a variety of capacities in an effort to support student learning.
- The district endeavors to communicate district initiatives and/or information by utilizing multiple media outlets.
- Faculty and staff members are continually afforded opportunities to take on shared leadership responsibilities.
- Student level, building level, and district level information is continuously provided to parents and other stakeholders.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Communicate district-level student learning expectations to all stakeholder groups.
- Develop and implement a process to ensure the involvement of all stakeholder groups in school-based and district level decision making and related actions and activities.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Hot Springs County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Stakeholder Communications & Relationships" standard.

Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

Description:

The district presented goals that are representative of continuous improvement and high expectations. District leadership, school personnel, stakeholders and students are knowledgeable and are in unanimous agreement of these four goals as indicated during interviews. District leadership, school personnel and stakeholders all echo the desire for their schools to be recognized in the State of Wyoming as the top performing school district and to reach and maintain a 100% graduation rate. The four goals are representative of each school's commitment for continuous improvement which includes a focus on increasing learning for all students and closing gaps between current and expected student performance levels.

The district provides evidence that professional development opportunities are available for district and school staff. During interviews, district and school staff recounted that district and school leadership are very supportive of their desire to attend professional development; however, interested individuals must demonstrate that professional development opportunities must be aligned with the needs of the school in order to gain approval from the school and district levels. The district also provided evidence through their QAR presentation and other artifacts that data is utilized to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of its continuous improvement plan. Results are shared with stakeholders during board retreats, administrative team meetings, Curriculum Coordinating Council (CCC), school site councils, staff meetings, and the consolidated Grant Stakeholder Planning Session to determine whether the district is having and maintaining success in meeting specific expectations of its continuous improvement plan.

The district and school staff explained the implementation of four and one half day work weeks which helps allocate and protects time for planning and engaging in continuous improvement efforts system-

wide. During district and staff interviews, the QAR team noted that the weekly, one-half days are used for planning and for professional development activities. In addition, during school visits, the QAR team noted that time for planning is protected to allow faculty the opportunity to collaborate and plan. The district provides direction and assistance to its schools and operational units to support their continuous improvement efforts through support for professional development for district and school staff, protected time for faculty collaboration, district and school committee meetings, and their continuous efforts to keep all stakeholders aware of district goals.

The district does not provide evidence which demonstrates engagement in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is using because the district does not have a specific vision. This conclusion was echoed by district leadership and school-based personnel during interviews. The vision is a vital component of the continuous improvement process and, therefore, is necessary to provide strategic direction of schools, departments, and services. The district does, however, emphasize that their goals are intrinsically linked to the continuous improvement process. Another area of concern that was evident during interviews is the lack of stakeholder involvement in the process of continuous improvement. It was clear that stakeholder involvement in the continuous improvement process is only contingent of individuals who were already involved in district and school committees, thus unintentionally excluding other stakeholders who have input that may be valuable to the continuous improvement process. However, the QAR team also noted during interviews that stakeholders are kept abreast of the results of improvement efforts. Results are delivered to stakeholders by such communication methods as the district website, stakeholder meetings, newspaper, and electronic mail.

Ralph Witters Elementary School

School Leadership and faculty are clearly familiar with district goals and are committed to the district, students and stakeholders in achieving these goals. School leadership and faculty share a positive sense of community that translated into effective communication and collaboration which are instrumental in achieving stated continuous improvement plans. Although the school mission is posted throughout the school, administration and faculty were unable to specifically articulate the district vision which is a vital component of the continuous improvement process and is necessary to provide strategic direction of schools, departments, and services. Representatives from the QAR team noted that parents and students have clear expectations for continuous improvement which can be incorporated into the development of a new and specific vision statement that focuses on increased student achievement.

Standard VII, Commitment to Continuous Improvement, was rated as Operational.

Thermopolis Middle School

During the QAR process the purpose and objectives of the district were clearly understood and articulated by all stakeholders. However, a vision to drive these objectives was noticeably absent. The system and student performance effectiveness is a constant source of data that is collected and used to drive instruction; the mission statement which was generated in 2001 was in need of revisiting. The multiple opportunities for stakeholder's involvement were evident in many areas.

Student interviews indicated a feeling of being outside the loop and efforts should be made to include student stakeholders in the process through suitable student government channels. The programs at Thermopolis Middle School include many opportunities for the students to obtain help with schoolwork and to insure they meet the anticipated progress; this includes many paid positions that meet these needs

within and after the school day. These meet during the day in a seminar format for struggling students, as well as after school in the Lights On Program funded by a grant that provides food, activities and academic help until 5:00.

Reports of the progress of these programs and statistics gathered are available to all stakeholders from parents to the school board and are used to make decisions about student placement. Staff interviews indicated a strong support for the shared planning time and the need to preserve the time for instructional preparation rather than non instructional activities. As stated by the majority of the staff, it was the journey toward excellence not the destination that drives the programs and where the emphasis and the money is focused the results followed. Continuous improvement was the often heard refrain that framed the discussion of programs and activities.

Standard VII, Commitment to Continuous Improvement, was rated as Operational.

Hot Springs County High School

Hot Springs County High School has fully adopted a collaborative process that engages staff to focus on continuous improvement. Improvement efforts are clearly aligned with student performance results and teachers engage in planning curricula to improve best teaching practices. The Curriculum Leadership Institute (CLI) has provided opportunity for the development of the Curriculum Coordinating Council (CCC) and the Subject Area Committees (SAC) across the district to make curricula decisions and oversee the implementation. This practice has provided curriculum planning opportunities across the district to align resources and target improvement performance. The staff has embraced the process of providing strategic intervention strategies and supports to students for continuous improvement results. The utilization of technology has enabled teachers across all content areas to communicate and monitor student performance and evaluate the effectiveness of their instructional practices.

Standard VII, Commitment to Continuous Improvement, was rated as Operational.

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

- District goals are consistently articulated by district leaders to internal and external stakeholders.
- The district has demonstrated positive gains in students' writing skills from grades K- 12 as indicated by data.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Include all stakeholders in processes and activities related to continuous improvement.
- Systematically develop and implement sustainable district/school systems to ensure continuous improvement.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Hot Springs County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Commitment to Continuous Improvement" standard.

Quality Assurance Findings

The Quality Assurance Review Team examined the effectiveness of the district's methods for quality assurance. The team reviewed the district's practices and methods to monitor and document improvement, provide meaningful feedback and support across the district, ensure that AdvancED standards are met and strengthened, and regularly collect, use, and communicate results. The team provides the following findings in this area.

Description

A sustainable and systemic process that includes representatives from all stakeholder groups is in place in the form of a Curriculum Coordinating Council and it has been fully implemented. Subject Area Committees provide consistency in curriculum decision making at the building level and communicate with the CCC to ensure cross-district consistency and proper alignment of curriculum. HSCSD #1 has also contracted with the Curriculum Leadership Institute to align standards and provide direction in the development of grade level and content pacing guides and common summative assessments.

The McRel evaluation system was recently adopted and will be used to provide feedback and support across the district. It is aligned to district goals and improvement efforts and will be utilized by principals to ensure that curriculum is implemented through the utilization of pacing guides, outcome component plans and common summative assessments.

A Strategic Plan is in place that defines goals, measures of success, strategies and steps necessary for implementation, persons responsible for actions and timelines and resources required for implementation. Professional development is embedded in the plan, is based on relevant data and is related to improvement efforts.

The district supports two and one-half Instructional Facilitator positions. Collaboration of IFs, the curriculum director and administrative team provides a cohesive focus to support district initiatives. One of the IF's is an elementary Reading Coach and district mentor for new staff; another focuses on K-12 mathematics, supports the aligned K-12 math curriculum and is the district liaison with the UW partnership project Ready to Learn Math (RtLM) and the third, a part time position, serves as technology integrator and DELT facilitator. This person also serves as part time district Technology Supervisor. An IF serves as a member on the Curriculum Coordinating Council (CCC).

The district has established a systems approach of continuous improvement that focuses on student learning and is aligned to the AdvancED standards. The entire school community operates within the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) framework of shared responsibility for all students learning.

Strengths

- The Thermopolis learning community demonstrates the belief that all students can be successful.
- The Board of Education and central administration are committed to a quality assurance process that includes internal self-assessment and external review.

Opportunities

- Develop a district vision that is consistent with the guidelines identified in Standard I to empower the learning community and to ensure institutional integrity.
- Review district guiding documents (vision, mission, profile, plan, results) to ensure alignment and

implementation with fidelity, consistency, and intensity.

Schools Visited

The Quality Assurance Review team visited the following schools during the visit to the Hot Springs County School District #1 on 10/16/2011 - 10/20/2011.

Thermopolis Middle School	1450 Valley View Drive	Thermopolis	Wyoming	82443
Hot Springs County High School	231 Park Street	Thermopolis	Wyoming	82443
Ralph Witters Elementary School	215 Springview St	Thermopolis	Wyoming	82443-2368

Conclusion

The commendations and required actions in this report are designed to focus the school district on those areas that will have the greatest impact on student performance and system effectiveness. While powerful in potential, the commendations and required actions only have meaning when acted upon by the school district and its schools. The strength of this report lies in the school district's commitment to using the findings to continuously improve. The key is action. The school district 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 required actions for improvement that the school district will need to address. Following this review, the school district will be required to submit a progress report summarizing its progress toward addressing the team's required actions.

The Quality Assurance Review Team expresses appreciation to the district leadership, members of the professional staff, students, parents and other community representatives for hosting the review team. The team wishes the district and its students much success in the quest for excellence through NCA-CASI-WY accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Dr. Jerry Griffin, Chair/Lead Evaluator
- Dr. Sharon A. Knudson, Vice Chair (NCACASI)
- Chad R. Bourgeois, Team Member (Buffalo High School)
- Dr. Alethea M. Allen, Team Member (Seed Time Harvest Time Consulting)
- Mr. Josh Ingle, Team Member (Dade County High School)
- Mr. James L. Walker, Team Member (St. Paul Preparatory School)
- Mr. Glen H. Stinson, Team Member (Riverside High School)

AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems

The AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems are comprehensive statements of quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school districts to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness. As school districts 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 system establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system.

Governance and Leadership

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

Teaching and Learning

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

Documenting and Using Results

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

Resource and Support Systems

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

Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

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

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The system establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student

performance.

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Natrona County School District #1
970 N Glenn Rd
Casper, Wyoming, United States 82601-1635**

**Dr. Joel Dvorak, Superintendent
Dr. Michael E. Lodico, Chair/Lead Evaluator, Quality Assurance Review Team**

Review Dates: 10/23/2011 - 10/27/2011



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 6

 Required Actions 7

 Next Steps 8

Standards for Accreditation 10

 Standard 1: Vision & Purpose 10

 Standard 2: Governance & Leadership 27

 Standard 3: Teaching & Learning 30

 Standard 4: Documenting & Using Results 52

 Standard 5: Resource & Support Systems 71

 Standard 6: Stakeholder Communications & Relationships 74

 Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement 75

Quality Assurance Findings 93

Schools Visited 95

Conclusion 97

Appendix 98

 Quality Assurance Review Team Members 98

 AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems 98

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 Schools (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, school districts, and educational service agencies continuously improve.

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

- 1) Meet the AdvancED Standards and Policies for Quality School Systems.** School districts demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards and policies which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school districts to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.
- 2) Engage in continuous improvement.** School districts and their schools implement a continuous improvement process that articulates the vision and purpose that the school district is pursuing (vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school and district 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.** School districts and schools engage in a planned process of ongoing internal review and self-assessment. In addition, school districts host an external quality assurance review team once every five years. The team evaluates the school district's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards, assesses the efficacy of the school district's improvement process and methods for quality assurance, and provides commendations and required actions to help the school district improve. The team provides an oral exit report to the school district and a written report detailing the team's required actions. The school district acts on the team's required actions and submits a progress report two years following the review.

NCA CASI and SACS CASI accreditation engages the entire school district community in a continuous process of self-evaluation and improvement. The overall aim is to help school districts and their schools maximize student success and improve organizational effectiveness

Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review

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

1. Evaluate the school district's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards and policies.
2. Assess the efficacy of the district's improvement process and methods for quality assurance.
3. Identify commendations and required actions to improve the district and its schools.
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 district is operating with institutional integrity - that it is fulfilling its vision and mission for its students.

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

Summary of Team Activities. The Quality Assurance Review Team is led by an AdvancED certified District Lead Evaluator and comprised of professionals from outside the school district. The team reviews the findings of the school district's internal self-assessment, conducts interviews with representative groups of stakeholders, reviews student performance data and other documentation provided by the school district, and observes practices and daily operations. The team engages in professional deliberations to reach consensus on the school district'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 district and its schools 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 district. The report contains commendations and required actions for improvement.

Using the Report - Responding to the Required Actions. The school district uses the report to guide its improvement efforts. The school district is held accountable for addressing the required actions identified in the report. The AdvancED State Office is available to assist the school district in addressing the required actions. Following the Quality Assurance Review Team visit, the school district must submit a progress report detailing the actions and progress it has made on the team's required actions. The report is reviewed at the state and national level to ensure the school district is addressing the required actions.

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

Summary of Findings

A Quality Assurance Review Team representing the NCA CASI Wyoming State Office (NCA-CASI-WY), a division of AdvancED, visited Natrona County School District #1 on 10/23/2011 - 10/27/2011.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 77 administrators, 675 teachers, 358 support staff, 309 parents and business partners, 475 students, and 8 Board of Education members for a total of 1902 stakeholders. In addition to meeting with district personnel and stakeholders, the team visited 35 schools within the school district. During the school visits, team members interviewed school stakeholders, observed classrooms, and reviewed relevant school artifacts. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by the district. Specifically, the team examined the district's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

1. Vision and Purpose
2. Governance and Leadership
3. Teaching and Learning
4. Documenting and Using Results
5. Resource and Support Systems
6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships
7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The AdvancED standards focus on systems with a school district 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 district, looking not only for adherence to individual standards, but also for how the school district and its schools function as a whole and embody the practices and characteristics of a quality school district.

Through its examination of the school district's adherence to the standards, the Quality Assurance Review Team prepared reports on each standard, highlighting strengths and suggestions for improvement specific to each standard. These reports can be found following this summary.

The Quality Assurance Review Team also examined the effectiveness of the district's methods for quality assurance. The team reviewed the district's practices and methods to monitor and document improvement, provide meaningful feedback and support across the district, ensure that AdvancED standards are met and strengthened, and regularly collect, use, and communicate results. The team's findings in this area can be found following the standard reports.

The team used the standard reports and quality assurance findings to identify common themes, significant accomplishments, and pressing needs facing the district. These became the basis for the overall commendations and required actions that are provided below. The commendations and required actions should serve as the focus for the district as it acts on the team's findings. They represent the areas that the team believes will have the greatest impact in helping the district further its improvement efforts. The standard reports and quality assurance findings can be used to help reinforce and enrich the district's understanding of the commendations and required actions.

Commendations

The Quality Assurance Review Team commends the Natrona County School District #1 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.

Commendation 1

Commendation Statement:

The district has made progress towards becoming a cohesive school district and not a 'system of schools' through adoption of a continuous improvement model.

Evidence:

The district has adopted the Baldrige model of continuous improvement, a key factor in its developing coherent, aligned systems in a district that has a tradition of autonomous schools. The district is systematizing its services to all stakeholders through consistent customer focus, strategic planning, focused leadership, systematic collection and analysis of results, and training processes for all staff members.

Rationale:

Increased cohesiveness and alignment will promote efficiency and collaboration among all the schools as stakeholders assume collective ownership of the success of all Natrona County students.

Commendation 2

Commendation Statement:

The district's leadership has revised the COMPACT to ensure students are the primary focus of the continuous improvement process.

Evidence:

The COMPACT was created following a district crisis in 2001. This document defines the process for negotiation among various stakeholders and has provided stability for a decade. It has been updated in the last year to encompass the district's strategic goals and to put students at the center of all decision-making.

Rationale:

The evolution of the COMPACT is a marker of gradually increasing unity of purpose for all district stakeholders.

Commendation 3

Commendation Statement:

The district has developed processes of instructional support that have the potential to become systematic, systemic, and sustainable.

Evidence:

The QAR team noted the deployment of instructional facilitators at all schools, a well-developed mentoring system for personnel, district-wide processes for analysis of results, district investment in instructional resources, professional development, early childhood education, and articulation of the district's Essential Curriculum, as

powerful evidence of the district's efforts to align and support all schools.

Rationale:

The district has done more than set goals for itself and its schools; it is providing tangible support in critical areas to create a climate of high expectations. Embedded district processes to support teaching and learning lead to increased student achievement.

Required Actions

In addition to the commendations, the Quality Assurance Review Team identified the following required actions for improvement. The team focused its required actions on those areas that, if addressed, will have the greatest impact on improving student performance and overall effectiveness of the school district. The Natrona County School District #1 will be held accountable for making progress on each of the required actions noted in this section. Following this review, the school district will be asked to submit a progress report on these required actions. The district should refer to the detail provided in the standard reports for guidance and greater depth on the required actions.

Required Action 1

Required Action:

Build collaborative and customer-focused partnerships among the district office and all schools to increase student learning.

Evidence:

Numerous stakeholders noted the continued need for trust-building in the district, both between the district office and individual schools and among schools, owing to unintended consequences of the school choice opportunities in the district. The district has established a process for rating schools based on student achievement data. As a result, there is potential for distrust among schools. In addition, some stakeholders expressed concern about the timeliness and accuracy of communication from the district office.

Rationale:

Following a superintendent-initiated organizational assessment in 2009, the district clearly identified areas for increased alignment, objectivity, and transparency in its processes. As the district moves towards systemic change, continued attention to lingering "us v. them" issues are important for sustained improvement.

Required Action 2

Required Action:

Fully implement the vision and plan for instructional technology to promote best practices for 21st-century learning.

Evidence:

The district completed a thorough technology planning process in the last year. There has also been substantial investment in instructional technology in the district as well, e.g., the 1:1 laptop initiative for all students grades 6-12. Nonetheless, stakeholders at the schools questioned the efficacy of the district's current deployment of instructional technology, citing problems with infrastructure, technical support, and professional development to support the use of technology for the enhancement of instructional rigor.

Rationale:

Full implementation of the district technology plan will increase the likelihood of the following outcomes:

- Technologically proficient staff and students;
- Assurances that best practices for 21st-century teaching and learning are applied consistently throughout the system;
- Reliable and responsive support systems for technology integration.

Required Action 3

Required Action:

Develop processes and criteria to ensure that site-based decisions and school options contribute to district-wide student success.

Evidence:

The district has a culture that values school autonomy and prizes choice. To ensure consistent quality among schools, it is incumbent upon the district to ensure basic alignment and coordination in curriculum, instructional practice, and professional training to ensure a smooth transition for students transferring into and within the district.

Rationale:

Ensuring basic consistency among schools is likely to decrease achievement gaps, increase graduation rates, help to achieve instructional alignment, and increase professional learning.

Review of AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools: The team reviewed the district'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 district 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 district.
3. Develop action plans to address the required actions made by the team. Include methods for monitoring progress toward the required actions.
4. Use the report to guide and strengthen the school district's efforts to improve student performance and district effectiveness.
5. Two years following the Quality Assurance Review, submit the Accreditation Progress Report detailing progress made toward addressing the required actions. The report will be reviewed at the state and national level to ensure that significant progress is being made toward the required actions. 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.

Celebrating Accreditation

Following the visit, the Quality Assurance Review Team submits an accreditation recommendation to AdvancED for review and action at the national level by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, which confers accreditation and communicates it to the school district. Upon receiving its accreditation, the school district should celebrate its achievement with the community. Flags, door decals, diploma seals, and other related items can be ordered from the website to help you share your accomplishment with your community.

Summary

The accreditation process engages the school district, its schools, and community in an ongoing journey of continuous improvement. The next steps in this journey are to build on the commendations and address the required actions noted in this report. Doing so will enable the school district 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 district 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.

The Quality Assurance Review Team divided into standard teams to review each standard and prepare a standards report summarizing the team's findings. These standard reports, along with the quality assurance findings that follow these reports, provided the basis for the team's identification of over-arching commendations and required actions presented earlier in this report. The reports submitted by each team are provided on the following pages for the district's review and use. Each report reflects its respective team's unique voice, perspective, and deliberations. The reports can be used to help enrich and deepen the district's understanding of the overall commendations and required actions.

Standard 1: Vision & Purpose

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

Description:

Natrona County School District #1 is undergoing significant transformation as a district. After years of high levels of school autonomy, the district is undergoing a concerted effort to align its activities in ways that will promote efficiency and consistency for students and staff. At the same time, district leadership acknowledges the value of diversity in school identity and services. There are parts of the system that are moving toward a school system; however, other stakeholders are slower – or even reluctant -- to adopt the district's efforts. Numerous stakeholders -- leadership teams, teachers, support staff, parents, and community members, expressed diverse views about the district's direction, but there was significant though as yet incomplete buy-in to the district's mission, goals, and processes.

The district has adopted a new vision statement (“Every Learner a Champion”), which was created by the superintendent. A sixty-member committee formulated a mission for the district. Stakeholders, including leadership team members, principals, parents, teachers, and community members, contributed to the development of the mission: “The Natrona County School District empowers every learner to grow, excel, and be successful contributors to the local/global community.” In addition the district has adopted five major goals relating to student achievement, performance on state assessments, graduation and preparation for further education and careers, safe and healthy facilities and environments, and effective and efficient operations and classrooms. The first goal (“All Natrona County School District students will read at or above grade level by the end of third grade”) was frequently cited by stakeholders around the district as one of particular power, particularly since the district staff has shared research on ways that early elementary literacy is a leading indicator for future academic achievement.

Schools are using a site-based vision and mission to guide instruction; however there is an inconsistency among schools in aligning their vision/mission documents with that of the district. The QAR teams noted the district vision was seldom articulated in interviews with school personnel or stakeholders, suggesting disconnect that is interfering with development of cohesiveness within the school system.

District and school goals, however, are aligned across the district and all schools are headed toward a common goal of literacy. In all schools, evidence of the literacy goal was not only present in classrooms; it was present in the conversations among teachers and students. Evidence of the importance of literacy was also articulated in interviews with parents and community members.

A comprehensive profile exists for Natrona County School District. QAR teams reviewed evidence that there is a systemic and systematic way that the district reviews data and is using the data to promote growth in students. The data are communicated to students and parents and used to form academic goals within the classroom as well as making teaching decisions based on student need. In addition, the district conducts formal District Data Reviews of each school's performance. The results of these reviews determine a school's status, which in turn helps target district support for that school's improvement efforts.

The district has committed to a shared purpose that supports student performance, but the commitment from all schools is not clear. It was communicated by district and school-level stakeholders that there is a lack of trust between the district office and individual schools and community. This, in turn, has had an effect on buy-in with the district. Not all schools feel included in the decision-making process. Leadership teams also indicated inconsistencies in the way systematic initiatives are implemented. Nonetheless, the district has in place a continuous improvement deployment plan, including for the current school year a five-part training session on the COMPACT. This training is designed to build understanding of and commitment to the district's overall strategic direction.

SCHOOL NARRATIVES AND FINDINGS

Alcova Elementary School

Alcova Elementary School's vision and mission provide focus and direction for stakeholders throughout the school community. Interviews with staff members and students revealed a knowledge and understanding of the school's vision and mission. Through classroom observations the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) team recognized the vision and mission of the school was linked to instruction and lesson focus. Historical context was provided documenting the development of the mission and vision statement. Teacher-facilitated conversation with students was used to develop the school mission. The mission statement was shared and discussed with parents. Parents made suggestions and the mission was modified accordingly. Parents also helped create the vision statement. In meeting with stakeholders, the QAR team determined there was a clear understanding of the essence of both the vision and mission statement.

Data are collected from the state assessment, Performance Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS), Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), and district assessments. This information is shared with stakeholders and students. Interviews with staff members indicated a familiarity with appropriate data regarding student achievement, student characteristics, and relevant community information.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Bar Nunn Elementary School

The mission at Bar Nunn is "We exist to challenge and empower our learning community for success now

and in the future,” and the vision at Bar Nunn Elementary School is “We want to be an exemplar school within Natrona County School District.” The mission and vision are evident in artifacts and supported by stakeholders of the school. The vision and mission at Bar Nunn aligns with the vision and mission of Natrona County School District #1, and the building goals support the vision and mission of the school. Stakeholders including teachers, support staff, leadership team, parents and students stated the vision of the school is to be the best, to move from a school of focus to an excelling school. All stakeholder group interviews, classroom observations and artifact evidence verified that the vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process. The mission and vision are revisited and revised annually at the School Improvement Meeting (SIP) where all stakeholders are included.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Casper Classical Academy

“Excellence in Everything We Do!” is evident throughout Casper Classical Academy (CCA). CCA, in conjunction with all stakeholders (parents and the governing council), is to be commended for collaboratively establishing, fully committing to, and continually revisiting their shared vision. Goals are visible throughout the school, in all classrooms, and are verbalized by students, staff, and stakeholders alike. This vision guides the allocation of time, human, material, and fiscal resources and serves as the focus for assessing student performance, system, and school effectiveness. High expectations for students and staff help to guide the strategic direction of CCA. Students are well aware of expectations and are challenged in their learning. CCA’s reputation for excellence is evident in the passionate “pride of ownership” expressed by all stakeholders. Staff, students, and parents expressed multiple times that CCA “is the only school where I want to teach” and “the only school I want my children to attend.” Students and stakeholders sing the praises of school staff and administration in their tireless efforts to meet the needs and fulfill the expectations of this school.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Centennial Junior High School

A Continuous Quest for Excellence" is evident throughout Centennial Junior High School (CJHS). The school’s vision, mission, and norms “evolved over time” with input from all stakeholders. CJHS’s vision, mission, and goals were developed through a shared leadership model and are fully aligned to district documents. They guide the teaching and learning process at the school level, and are shared regularly in weekly bulletins, parent newsletters, handbooks, and on the school website. CJHS is to be commended for fully committing to, and revisiting their shared vision during monthly leadership team meetings. District goals provide direction for the allocation of time, human, material, and fiscal resources, as well as guide decision making and assessing student performance, system, and school effectiveness.

Profile data are visible throughout the school, in all classrooms, and are easily verbalized by all stakeholders. Teachers regularly post data regarding student performance on class projects and assignments. Students and parents are fully aware of student performance at both the aggregate and individual levels. Student data “folders” are systematically maintained and serve as a focus for regularly scheduled conferences.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Cottonwood Elementary School

The Cottonwood Elementary School family has created an environment that supports the academic, emotional, physical, and social needs of their students. The entire school family (students, parents, and staff) are knowledgeable of the vision and actively engaged in the implementation of the vision -- Every Student a Champion. During the interviews of staff, students, and parents all groups provided the reviewers with information about the vision and purpose and their role in implementation. The students when asked why the school existed explained that it was to help them learn and excel as individuals. The staff were able not only summarize the vision and purpose but to indicate their role in its implementation. During the interview of support staff all individuals indicated an understanding of the vision and purpose statement and their role in its implementation. The custodial staff member indicated that everything was and should be about supporting student learning. The vision and purpose was visible throughout the school and available in every classroom. In addition there was information concerning the success of students in fulfilling the vision posted in the classrooms. Every classroom visited by the reviewers had posted a chart, table, or graphic that depicted student progress and accomplishments.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Crest Hill Elementary School

The entire community of Crest Hill Elementary School, including students, parents, teachers, and leaders, stand behind and firmly believes in the school's motto of "together achieving excellence." All agree that the focus is on the whole child, lifelong learning, and giving every child real-life experiences. There is a strong sense of collaboration and ownership of student success (not only on standardized tests) among all stakeholders. One individual even commented that "we are more all on the same page than we've ever been." At Crest Hill there is a culture of high expectations for every child to succeed. Goal teams and the leadership team work in concert to advance the vision and review the vision and purpose often. A school budget team ensures that the vision guides allocation of time, human, material, and fiscal resources. Use of the PLAN/DO/STUDY/ACT (PDSA) process in the school is pervasive. Each classroom has a mission created by students with teacher direction. Students understand the purpose of the mission; students are actively involved in goal setting and keep track of their progress.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

CY Middle School

The vision of CY Middle School (CYMS) is the commitment to a focus on learning by empowering students, celebrating the culture of learning, developing great minds, and building mutual respect within the CYMS community. The vision and mission of the school were developed by the school leadership team and a commitment to its shared purpose and direction is evident among all stakeholders. CYMS has established goals and expectations for student learning that is aligned with the school's vision and those

goals and expectations have not only been communicated, but are fully supported by school personnel, students, and external stakeholders. The goals and expectations that have been established serve as the focus for assessing and improving student performance and the effectiveness of the school. The leadership team and faculty ensure that the vision and purpose of CYMS guide the teaching and learning process and that the allocation of time and human, material, and fiscal resources is aligned with achieving the goals of CYMS.

The entire CYMS community displays a commitment to the continuous improvement of the school and to the Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle. The leadership team and faculty place a strong emphasis on offering numerous opportunities for students to be active in the life of the school through extracurricular and co-curricular activities, and involvement in mentoring and anti-bullying programs. There is a strong commitment to the team concept of continuous school improvement through collaboration and content alignment opportunities for all staff members. While CYMS faculty are heavily invested and involved in school improvement through the establishment of goal teams, an increase in student and parent involvement is necessary to promote greater continuous improvement.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Dean Morgan Middle School

Dean Morgan Middle School has created a school environment that lives the theme of “Kids First”; this is widely reflected in the comments by all stakeholder groups and in the school environment. School stakeholders have aligned the school vision with the district vision, “Every Learner a Champion.” The vision and mission drive the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of the school. The goals of the district are reflected by the school’s curriculum. The school has ensured alignment of the curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning. An intensive effort has been placed on Goal One: Literate Students. Incorporating Literacy First in every class drives this curriculum. There is an active vocabulary for every class and every subject. Each classroom has integrated the Plan-Do-Study-Act model into their practices.

Goal 2: Excelling Students is also a top priority at Dean Morgan. They are striving to address the needs of the students, academically, socially, and emotionally. Goal 3: Prepared Graduates is another goal school stakeholders are striving to meet. Students begin their body of evidence portfolios at the middle school level. The school meets the needs of the students by allowing individuals to work through coursework. They are transported to another campus if they need to have more advanced classes than those offered at Dean Morgan.

Goal 4: Safe, Healthy People is a priority for both staff and students. They have directed efforts to stop bullying, they have a healthy student initiative, and they have significantly reduced the discipline within the school. This is a school that has worked strategically and intensively to create a school culture of caring, positive collaboration that permeates the school environment as can be evidenced through artifacts and interviews.

The schedule is purposefully designed in block classes, with each student participating in a “Comet” block for the goal of building positive school relationships. During this time, there is a small teacher to student ratio (12-16 students), where teachers and students can create “connections” and learn life skills through the “Cowboy Code of Ethics.” funded for two years by the McMurray Foundation grant. During student interviews, a student stated, “Personally (in) my Comet block, we are like a little family.” All

stakeholders stated a deep satisfaction with the schedule that allows for this type of culture and facilitates positive connections and a sense of belonging for students.

Students report adults take care of bullying when it happens. The parent also has a “go to” teacher when questions arise. The block schedule also allows for teacher collaboration around student needs and student progress. A teacher stated, “Communication has improved.” Teachers communicated the master schedule is based on student needs and not on a schedule. A student stated, “In math class, he (the teacher) doesn’t stop to answer the phone, he focuses on kids. The teacher will sit down and help you “learn for hours.” The Dean Morgan Strategic Plan is posted in the school and includes the goals, mission, and vision, but beyond that, the vision and mission are lived throughout the school as a part of the culture.

As reported in the student stakeholder meeting, a student pointed out, “They need student opinions.” It was said that the student council program is effective and there are a lot of activities the student council helps with such as dances, Challenge day (“like a no bullying day”), red ribbon week, healthy choices, spirit weeks, bingo night, and getting a new football field. Overall, there was an overriding theme of “Kids First” at Dean Morgan Junior High School.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Evansville Elementary School

At Evansville Elementary School the vision and purpose were created prior to the current administration, and the staff and stakeholders have affirmed both. From stars inside the front door (student commitments to become a champion in an area of their choice), to all written and visual communication the vision is clearly visible within the building. Classrooms also display their mission and goals. Stakeholders understand and fully support the vision and purpose. The school and committees (leadership, reading writing, math, and behavior) all have written goals aligned to their vision/purpose, which drives the focus of monthly meetings. Evansville Elementary continuously maintains a profile of the school, and its students, and the community (we learned Evansville opened a new community center in January of 2011 by reading the introduction of the school improvement report). All classroom mission statements are aligned to the school’s vision and purpose. Academic goals are aligned to these commitments. Students and teachers create classroom mission statements annually and school vision and purpose will be reviewed annually within the continuous cycle of school improvement.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Fort Caspar Academy

Fort Caspar Academy was founded by parents within the district approximately fifteen years ago. The staff and the parents at this school report they are a collaborative team all working towards the school vision for Fort Caspar to be the “Best School in the World.” All staff, students and parents strongly support the building vision, and the principal is beginning to meet with stakeholders to help them articulate what their school will look when it is the best school in the world and how they will know when they have achieved their vision. During interviews, both staff and parents were able to cite multiple examples of how the school’s vision clearly guides their allocation of resources.

The school's mission to prepare students academically and with character was also highly supported by all stakeholders. In addition, all classes have developed a mission with student goals that have been developed by the students. Students were all aware of their individual class missions and goals. School goals have been developed utilizing NWEA and PAWS assessment data. However, only grade level data was utilized. Very little student subgroup data has been disaggregated in their school profile for review; only reading was disaggregated in 2009-10. Additionally, although the disaggregated groups demonstrate lower performance, there is no evidence that the data were addressed during goal setting. Therefore, the school improvement plan contains no strategies to help teachers differentiate instruction to student subgroups scoring below the proficiency rates for all students.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Frontier Middle School

The stakeholders at Frontier Middle School have a shared purpose for improving student performance. Leadership, teacher, and parent stakeholders report this school has faced many challenges, but stakeholders have not given up because "students make it all worth it". All stakeholders reported this school has a welcoming climate.

The vision of Frontier Middle School was developed through a collaborative process when the school was built. Some stakeholder groups were involved in determining the school's vision. This was the first school with one-to-one laptops, so the vision of rising to the challenge of the 21st century was apropos. Due to a changing student body, the mission was changed in 2009 to meet needs of current students. This was accomplished in a collaborative group.

Plan, Do, Study, Act is utilized in classrooms throughout the school. Students report that they like the formula of PSDA. The goal to meet the mission is signed by teachers. Classes also set their own missions. Students were not confident in their knowledge of what 21st Century skills might be, but they did mention such things as: "listening to the teacher, writing notes, paying attention, working hard, doing all of your work, getting better grades, and using laptops". They felt they did not use their laptops much at school except for English and sometimes social studies. Teacher stakeholder groups are proud of the new career/technology lab, and they described an effective application project that originated in this lab. Teacher stakeholders report that they do not run extra elective/explore classes because students need the core curriculum. They also report that technology is integrated in the classrooms and is not taught in isolation.

A website artifact states that 21st Century skill scores are given in each content area. Frontier Middle School goals promote student achievement. Leadership and teacher stakeholders collaborate on these goals and have created an effective system for improvement. In general, Frontier Middle School has committed to a shared purpose with clearly defined expectations for student learning supported by school personnel.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Grant Elementary School

Grant Elementary School has a shared purpose and direction for students: every student successful and

every student prepared for the next grade. Students, teachers, and the leadership team members all articulated this. There is a shared sense of caring for all students, and dedication to ensuring they are successful. Further, the school has a shared sense that good is not good enough and that students can achieve at higher levels; the entire staff is dedicated to figuring out how to facilitate that success. The school recently reworded the vision to be shorter and thus more understandable and meaningful to the entire community of stakeholders. Finally, staff members know the district vision and believe that their vision and purpose are directly tied to the vision of “every learner a champion.”

Every classroom at Grant Elementary School has a mission; students know it and have it written in data notebooks. Every staff member in the school, including all support staff, is on a goal team. Goal teams have recalibrated and made adjustments since last year in order to improve the process. Leadership team members agree that using goal teams has been a process that, though difficult at first, is proving to be effective and efficient for decision making. Goal teams advance the vision and guide allocations of resources. The school’s vision and purpose are articulated in PDSAs at all levels (personal as well as classroom PDSAs) and guide the teaching and learning process. Grant Elementary School has embraced the continuous improvement model (Shipley) which permeates all processes and groups at the school. Staff members agree that the model of continuous improvement is “here to stay.”

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Kelly Walsh High School

Kelly Walsh High School has established and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the school through the articulation of a school strategic plan. This plan includes a vision statement, pillars of excellence, and school improvement goals focused on literacy, state standards proficiencies, and prepared graduates. All staff, students and stakeholders expressed knowledge of and support for the vision and purpose of the school. The vision and purpose is inculcated into all teaching and learning activities of the school in both its curricular and extra-curricular program. The vision and purpose of the school are visible throughout the school building. Students and parents acknowledge the importance and power of the school purpose to “Prepare All Students for Their Next Step” as a relevant and vital part of their educational experience. Staff, students and stakeholders express pride in their school and its vision. In support of its vision and purpose the school maintains a profile of data related to school climate and student performance. Students establish learning goals in each class based on performance data and established curriculum. Lesson objectives are aligned to the school vision and purpose. Students are encouraged to explore career opportunities as potential “next steps” in the learning process. The school staff evaluates school curricular offerings to ensure that learning opportunities are available for all students in a variety of post-high school educational and vocational areas. Students, stakeholders, and staff report that Kelly Walsh stands above other schools because of its strong vision and purpose resulting in a climate of caring and acceptance. Students and parents are included in school improvement activities. All groups share a strong commitment to the students and the direction of the school.

Finding:

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Manor Heights Elementary School

Manor Heights Elementary is a school with a strong vision and sense of purpose. The staff, parents and students all know that their vision is to “Believe, Achieve and Succeed” and they are all able to articulate what that means for them as a school and for each of them personally. During interviews, both staff and parents were able to cite multiple examples of how the school’s vision clearly guides their decision-making. Students’ understanding the vision was evident in their ability to define their strengths and weaknesses, and to develop goals for improvement. In addition, students were able to verbalize an understanding of proficient, advanced, basic, and below basic as they focus on their goals. Every student has a student data notebook with a wealth of information. During the visit, every student was able to turn to any page in their notebook and explain exactly what information on that page would help them reach their goals. Truly, every child owns his or her learning in this school.

School goals have been developed utilizing NWEA and PAWS assessment data. Attention has been given to the student subgroup data that shows that the significant special education population in the building is struggling. (In addition to a general resource room, Manor Heights houses a district behavior lab and a district life skills lab.) Because this disaggregated group demonstrates lower performance, there was specific attention to address this during goal setting. This building embraces their special education population, and results of their most recent assessments dealing with their goal in Language Arts shows that the special education students made the same gains as the rest of the students in Reading and made significantly higher gains in language arts. (12.8% gains compared to 8.3% gains.)

Finally, it must be noted that this is a school that gives back extensively to their community. In an effort to help others, the school has hosted a statewide Special Olympics competition and raised funds for multiple charities.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Midwest School

The educational community of Midwest operates in a unique scenario within the Natrona School District. The school is rural and isolated, and includes under its administrative umbrella, Willow Creek Elementary, that consists of three students and one teacher at a very remote location. It is evident that the communities, both internal and external, embrace a shared vision and purpose for the schools with students as the centerpiece. A strategic plan is in place that was developed with input from all stakeholder groups. It focuses on continuous improvement, and is thus consistent with the District’s purpose. The vision, mission, and goals permeate the school community, providing focus for pedagogical and operational practices and procedures. It was particularly encouraging that the students understood and articulated that the educational process was designed to assist them as individual learners and to guide them into successful futures beyond high school. Community stakeholders expressed similar sentiments, and felt that they were involved in the improvement process.

The QAR team found evidence that school leadership has the respect and trust of students, staff, and stakeholders. Strategic organizational leadership is a particular strength of school administration as evidenced by the structures in place to promote continuous improvement. Leadership teams, goal teams, and committees are eager and focused on the vision, mission, and purpose. Appropriate and timely professional development is provided to all faculty and staff, and all interviewees indicated that opportunities to be involved in planning are readily available.

Finding:

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Mills Elementary School

The learning environment at Mills Elementary School is very supportive of the school's mission statement, teachers, and the learners. Teachers have incorporated team teaching techniques that focus on the student as a citizen who is proficient, responsible, and productive. The mission statement is posted on the school's web site, in the main office, and in several conspicuous places throughout the school. The QAR Team received information from interviews that supported the concept of high expectations for student learning. Stakeholders were excited about the education that their children are getting at this school. Several revisions to this instrument have been made over a period of years and the faculty via the School Improvement Team (SIT) feels that future revisions will be necessary as changes are mandated in classroom instruction.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Mountain View Elementary School

The Mission and Vision statements for Mountain View Elementary School were established three years ago, and are reviewed annually by the school's Leadership Team, which includes the Principal, five certified staff, one classified staff, and a parent representative. Decisions are made by consensus, with all members having input. More recently, the statements were modified to bring them into closer alignment with the District's Mission and Vision; to raise the level of expectations for student achievement, and to more specifically identify target goals. The changes were submitted to the building certified staff for their approval before final adoption. Both statements clearly indicate the school's emphasis on helping each child maximize potential toward becoming a successful and responsible citizen, and staff members provided examples of new programs initiated in order to address emergent individual needs, particularly in the areas of parental involvement, reading, and mathematics. The use of the Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) sequence by students to complete and evaluate their academic tasks is an example of encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning.

Annual goals are established through intensive data analysis together with the results of surveys of parents, teachers, staff, and students; a committee is attached to each goal to guide school activities toward its attainment. It was noted that every certified staff member is a member of one of the committees, which creates effective staff ownership of program successes; however, support staff as well as parents have little involvement with the committee activities. The school's staff and administration are currently seeking activities to increase parent participation as well as provide parenting training on how they may become partners in their child's education. The building's staff recognizes that the school's present low socio-economic rating, in excess of 79% free and reduced lunch student, contributes to the difficulties for parents to become active participants in school programs; a high degree of student transiency is another major negative factor toward parental involvement.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Natrona County High School

Natrona County High School's vision, mission, and values provide direction for improving student performance and the effectiveness of the school. Administration acknowledges the need to review the vision and mission in collaboration with all stakeholders as part of upcoming school improvement efforts. The current statements are several years old and have not been reviewed since written. The current vision and mission statements are communicated to stakeholders as letterhead information on e-mails, newsletters, and other correspondence. While school stakeholders were not able to articulate the specific vision and mission statements of the school, they voiced a conceptual understanding that the school goals represented a shared commitment to learning the established curriculum of the district and to preparing students for transition to higher education and the world of work.

The school maintains a profile of its school, students, and community. Beginning in 2011, student performance data on the PAWS, ACT, and NWEA assessments, as well as school climate and Gallup poll results were compiled by the District Office, and subsequently reviewed and analyzed by the School Improvement Committee. School improvement goals were developed which reflected the data and were aligned to the district goals in literacy, math, and graduation rate. Administrators, staff, and stakeholders voiced concern about the school not making AYP status, and explained a sense of urgency to improve assessments during the 2012 assessment window.

Interviews with staff members, students, and parents revealed strong support for the curricular and extra-curricular program of the school. Teachers implement and assess the Essential Curriculum and complete required documentation in accordance with district and building policy. All teachers work collaboratively in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and department teams to ensure fidelity and consistency within the school. Teachers acknowledge that consistency among the differing curricular programs and teaching methods across the district is a problem. Teachers report that the majority of the staff have moved from compliance to enthusiasm as they have embraced the power of working collaboratively to improve teaching and learning at their school.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Emerging

North Casper Elementary School

A friendly atmosphere, challenging academics, and rigorous instruction are part of the environment of North Casper Elementary School. Classroom observations, student data, and stakeholder interviews held a recurring theme for student success. When establishing a vision at the school level, staff and parent representatives were involved and spoke with the purposeful intent to student success. Communicating the vision and purpose to the parents came in the forms of home visits, an annual report, and 100% participation in parent teacher conferences. When identifying goals to advance the vision, teachers addressed foundational skills that build upon district goals, 'adding layer to layer'. The teachers and support staff have high expectations of performance and proficiency and rise to the language (ELL) challenges, background diversities and multi-level abilities of incoming transfer students. One teacher spoke, "We are redefining education for our parents as well as for ourselves."

The students recognize the need for a good education for their futures. Student interviews revealed a personal ownership of their academic learning. A common mantra shared by parents, staff and student is, "No excuses". All of these stakeholders are accountable to each other for active participation and the pursuit of student growth.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Oregon Trail Elementary School

Oregon Trail Elementary School community has created an environment where all students have value and are cared for by dedicated school personnel. The collaborative support of the school's mission has provided learning opportunities that have been instilled in the students. Couched within these ideals is the concept that the student is to be viewed as a life-long learner. The school had the mission statement posted at the front door and stakeholders were aware of its intent. The QAR Team conducted interviews with stakeholders who conveyed their understanding of the high expectations for student learning. However, few stakeholders could recite it but they did understand its intent. The principal stated that his school and community were in the process of revising their mission statement because of changing expectations for teachers and students.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Paradise Valley Elementary School

Paradise Valley has established a Vision and Purpose that is intended to take them to Excelling status in the district. Their inherent belief that it all starts with the Vision along with the strong leadership at Paradise has the capacity to lead the school to excellence. A collaborate process was used to establish the Vision and Purpose as attested to by stakeholder interviews. The mission was seen throughout the school in publications, fliers, and on the website, and the school community (teachers, students, staff, and parents) was able to articulate the Vision and knew that the Vision would ensure success. All stakeholders could speak to their role in the Vision. The goals set are rigorous and although aligned to the district goals, exceed the expectations of the district in some areas. The Vision was evident to all stakeholders along with the commitment to celebrating successes as they grow. While the team was in the school, the principal recognized student for academic excellence over the speaker system with a "Yahoooo" shout which resonated throughout the halls as students joined in the celebration. The Lifelong Guidelines and Life Skills were evident throughout the building, as well as the classroom visions created by students. The Vision and Mission had been revised under new leadership last year, and the results are already evident as seen in the walk-throughs. To ensure alignment with the district, teachers sit on the district goal committees. Paradise Valley is a Vision driven school.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Park Elementary School

The Park Elementary community has created a school environment that is highly focused on educating the whole child. A broad base of stakeholders understand the expectations for student learning and speak the same language regarding empowering the student to take control of their learning while creating a safe family atmosphere. The thematic multi-age structure of the school is exciting for teachers, parents and students.

The initiative shown by students during observations of project-based learning activities and the enthusiasm expressed by students regarding student-led conferencing is reflective of student engagement and responsibility for learning. The discussion with and understanding by students, parents and teachers regarding stretch goals and the use of higher order questioning by teachers suggests a focus on continuous student improvement.

Interviews with parents indicated a high degree of confidence in the teachers and administration at Park. Parents feel welcome and involved in the school and could talk about the school philosophy. They also recognized to some degree that the district had a vision and five district goals. The parents did not express a comfortable level of positive involvement with district level staff and initiatives. Several expressed concern that district committees do not function properly and voiced the perception that most of the decisions are made before the committees meet and the committee is a façade to lend credibility.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Pineview Elementary School

Pineview Elementary school has created an environment of trust and collaborative learning by following their mission statement of "everyone does everything." The staff and leadership team as well as the students demonstrated this belief by working together and supporting each other in reaching and obtaining goals and mission. The alignment, goal teams and PDSA processes work in concert to accomplish continuous improvement toward student growth. The school is very cohesive in every step in the process of school improvement and is demonstrated by school wide shared leadership.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Poison Spider Elementary School

Poison Spider Elementary has created a professional learning community that is meeting the needs of students. They are dedicated to the vision and mission of their school to "ensure a culture where ALL achieve their highest potential." The mission of the school and the district are visible in the building. Teachers, parents and students use similar language to describe the schools purpose and vision. They are collaborative and unified in their work for students. Parents believe they have a valued voice in the school and are confident that their children are receiving the best education in the district.

The school's work on Professional Learning Communities combined with the Shipley training has provided them a framework for systemic and systematic implementation of collaborative practices that support student achievement. Their students have made significant gains since these practices have been in place.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Powder River School

Powder River School has created a learning community that is meeting the needs of all four students. The

teacher is dedicated to the vision and mission of their school to “ensure a culture where ALL achieve their highest potential.” The teacher, parents and students have a common understanding of the mission. They are collaborative and unified in their work for students. Parents believe they have a valued voice in the school and are confident that their children are receiving the best education in the district. Each student is receiving individualized instruction that meets his or her needs. The students have made significant gains.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Red Creek Elementary School

The school mission for Red Creek Elementary School is as follows: “Our mission is to be prepared for 5th grade. To be ready I need to work hard, be responsible and accountable, and have a good attitude.” This mission statement results from collaboration between the administration, teacher and students, shared with parents and reviewed/revised annually. The school goal states 100% of the students will read at grade level and will demonstrate proficiency in math at grade level as measured by NWEA assessments. Although the goal is not time bound, it aligns with and supports district goals. Red Creek School maintains individual student data, and classroom data used to set individual student goals and drive instructional decisions. Students compose their own mission statement, review it weekly and set short and long-term goals. The mission and goals at Red Creek School align with district goals, vision and mission.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Roosevelt High School

Roosevelt High School’s leadership team has developed a vision for the school. The vision and purpose have been communicated to the other stakeholder groups. The school has clearly defined and articulated goals aligned to the school’s vision. The school has pieces of a profile, but they are not combined into a comprehensive profile that is updated on a regular basis. The school has identified goals to advance the vision using data-driven decision-making processes. The school’s vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process, and serve as the focus for assessing student performance and the effectiveness of their school programs. The staff and leadership team articulated that their mission and goals are consistently being evaluated through their professional learning communities and will revisit their mission at the end of each school year to determine if some goals have been met and others need to be adopted or included; other stakeholders, however, have not yet become a part of the review process.

The entire Roosevelt High School community has taken ownership and self-actualization of the vision through data analysis of student achievement and needs. The entire staff is committed to building positive relationships with all students in order to engage them in the learning process and to see them continue to improve toward achieving the school’s goals. Stakeholders know about and are able to articulate the vision and mission of the school, and have truly bought in to the vision and goals of the school.

Communication of the mission and vision of RHS to parents and the community is extensive. Their use of newsletters, positive postcards, family involvement drop-in opportunities, and community service are some examples that were consistently shared by stakeholder groups.

Roosevelt High School is a data-driven institution, yet the development and regular maintenance of a longitudinal school profile is necessary to continue addressing their vision and goals. By having a detailed

school profile, RHS will be able to make even more research-based, data-driven decisions to enhance their vision and goals.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Sagewood Elementary School

The mission and vision of Sagewood Elementary School are clear to all stakeholder groups including, certified staff, classified staff, students, and parents. The school mission was developed two years ago using a process that included both certified and classified staff members. A parent meeting was later held and parents were informed and asked for input regarding the mission and vision. Both certified and classified staff members annually review the school mission and adjustments are made if deemed necessary. Through interviews with all stakeholder groups it was clear that the mission provides a shared purpose and clear direction for the school. The mission is displayed throughout the school, in student data folders, on school newsletters, and other documents and communication sent out by the school. Staff indicated that the mission of the school provides a common language throughout the building and is used as a focus for assessing student performance and school effectiveness. In addition the leadership, all staff members, students, and other stakeholders take responsibility for modeling and reinforcing the vision and mission of the school as well as taking actions that will sustain both. The school's mission identifies the learning to be achieved and helps to keep the school and the efforts of the staff and students on target. The school's vision is critical as it provides the underlying foundation upon which all decisions are made.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Southridge Elementary School

Southridge Elementary School has an established vision of "every student succeeds." The school's vision encompasses the belief of parents, staff, and students. This vision guides the teaching and learning processes of the school. School wide goals are in place and evidence is found within the classroom setting. Southridge's vision and purpose guides the instruction and student learning and is driven by data. The vision is reviewed systematically in the goal team meetings.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Summit Elementary School

Through interviews with students, parents, teachers and support staff it is clear that Summit Elementary School has achieved wide commitment from all groups of stakeholders to a shared purpose and direction. Summit has created a family and a team encircling students who really get what education is all about. Student, teacher and parent interviews confirm there are clearly defined expectations for student learning, fully supported and aligned with the school/district vision. The infusion of the seven habits is observed in school administration, teachers, classified staff, students and parents with the result that all are talking the same language. All curriculum, lesson plans and annual reports to the community reflect the school vision and purpose. Evidence supporting Summit's highly functioning success includes an annual systems check

in which the SILT team reviews the school's vision, mission, goals, and its alignment to the District vision, mission and goals. They are striving to become a Lighthouse school, and are targeting this process through a systematic approach including all school stakeholders. Other evidence is found in the use of survey information contained in the "We Support Survey", a leadership development PDSA template, Bison Briefs newsletters and parent interviews.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

University Park Elementary

University Park systematically established its vision over time through a collaborative process that included consensus, and involved their parent community as attested through interviews of support staff, teachers, parents, and the leadership team. Communication of their vision and purpose is clearly posted in letters, on the website, and in the school. To promote understanding and support, teachers with their students create a Classroom Mission that is aligned with the school vision, and then prominently posted in the classroom. School goals have been recently revised to reflect current data, yet remain directly correlated to NCSD goals as seen in the School Improvement Plan. A sufficient school profile was posted in ASSIST. University Park excels in ensuring their vision and purpose guides their teaching and learning as observed in classroom walk-throughs. Students had posted their academic and personal goals in their classrooms. Using the PDSA strategy, which students could succinctly express, their goals indicated how where they were academically, what they needed to do to reach the goal, and how they were going to arrive at that goal. The teaching observed in the classroom visits was tied directly to the goals that were seen in most of the classrooms. Although it was evident that the leadership team had reviewed the vision, purpose and goals, there was a goal in the SIP that specifically addressed consistent monitoring of their system for school improvement.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Verda James Elementary School

Verda James Elementary School has created an environment that is both educationally and socially rewarding for their students. They have arrived at a vision that "empowers all learners to excel academically and socially on life's journey." This statement was observed throughout the building and was stated in interviews with staff members. Verda James also communicates their vision via newsletters and classroom letters to their stakeholders. The goal to advance their vision has been addressed by the staff's participation in mileposts one and two. Through staff collaboration and communication the school has maintained a current profile of the school, students, and community as well as ensuring that the school's vision and purpose guide the learning process. The data wall in the main office, data gathering, and Verda James's Guide to Success promotes the teaching process. Individual classroom mission statements lead teachers and students to review their vision and revise when appropriate.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Willard Elementary School

Interviews by the QAR team with Willard certified and classified staff, students, and parent stakeholders verified that the school's mission and vision statements are not only well-understood, but are consistently used for decision-making within the continuous improvement processes and are applied to the core of the instructional program. The most significant example was demonstrated by students showing their individual "data notebooks" to the team, each notebook including a mission statement for the classroom, a personal mission statement created by the child in collaboration with the teacher, and individual goals which the student has identified after "analyzing" his/her personal data. Parents overwhelmingly demonstrated enthusiasm for this approach, and emphasized that they perceived the school's mission and vision, pointing toward developing the children for a successful adulthood, is easily observed at the classroom and individual level to be teaching personal responsibility in support of the long-term goals. The present mission and vision statements were modified from older versions by the school's leadership team, composed of the building principal, three teachers, two facilitators, one support person, and one parent representative. The changes were submitted for input through the school's four Goals Committees, from the school's Parent-Teacher-Organization (PTO), and from the district's Solid Foundation parent group, and finalized at the beginning of this school year. Using the District's Essential Curriculum scope and sequence as a core for establishing consistency throughout the school's instructional program, decisions regarding material selection, scheduling, and other major components of a school's program are based upon mission statement-determined needs. A major example is the use of block scheduling, initially for the reading program but later extended to the mathematics area after seeing how this change in the use of time provided better opportunities for individualizing instruction to address identified student needs. The QAR team was satisfied that the major improvements in student achievement as a result of these activities and the guidance provided through the mission Statement are deserving of a Highly Functional rating.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Willow Creek Elementary School

The educational community of Willow Creek School operates in a unique scenario within the Natrona School District. The Willow Creek Elementary school is rural and extremely isolated consisting of three students and one teacher. Administration for Midwest School also oversees Willow Creek. It is evident that the communities, both internal and external, embrace a shared vision and purpose for the schools with students as the centerpiece. A strategic plan is in place that was developed with input from all stakeholder groups, focuses on continuous improvement, and is consistent with the District's purpose. The vision and mission permeates the school community providing focus for pedagogical and operational practices and procedures. Willow Creek's unique operations scenario allowed staff, students, and stakeholders to set their own specific goals relative to the needs of its three students. It was particularly encouraging that the students understood and articulated that the educational process was designed to assist them as individual learners and to guide them into successful futures beyond elementary school. Community stakeholders expressed similar sentiments, and felt that they were involved in the improvement process. The QAR team found evidence that school leadership has the respect and trust of students, staff, and stakeholders. Strategic organizational leadership is particular strength of school administration as evidenced by the structures in place to promote continuous improvement. The teacher at Willow Creek participates in Leadership teams, goal teams, and committees thus keeping Willow Creek focused on the vision, mission, and purpose of the school system. Appropriate and timely professional development is provided to faculty and staff, and all interviewees indicated that opportunities to be involved in planning are readily available.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Woods Learning Center

The vision and purpose for Woods Learning Center was created with stakeholder input at its creation 20 years ago. It has been reviewed and affirmed periodically by staff and stakeholders who maintain their commitment to its essence. The most recent review added the phrase “democratic participation” affirming their commitment to the principles of the National League of Democratic Schools. Inquiry learning as the instructional core of Woods Learning Center is intertwined with its vision and philosophical purpose. The profile of the school, its students and community is reviewed and revised annually. Furthermore, eighth grade students demonstrated their interpretation of the vision using technology to create videos, clearly demonstrating their internalization of the vision.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

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

- The district is explicit in its vision, mission, and goals, as well as in the district-level actions, e.g., district-wide training, to achieve them.
- The district has developed five strategic goals and is using them as a means of creating shared purpose among all stakeholders and schools.
- The district profile is continuously maintained.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Ensure the vision is embedded in the continuous improvement process and articulated throughout the district.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Natrona County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Vision & Purpose" standard.

Standard 2: Governance & Leadership

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

Description:

The Natrona County School District #1 is governed by a nine-member board of trustees with members elected to four-year staggered terms with the option for re-election. The district is under the leadership of a board-appointed superintendent who is assisted by a central office cabinet and staff. The superintendent has stated that stakeholder support is essential to the educational success of every child in the district.

While there are policies and procedures in place providing avenues of communication from the board and

central staff to various operational units within the system, stakeholders have indicated that there are some gaps in communication.

The board has established clear guidelines for definitive areas of responsibilities in the governance of the school district. It protects the role of the superintendent as the administrative leader of schools. Board minutes reveal that the board creates policies and procedures and effectively communicates them to the district. Timelines are established for the review and updating of school board policies to insure that they are current and achieve their desired intent. Board members expressed understanding of the role of the board as a policy-making body and the role of the superintendent as having the responsibility of administering the policies as adopted by the board. At the same time, several board members communicated that upon election some board members occasionally cross the line into micro-managing, a process that normally works itself out as they "mature" as board members.

Interviews with trustees showed that policies are developed, reviewed, and revised by standing board committees, whose members include a cross-section of stakeholders throughout the district. Policy changes move from specific committees for consideration by the entire board. The district has not availed itself of policy development services available from the Wyoming School Boards Association.

An examination of artifacts revealed that a basic orientation process is conducted when board members are first elected. Areas of responsibility include schools, personnel, elementary education, high school education, support operations, community relations, accountability to stakeholders, and state and federal laws that pertain to education. The state of Wyoming does not mandate training for board members. The state school boards association does provide professional development workshops in the role and responsibilities of school boards; some board members have attended these training sessions. There are no district regulations that include specific qualifications or training for board members. The uniqueness of the composition the board includes two practicing attorneys who are able to advise the members and system of applicable local, state, and federal law, standards, and regulations. In addition, the system does retain legal counsel trained in school law.

Presentations, interviews, and artifacts provided evidence that the district communicates intentionally with its stakeholders through multiple methods. These methods include monthly meetings with stakeholders, newspaper coverage, monthly interviews on television and radio, newsletters, electronic mailings, mailings, and district and school web pages. District leadership maintains communication links with Wyoming government officials and takes initiative to communicate the district perspective to state policy makers.

Interviews showed that there is public support for the board for its stewardship of the school's resources. Information gathered revealed that state financial support of local school systems was not an area of major concern because of the allocation of state funds. District records provided evidence that the school system and its schools are audited yearly and adhere to accepted principles of accounting. Evidence was presented that the system does carry sufficient insurance to cover for damages and loss to the system and staff.

Evidence revealed that the school district sets goals and expectations for student performance that are based on test data. As part of its systemic continuous improvement process, the district has identified five broad goals with specific benchmarks and strategies for achievement. These goals pervade the operations of the district and its schools. There are annual meetings with at all levels of the system to adjust and implement new directives intended to correct any areas of deficiency. The leadership demonstrates a commitment to student achievement and success.

In an effort to ensure clear communication of expectations to all stakeholders, the superintendent has articulated eight non-negotiable expectations, which speak to living our values, commitment to systemic continuous improvement, student mastery of the essential curriculum, becoming a data-informed district, effective lesson design and delivery, urgency regarding student performance, use of short-cycle predictive assessments, and the customer focus of the district-level staff members.

An examination of artifacts provides evidence that there are annual evaluations of all personnel of the school system. This plan does include professional growth and development in areas of demonstrated need. The evidence supports positive comments for and about individual schools and indicates strong support for the teachers and administration of certain schools. The district promotes consistency through its embrace of the Baldrige continuous improvement model.

Minutes from meetings with stakeholders revealed a concerted effort on the part of the school system at the district level to continue to engage stakeholder groups representative of parents, and the community at large with policy issues reflective of the entire system. A decision-making process has demonstrated the inclusion of planning sessions, regular community meetings, and several other district level meetings designed to foster transparency and participation. Surveys are a tool used by the school district to obtain information on customer satisfaction. This information informs the goal setting process.

A district document entitled "Collaborative Journey of Continuous Improvement" narrates the recent history of the district from a near-strike in 2001 and its rescue through the development of the evolving COMPACT since then. The document clearly spells out a management system detailing customer focus, strategic planning, and leadership for sustained execution of the COMPACT. All employees in the district are attending five "Milepost Training" sessions throughout the 2011-12 school year to ensure widespread understanding of the district's continuous improvement process and every individual's role in it. Stakeholders in numerous interviews affirmed the widespread buy-in to the COMPACT process and its efficacy in promoting student-focused dialogue among all stakeholders.

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

- District leadership maintains a relationship with local legislative representatives.
- The board supports literacy goals and its tie-in to the graduation rate,
- Execution of the COMPACT involves multiple internal stakeholders and insures participation and transparency.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Develop a formal system of board evaluation and training,
- Establish a regularly scheduled revision process for the Board of Education Policy Manual, perhaps with the help of the Wyoming School Board Association.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Natrona County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Governance & Leadership" standard.

Standard 3: Teaching & Learning

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

Description:

Through interviews with stakeholders, students, and staff as well as a thorough exploration of artifacts and evidence of instructional practices, QAR team members observed that Natrona County School District No. 1 (NDS #1) has developed, articulated, and coordinated a comprehensive Essential Curriculum based on clearly-defined expectations for student learning that are articulated and communicated to all stakeholders using a variety of methods.

Students at NCS #1 are engaged in teaching and learning processes that are research-based and reflective of best practice. All students at NCS #1 are supported in their learning through multiple efforts by staff to meet the varied and diverse needs of learners. Students are provided multiple opportunities to explore and apply higher order thinking skills as they apply to real world applications. QAR team members cite multiple examples of “student-owned learning” including, but not limited to, project- and problem-based learning where curriculum is embedded in a series of problems, issues, scenarios, and ideas or concepts. In addition, QAR team members observed advanced placement coursework, International Baccalaureate, 21st Century language and logic classes, and Robotics. Parent stakeholders, staff, and students acknowledge the importance of a rigorous classroom environment where all students are challenged and supported to succeed. Teachers and administrators cite the importance of responsive professional development including, but not limited to Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) protocol that is fully evidenced through classroom walkthroughs and interviews with students who echo using PDSAs as well as plus/delta reflections in their learning.

Stakeholders in NCS #1 have multiple options with regard to school enrollment and course selections that best fit family goals. “Your Family’s Guide to Natrona County Schools” articulates offerings available throughout the district. Some examples include accelerated programs, language and logic classes, comprehensive explore programs including culinary arts, industrial technologies, career technology programs, and 21st Century technology courses as well as Title I, Special Education, learning support programs, and assistive technologies. In addition, NCS #1 has committed to “research-informed” tutoring available during the day through study skills labs, one-on-one or small group assistance, before and after school assistance, as well as having opportunities to meet with teachers and/or email teaching staff for assistance via personal laptops.

Instructional time is adequate and protected so as to support student learning. A good example of NCS #1's commitment to maximizing student learning includes trimming \$1 million from the Central Service budget in order to lessen any negative impact of budget cuts directly related to student learning. Professional development opportunities are scheduled before school starts in August to maximize the impact for teachers to begin effective instruction from day one. Building staff work to minimize classroom interruptions and promote bell-to-bell learning.

While Natrona’s Essential Curriculum is in place to ensure articulation between all levels of schooling, interviews with stakeholders, staff, and students evidences a need to develop processes and criteria to ensure that school options (choice) and site-based decisions contribute to student achievement, decrease achievement gaps, and increase graduation rates. Some stakeholders expressed concern that instructional

practices are not sufficiently consistent within the district to ensure that students transferring within the district do not become at-risk for lower achievement.

NCSD #1 supports the implementation of interventions to help student meet expectations for student learning. This is evidenced in the Essential Curriculum, multiple learning support programs including credit recovery, learning labs, flooding and front-loading instruction, an effective Pyramid of Interventions, Instructional Facilitators, Informed Tutoring, co-teaching, gifted and talented programs, and high access to instructional technologies. While ready access to technology is evident, QAR team members recognize a need to research, develop, and communicate a plan for instructional technology to assure that best practices for 21st century teacher and learning are applied consistently throughout the system. Ready access to instructional technologies is evident throughout the district. Efforts to ensure that these technologies contribute to rigorous, relevant, real-world learning need to be coordinated system wide. QAR Team walkthroughs provided evidence of multiple instances of off-task student behavior on laptops including non-instructional game playing during classes, random Internet searches, etc.

A positive climate is an area of focus for NCSD #1. Multiple revisions of the district COMPACT evidence efforts to build relationships with a strong focus on supporting and increasing student achievement. QAR team members found evidence throughout district schools of positive learning environments for all students. Nonetheless, the district shared data from surveys in recent years indicating significant numbers of disengaged students.

NCSD #1 ensures that curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals through the Essential Curriculum processes. Building staff report continually reviewing Essential Curriculum annually, based on reflective feedback. The division of teaching and learning works to ensure this process district wide. In addition, an annual data review protocol ensures that curriculum revisions are constantly moving towards increasing student achievement.

SCHOOL-LEVEL NARRATIVES AND FINDINGS

Alcova Elementary School

Several processes are in place to assist school staff in ensuring they meet the needs of all students in the areas of instruction, assessment, and curriculum. A guaranteed curriculum is delivered by way of essential outcomes on the district curriculum maps, along with district developed scope and sequence guides. A variety of instructional resources and curriculum materials are provided to support the teacher in working towards bringing students to higher levels of proficiency. The teacher/student ratio is conducive to individualized instruction. Progress monitoring assessments are used to ensure students are achieving proficiency. In addition, the teacher uses results from the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Performance Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS), Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), and classroom assessments to ensure students are meeting expected growth. Technological supports for teaching and learning are in place including student laptops and Promethean board technology. Regular communication between staff and with parents ensures that all stakeholders are informed as to individual student's strengths and areas for growth allowing for a concentrated home and school partnership to improve student performance. The school climate is monitored and appropriate steps are taken to ensure that it is conducive to student learning. The Quality Assurance Review team found through observations and interviews with stakeholders, that Alcova Elementary School has developed and implements a curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this

standard: Operational

Bar Nunn Elementary School

The curriculum at Bar Nunn School is aligned and paced with the essential curriculum of the district. The students stated that teachers tell them in the morning and before the beginning of each class what they are going to learn. Through pre-tests and formative assessments given in the classroom, students know what they have to work on. PAWS, NWEA, district assessments and classroom assessments provide information to students, parents and staff to focus efforts. Student goal notebooks are reviewed weekly by students and are accessible to parents at all times. Math, Reading, Writing and Parent Goal Team artifacts and stakeholder interviews indicate that results are analyzed, goals set and plans made to improve teaching and learning. Information is channeled to all staff via a system of teams (Professional Learning Communities, Goal, and School Improvement Teams).

Staff members are respected at this school. Parents and students appreciate that teachers are available before school, after school and during recess for students who needed additional help. Homework club, Success For All Tutors, and Add+Vantage Math are some of the programs available for struggling students. Tutors benefit targeted students at Bar Nunn by filling gaps and providing additional practice. At-risk teams meet weekly and analyze data. Student placement and movement in groups occur quarterly. Classified staff are included in every aspect of the school and are valued at Bar Nunn. Instructional strategies implemented at Bar Nunn include cooperative learning strategies, Marzano strategies, modeling, tutoring and engagement strategies. The Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle was evident in every classroom. Teacher, leadership and student interviews explained the cycle and how it was used in the school. Bar Nunn uses SWIS data to monitor behavior issues at Bar Nunn. Parents believe that the rigor is high for the “middle” student. They expressed a desire for additional enrichment programs to be made available for students at Bar Nunn. Professional Learning Community (PLC) time is valued at Bar Nunn Elementary. The teams meet weekly and use data to plan, instruct and assess students. Bar Nunn staff crave the opportunity to collaborate with other high performing schools to better their educational system. Technology is abundant at Bar Nunn Elementary. Students have access to classroom computers, laptops, a computer lab, iPads, Nooks, Promethean boards and document cameras. Training on technology is key in furthering the use of technology in student achievement. Stakeholder interviews revealed all staff at Bar Nunn is moving forward in a unified manner.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Casper Classical Academy

Casper Classical Academy successfully implements a challenging curriculum based on the Trivium model of education with a focus on grammar, logic and rhetoric. This model serves as the core foundation for the implementation of the district’s essential curriculum. CCA has strong expectations for high levels of student learning, critical thinking, problem solving, and applications of learning to real world situations. Advanced classes in Latin, logic and political discourse support this philosophy. PDSA examples are posted on all classroom walls. The staff is committed to the learning needs of all students including the exceptionally high performing, and those with special needs. While staff comments that they “never have enough time” [for teaching everything they want to teach] this statement is indicative of their commitment to meeting the needs of all students.

Teachers continually review curriculum at monthly planning meetings, coordinate planning and

instruction, implement common assessments, and share responsibility for analyzing student performance data. From this analysis, interventions are planned for improving student learning. CCA exemplifies a system-wide positive climate where there is a strong relationship between students, staff, and stakeholders.

Students have ready access to instructional technology through one-to-one computers, Promethean boards and projection systems in all classrooms. Media access is instantly available through student computers. Additional media services are available through a Library shared with Frontier Middle School.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Centennial Junior High School

A positive school climate is fully evident throughout Centennial Junior High School (CJHS), resulting in a sense of belonging and support for student learning. CJHS implements the district essential curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of students. Lesson plans are reviewed weekly for alignment by the building principal and department chairs. Students and parents report having clearly defined expectations for learning that are challenging and relevant to real-world expectations.

Students take ownership for their learning through classroom goal setting conferences, collaborative scoring of work samples, and by maintaining student data folders/notebooks. PDSAs are posted on the walls of all classrooms evidencing a commitment to ensuring that all decisions are based on data. Their Literacy First goal is evidence of research-based, best-practice instruction. Staff is committed to the learning needs of all students including the high performing, and those with special needs.

Instructional time is protected to every extent possible. Teachers plan engaging lessons based on clear objectives, working from “bell-to-bell.” Parents report that instruction is challenging and that students are adequately prepared for the future. Technology is “everywhere.” One-to-one laptops, Promethean boards, document, digital, and video cameras, and Activote responder systems are used to enhance student learning. Interventions are in place to address the needs of all students. An extensive on-site support system of teachers, support staff, counselors, tutors, extended day opportunities, math and literacy labs, “MIRP” (Monitored Independent Reading Practice), and “Bully-Busters” are evident throughout the school. Website resources are provided for students that contain vocabulary lists, math games, “Just Ask AI” an online technology tutor system available to both parents and students.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Cottonwood Elementary School

From the pertinent quotes stenciled on the walls to the music indicating transition time, Cottonwood Elementary projects a positive, warm, learning-focused environment. Teacher and parent interviews highlighted the “family with a purpose” atmosphere that prevails. Students indicated they feel safe at school.

Staff uses data from a variety of sources to review and revise school improvement goals on an annual basis. The instructional program is based on the district adopted essential curriculum and student assessment data. The first school improvement goal in reading aligns to the district goal in literacy. QAR observations verify a planned, researched implementation of instructional strategies and programs.

Students and teachers were using plan, do, study, acting on the results to structure the learning process. Schedules are arranged to protect teaching and learning during core subject areas with a solid thirty to sixty minutes of intervention or enrichment for all students. Parent interviews substantiated the clear expectations for improving student achievement were a significant factor in why they chose to have their child attend Cottonwood.

Student interviews about their school days underline the support of learning provided by the entire staff at Cottonwood. One student talked about how the teacher helps the class with math when they don't understand. Classroom observations during math time demonstrated teachers and students using accurate math vocabulary and working with manipulatives and iPads when appropriate. Tutors provide small group support and one to one when extra instruction or time is needed. Cottonwood is developing an effective curriculum and instructional system for students.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Crest Hill Elementary School

At Crest Hill, there are clear expectations for student learning. Teachers on grade level teams collaborate weekly ensuring alignment on grade levels; the leadership team and goal teams excel in alignment and articulation across all levels. Goal teams are inclusive of all areas, and there is a collegial attitude towards common planning. Students are actively involved in the learning process. In order to meet the needs of all students, Crest Hill is piloting a program to ensure tutoring for all who need it using art, music, and PE teachers. The school focus team meets twice a year for a week and discusses every child in the school and their progress. The principal sends home a letter to every child with a handwritten "refrigerator-worthy" note. Through goal teams, Crest Hill "designs and uses instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that are research-based." Those resources are now in place to ensure that students reach their goals. Some examples include short-term predictive assessments for reading in K-2, Rigby, Horizons, IXL.com, and Bridges.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

CY Middle School

CY Middle School staff are familiar with the essential curriculum and most staff members use it to direct the teaching and learning in their classrooms. All stakeholder groups indicated that CYMS staff has shown their dedication to supporting student engagement and especially to higher order learning opportunities in a variety of ways. Some of the ways that they have demonstrated this commitment is through the implementation of the Summit-DI program, Digital Media, Digital Drawing, Manufacturing Science, and Agricultural Science. CYMS goal teams make curricular and instructional decisions based on data. The staff report that they are trying to make instructional decisions that are research-based and reflective of best practice, but would like more district-level support in this area.

CYMS staff recognizes the importance and value of the instructional time and work hard to preserve it when they are able; however, they did note that state-mandated testing cuts heavily into the instructional time in the spring. They also reported that that is the specific focus of the E2 goal team this year. Articulation among the CYMS staff is very evident; vertical articulation, however, is an area that

stakeholders report needs improvement. They have very limited opportunities for vertical alignment throughout the district. CYMS provides many interventions to help students meet the expected standards and create a climate that supports student learning. Some of the interventions that accomplish these purposes that were reported by stakeholders are: Read 180, Literacy First, I Can Learn Math, System 44, tutoring, Prime Time, Bridges, E2 , WEB and Cyclone Pride.

Curriculum and its effectiveness are reviewed constantly and consistently through the PDSA process, which is evident in every classroom. The students and teachers review the curriculum and the learning and teaching strategies after each unit to make adjustments and revisions that will improve the learning process.

CYMS is a technology-rich, state-of-the-art school. Instructional technology is evident in every classroom and with every student, as Natrona County School District #1 employs a one-to-one computer initiative for every student in grades 6-12. Staff expresses the need for additional training to ensure that the technology is having the desired positive effect on teaching and learning. CYMS has a comprehensive media center that facilitates and promotes effective instruction and learning.

It is clear that CYMS is working hard to implement the essential curriculum outlined by the district. They are collaborating in their school and soliciting the input of students to constantly refine the teaching and learning process. They desire support at a district level to identify research based instructional strategies that they can implement. In addition, multiple stakeholder groups expressed the need for a “common curriculum”, implemented with fidelity in order for the school and district to increase student achievement and alleviate some of the challenges they currently face as student come to them with different foundations of learning.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Dean Morgan Middle School

The staff at Dean Morgan utilizes a wide variety of curriculum and instructional methods to help students attain a high level of achievement. There is an advisory block where students meet to engage in MIRP, check grades, and study the Cowboy Ethics. The instructor in this class regularly meets with the students to ensure they are meeting their individual achievement goals. Accelerated math, math lab, literacy labs, team meetings, and grade reflection papers are used. Classes integrate the Plan, Study, Do, Act process into their lessons; students keep a personal goal chart and track their progress through the goals for each unit.

The whole school embraces the Literacy 1st program. Every classroom has a “Word Wall”, all teachers utilize writing as a part of their curriculum, and teachers meet to develop cross-curricular lessons that will allow the students to understand the real world implications of their work. The educators examine best practices and often serve as examples for other schools with their work. They have aligned the school to the essential curriculum, they serve on teams who teach the same lessons, give the same tests, and use the same materials to ensure all students receive the same quality instruction. The teachers integrate technology to produce I-movies, podcasts, bell assignments, quizzes, drop boxes, discussion groups, and investigative lessons.

Students at Dean Morgan are enrolled in a four period block schedule. Each class period consists of a variety of lessons (at least three) to keep the students engaged in the learning process. Teachers model the “I do it – We do it – You do it” process to increase the students’ confidence and ability. There are before and after school programs designed to allow students the opportunity to have assistance from

certified staff. A variety of CTE programs are offered at Dean Morgan. Students seem to be acutely interested in their elective classes and the more than 40 clubs at the school.

The school strives to meet the physical, emotional, social, and academic needs of each child. They host a Challenge Day for all students, and student leaders help with the activities. During this time, the students are challenged to think differently about people and things. They are taught acceptance of individuals and are encouraged to become more empathetic to others.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Evansville Elementary

Student achievement expectations are the foundation for goal area curriculum (reading, writing, and math) that is aligned to the district's "Essential Curriculum". Students are actively involved in their learning process by setting concept goals, determining appropriate strategies for learning, recording their personal achievement data, and reflecting on the entire process using a plus/delta discussion. Evansville staff, through curricular committees, review PAWS, NWSA and NCSD#1 Writing Prompt data at least twice annually. Information gleaned from this data is the basis of grade level curricular adjustments during the school year. Teachers and support staff instruct students using research-based strategies that are intentionally taught and reflected upon by students for effectiveness in a range of curricular activities. "Strategy Walls" were visible in some classrooms providing students with a list of appropriate strategy choices. The curriculum has the flexibility to be delivered with challenges and supports serving a range of student ability levels. Equity and diversity are components of the reading curriculum and writing prompts. Instructional time is a building "non-negotiable" agreed upon and committed to by the staff. Reading, writing and math curriculum has been aligned horizontally at the school level for fidelity and vertically at the district level for alignment. Instructional interventions are provided to students identified as special education, Title I, at risk and English as a Second Language (ESL); in addition, sign language interpreters accompany deaf students and students loop with their two teachers in a two-year cycle. School climate is monitored through Gallup and Solid Foundation surveys. The administration reviews this feedback and seeks additional information from parents to provide an environment conducive to student learning. Students and staff members have access to materials, media services and technology that support the curricular and instructional program. The library recently received "a ton" of new books, and a Promethean Interactive Board, a classroom set of iPads is available in the media center and classrooms have student sets of laptop computers. Some classrooms have amplification systems.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Fort Casper Elementary School

Fort Casper promotes clear expectations for student learning based on Natrona County's essential curriculum, district goals and the Wyoming State Educational Standards. Parents revealed through the interview process that these expectations are shared with students and parents through weekly assessment folders, newsletters, and during regular parent conferences. Stakeholders, including the students, were able to readily connect student learning and expectations to their school's vision but unable to describe what "The Best School in the World" would actually look like. The student's have earned the excelling school

status for their school in the areas of math, reading and writing in the Natrona County School District in the most recent school year and historically.

The staff reported that parents created the school as a way to fill the need for a ‘back to the basics’ education and character building environment for their children. The curriculum implementation reflects that parent driven mandate in language arts and math.

Through classroom observations, the QAR team noted most classrooms were taught using the instructional practice of direct instruction starting in kindergarten and extending through fifth grade. Classrooms of the same grade were at the exact same place in their lesson plans during our visit. There was a consistency with the vocabulary, expectations, routine, discipline program and visual guides indicating that the staff was using their curriculum adoptions with fidelity. Students are challenged to excel within the school’s curriculum and then the students are accelerated when mastery is shown.

Curriculum articulation and alignment was documented within their Saxon Math, Foss Science Kits and Spaulding Language Arts Program. Fort Caspar Academy is a technological “high access school”. Technology plans, implementation and professional development are in the initial planning stages with committees in place. Schedules indicate that instructional time is protected for all learners everyday by nonacademic scheduling and other restrictions. Tutoring opportunities for students are in place before school, after school, and during the school day to ensure that all students will meet expectations for learning.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Frontier Middle School

Frontier Middle School is at the heart of establishing an effective learning system that has high expectations, clear learning goals, a process for improvement, and instruction that is data driven. This is facilitated by the efforts of school professional learning communities. This school has leadership, teacher, and support staff stakeholders who employ a variety of research-based strategies in order to reach the three goals of the school. The vision, “Rising to the Challenge of the 21st Century,” has school stakeholder support. It is communicated to outside stakeholders through a variety of means. Examples include the website and the student planner. The reading, math, health, and safety goals are shared throughout the school, as is the mission.

The district essential curriculum is followed. Frontier Middle School supports various supplemental programs in addition to regular classroom work. Math teaching support has been built in teacher training. Math teachers work with a consultant. The students took NWEA-MAP in the spring, and there was a significant growth in math scores. The leadership stakeholder group reports, “We are changing the habit of mind and being intentional and focused.” During the past two years, the district supported a middle level cohort group. Math teachers said, “This helps us understand what was happening in the district.” Stakeholders agreed grade level groups need to meet across the district for their subject areas. The Literacy First Framework has been implemented with fidelity to ensure systematic instruction and assessment. Tiered interventions are in place to facilitate student growth.

Teachers reported the mentoring program was good, but at the same time, could be overwhelming for a new teacher. Other interviews report special education provides great support. Students report they student are fully engaged in about one- half of their classes. They also noted that only about one- half of

their parents look at Infinite Campus. The parent at the stakeholder meeting reported that she is very pleased with teaching and learning at Frontier Middle School. A student reported in his interview, “My NWEA-MAP scores continue to rise and that did not happen when he was in elementary school.” Instructional support for effective learning practices is evident in all school stakeholder groups. Instructional facilitators are an important piece of the improvement plan. Teaching and learning at Frontier Middle School is becoming systemic, sustainable, and systematic.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Grant Elementary School

Grant Elementary School implements the Essential Curriculum with the clearly defined expectation that every child will be prepared for the next grade. Students understand this expectation, feel supported, are engaged in learning, and believe that they are learning “for the future.” Students know where to go for help. Students are actively involved in the learning process, regularly engaging in PDSAs, keeping data notebooks, and tracking their own progress. They truly “own their learning” by reflecting on what strategies work or do not work for them. Goal team leaders are actively investigating and researching opportunities for higher order thinking for students.

Goal teams continually study the data and identify areas for improvement. Several examples of this were shared; one team leader shared that they are “looking for the missing piece that can give us the edge we are looking for in math.... that piece might be alignment.” Thus, the team is digging into the curriculum as well as the textbook alignment in order to improve. When students were not achieving at the level desired in comprehension, the lack of informational text in the reading text was noted. Therefore, the team made the decision to allocate funding for a newer more information text-rich resource. The leadership team has also identified the need for finding strategies for facilitating growth for the high-achieving students. Collaborative planning time and goal teams (with representation from each pod) ensure articulation and alignment between and among all grade levels; focus team meetings three times per year and at-risk meetings ensure that proper interventions are provided to help students meet expectations.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Kelly Walsh High School

Kelly Walsh implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Teaching and learning units are mapped on the District Essential Curriculum website which serves as the basis for instruction in the core areas of language arts, math, social studies and science. The established school vision and pillars of excellence guide the teaching and learning processes for the school. Support staff members report being directly involved in the activities of the school. Co-teaching occurs in some classrooms effectively utilizing content area tutors and special education para-professionals. QAR team representatives who visited both Natrona County High School and Kelly Walsh High School found consistency and continuity between the two schools in teaching and learning strategies.

Professional learning communities and department committees work weekly to ensure implementation of the curriculum and assessments. Students report knowing and understanding curricular requirements and

credit teachers with providing rigorous and relevant lessons. Students establish individualized learning goals in most classes and are able to relate their goals to the vision and purpose of the school. Students track progress on assessments using a variety of methods including graphing and “sticky dots” to record progress. A school data board is located prominently in the school to display student performance data to all students and stakeholders. Teachers utilize best-practice instructional methodologies such as CRISS strategies and cooperative learning to support student learning and the school improvement goals. Student work is displayed throughout the school. Instructional facilitators provide support for classroom teachers in best practice methodologies and data collection.

Kelly Walsh High School provides varied and challenging course offerings for all students. Students are able to pursue the “next step” of attending college through Advanced Placement and Concurrent Enrollment courses. Elective course offerings in career and technical education, physical education, fine and performing arts, and foreign language provide opportunities for all students to excel academically in curricular and extra-curricular activities. Students report that because opportunities exist for all students to be accepted and actively involved, student engagement is high at Kelly Walsh. Classroom observation and stakeholder interviews reflect the significance and influence of a positive and secure learning environment on the students and their respective families. Survey results indicate that parents are confident that students are safe at the school. Students are appreciative of the willingness of staff to do everything possible to help ensure student success. Interventions such as “freshman purgatory,” lunch-remediation, tutoring, and credit recovery lab, provide support for students in need of remediation. The administrative staff tracks student attendance and holds students accountable for getting to school. Students and parents credit all staff members with always being ready and willing to help students, and recognize the importance of the principal in creating a positive, caring, school environment.

The use of technology is evident throughout the school and technology is integrated into teaching and learning activities. Student-generated posters are displayed throughout the school. Students have one to one availability of computers. Many classrooms are equipped with electronic whiteboards and projectors. Teachers utilize video and photography technology in multi-media lessons and presentations. Instructional materials are available to support learning in all content areas.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Manor Heights Elementary School

Manor Heights has actively sought out curriculum with a foundation based in their expectations for learning built on Natrona County’s Essential Curriculum, district goals and Wyoming state educational standards. During classroom visits the QAR team observed the Writer’s Eye curriculum in action. It was developed by the staff at Manor Heights to ensure that all students mastered each grade level’s nonnegotiable writing skills. The team witnessed that the students were not only active participants in their own learning but they were in charge of their own learning by using and identifying their own personal high yield learning strategies during the student interviews. Students also kept a goal folder that contained evidence of their weekly work that was completed toward reaching their goals and student created graphs to document their progress. The classroom walls consistently bore the evidence that each classroom was using the common language of PEBC Thinking Strategies with the posting of student and teacher generated graphic organizers. The QAR team also found evidence displayed that proved the entire school was using research based CAFÉ strategies and the Daily 5 framework for reading success

During student and teacher interviews, as well as classroom visits, the QAR team found that the teachers

had created and were following their quarterly curriculum maps. The students in the upper grades were aware of what they had to accomplish during the particular quarter of instruction. The teachers worked to articulate and align standards between grade levels and individual classrooms. The staff is using the PDSA model to create action plans for areas of weaknesses effectively as shown by the fact that their school has now achieved excelling status in writing, thus attaining their goal.

Technology plans, implementation and professional development fall under the district umbrella however, staff members actively seek out and request professional development with such technology as Promethean Boards and communication tools for their special education students. The staff actively applies for and receives grants to fund technology for their school as they see developing student needs.

Diversity is appreciated and celebrated at Manor Heights with the inclusion of all students in classrooms and celebrations. Parents, staff and students reported that the whole school supports Special Olympic Athletes and special needs students during inclusion. The staff fosters this by creating programs of behavior and community work that is inspired by current children's literature. It was stated, "they are in the practice of accepting and growing all children.

Tutoring opportunities for students are in place before school, after school and during the school day to ensure that all students will meet expectations for learning.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Midwest School

Natrona County School District #1 has developed an essential curriculum aligned with state and common core standards, and requires that all district schools follow this curriculum. The QAR team found evidence that Midwest School has implemented the essential curriculum. Additionally, teachers follow a comprehensive research-based pedagogical model---Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA)---that yields highly useable, content-specific, outcomes-based learning for students. Classroom visits indicated that teachers consistently utilize the PDSA model in planning and teaching across all content areas. Interviews with students indicated that they understand this model and that its use is helping them understand and take ownership of their learning. The leadership team and content-specific goal teams meet regularly to monitor the teaching and learning process, and adjust based on this monitoring. Professional development around the PDSA model is ongoing. Interviews with community stakeholders indicated that they have a working understanding of the pedagogical methodologies and feel that school administration is available to assist them with any questions they may have. Administration has implemented a comprehensive research-based evaluation system that they believe is leading to more effective performance for all instructional staff. Much time and effort are being put into improving pedagogical skills with evident buy-in on the part of teachers. Midwest and Willow Creek schools clearly operate as a learning community and are moving forward toward meeting school and district goals for improved student achievement.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Mills Elementary School

Mills Elementary provides research based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievements for all students. Mills Elementary uses a curriculum that is aligned to the essential

curriculum mandated by the district office. The curriculum promotes high standards for all children at all levels to learn. The teachers and staff are highly qualified to teach and provide information daily enhances students academically, socially, and emotionally. Instructional time at Mills Elementary is important and protected to provide students optimal learning opportunities. Interviews with all stakeholders supported a sound educational system where children learn “every way, every day”. The school system implements programs for children in remediation and enrichment. The Boy’s and Girl’s Club is imbedded in the school for after school programs and via interviews with students, parents and teachers provides educational and behavioral services that supports the goals of the school. Interviews indicated that the parents in the school system need to engage more in students learning as much of the parent support system is provided by “the same parents”, however, communication to and from school is outgoing weekly, monthly and quarterly.

The classroom observations show that students are actively engaged in learning. The teachers ensure that all student needs are met through constant data review, meetings for setting goals and a strong RTI program guided by research but adapted to meet the students at Mills Elementary needs. The school is equipped with a computer lab where students have access to programs and computers and other technology devices were embedded throughout the classrooms.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Mountain View Elementary School

Mountain View Elementary uses the Essential Curriculum, a district-adopted scope and sequence model, as the basis for its instructional program, and given the latitude of the district’s site-based decision-making parameters, has chosen from among a variety of approved research-based programs for its instruction in “the 3 R’s.” However, the fact that the district not only allows each school site the opportunity to select core curriculum materials, but also has established an open “school choice” format for parents, has led to a lack of consistency throughout the district in instructional delivery. As a result, there have been a significant percentage of student transiencies from school-to-school, with some students having experienced as many as three different reading programs within the primary grades.

Through the analysis of data relative to student performance coupled with a major lack of parent involvement in their children’s education, the staff identified a need for training in new approaches to instruction which would not only effectively have the students become more responsible for their own performance, but which would also include a component to teach parents how to provide better support for their child’s academic achievement. The training, which was offered to Title I schools, provided for adoption of Jim Shipley’s model for continuous improvement of performance, and focuses at the same time on group and individual progress. Each student has a “data notebook” which includes the class’s Mission Statement, the child’s individual mission statement, and the child’s individual goals, which he/she developed from looking at personal data. Interviewed students proudly showed the QAR team their notebooks, and were able to explain how they were a major factor in improving their performance. This classroom activity coupled with school-wide emphasis on the analysis and applications of data from a variety of sources (PAWS, MAP, DIBELS, et al.) are major contributors to the improvement of the school’s performance on standardized assessments, moving from being a District “focus school” to being in the “unclassified” category and near to “excelling” in the area of Reading.

The school has significant technological resources, with “Smartboards” being observed in use by classroom teachers throughout the building, and computer resources in all classroom areas. Upper grade

levels access the Infinite Campus software to record student performance and to provide two-way communication through email with parents. It was noted that given the high poverty level of families in the school, many do not have internet access in their households, and that “more traditional” methods of communication are necessary.

As a Title I School wide school, numerous Tier 2 and 3 resources are provided, including not only technologically based programs but also direct instruction using tutors, academic specialists, and a strong special education component. The latter is due to the high percentage of special education students in the school; the district has also established the school as the major center for providing Focused Life Skill instruction (FLS) and Behavior Intervention for District elementary level students.

The school’s staff attributes recent major progress in student achievement to the implementation of the District’s Continuous Improvement model, a data-based, ongoing approach to instructional decision-making and which enhances team-building among the school staff. Interviews indicated that many long-time members of the staff feel that they are finally part of a team having common goals, rather than teachers operating “on their own” and with little coordinated group efforts. This recent change has led to better articulation of instruction between grade levels, and improved student performance.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Natrona County High School

Natrona County High School implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provide opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Teaching and learning units are mapped on the District Essential Curriculum website which serves as the basis for instruction in the core areas of language arts, math, social studies and science. District curriculum efforts to complete the alignment of learning activities in all content areas continue to be a priority of the district and school. Assessments are aligned and learning activities which reflect higher order thinking skills are articulated in the Essential Curriculum. Teachers state their commitment to using the Essential Curriculum as directed by district and school policies. QAR team representatives who visited both Natrona County High School and Kelly Walsh High School found consistency and continuity between the two schools in teaching and learning strategies.

Professional learning communities and department committees work weekly to ensure implementation of the curriculum and assessments. Students report knowing and understanding curricular requirements and credit teachers with providing rigorous and relevant lessons. Teachers utilize best-practice instructional methodologies such as CRISS strategies to support student learning and the school improvement goals. Instructional facilitators provide support for classroom teachers in best practice methodologies.

Natrona County High School provides varied and challenging course offerings for all students through the International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, and Concurrent Enrollment programs. Elective course offerings in career and technical education, fine arts, and foreign language provide opportunities for all students to excel academically in curricular and extra-curricular activities. Students and teachers report that while opportunities exist for students to be actively involved in learning both in and outside of the classroom, there are some disengaged students who are not involved in school learning activities.

Classroom observation and stakeholder interviews reflect the significance and influence of a positive and secure learning environment on the students and their respective families. Survey results indicate that

parents are confident that students are safe at the school. Numerous interventions such as Saturday school, lunch-remediation, tutoring, and credit recovery lab, provide support for students in need of remediation. Students credit staff members with always being ready and willing to help students, and state their appreciation of the extensive efforts carried out by the staff to ensure student success.

Teachers report the administration supports the school improvement goals and processes. Staff members acknowledge there is frequent communication with administration regarding progress toward achieving the school goals. Instructional facilitators further support the efforts by providing data to school improvement committees to inform and assist the committees in school improvement decisions.

The use of technology is evident throughout the school and technology is integrated into teaching and learning activities. Students have one to one availability of computers. Many classrooms are equipped with electronic whiteboards and projectors. Teachers utilize video and photographic technology in lessons. Instructional materials are available to support learning in all content areas.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

North Casper Elementary School

Artifacts indicated that North Casper Elementary School develops and implements curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for students. The staff at North Casper promotes active involvement of students in the learning process through goal setting, the PDSA format and action plans. Rigor and relevance were evident during classroom observations and student feedback regarding their active participation and ownership of their learning. From teacher interviews, the data artifacts and classroom observations, it was apparent that teachers use data gathering to identify student needs and guide the collaboration for lesson plans utilizing research-based practices. Learning goals, aligned to the essential curriculum, and rubrics are posted for students' reference. As a Title I school, the RtI (Response to Intervention) process ensures that tiered interventions are provided for differentiated instruction to meet student needs. A commitment to diversity was evident on "Walls that Teach" which included literacy cognates for ESL students. The staff provides 'sheltered instruction' for English Language Learners. Additionally, teachers pursued ESL certification on their own initiative to improve instructional effectiveness. To support student learning time instructional schedules were protected and collaborative teaming time was allocated. North Casper Elementary School is in an emerging state in regards to progressive technological sophistication.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Oregon Trail Elementary School

Oregon Trail Elementary has established an effective and unique operating system to promote teaching and learning that is aligned to the districts essential curriculum. The school uses their own curriculum that is research based and reflective of best practices. The curriculum is aligned to the essential curriculum of the district and promotes high achieving students and establishes higher level thinking skills. The data analysis supports that the curriculum promotes growth in student achievement, Oregon Trail Elementary met the criteria of an Excelling school in Natrona County School District and the longitudinal student

achievement data presented to the QAR team reflected continuous growth in student performance. The school has an established RtI process that meets the needs of all students. The school teams meet on a regular basis and disaggregate data on all students and view the data analysis process as part of the ongoing process of achieving excellence for all students. The staff has established collective commitments where the following programs have been implemented to promote learning for all learners: Writer's workshop, CRISS, Read Naturally, Total Reader, Continuous Classroom Improvement, Six Traits +1 and Step Up to Writing.

The school climate represents a school where teachers can teach and students can learn.” Interviews with all stakeholders supported instructional time for all students are essential and protected. Classroom observations supported that instructional practices consist of students engaged in learning, direct instruction, and ability grouping. Interviews and artifacts support 100% of the teachers are highly qualified. All staff members are involved in decision-making about student learning and support and promote a school climate where “teachers can teach and students can learn”.

Oregon Trail Elementary assures all students and staff are safe and a sense of belonging existing in the school. Bullying programs have been a part of the school system before the district mandated bullying programs in all schools. It was evident through walkthroughs, class observations and interviews, the students and staff respected each other, themselves and the school. Artifacts of the bullying program were posted in every classroom that promoted a safe learning environment.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Paradise Valley Elementary School

Paradise Valley has developed and implemented a rigorous curriculum that takes students naturally into 21st Century Skills as a result of high standards and high thinking skills that have been imbedded. Student engagement is extremely high partly as a result of the positive behavior system that is consistently applied throughout the school. Very few worksheets were used in the classrooms, as students were engaged in authentic hands-on learning. Learning centers, word walls, and writing walls were seen by the team throughout the school that were student interactive. The research-based curriculum used in the school has been developed and implemented over time by the staff and defines expectations for students. Ninety minutes of uninterrupted literacy time has been established through the master schedule with an additional thirty minutes used for intensive instruction at that child's level of learning. Classrooms that are collaborative and student-owned are evident in almost every classroom. The staff recognizes the need to work on the vertical alignment throughout the classrooms and their instructional facilitator is committed to assist in that area. Paradise Valley has been used throughout the district as a model for reading as other schools come to observe their Balanced Literacy.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Park Elementary School

Through classroom observation and instructional walkthroughs the QAR team noted instructional practices including direct instruction, small group learning, blended multi-age project learning, thematic based project learning, PDSA, and the infusion of Quantum learning strategies in classrooms. Interviews with

students suggested high student engagement in managing their own learning particularly at the upper grade 4/5th level and recognition by students that their teachers were trying to help them continuously improve. A student stated that “teachers are challenging us to get our brains to stretch and be better learners.” Students were able to relate to the district vision of “Every Learner a Champion” and stated that it means that all should be succeeding and meeting their goals. All staff members have received Quantum and Literacy First training and there is a group preparing to go for Professional Learning Communities training. In the interview of teachers, it was clear that teachers refer to the essential district curriculum and they build the goals into their project based learning units. Teachers expressed a concern that strict adherence to the Essential Curriculum and increasing district program initiatives will pull them away from their school orientation of multi-age grade levels and thematic project based learning. Teachers feel that central services should trust the teachers to meet their students needs and foster continuous improvement among students within a range of acceptable variation and adjustment to district initiatives. That is the only way that teachers feel that their current school orientation can be preserved.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Pineview Elementary School

Pineview Elementary school promotes clear expectations for student based learning by using data to determine strengths and weaknesses. The staff uses the Essential Curriculum as a roadmap to instruction and uses PDSA cycle and goal teams to determine areas for improvement.

The students use data to determine their own learning objective. They also track progress by graphing classroom and NWEA assessment data. The students understand the PDSA process to set achievement goals. The teachers work together to set priorities of instruction by using data.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Poison Spider Elementary School

Poison Spider Elementary promotes high expectations for student growth and achievement. Their lessons are all aligned to the districts Essential Curriculum. They plan for and consistently meet in Professional Learning Community Teams to review the needs of students. They provide intervention and enrichment time daily as a venue for differentiation of instruction. Individual student instructional decisions are based on data from classroom assessments, state tests, growth assessments and specific reading assessments.

Primary grade classroom observations indicated that instruction is provided in small groups based on the needs of the students. Elementary classroom observations did not show this level of differentiation. Students were allowed to demonstrate their learning through multiple strategies including manipulatives and oral expression.

Middle grade classroom observations showed primarily whole-group instruction. Some classrooms were challenged with discipline issues that interfered with instruction. Technology is readily available in the classrooms of this three-year-old building; however, the administration and the teachers feel they need professional development to use it to its best advantage.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational.

Powder River School

Powder River School promotes high expectations for student growth and achievement. Their lessons are all aligned to the district's Essential Curriculum. They provide intervention and enrichment time for differentiation of instruction. Individual student instructional decisions are based on data from classroom assessments, state tests, growth assessments and specific reading assessments. Instruction is provided individually, based on the needs of the students. These students and their parents trust the teacher and felt that they could not receive this level of instruction and individualized attention any place else.

The classroom is set up to provide individual study areas as well as teacher to student time. Students with disabilities are provided specific instruction and support as required by the IEP. This works well in this small setting and with the level of attention each student receives. Daily instruction for all students includes writing every morning, individual work assignment packets, and direct instruction from the teacher supported by the assistant. School programs are a community-supported event filling the gym.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional.

Red Creek Elementary School

The curriculum utilized at Red Creek Elementary School includes Harcourt Trophies, Everyday Math, FOSS Science, Wyoming History and Our Country and its Regions. Students travel to Alcova School for specials, which include art, physical education, health, and music. While the students are engaged in these courses, teachers are afforded collaboration time.

The teacher at Red Creek School uses a variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners. Intervention programs and supports are evident. Students have multiple opportunities to master objectives. Evidence includes small group instruction, teacher led discussions and the use of technology (Promethean Board, computers, software). The teacher begins the day with clear daily learning expectations. The objectives are revisited at the beginning of each lesson and at the end of each lesson with a check for understanding. Rigor is evident by the level of questioning asked by the teacher and the quality of student work. Principal, teacher and student interviews revealed the use of real-world applications in the learning process.

Data drive teacher instruction. Student achievement results are examined, targets are identified, and planning for instruction is based on students needs. Individual student data folders include NWEA (MAP), Spelling, Math and Multiplication 2 Minutes test. Teachers and students engage in data discussions daily, review data folders weekly, and parents and students review data together every other week.

The wall graphic organizer of Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) is a constant reminder of the systemic school, teacher and student improvement. Teacher and students use the PDSA model weekly. Objectives, plans, student progress and actions are evident. Student evidence supports the use of both formative and summative assessments.

Collaboration opportunities with other district staff exist weekly with Alcova Elementary and with Sagewood Elementary monthly. Teachers examine student work and data to ensure alignment with the district's Essential Curriculum. Also, teachers work in vertical teams to assure alignment. Extending collaboration opportunities for the Red Creek School teacher will support her in using data to improve teaching and learning.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Roosevelt High School

Roosevelt High School has developed and implemented a curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning which is aligned to the district essential curriculum. Students are becoming more involved in the learning process and applying their learning. We did not see significant evidence of the application of higher-order thinking skills and stakeholders did not mention the importance of integrating higher-order thinking skills. There was evidence that data are gathered and analyzed to make instructional decisions, but the evidence was not as clear as to how the data are used for curricular decisions.

All stakeholder groups indicated that there is equity and appreciation for diversity with respect to the curriculum. There are equal opportunities for all students. There is evidence that the curriculum may not be challenging for some students and that the school is making adjustments to make the curriculum more challenging and more reflective of student and parent needs and desires. There is a clear demonstration that instructional time is allocated and protected. In fact, stakeholders report that an additional period was added to extend the learning time for students. Vertical alignment and articulation between schools and across the levels was not evident. Staff indicated a desire to have more collaboration with other schools and stakeholders. Stakeholder groups all expressed the school's commitment to implement interventions to help students achieve expectations for their learning. The work of the school PLC teams leads to these interventions being identified and applied. They express a desire for all students to succeed and achieve the school goals and they demonstrate a dedication to making this happen. Surveys of students and parents are conducted to monitor school climate and address identified concerns. Media services are provided to support curricular and instructional programs. Instructional technology is readily available for students and staff. The essential curriculum established by the district is becoming more accepted and utilized by the staff. Their "non-negotiables" stress academic excellence and they are dedicated to providing the required curriculum and affording students the opportunity to apply their learning to real-world situations and pushing out into the community.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Sagewood Elementary School

At Sagewood Elementary the staff focus is to motivate students and nurture their desire to learn in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. It was clear to the Quality Assurance Review team that the school's main business is teaching and learning. Various activities and resources are established in the schools to optimized and ensure that teaching and learning are implemented effectively. Curriculum materials are research-based and are implemented across classrooms at all grade levels in the school. A guaranteed curriculum is delivered by way of essential outcomes on the district curriculum maps, along with district

developed scope and sequence guides. A variety of instructional resources and curriculum materials are provided to support the teacher in working towards bringing students to higher levels of proficiency. The teacher/student ratio is conducive to individualized instruction. Progress monitoring assessments are used to ensure students are achieving proficiency. In addition, the teacher uses results from the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Performance Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS), Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), and classroom assessments to ensure students are meeting expected growth. School leadership, especially the principal, provides trust and support to teachers to enable them to carry out their duties. Teachers create learning environments and provide meaningful learning opportunities where students are active participants as individuals and as members of collaborative group and encourage students to accept responsibility for their own learning. Both teachers and students use data in making decision regarding student progress and learning. Classroom routines exist that promote comfort, order and appropriate student behaviors. Sagewood is an environment where student work is valued, appreciated and used as a learning tool.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Southridge Elementary School

Southridge Elementary School has clear expectations for student learning based on success of all students. This is evidence through the use of data to inform practice of differentiated learning - "flooding." The staff, students, and parents were all knowledgeable and very positive about this process. The teachers have one hour per week to meet as a group to review data and receive training by the instructional facilitator. The leadership team as well as school artifacts support research-based instruction and best practice. Southridge has developed a consistent curriculum and behavior plan K-5. Data are used to drive instructional decisions and support a challenging, curriculum meeting the needs of all students, supports implementation of interventions to help all students. The staff and leadership work to protect student learning time as well as creating a very positive school climate as evidence of the effective use of the Positive Behavior System. Plans are in place to align essential curriculum to classroom curriculum.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Summit Elementary School

There is overwhelming evidence that Summit implements the essential curriculum of the District, which includes cross-walking goals to lesson, plans. The teacher's use of curriculum, as a guide to drive target goals, is evident in student charting of their own progress, student goal setting using data folders, and student led conferencing. Students are involved in continuous leadership training using the Leader in Me model, in addition to academic learning. During teacher interviews one teacher summed up the relationship of school learning to the essential curriculum, "the essential curriculum isn't a Bible; it is a map that allows teachers to be creative and use their talents to move students toward their achievement destination." Summit focuses on the whole child and utilizes flex grouping and an inclusion model to meet individual needs. The school has implemented a 21st Century goal team and in the late spring infuses higher order thinking activities into the curriculum through rich performance tasking. Guiding principles that Summit Elementary was founded on included a goal to create critical thinkers and utilize information from multiple sources and create high quality products. This was evidenced through the use of rich performance tasks, to infuse higher order, critical thinking skills into the curriculum. These tasks

have been cross-walked to the essential curriculum, 21st Century Skills and guiding principles, and assessments.

During classroom walkthroughs, the QAR team noted the extensive opportunity for students and teachers to use technology through the use of promethium boards, computer technology, and graphic calculators. Students have the opportunity to participate in the designing of robotics projects. In the spring the entire student body will have access to a wind energy project.

Teachers at Summit Elementary have an opportunity to collaborate during their workday through the design of their schedule, and during Discovery Days. This strategy allows teachers to develop lessons targeting student's individual needs. They celebrate all student's successes during a leadership assembly with leaders recognized in classroom letters to parents, and Bison Briefs on the school website.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

University Park Elementary School

University Park has effectively implemented the teaching and learning standard to the extent that they have been named a Blue Ribbon School this year, and achieved National Distinguished School previously. The team believed these honors were well deserved when looking at the evidence for this standard. The staff has enhanced the Essential Curriculum developed by the district in order to ensure coverage by implementing a checklist and frequency count for skills covered. Curriculum has been examined for relevance, and subsequently when the Core Reading Program Assessments did not demonstrate higher-level thinking, they researched an assessment for comprehension that was aligned with the skills and demonstrated rigor. Students are highly involved in their learning process through the PDSA training and implementation. The process of analyzing the data to review the effectiveness of their curriculum was evident as the committee described their journey. A commitment of 90 minutes for their literacy block in addition to an additional 30-45 minutes for enrichment and remediation reflects a commitment to equity. The principal is committed to support student learning through protecting instructional time, and most classrooms reflect that commitment. The leadership team has researched a different behavioral plan that they feel will assist classrooms in ensuring the climate is conducive to learning. There are Promethean boards in classrooms, but little training on effective use for student learning was evident. But interviews with the leadership team and principal showed that they already had a plan for improvement in most areas that were in need of change, and the climate of the school was such that the teachers are ready to move forward in the areas they did not feel were exemplary in their classrooms. This is a dedicated and hard working group of teachers and support staff that although are demonstrating PAWS proficiency scores in the nineties, they continue to search for excellence in all areas.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Verda James Elementary School

The school enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performances and uses these results to improve student performance and school effectiveness. Using the Rigby System, Literacy First, SRI, PAWS, and NWEA Verda James Elementary School has established and implemented a comprehensive assessment system that is aligned with the district's expectations for student learning

that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free. Through collaborative meetings every two weeks this school has set up a Tier Intervention System that analyzes effectiveness and uses the results to improve student and system performance. Teacher interviews reveal that student data trends within Verda James Elementary School have produced verifiable growth in student performance that is supported by multiple sources of evidence including reports from progress monitoring assessments, PAWS, NWEA, Literacy First. The school keeps accurate and secure student records in accordance with state and federal regulations.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Willard Elementary School

The school's instructional program is based upon the district-adopted Essential Curriculum, which outlines the scope and sequence within the core subjects and establishes expectations for performance. As an outcome of the recent continuous improvement initiative, the school has incorporated a major emphasis on the collection and analysis of data for the purposes of goal setting and instructional decision-making, not only for school staff but also for student activity. Higher-order thinking skills are a primary component within the student application of data analysis to their own education; the use of the data notebooks containing student-determined personal goals and mission, and the focus on students monitoring their own progress has produced a "higher order environment" in the building. Staff members commented that they hear students discussing their personal progress numbers among themselves, and determining what they need to do both as a group and individually to reach the next target level. Under the district's site-based organizational scheme, the school has made most of the decisions regarding materials selection and scheduling, and has found a block grant model to be the most effective means to provide individualized instruction to address identified student needs, in reading and mathematics. A wide array of support programs are available, identified through the Response to Intervention (RtI) Tier System dependent upon the types of service that are targeted for individual students. External resources also provide service; examples include the Parent Education Network, and the private counseling services contracted by the district.

The school facility is quite old, and as is typical of buildings designed for a different era, numerous space requirements are not adequate for current needs. The art class, for example, is taught on the stage at one end of the gymnasium; two speech therapists share a therapy space somewhat inadequate for one person. Storage is very limited. Actually, the school illustrates the fact that while a new, up-to-date facility would be wonderful to have, good education is dependent upon the attitude and professionalism of a school's staff and leadership; Willard excels in its child-centeredness and student achievement. Technology is used routinely, with computers and Promethean boards in all classrooms and a large computer lab for group work. Teachers were observed using the Smartboards quite effectively for the visual learning mode. Parents indicated that they have excellent communication with the school relative to their children's progress and about school-wide activities. A variety of resources are used ranging from email access through the Infinite Campus software to various forms of printed material, and phone calls or personal conferences. The representative of the Parent Education Network commented that she works with 13 different Title I schools, and that Willard has by far the most participation in school activities of any of the schools. She indicated that this is quite unusual for Title I populations, particularly schools like Willard that have high levels of poverty (79% Free and Reduced Lunch eligibility). The QAR team rates Willard Elementary as Highly Functional, given the school's travel from being a Focus school to one that is Excelling in at least one area, and close in one other, and in the observed degree of child-centeredness

coupled with a high level of parent satisfaction and interaction for the school's program.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Willow Creek Elementary School

Natrona County School District #1 has developed an essential curriculum aligned with state and common core standards, and required that all district schools follow this curriculum. The QAR team found evidence that Willow Creek School has implemented the essential curriculum. Additionally, the teacher follows a comprehensive research-based pedagogical model—Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) – that yields highly useable, content specific, outcomes-based learning for students. Classroom visits indicated that the teacher consistently utilizes the PDSA model in planning and teaching across all content areas. Interviews with students indicated that they understand this model and that its use is helping them understand and take ownership of their learning. The teacher demonstrates creativity and care by taking the students to a neighboring school, each month, for enrichment activities. The teacher meets with the leadership team and content-specific goal teams to monitor the teaching and learning process, and adjusts based on this monitoring. Professional development around the PDSA model is ongoing. Interviews with community stakeholders indicated that they have a working understanding of the pedagogical methodologies and feel that the teacher and school administration is available to assist them with any questions they may have.

Administration has implemented a comprehensive research-based evaluation system that they believe is leading to more effective performance for all instructional staff. Much time and effort is being put into improving pedagogical skills with evident buy-in on the part of the teacher. The isolation of Willow Creek School makes certain aspects of internet connectivity problematic, such as the Infinite Campus. The teacher compensates for this by utilizing cooperative agreements with neighboring rural schools. The education community feels that they are an integral part of the larger system with regard to Midwest School.

Finding:

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Woods Learning Center

Since its inception, Woods Learning Center has implemented a curriculum that is founded on project-based and inquiry learning. The nature of this curriculum demands active student involvement in their own learning process. This instruction incorporates higher order skills and application of learning. Several of the instructional practices implemented with the project-base include working collaboratively with others during a planning/organizational phase, meeting timelines and check points, producing a product and formally presenting that product. This curriculum demands that students be actively engaged and assume ownership of their learning. These traits are instructed to, facilitated and expected from kindergarten through 8th grade. Traditional grades are not reported at Woods; students are assessed based on standards-based proficiencies. Staff members review PAWS, NWEA Growth Assessments, DIBELS, Add+Vantage math, Rigby reading assessments for kindergarten and first grade and district writing rubrics based on the Six Trait Model, as well as formative assessment data at least twice annually to monitor student/group progress. Woods Learning Center believes in full inclusion for students who qualify for interventions. Interventions are available in the classroom as support from one of the teachers. Services from tutor or instructional facilitator are also available. Frequent feedback, individual and group, is provided verbally

and in writing. Students also receive peer feedback. Advanced ability students are challenged by open-ended assignments. The curriculum, while untraditional, has been aligned with the district's "Essential Curriculum" as well as the Common Core State Standards.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

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

- NCS D #1 systematically implements a cohesive, system wide Essential Curriculum designed to ensure consistency of student learning. In conjunction with the Essential Curriculum, moving district efforts into the Pre-K level will continue to increase student literacy in alignment with the district's "Profile of a Graduate."
- The district systematically implements a comprehensive new teacher orientation program through four full time Teacher Mentors and Instructional Facilitators who work to ensure the successful integration of new teaching staff into the district. Mentors work with staff for a full three years with a well-designed program of support.
- The district successfully implements a Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) protocol system-wide. This is fully evidenced through teacher interviews, classroom observations, and student interviews where students described using the PDSA protocol for their own learning. In addition, a Plus/Delta reflection piece is integrated into the "study" phase of PDSA. In conjunction with this, student use of Student Data Folders/Notebooks is an exemplary practice at NCS D1.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Coordinate the systemic alignment of teaching and learning throughout the district.
- Research, develop, and communicate a vision and plan for instructional technology to assure that best practices for 21st century teaching and learning are applied consistently throughout the system.
- Coordinate full three-way (curriculum, instruction, assessment) alignment among the district's schools to facilitate smooth transitions for students moving between schools and grade spans.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Natrona County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Teaching & Learning" standard.

Standard 4: Documenting & Using Results

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

Description:

Natrona County School District #1 has established and implemented a comprehensive assessment system that is aligned with the system's expectations for student learning and yields reliable, valid, and bias-free information. NCS D #1 has a number of assessments in place to measure student progress; the results of those assessments are utilized to analyze and update mission and goal statements, rank schools, and allocate resources. QAR team members found analysis of student achievement data, including the results of the Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) tests, the Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming

Students (PAWS), Body of Evidence results, and ACT Plan & Explore, throughout the district.

District Data Reviews (DDR) have been conducted at all schools (with high schools just having completed their first DDR) leading to a rating system for each school (Focus, Unclassified, Excelling). This process is an important factor in the district's targeting its progress towards its goals; it should be noted that "Excelling Schools" is part of one of the district's strategic goals. In addition, the designations help determine the specific support provided for each school's improvement process.

NCSD #1 has adopted the Baldrige Model for Continuous Improvement, and the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle, which guides and improves teaching and learning, is evident throughout the district. Staff and students are both engaged in the PDSA process, and its consistent implementation is evident in classrooms throughout the district. QAR team members found instances of its use at all levels and programs, including alternative programs. Students are active participants in the PDSA process, and this active participation has enabled them to understand expected learning outcomes, to identify progress toward achieving learning targets, and to facilitate their learning by sharing information with their teachers about effective and ineffective instructional methods.

NCSD #1 employs a reflective and comprehensive district data review system to rate schools based upon their performance in reading, language arts, and mathematics. These ratings are then used to determine the allocation of additional district resources to enhance the "focus" schools' abilities to achieve their instructional and continuous improvement goals.

NCSD #1 conducts a systematic analysis of its instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance. Systems checks from the Baldrige Model are beginning to be utilized at the classroom, school, and district level to assess district effectiveness. The district uses a variety of surveys to solicit feedback from various stakeholder groups. The PDSA cycle, including plus/deltas, is used throughout the district and schools to contribute to improvement in student and overall system performance. District leadership is currently redesigning its plans and procedures to ensure fidelity to the Baldrige process.

NCSD #1 employs an effective instructional facilitator and mentor program for its first, second, and third year teachers. The instructional facilitators and mentors utilize MediaX to observe, evaluate, and gather data, which is then used to drive the curricular decisions of its monthly professional development program. A comprehensive preschool data collection system is in place where the analysis of the data is used to assure vertical alignment with instructional programs in place at the elementary school level. Preschool participation data are seen as predictive indicators of the district's approaching its goal of 100% literacy by third grade.

Through its use of the Tableau program to store, analyze, and disseminate data to decision-makers, and the Infinite Campus program to communicate student performance data to parents, NCSD #1 provides a system of communication to report student performance and system effectiveness to all stakeholders that is secure, accurate, and complete in accordance with state and federal regulations. Individual schools in the district have extended these communication efforts to include weekly, monthly, and quarterly communication regarding student performance and continuous improvement.

NCSD #1 has used its student performance and system effectiveness data to measure its own progress over time. Central office staff has evidence that demonstrates a comparison to the rest of the state and how it relates to progress toward district mission goals. During the interview process, however, no other stakeholder groups articulated their understanding or awareness of comparison and trend data at the district level. Schools within the district seem to be aware of their comparison and trend data in relation to other

schools within NCSD #1 due to the competition for students that results from NCSD #1's open enrollment policy. School personnel did not, however, express awareness for how their schools compared with other schools throughout the state. Current evidence shows some consistent growth in student performance over time, e.g., graduation rates, performance gaps between Title I and non-Title I schools, and increases in third grade literacy results

The district communicates results to stakeholders through multiple methods: Tableau, student portfolios, data conversations, dual report cards which report both grades and performance on standards, and the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. To facilitate all of its efforts, the district maintains secure, accurate, and complete record system.

SCHOOL LEVEL NARRATIVES AND FINDINGS

Alcova Elementary School

The Alcova Elementary School utilizes a comprehensive assessment system including data from state and district assessments, textbook assessments, teacher observations and classroom checklists for making decisions regarding the continuous improvement of the teaching and learning process. While the small student population creates confidentiality issues regarding sharing data with all stakeholders, the instructional staff analyzes school data sets and compares them with district and state trends and averages to evaluate instructional effectiveness. Small class size allows for highly differentiated instruction, individual lesson plans, hands-on learning activities and outdoor classroom experiences. Each student tracks his/her own performance through the use of a personalized student data folder and is willing and able to discuss his/her progress.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Bar Nunn Elementary School

Barr Nunn Elementary participates in a comprehensive assessment system that includes common formative assessments, classroom testing, PAWS and NWEA grade testing. A review of artifacts as well as classroom observations and discussions with parents, students, teachers and administrative representatives revealed an assessment system incorporating the monitoring and documentation of performance in order to use resulting data to improve learning and teaching. Administrators, teachers and students regularly analyze classroom performance as well as test data. Evidence observed by the team includes student data notebooks, and posted graphical representations of student achievement. Student data notebooks contain results of NWEA, weekly Spelling, Reading, and Math. These data were used to form new student achievement goals. Graphical representations of student achievement are posted in various classroom locations as is the student/teacher devised Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA). Teacher and students discuss PDSA data and make adjustments. The parents, students, administrators and teachers participate annually in district and school sponsored surveys to inform stakeholders about components of potential student success.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Casper Classical Academy

Casper Classical Academy (CCA) has established and implemented a comprehensive assessment system that is aligned with district expectations for student learning. Information gained is valid, reliable, and bias free. Assessment data are used to plan for instruction and placement in advanced classes and/or intervention programs. CCA staff review PAWS and NWEA assessment results with students and parents so as to ensure a common knowledge and understanding of information that enhances the home-school connection. CCA accomplished its goal of being an Excelling School in every area this past spring. In addition, the school is a past recipient of the Blue Ribbon School award. These accomplishments evidence implementation of a comprehensive curriculum, high expectations for student learning, and a comprehensive assessment system where data are central to the continuous school improvement process. Student data are reviewed every Thursday with students, mailed and emailed to parents, and is available in real time to all students and parents through Student and Parent Portals on Infinite Campus. Teachers continually review curriculum at monthly planning meetings, coordinate planning and instruction, implement common assessments, and share responsibility for analyzing student performance data. From this analysis, interventions are planned for improving student learning. PDSAs are posted on all classroom walls. Plus/Delta activities are consistently used to reflect on lessons and student learning. Des Cartes interventions are successfully used to close gaps in student learning, and to increase growth in the exceptionally high performing students.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Centennial Junior High School

Centennial Junior High School has established and implemented a comprehensive assessment system that is aligned with district expectations for student learning. Information gained is valid, reliable, and bias free. Assessment data are used to plan for instruction and placement in advanced and/or intervention classes. CJHS staff reviews PAWS and NWEA assessment results with students and parents so as to ensure a common knowledge and understanding of information that enhances the home-school connection. Student performance data are systematically used to plan for systemic continuous improvement. PDSAs and Plus/Delta activities are consistently used to review lessons and plan for improvement. A comprehensive "Data Dashboard" is prominently posted in the hallways. Tuesday Folders, parent newsletters, CORE team communications, Infinite Campus Parent and Student Portals, and emails are used to communicate student performance results to parents. Growth in student performance is supported by a reduction in the number of below basic students on PAWS, and continued RIT growth on NWEA.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Cottonwood Elementary School

The school uses a comprehensive assessment system that documents, monitors, and uses student performance to guide and inform instruction for the purpose of improving student performance. The staff indicated during interviews both objective and subjective data were available and used to guide instructions. During classroom observation data regarding student performance were visible in the classroom in a manner that would allow students to be aware of their performance. These methods included charts, tables, and visual images. One of the classrooms had a tree with monkeys in the tree; the higher the student's monkey was in the tree, the higher the student's performance level. In addition to

recording academic performance the school also tracked the social and behavioral performance of students. The students displayed behavior that was respectful of others during interviews, in the classroom, and in the hallways. Interviews with parents indicated that teachers kept parents informed about their child's performance. Some parents accessed the district electronic student records system for parents while others relied on teacher notes or the daily journal that teacher provided for parents. During the staff interviews the reviewers repeatedly heard that teaching is hard work but that student success made it worthwhile. The support staff shared with the reviewers that teachers worked together to review student performance data and this information was shared with the instructional support staff. Parent shared with reviewers that the school had been classified as a focus school but that student performance had improved and that the school was currently classified as unclassified and being close to excelling.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Crest Hill Elementary School

Crest Hill analyzes and utilizes data results to make building and classroom decisions. The building's vision and goals were established based on the data that were collected. An impressive process that Crest Hill implements is their "Focus Team" meetings that let them look at data of each individual student. This is a week long process that happens throughout the year; it involves multiple staff members' analysis of the instructional needs of particular students. In the classroom, teachers are using data to drive instruction by using Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA). The teacher plans what will be taught, teaches the objective, and assesses the student knowledge at the end of the week. The next step is to figure out what is the next action the teacher will take in the student's instruction. Teachers keep data notebooks in the classroom and share the information with the students and parents. Students are educated in understanding their results and motivated to attain their educational goals. Crest Hill Elementary is continually researching new interventions and reviewing data to assist the teachers in matching the correct intervention with the student to promote success.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

CY Middle School

CY Middle School uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures for student learning that yields reliable, valid, and bias-free information. This system is used to assess student performance on goals and expectations for student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of instruction, and to determine interventions to improve student performance. The leadership team and faculty of CYMS uses student assessment data for making decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning while maintaining a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations.

Through their analysis of student performance data and stakeholder feedback, the leadership team and goal-oriented faculty teams of CYMS are able to conduct an analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness and determine the necessary adjustments, if any, to their goals and expectations in order to improve student performance. CYMS then communicates the results of student performance and school effectiveness to all stakeholders through a variety of means. The CYMS assessment and data analysis system that is in place will, in time, yield timely and accurate information that can be used in comparison

with other schools in the district and across the state in evaluating its effectiveness, resulting in the demonstration of verifiable and consistent growth in student performance.

CYMS employs an effective system of communication of student performance data with all stakeholders. Their use of student data folders (“Tuesday Folders”) containing student performance reports that are sent home to parents, and the individual tracking of performance data by students through their Plan-Study-Do-Act cycle display a commitment to communicating performance data in order to drive the development of strategies designed to improve student achievement.

The administration team of CYMS consults with each student prior to the PAWS assessments in order to develop strategies for preparation and to set clear achievement goals that are individually tailored to each student and their past performance data. Students, during the interview process, expressed their desire to have these meetings earlier in the school year so that effective and efficient preparation strategies can be put into action.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Dean Morgan Middle School

The evidence presented at Dean Morgan Middle School showed the staff uses a variety of assessments to guide their instruction. Assessments were given both long and short term. Continual monitoring of student achievement takes place. The school uses the NWEA and PAWS testing to determine the child’s placement and to acquire longitudinal information for each child. A transition team examines the scores that may result in placement in the Challenge (advanced) program. These scores may also determine if the child is placed in either the math lab and/or the literacy lab for remediation for one block during the school day.

In addition to standardized testing, individual students monitor their achievement. Each class requires students to complete a personal grade reflection paper utilizing the PDSA process. They chart their progress though out a unit and graph scores. In addition to the individual reflection papers, each class also tracks the results of the whole group. Short predictive assessments are used. Students also participate in Accelerated Math, Reading 180, Accelerated Reading, and use rubrics that offer immediate results for their efforts. As an intervention, seating charts are designed to place students with others who may have a more difficult time in a subject. Cooperative learning models were quite evident in the classrooms.

Students attending Dean Morgan participate in an advisory class (Comet block) where students with their instructors' guidance track their individual reading progress with Monitored Individual Reading Program (MIRP). Every Wednesday, the students log onto Infinite Campus to check grades. They have the opportunity to check for missing assignments and then utilize the after-school study tables and conference with teachers for make-up work. The advisory block is also the time when the students are taught “Cowboy Ethics.” A climate of positive behavior is emphasized. Phone calls and post cards are sent to each student by the staff to reward the positive.

Longitudinal data have also been collected on both discipline and attendance. The data show conclusively that the discipline referrals have declined significantly over the past three years. Students are given comet coins to reinforce positive behavior as an incentive. The school has also incorporated a sick call time. Students are required to report to class and spend the first ten minutes in a class before being dismissed to see the nurse. This policy has helped to identify student’s location. There is a strong effort to improve

attendance and data are recorded monthly showing the percentage of students who are in class.

Teams with both subject area and grade level teachers meet to determine the path for the students. There are connections not only among the core subject faculty but also with the staff who teach the extra-curricular activities. There is an active PTA; members receive information at their monthly meetings. Each department communicates information on the testing data. A school-produced newsletter also illustrates the progress of the school.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Evansville Elementary School

Performance measures that yield reliable, valid and bias-free data, includes PAWS, NWEA, NCSD#1 writing and reading rubrics and formative curricular assessments. Data from these resources are reviewed at the classroom, committee and building level and are used as the basis for continuous improvement of instruction. All results are reviewed internally and are communicated to internal and external stakeholders. District data from comparable schools are available. Student performance is accurately recorded and monitored. Infinite Campus Electronic is the student record system provided by the district.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Fort Caspar Academy

Formative and summative performance measures are in place for every student. Weekly monitors keep the parents, students and teachers informed of the student's progress toward student goals. Assessments such as DIBELS, NWEA, PAWS and weekly tests inform and influence teacher's instructional decisions. It is very evident that student instruction and student tutoring services are driven by the results of the formative and summative test results after conferring with the support staff and teachers. Collaborative meetings are held both within the grade levels and between grade levels to discuss strengths and weaknesses in the student's progress. Goal teams meet to analyze and use data to improve student performance twice a month throughout the year.

Parents reported that the progress of student performance is tracked and reported on a weekly basis to the parents, students and teachers. Weekly assessment folders go home, phone calls are made, and emails are sent to the parents. The students are very aware of their performance and growth on a weekly basis through conversations with their teachers as they go over the data together.

As indicated by print evidence, classroom data are disseminated to the stakeholders at back to school night, through the school website, hallway posters and in the Natrona County School Choice Guide. The school is very proud of student performance results. School goals have been developed utilizing NWEA and PAWS assessment data. However, only grade level data were utilized. Very little student subgroup data have been disaggregated in their school profile for review (only reading has been disaggregated in 2009-10). In addition, although the disaggregated groups demonstrate lower performance, there is no evidence that the results were addressed during goal setting. Therefore, the school improvement plan contains no strategies to help teachers differentiate instruction to student subgroups scoring below the proficiency rates for all students.

Through interviews with the instructional staff, the QAR team was able to determine that the principal, goal teams, grade level teams, and individual teachers compare the data systematically. The data are reviewed year to year, class to class, strand by strand, and by looking at individual student growth at regular meetings both formally and informally.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Frontier Middle School

In interviews, one staff member stated, “For us, data is real stuff.” Frontier Middle School uses data to drive all student instruction. PAWS scores are highly visible, posted in classrooms and in areas frequented by school patrons. Students participate in frequent assessments and monitor their individual achievement. A pre-test is given in the fall, students are tested at mid-term, and a spring test is given to measure the required skills. They utilize the Plan-Do-Study-Act process in each classroom where goals for that class have been set. The class graphs their progress as a visual to determine if they met their goals on each unit. The staff utilizes Scholastic Reading Inventory, Scholastic Vocabulary Inventory, Reading 180, Fast Math, a fluency assessment and Literacy 1st to track students’ progress.

Frontier students begin and end each day in an advisement class. Their day starts with MIRP (Monitored Individual Reading Program) and the school has implemented the one school – one book approach. With assistance from their advisement instructor they track their reading progress. Every student attending Frontier has a planner. They can write goals for specific classes, record their assignments, check for missing assignments, and record grades. Teachers are required to have grades entered by 7:00 on Thursday, so all students check their grades on Infinite Campus weekly during the Thursday advisement class. Two days each week, the students use Fast Math to improve their skills.

A fluid schedule is available for students who attend Frontier. Teachers have a common planning period and a specified time for collaboration each day. If and when a student exceeds their goals and advances to a higher level, the administration will offer a change in placement for that student. Student work is proudly displayed in the classrooms and the hallways throughout the school. A BEST assembly is held at the end of the quarter to reward students for outstanding academics and attendance.

Student behavior and attendance data are tracked. A tracking sheet is used to show student behavior and contracts are used to help improve it. A Refocus room is used to limit time spent away from the classroom. Phone calls are made to parents each time a child is absent. Letters are sent after five absences and seven absences. Following the tenth absence, the child is referred to the district attendance officer. The staff reported this is an effective method for keeping students in school.

Frontier houses a class for students with multiple disabilities. Those students are included in as many school activities as their respective disabilities will allow. Their progress is monitored on a bi-weekly basis, and the teacher is part of teams within the school.

Information is disseminated in the student planner, with closed circuit television, and online. Three large screen televisions are mounted inside the entry. One of them displays a slide show of the students participating in a variety of school activities, one shows news, and the third informs constituents about school events, including test scores. A school employee summed up Frontier with these words, “Amazing

teamwork – looking at what is best for this school.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Grant Elementary School

A very telling comment from a member of the leadership team was “the data is telling us what we need to do.” The staff at Grant Elementary School embraces this idea and works diligently to identify the proper assessments (DIBELS, NWEA MAP assessment, PAWS, and weekly PDSA assessments), implement them with fidelity, and use the data to drive decisions. Data drive decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning processes from the selection of programs and resources to whole-class instruction goals and strategies to individual student activities. Behavior data were examined and analyzed and a bullying prevention program was instituted. At all levels (school-wide, class –wide, and on the individual level) data are available and shared appropriately. Data are available for the entire school to see (on bulletin boards in the front hallway) so that everyone will remain focused on the vision and purpose. Parents receive information via parent conferences (with students invited), newsletters, progress reports, report cards, and phone calls. Teachers have students document their own results into data folders or data notebooks so they are able to make goals and check to see if they attained the goal.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Kelly Walsh High School

Kelly Walsh High School (KWHS) faculty, staff and administration has established performance measures for student learning that yield information that is valid, reliable and makes use of leading indicators to track student achievement. These data are reviewed and communicated regularly to all stakeholders within the school. Results are displayed in classrooms and in the main hallway of the school. Students track their progress using charts and graphs in the classrooms.

The faculty of KWHS is in the process of developing a comprehensive common assessment program that addresses the essential curriculum and demonstrates the body of knowledge. The teachers discuss student achievement data to make informed decisions on student progress and teaching and learning. Teachers utilize data from formative and summative assessments to adjust instruction in an on-going process. There is evidence of collaboration within the school among teachers. Students set individual course goals, are able to articulate these and they monitor their progress. The model of PDSA is strongly evident.

The results of student performance, achievement and school data are communicated with all stakeholders. The faculty, support staff and students assess student performance and expectations for student growth and learning, evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction and determine interventions to improve student performance. Data are used daily to discuss student progress. The faculty is determined to use data to engage students in the learning process. All students are expected to engage.

An opportunity exists to use comparison and trend data of student performance from comparable schools to evaluate school-wide program and instructional effectiveness. Internal data are utilized to pair students with programs whether they be CTE, college level or remediation/credit recovery. There is evidence that instruction is differentiated based on learning style indicators.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Manor Heights Elementary School

Formative and summative performance measures are in place for every student. Weekly monitors keep the parents, students and teachers informed of the student's progress toward student goals. Assessments such as NWEA, PAWS, classroom assessments, reading and writing rubrics and weekly monitors inform and influence teacher's instructional decisions. The staff has built common assessments and checklists to monitor mastery of individual students in their grade levels.

Collaborative meetings are held both within the grade levels and between grade levels to discuss strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and delivery of instruction. Staff members have taken the initiative to seek out programs and strategies to strengthen teaching skills. The school wide goal team selected writing improvement based on test data, sought out programs to improve the learning, and improved student performance in writing.

Parents reported that the progress of student performance occurs on a weekly basis to the parents, students and teachers. Weekly completed assignments go home, phone calls are made, notes and emails are sent to the parents. The students are very aware of their performance and growth on a weekly basis through conversations with their teachers as they go over the data together while compiling their data notebooks. Students were able to discuss their data with the members of the QAR team with great competence.

As indicated by print evidence, classroom and school data are disseminated at back to school night, parent teacher conferences, PTO meetings, and goal meetings. Parents revealed that they are made aware of their child's achievement as determined by test scores.

Through interviews with the instructional staff the QAR Team was able to determine that the principal, goal teams, grade level teams, and individual teachers evaluate the data systematically. The data are reviewed year-to-year, class to class, strand by strand and by looking at individual student growth. The instructional staff has spent professional development time to learn how to look at data and how to locate areas of improvement to move their status.

Manor Heights reviews the test data of various subgroups to understand school effectiveness. The staff is cognizant of the populations in the most need and the test data drive their efforts to reach that population. Data shows that the general population gained 8.3% points in language arts while the Special Education population gained 12.8%, which was one of their school improvement goals.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Midwest School

School leadership has developed a climate of high expectations throughout the school system. Operating within a professional learning community (PLC) environment, and guided by school administration in conjunction with the school leadership team, teachers have implemented a comprehensive pedagogical model Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) that yields highly useable, content-specific, outcomes-based learning.

With a focus on continuous improvement, teaching and learning are focused on the schools' vision and goals, and consistent with the district's strategic plan. Assessment data are gathered in a systematic, purposeful, and timely manner through a variety of measures including DIBELS, NWEA/MAP, Plan, Explore, and PAWS. Data are comprehensively analyzed and used to inform Instructional decisions.

The schools' strategic plan identifies four specific goals, and content area teams have been formed with a focus on achieving these goals. Progress monitoring is facilitated through regular goal team meetings purposed to disseminate data and evaluate performance. Interventions, pedagogical decisions, and adjustments are based on meticulous evaluation of data. Performance information is communicated visually through strategic placement of data on walls, bulletin boards, and posters throughout the building. Administration is working toward an efficient and effective method for disseminating this information to parents. Students, teachers, and stakeholders, however, understand the importance and significance of school improvement strategies, focused on student growth, purposed to prepare graduates for their futures. All groups support these efforts.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Mills Elementary

The district uses the District Data Review to classify schools based on achievement either as "FOCUS", "UNCLASSIFIED", or "EXCELLING". Mills Elementary School is an excelling school, which indicates that it has reached a level of mastery in its instructional program. The students are well versed in the test requirements and what they must do in order to retain the excelling status school. It was surprising during the interview process to sense the excitement displayed by the students over being tested and doing so well. It has produced a determination to do even better than the last time.

The Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) process is the framework to guide and assist teachers in making instructional changes to best meet the individual learning needs of the student. Mills Elementary School students have data portfolios that contain assessment information on Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming Students (PAWS) this test is examining areas of learning pertaining to math, language arts, and science. The Northwest Education Assessment (NWEA) measures data collected in the content areas of math, language arts, science, and reading. The district's Strategic Plan sets clear and measurable goals for improving academic achievement, a safe and healthy environment, and for improving the effective and efficient learning organization.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Mountain View Elementary School

The school has systems for collecting and utilizing data to inform instruction as well as to improve programs and practices. The school utilizes a variety of data sources to measure student achievement and map growth at the school, grade, class, and student levels. Members of all stakeholder groups are comfortable discussing data and setting goals including staff, parents, and students. The school leadership team and the school improvement goal teams systematically evaluate data to set goals, plan initiatives, and evaluate results. The school goal teams and the leadership team use the data collected to make decisions regarding curricular programming and initiatives. Each class of students, with teacher guidance, crafts a

unique mission that is in alignment with the school's mission. The teacher then sets class achievement goals consistent with grade level proficiencies as outlined by the statewide test and the district's Essential Curriculum. These target scores are in alignment with the school's improvement goals. Each student has a data notebook that includes the classroom mission and goals as well as an individual goal mapped to the classroom goals. Each student is responsible for graphing his or her growth through the year. Several students proudly displayed their individual notebooks and provided a thorough tour of each section and goal. One teacher noted that discussing student level data with parents at conferences helped make the discussions more impactful. She shared that, "Last night at parent conferences, we went over the data notebook with the parents. It's a better visual to see where the students are. We sign it, the kids sign it, and the parents sign it."

In this school data are in evidence throughout the building; they are systematically used in continuous improvement cycles to inform decision-making. The school is to be commended for their student data notebook system a tool that has instilled in their student body a sense of ownership, enthusiasm and drive for growth and achievement.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Natrona County High School

Natrona County High School faculty vision for improving student learning has established the use of student data points to implement the initial work in PLCs. The PLCs meet in course and department configuration once a week to review classroom and school data to frame instruction and create common assessments. The school leadership team is encouraged to continue to communicate student data points to all stakeholders, including students, in a variety of ways. In PLCs the faculty is establishing common assessments for all core courses. The team applauds these efforts and recognizes the challenges ahead. Presently student data are utilized to direct students to tutorial programs, intervention opportunities, and accelerated programs. Data from learning labs should be analyzed to determine effectiveness of programs on student achievement.

The faculty acknowledges the abundance of data and recognizes using data to assure instructional effectiveness and student achievement is a challenge. They realize they are just beginning and want to use performance measures with fidelity to improve student performance. A system for using data consistently across the school to improve instructional practices and implement rigorous teaching strategies should be established, monitored and communicated.

An attempt should be made to use comparison and trend data of student performance from comparable schools in evaluating effectiveness of instruction, assessment and programs. All stakeholders must be informed. Systematic analysis of available data should be reviewed to determine the effectiveness of PLC work and chart the future course. Data points should be used for planning, monitoring and decision-making.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

North Casper Elementary School

For data collection, North Casper uses AMS, AIMSweb, PAWS, NWEA to establish reliable performance measures. Artifacts and interviews indicate the staff has implemented a comprehensive assessment system that is aligned with the district's expectations for student learning that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free. Through collaborative meetings every two weeks this school has set up a Tier System that analyzes effectiveness and uses the results to improve student and system performance. This indicates a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness that uses the results to improve student performance is in place. North Casper Elementary School student data demonstrate verifiable growth in student performance. Students and parents are aware of the data and data outcomes. Students set goals for themselves and are aware of their personal progress. The school keeps accurate and secure student records in accordance with state and federal regulations.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Oregon Trail Elementary School

Oregon Trail Elementary School is using ramifications of the district's Strategic Plan which sets measurable goals for improving academic student achievement, improving the health and safety of all who enter their school, and for improving the operation of the learning organization. Assessment data are used within a Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) framework to guide and assist teachers in making instructional changes to best meet the individual learning needs of students. Student data portfolios contain various assessment data on Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming Students (PAWS); this battery measures language arts, math, and science. The Northwest Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) measures language usage, math, reading, and science. The teaching and learning process is data driven with the results of these examinations. Schools are classified based on student performance either as focus, unclassified, or excelling. Using this model of classification, Oregon Trail Elementary School is an excelling school. Excelling means they are going above expectation levels of the teaching learning process. Weekly staff meetings are designed to identify student deficiencies in the content area. Teaching strategies are modified to meet the needs of the student.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard. Highly Functional

Paradise Valley Elementary School

Paradise Valley has effectively taught their students how to take control of their own learning through the use of data. As the team met with students third through fifth grade, they were proud to show off their assessment folders that were self graphed and easily understood. They stated the folders were a new initiative. Students also had weekly learning goals using their PDSA system throughout the school. These are posted in the classrooms. There are many points of data used to formatively assess students in reading, math and writing including rubrics and other formative assessments. It was clear that teachers used instructional data to make instructional decisions to guide student learning in our interview with the leadership team. Teachers did express a concern in relation to accessing student data on their own without having to wait on the district to send it to them. K-2 teachers had recently attended a Literacy First training specifically for reading in the early grades using rubrics that would help them close the gap in literacy. Paradise Valley in reviewing their data has determined that raising scores of their high students will result in becoming an Excelling school. They are putting into place some enrichment strategies for students and will monitor those to check progress towards their goal.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Park Elementary School

Through interviews with school leadership and teachers it is evident that multiple data sources are utilized to improve student performance and school effectiveness. Included in student performance data collection are teacher classroom assessments rubrics and short cycle testing, formative assessments such as NWEA Measurements of Academic Progress, Literacy First, and the PAWS state assessment. Students have a data folder that follows them across grade levels. The results are analyzed in grade level meetings, school improvement team meetings and teacher student goal setting meetings. The district also provides analysis through a district data review process, which results in the development of school goal teams and improvement plans. The teachers believe that while achievement results are very important, the school must maintain its focus on the whole child.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Pineview Elementary School

The Pineview Elementary School assessment system is directly aligned with the school's expectations for student learning. Data is used to drive decisions for continuous improvement in student learning as well as instruction. Staff members meet regularly to mine data to make decisions on student's individual learning objectives. Multiple sources of data are used to check the effectiveness of teaching strategies, programs of instruction, and student progress.

The school reports student progress weekly in the Thursday folder, monthly newsletter, and parent/teacher conferences. Progress monitoring and PDSA cycle yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful to all stakeholders. Graphs and charts are strategically placed around the school building to inform all stakeholders of student achievement.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Poison Spider Elementary School

Poison Spider Elementary School has clear expectations for use of data for decision making and charting progress. Teachers and students chart individual progress as well as class and school progress at regular intervals. Students know their status and are aware of targets for growth. They are intimately involved in the use of their own data in conversations with their teachers and parents. Parents feel they are well informed of their child's progress and are more than pleased with it. The school uses NWEA growth measures, state test scores, PLC assessments and individual students data folders and goal setting conversations. As a result, the elementary school has moved from focus school status to "unclassified" in three years. K-2 reading shows an increase in students on grade level from about 60% to about 90% in three years. Upper grades do not yet show this growth.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational.

Powder River School

Powder River School has clear expectations for use of data for decision-making and charting progress. The teacher, parents and students know their individual student progress. Students know their status and are aware of targets for growth. They are intimately involved in the use of their own data in conversations with their teacher and parents. Parents feel they are well informed of their child's progress and are more than pleased with it. The school uses NWEA growth measures, state test scores, and PLC assessments for goal setting conversations.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Red Creek Elementary School

Red Creek Elementary School participates in a comprehensive assessment system that includes common formative assessments, classroom testing PAWS and NWEA of grade testing. Classroom observations and discussions with student, teacher and principal representatives were illustrative of a school community participating in a comprehensive assessment system, which incorporates the monitoring, and documentation of performance in order to use resulting data to improve learning and teaching.

Administrators, teacher and students regularly analyze classroom performance as well as test data. Such evidences observed by the team include student data folders, classroom and school data folder, and posted graphical representations of student achievement. Each student data folder contains the student mission statement and results of NWEA, weekly Spelling, Reading, Math, and Multiplication Two Minute tests (Math facts). These data were the center of weekly teacher-student data discussions and were used to form new student achievement goals. Students extend their data conversations by reviewing their data folder twice a month with their parents.

The classroom and school data folder maintained by the teacher houses PAWS/ NWEA assessment data expressed in aggregated and disaggregated form and is used by the teacher to target the instructional needs of each student. Graphical representations of student achievement are posted in various classroom locations as is the student/teacher devised Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA). Teacher and students discuss PDSA data and make adjustments weekly. In addition, the administrator and teacher participate in the annual district data review process which is a practice of sharing school and district data to reinforce transparency, trust building, and goal setting leading to a climate supporting continuous improvement.

The administrator, teacher, students and community stakeholders participate annually in district-sponsored surveys to inform stakeholders about components of potential student success.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Roosevelt High School

Roosevelt High School has established performance measures for student learning that yields information for all students that is reliable and valid. The school has developed and implemented an assessment system that evaluates progress toward meeting the expectations for student learning, and uses student assessment data for making decisions for continuous improvement of the teaching and implementation of their program practices and processes. The leadership team and professional learning communities conduct an analysis of student performance data in order to evaluate the instructional and organizational effectiveness, while also sharing the results of student performance to all stakeholders, while maintaining a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations. Roosevelt High School has instituted a “Data Wall” where students are able to see their performance on assessments related to the school’s mission and goals. Students know their own levels of achievement and performance, and where they are expected to achieve. On the “Data Wall,” the leadership team has been able to effectively communicate to all students the number of “Bulldogs” needed for the school to achieve district-wide goals in reading and math. Because of the school’s emphasis on data collection, analysis, and sharing, students feel that they now understand that their performance reflects on the entire school community, and they are motivated to achieve success. All stakeholders reported the importance of the data wall in creating student buy-in and understanding of the school goals and expectations. While there is clear evidence of the use of data to drive instructional decisions, it is unclear how achievement results are used to inform curricular decisions and to assess the effectiveness of instructional technology.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Sagewood Elementary School

Sagewood Elementary School consistently utilizes a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures as defined by federal, state, district, and school-based criteria. The system is effectively and efficiently used to assess student academic performance, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine appropriate interventions to improve student performance. A wealth of assessment data is available and utilized in a collaborative analysis process. Results of the analysis are used to make decisions for continuous improvement of the teaching and learning processes and to inform the PDSA process for individual teachers, grade levels, and the school as a whole. The consistent focus is on the improvement of student performance. The school process for gathering, analyzing and using data yields timely, accurate information that is meaningful and useful to all stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and school improvement efforts.

The results of student and school performance are communicated to all stakeholder groups. Staff members are clearly aware of school trend data and the performance levels of individual students. Parents receive regular communication regarding their student's achievement and students track their own progress through the use of Student Data Review folders. The Student Data Review folders are a significant motivational tool, as students set “personal best” goals and track their progress. Visual representations of progress towards academic goals are posted throughout the school and referred to frequently by all stakeholders.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Southridge Elementary School

Southridge Elementary School has a systematic approach of using NWEA, PAWS and building data to drive instruction. The data are used down to the student level to set goals for learning, to the teacher level to inform instruction and student grouping, and the school level to set goals school wide. School assessment data are available for analysis and shared with all the stakeholders. Weekly classroom results are shared with the students and the parents in the Friday folder. NWEA assessment data are shared in the fall, winter, and spring with staff, students, and parents. The strategy of "flooding" is used to fill the gaps in instructional needs of individual students both for reteaching and enrichment. The process of alignment of the school curricula and the Essential Curriculum has started the 2011-12 school year. The goal teams were also started this school year. The system has been set for structure, meeting schedules and goal setting. During the visit of the QAR team, assessment data aligned to the Essential Curriculum was not yet available.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Emerging

Summit Elementary School

Through document reviews, school planning documents and interviews, it is clear that a comprehensive assessment system is in place. There is clear usage of disaggregated data to create effective curriculum and improve instructional practices. The assessment system provides timely information utilizing both short cycle assessments such as DIBELS and MAPS and summative evaluations such as PAWS. Student assessment information is organized in data folders, and each student is fully aware of their strengths and areas of need, to the extent they participate in student led conferences. Teachers use data to prepare for school wide discussions regarding flex grouping for students, and overall planning to meet the school's achievement goals. Summit Elementary reports overall data information to the public by posting results in the school, through classroom newsletters, and on the school web site. The only missing element is the lack of trend data from assessments. The school is less than two years old, which only provides one year of data. Other parts of the system are highly functional.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

University Park Elementary School

University Park Elementary School uses a variety of assessment measures to formatively assess their students' progress towards academic goals. Teachers meet weekly to look at scores, which helps to adjust strategies and structure intervention groups effectively. Not making AYP in 2005-2006 was the impetus to begin their data walks that inform their instruction and grouping. Their efforts have helped them claim many number one spots in the state on the PAWS just this past year. Parents spoke of the rigor that the teachers have established in their school, and they attribute it to data. Students have been taught to interpret their own results from the graphs, and parents meet with teachers at conferences to talk about student data. When a parent was asked if she understand her child's data, she laughed and stated that if she couldn't, her child could teach her. Data sets are fed to the schools through the district office, and a data summit is held. Stretch goals are set by students through conferencing with their teachers at the beginning of the year after the NWEA testing is completed. Students own their data as evidenced in interviews with stakeholders and postings in the classroom. Teachers know their school looks compared to like schools in the district, and are aware of their standing in the state on PAWS. Data sets are

examined to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum. The school is currently searching for a formative assessment to measure math skills for each child in order to grow students effectively in math. The K-2 teams recently attended a Literacy First training that included using rubrics to address reading skills, which now gives the school another formative tool. The team was impressed when a student talked about his recent writing that he had finished using a prompt. He commented that there was one area that he did not receive a four, and then stated that when he looked at the rubric, he understood why.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Verda James Elementary School

The school enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performances and uses these results to improve student performance and school effectiveness. Using the Rigby System, Literacy First, SRI, PAWS, and NWEA Verda James Elementary School has established and implemented a comprehensive assessment system that is aligned with the district's expectations for student learning that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free. Through collaborative meetings every two weeks this school has set up a Tier Intervention System that analyzes effectiveness and uses the results to improve student and system performance. Teacher interviews reveal that student data trends within Verda James Elementary School have produced verifiable growth in student performance supported by multiple sources of evidence, including reports from progress monitoring assessments, PAWS, NWEA, Literacy First. The school keeps accurate and secure student records in accordance with state and federal regulations.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Willard Elementary School

Willard Elementary School's instructional program is based on applications of the district-adopted Essential Curriculum, which includes performance standards within its scope and sequence format for core subjects. In order to measure student progress and secure data to use in establishing instructional goals, a combination of assessments is administered including Proficiency Assessment of Wyoming Students (PAWS), NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), and the DIBELS diagnostic materials. The teaching staff, having received extensive sustained training in the application of data into action under the Jim Shipley Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) format, has organized all instructional activities under this format and has taught students how to use it to improve their individual academic achievement. Students learn how to analyze "their own" data from the MAP assessments, how to use that information to establish personal goals, and how to evaluate and record their own progress. These concepts address the higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy, and are implemented with varying degrees of sophistication at all grade levels within the school. Thus, teachers and students together are focusing on meeting expectations. The longitudinal data mined from the various assessments allowed the school to achieve a rating of "excelling" in the area of Reading, and to become close to that level in Mathematics, having moved to that level of performance from a beginning as a "focus" school. At the same time, training to staff on the analysis and use of data has revealed a need to develop interventions to use with higher-achieving students, whose progress as a group has remained fairly static. This identified need was provided to the four goals' committees in order to develop a school-wide plan to address this concern. The collection and use of data drives all decision-making in the school's program, and has proven to be effective in

improving student performance. Interviewed parents expressed total satisfaction with the school's communication about their child's progress toward meeting goals.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Willow Creek Elementary School

School leadership has developed a climate of high expectations throughout the school system. Operating within a professional Learning Community (PLC) environment, and guided by school administration in conjunction with the school leadership team, the teacher has implemented a comprehensive pedagogical model Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) that yields highly useable, content-specific, outcomes-based learning. With a focus on continuous improvement, teaching and learning are focused on the school's goals, and are consistent with the system's strategic plan. Assessment data are gathered in a systematic, purposeful, and timely manner through a variety of measures including DIBELS, and PAWS. Data are comprehensively analyzed and used to inform Instructional decisions. The school's strategic plan identifies goals specific to its unique situation, and procedures and practices are focused on achieving these goals. Progress monitoring is facilitated through regular goal team meetings at Midwest School purposed to disseminate data and evaluate performance. Interventions, pedagogical decisions, and adjustments are based on meticulous evaluation of data. Performance information is communicated visually through strategic placement of data on walls, bulletin boards, and posters throughout the building, and in individual meetings with parents. Students, teachers, and stakeholders understand the importance and significance of school improvement strategies, focused on student growth, purposed to prepare graduates for their futures.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Woods Learning Center

Woods Learning Center employs multiple layers of assessment data to determine learning progress. Profile data includes PAWS, NWEA Growth Assessments, DIBELS, Add+Vantage math, Rigby reading assessments for kindergarten and first grade and district writing rubrics based on the Six Trait Model. The analysis of this data results in instructional decisions impacting student growth. Woods implements the Response to Intervention model in kindergarten through fifth grade. Data resulting from the specifics interventions is monitored, analyzed and responded to accordingly.

All students at Woods Learning Center maintain a learning log. This is a three ring binder in which students have copies of their personal assessment results; based on their date they write personal goal statements. As assessments occur they review their goal and determine if the learning strategies they employed succeeded in meeting their goal. They also graph their personal data. Graph complexity reflects the instructional ability of the student (bar graphs to comparative line graphs). Student performance results are shared individually with parents three times annually (class data are posted in the classroom). Due to its unique structure Woods Learning Center is in the process of setting up the opportunity of sharing data with the Laramie Lab School in order to compare student learning with a school of similar philosophy and structure. The district student record system (Infinite Campus) contains secure, complete student records.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

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

- The systemic data-driven decision-making process in place across the district yields timely and accurate information to inform instructional practices, improve student outcomes, and target district support for individual schools.
- Many students are active participants in the data review process and are taking ownership for their learning through the PDSA model.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Further develop the data analysis processes and criteria to evaluate and select curriculum, so that school options and site-based decisions can be aligned throughout the district, and to facilitate transitions from grade to grade and from building to building.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Natrona County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Documenting & Using Results" standard.

Standard 5: Resource & Support Systems

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

Description:

Natrona County School District #1 has established a comprehensive process to recruit, employ, and retain qualified professional and support staff. The district's recruitment, employment, and retention process aligns to the district vision of putting students first.

Recruitment trips throughout the year, local/national advertising using a variety of multi-media resources, Teacher Insight, and Principal Insight screening tools facilitate the recruitment of qualified professional and support staff. An on-line recruitment and application process is utilized. Current job postings and instructions for applying for positions are also communicated on the district website. Competitive salaries and benefits, opportunities for growth (professional development incentives and year-round trainings), and collaborative decision-making are recruiting points.

As ascertained through interviews and artifacts, similar attributes that facilitate the recruitment of employees also assist with retention of staff. Offerings include base pay for regular assigned positions and the opportunity for classified staff professional growth allowing classified staff to acquire salary upgrades. Also mentioned in interviews was the COMPACT of Trust that aids in staff retention. This COMPACT governs how the district structures decision-making in order to assure all major decisions impacting students are reached through a consensus process. The district recognizes outstanding service by awarding the Medallion of Excellence award to outstanding employees. The mentoring process provides induction and professional development for novice faculty (those with fewer than four years of experience). Interviews indicate that mentors play a vital role in helping maintain commonality of practice in the district.

The district assigns staff from the Human Resources office to the various school sites providing support in

hiring highly qualified staff. Certified teachers are assigned to schools based on the number of at risk students, as determined by free and reduced lunch eligibility. Instructional facilitators are provided at all school sites. Music, art, and physical education teachers are provided at all school sites. Special education teachers and related professional support staff are assigned to schools as dictated by student needs. Staffing ratios are 16:1 for kindergarten through grade five and 21:1 for grades six through twelve. The district has a staffing rationale based on student enrollment and implementation for grade configurations. Some staffing has been decreased on the 2011-2012 budget. One concern mentioned is reduced staffing for tutors. In addition, there are grant-funded positions that end this year, resulting in stakeholder concerns regarding the loss of this staff. Otherwise, there are relatively few staffing concerns.

Superintendent Dr. Joel Dvorak stated, “The vision guides the allocations of resources.” The district operates on a collaborative budgeting model based on the COMPACT of Trust beginning with a draft budget in October and continuing until final adoption by the board in July. Allocations involve a combination of both district and site-based budgeting. Based on data review, additional resources are allocated to sites identified by the district as focus schools. Those resources include additional professional development and tutors, as well as instructional facilitators. Resources and funding are also used to support summer programs utilizing data-driven instruction designed to address the loss of student reading skills over summer months. Additional resources are provided during the summer for staff to support the review of the scope and sequence of the district essential curriculum.

The district provided documents showing financial transactions, insurance, payroll, purchasing policies, and refund policies. These documents support the appropriate use of fiscal resources and secure management of all fiscal processes across the district. District sites and facilities are properly maintained. The Facilities and Technology Division oversees all capital construction, maintenance, grounds keeping, custodial, and technology services for the district. The facilities staff members maintain 34 school buildings, plus the Central Services campus, and the Fairgrounds Center. The district, supported by funding from the State of Wyoming, is embarking on a \$200 million capital construction program that is expected to remodel or rebuild many schools in the county. During the interview process, the director of maintenance said he saw his department as an “integral part in academic success of the district. We touch every aspect – every day.”

The evidence in the Major Maintenance Approved Projects 2011-12, Major Maintenance Prioritized Proposed Projects, and the Long Range Capital Construction Plans indicate the district has a short-term and long-range physical assets plan to maintain and develop physical facilities. An automated process is used for submitting maintenance work orders that includes immediate feedback to the respective individual or entity.

The district has a crisis response team that includes district staff and community stakeholders. A crisis response guide is provided to all staff members in all buildings in the district. This plan details emergency procedures and processes. Training is provided to all district staff regarding emergency procedures. These procedures are also outlined in staff and student handbooks.

Interviews with district staff indicate technology infrastructure and electrical systems of building sites have been upgraded to support district technology needs. The district implemented a 1:1 computer program providing laptop computers for all students in grades 6 – 12. The district supports the development of technology within the schools and provides procedures for the maintenance and improvement of both hardware and software. Policies and procedures exist and all stakeholders are knowledgeable regarding appropriate internet access. Some stakeholders, particularly at the school level, expressed concerns about the district’s capacity to implement the 1:1 laptop initiative, citing bottlenecks in technical support and professional development to ensure that equipment was readily accessible and

used in a manner to transform instruction.

The district adheres to federal and state child-find mandates. Children who are identified as needing special education services have an individualized education plan, which identifies needs, goals, progress, accommodations, and other services. Inclusion is supported. Evidence is in place showing the existence of various programs including School-Wide Information System (SWIS), Safe Schools Healthy Students (SSHS) Grant, district-wide bullying program, Safe Schools Lab, suicide awareness program, refocus room, and group counseling in the elementary school. In addition, the district sustains has a full complement of special programs and sites to meet the varying needs of students. Among these programs are Star Lane project-based learning program, the Transitions dropout prevention site, the ProStart culinary arts program, Reach High for students with substance abuse problems, and a K-12 alternative to suspension site.

Partnerships intended to support students exist with community agencies including the Youth Crisis Center, Wyoming Community Counseling Center, and Casper Mountain Science School. Other programs involving school, home, and community include an after school program at the local museum, a truancy program with the District Attorney's office, the Help Yourself Academy and Project Eye-to-Eye with the community college, a crossing guard program with the city supervisor, and the Boy's and Girl's Clubs. Stakeholders indicated, when approached with a request for services, the district "wants to find a way to say yes." According to community agencies, there is a pervasive attitude that there are "no disposable kids."

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

- Facilities, transportation, and maintenance personnel maintain sites, facilities, and equipment to provide a safe, orderly, and healthy environment but are also an integral part in the academic success of the district.
- The collaborative and transparent nature of the COMPACT of Trust process facilitates staff retention.
- Professional and support staff members are assigned based on system needs that are congruent with the district mission and vision.
- The district provides a wide array of support services and alternative programs to address varying student needs and abilities.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Clarify and communicate the process for allocation of resources to all stakeholder groups.
- Provide fiscal and human resources for the development maintenance of technology.
- Provide systemic and systematic training and professional development in the effective and appropriate use of instructional technology.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Natrona County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Resource & Support Systems" standard.

Standard 6: Stakeholder Communications & Relationships

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

Description:

Natrona County School District #1 uses multiple methods to communicate with and listen to its stakeholders. The district maintains a Parent-Community Advisory Council (PCAC) which is a vehicle for parental involvement and communication; while the PCAC has involved and committed individual members, not all schools are represented on it. In addition, the district provides important information via district and school websites, mailings, the Infinite Campus Parent Portal, community meetings, and press and media releases. The district's Community Partnerships Office produces three annual mailings to families: a back-to-school mailing late in the summer, an enrollment packet in the middle of the school year, and a publication late in the school that outlines summer opportunities for students. The district also produces an employee newsletter. The district office produces a huge number of press releases annually.

The district has in place substantial vehicles for input. The district conducted Gallup Surveys of staff and students in 2010; the Solid Foundation Survey is used to measure parental satisfaction. The results of these surveys have been collected, analyzed, and significant findings reported. During his presentation to the QAR team, the superintendent informed the team that there were sixty community members involved in the creation of the mission statement.

The district has established a COMPACT as a means of safe, honest, solution-focused negotiation on issues of continuous improvement, student achievement, working conditions, salaries and benefits.

As part of its continuous improvement process, the district is focusing squarely on determining "Who is the customer?" for critical functions of the district, and crafting strategies to meet customer needs. As a result of these discussions, the district builds strategies to meet the customer requirements, set processes in place that can be produced, monitored and sustained. The district remains committed to its schools of choice program. A school catalog entitled "Your Family's Guide to Natrona County Schools" provides information about each school's programs and achievement to assist families as they make decisions about school choice. The district uses its communication processes to enhance its strategic goals, e.g., the alignment between the district's WE READ community partnership program with its literacy goals.

The district utilizes the knowledge and tools of the community stakeholders by involving business owners and parents with all aspects of the education process from human resources to the classroom curriculum to the maintenance department. Building trust among the stakeholders is key to Natrona County Schools as the district informs and engages the community. They have achieved this by asking, receiving, and acting upon feedback. Interviews with a large group of stakeholders demonstrates how the breadth and depth of support, but also significant challenges and limitations. Some stakeholders questioned the responsiveness of the district to requests for assistance from schools and families.

Part of the district's challenge is moving from a "system of schools," i.e., an uncoordinated collection of largely autonomous schools, to a "school system," with efficient operations to serve all students while at the same time preserving the innovation and distinctiveness of individual schools, while retaining strong community support.

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

- The district has multiple committed business and community partnerships whose actions are aligned with district goals.
- The district has multiple vehicles for communication to parents and other stakeholders.
- The abundance of positive press releases helps to create a positive public image.
- The COMPACT is bridging the gaps of trust among stakeholders.
- The district fosters collaboration with parents to provide educational options for their children.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Foster better communication among district office departments, especially classified staff, to be more responsive to stakeholder requests.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Natrona County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Stakeholder Communications & Relationships" standard.

Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

Description:

The school district has a clearly articulated vision for student achievement and a process to ensure continuous improvement. The improvement process was established by the school board and the District Leadership Team, composed of central office personnel, a board member, and building level representatives who annually collect and maintain a student and community profile to guide the improvement process. However, interviews by QAR team members at schools throughout the district indicate that commitment to the improvement process varies significantly from school to school and among various stakeholder groups.

The district is developing a predictive assessment process focused on identifying the specific needs of the student population, both for groups and individuals. The collection and analysis of the assessment data identifies areas for improvement and provides information for decision-making. The district has a data review process utilizing a professional judgment panel that analyzes the data of each school and assigns a rating of "focus," "unclassified," or "excelling" to the core subject categories of each school; the particular rating is used to establish priorities for funding buildings in need of varying degrees of professional development and material support. Each school's plan is based on the use of school data-based rating by the panel, and includes measurable goals and specific programs to improve student performance. A major component of each building's plan is a slate of measurable goals, evaluated in terms of student performance on various relevant assessments. In some schools where the process has been initiated, longitudinal analysis of assessment data reveal significant improvement in student achievement after implementation.

The district has adopted the Baldrige model for continuous improvement and in the most recent revision of its COMPACT has clearly articulated the philosophical assumptions, guiding principles, stakeholder commitments, and committee structures for fulfillment of the COMPACT. At the district level, the superintendent regularly meets with principals and instructional facilitators (as the advocates for infusing

information into teaching/learning in the classroom and the essential curriculum) to review building level data related to the five district goals, and to develop district improvement plans that support the district's vision, mission, and goals. The superintendent has established clear expectations and accountability of his staff in modeling and deploying the continuous improvement process.

In interviews, community stakeholders had some knowledge of district priorities and goals and felt there is sufficient information available regarding the district improvement plans. Several of the community stakeholders expressed a desire for improved K-12 alignment for instructional programs, indicating some disconnect between elementary, middle, and high school level programming. All community stakeholders interviewed showed a strong connection with the district and described strong partnerships in shared areas of interest and for targeted initiatives. However, none reported active participation on school improvement teams.

The new state-mandated professional evaluation system, which includes individual professional growth plans, was piloted last year and was instituted district-wide at the start of this year. Although not all those interviewed have experienced the complete process, responses to the new system were positive with many persons indicating that the new system "emphasizes professional growth and the improvement of instruction, rather than being primarily a tool for employment decisions". This perspective is highlighted by one of the goals included in the plan, "by 2015 all employees will actively engage in a process of systemic continuous improvement to identify learning needs in order to become more efficient and effective." This goal also clearly supports the district's commitment to continuous improvement and is representative of improved alignment between systems and intent.

Professional development in recent years has been determined at each school site and at present, the majority of professional development remains site-based. Instructional facilitators have been extremely helpful in recent years toward the improvement of instruction; however, changes in a school's rating by the judgment panel affect the degree of facilitator services; additionally, state funding for the positions was cut significantly which greatly reduces the scope of the program. The district is moving toward more district-wide initiatives as one means of improving consistency across the district. Principals, teachers, and staff spoke favorably of recent district-wide professional development initiatives, such as the Jim Shipley and Associates methodologies, and department-specific professional growth opportunities. In addition, the district professional mentoring programs were widely lauded by school personnel.

The district demonstrates an ongoing commitment to collaboration and school improvement through its committee structure. Annually, school level data are to be systematically reviewed at the school and district level, with improvement plans adjusted accordingly. Each school maintains building-level leadership and goal teams to guide the school improvement process, with participation and membership from classified staff and external stakeholders in addition to the certified personnel. Each team analyzes relevant data, reviews and sets goals, and makes relevant decisions in alignment with district and school visions, missions, and goals.

SCHOOL LEVEL NARRATIVES AND FINDINGS

Alcova Elementary School

Alcova Elementary School is the heart and hub of a small community. As noted by one staff member, "It is much more than just a school." Parent involvement and community support are evident in conferences, student productions, after school events, field trips, volunteers serving hot lunches and donating student snacks. Students and staff members developed the school's vision statement, "Every student will work hard and be ready for the next grade level," which was then reviewed and approved by parents and

community members. Due to a very small, highly transient student population, continuous improvement is implemented and measured on an individual student level. The teacher is provided monthly professional development opportunities through a partnership with a larger sister school. Staff and students travel to the sister school for a monthly “Discovery Day.” Students participate in structured enrichment activities while the teacher engages in professional development activities and collegial sharing aligned with school improvement efforts.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Bar Nunn Elementary School

Bar Nunn School and stakeholders are committed to the process of continuous improvement. The school improvement plan identifies the on-going process for improvement involving administrators, teachers, parents, district office, and community members. All stakeholders have a vested interest in improving achievement. The school community understands communication is an essential component of continuous improvement. This communication is a cycle of filtering information through administrators, staff, students and parents through a system of interlocking teams that are representative of parents and all school staff to facilitate communication and shared decision-making. The school makes contact with parents regarding student learning using informal discussions during parental drop-ins, telephone conversations with parents, through the weekly distribution of a school newsletter and bi-annual parent-teacher conferences.

The continuous improvement process is aligned with the district and school missions clearly identifying what the district, school and students must do to prepare students to be successful in the 21st century. Goals are in place, planning for instruction is based on data analysis. Teams examine and discuss assessment data to help guide instructions. Such data discussions help teachers identify skills students have mastered and skills to target. These assessments also enable administrators and teachers to track student performance as well as determine the effectiveness of the instructional strategies being used. Results are gathered and shared amongst administrators, teachers, facilitators, students, teachers, and parents in order to make logical decisions about the academic needs of the students. A component of the process of continuous improvement is Plan, Do, Study, and Act (PDSA). PDSA is a method that classroom students and teachers identify a plan of action on how to adequately support student learning by identifying “this is where I am, this is where I need to go and this is what I must do to get there.” Continuous adjustment analysis of the PDSA will assist in informing professional development and resource needs as well.

Administrators and teachers indicate a desire for more assistance from the district in the support of “next steps” needed to continue expanding their understanding of data use to improve student achievement. Methods of examining a wider range of data (classroom projects, lab reports, reading journals, unit tests, homework, teacher observations, discussions with students) in conjunction with standardized test scores, assist in building a data overview and the triangulation process, important components in making effective instructional decisions. Discussions with teachers and administrators reveal a desire for more consistency in the method of professional development offered by the district. Specifically the train the trainer model relies on school site facilitators to be trained by the district and then train teachers at the school site. Facilitators move and other issues such as funding, reclassification and reassignment create gaps in support and communication.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this

standard: Operational

Casper Classical Academy

Casper Classical Academy (CCA) successfully implements a collaborative and ongoing process for continuous school improvement that clearly articulates the vision and purpose they are pursuing. A rich profile of student performance data drives instruction. As the population continues to increase and diversify, additional training on accessing readily available data for growing subgroup populations will enhance these efforts. Clear goals are articulated in the school improvement plan that focuses on student learning, providing a challenging, rigorous curriculum. CCA's leadership team continually reflects on ways to enhance curriculum offerings. Every parent has a voice in the decision-making processes related to continuous improvement. The leadership team and the governing council work together to ensure that continuous improvement efforts are aligned with the school's vision and expectations for enhancing student learning, and for closing the gaps between current and expected performance. To move to highly functional, it is recommended that the CCA leadership team develop a structured process to guide continuous improvement efforts and establish timely goals for the leadership team. This could include identifying meeting times, dates, agenda items, establishing goals, and identifying methods for accessing and disseminating information to all stakeholders.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Centennial Junior High School

Centennial Junior High School successfully implements a collaborative and ongoing process for continuous school improvement that clearly articulates the vision and purpose they are pursuing. Clear goals for continuous improvement are articulated in the school improvement plan. A rich profile of student performance data drives instruction and is prominently posted as a "Data Dashboard" in the hallway. The CJHS Leadership Team ensures that continuous improvement efforts are informed by and aligned with district improvement efforts through a shared-leadership model that is implemented with fidelity. In this model the building leadership team, goal teams, and steering committee meet at least monthly to review the components of continuous improvement with a focus on "closing the gap" through an analysis of assessment results and designing interventions to increase student learning. On Teaching Tuesdays, all teachers attend a professional development activity related to the continuous improvement cycle. Parents are actively involved in the school, and report that CJHS has an "open door" where parents are invited to provide input regarding continuous improvement. CJHS monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts through parent newsletters. To move to Highly Functional, efforts to continually engage parents in the school improvement process could be strengthened.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Cottonwood Elementary School

Cottonwood is the result of combining two schools and building a new facility. This process encompassed significant change. However, stakeholders in all interviews discuss the school's commitment to change when necessary to improve student performance. A review of artifacts indicates the school maintains and monitors a continuous process of school improvement. Leadership on an ongoing basis monitors basic

demographics. Group assessment results are reviewed throughout the year. School action plans are revised based upon collected data and new improvement efforts initiated as required. Staff training is an integral part of the school improvement process. Report cards, conferences, and parent access to grades online through Power School provide parents with information about student progress. The QAR team visited the day of Parent Teacher conferences. Teachers discussed the transition involving students in the conferences as a significant initiative to involve students in assessing their learning. During interviews, parents discussed their appreciation for how accessible the staff is.

Student interviews reflect an understanding of why they are in school and what they have to do to achieve classroom goals; however, there does not appear to be a school-wide process whereby students are involved in formal goal setting and achievement. Initiating this process would assist the learning community in maintaining a sustained focus on the school improvement goals and support continuous improvement.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Crest Hill Elementary School

As the evaluation team interviewed the students, leadership team, teachers, and stakeholders there was an overwhelming reaction that Crest Hill has been continuously improving. The internal and external stakeholders were proud of the gains that have been made, and want to continue growing. Stakeholders are engaged in the process of continuous improvement by being involved on the leadership team and are aware of data results. Through the use of goal teams and the leadership team, the school ensures that the plans for school improvement are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school and the expectations for students. It was said by many, “We are always trying to find that next puzzle piece to help that one student succeed.”

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

CY Middle School

CY Middle School is committed to the Baldrige Model of continuous improvement and has a clear vision and purpose identified by the stakeholders. While elements of a school profile were present, a comprehensive profile containing a description of students, their performance, system effectiveness and the community was not evident. There was strong evidence in the classrooms and in all stakeholder interviews, that a PDSA model of improvement is used throughout the school to drive instructional decisions and to assess student performance on school and district goals. Plus-Deltas are conducted in each classroom at the end of every unit to assess the instructional process. Students are active participant in this process and they are aware of the learning targets, their progress towards the learning targets, and are advocates for strategies that will help them achieve success in future learning.

There are opportunities for staff, students and parents to be actively involved in the improvement process. Several groups, including the parent and community stakeholders, expressed a desire to have more parents involved. This is an ongoing challenge that CY Middle School continues to address. Professional development is available for staff when there is a demonstrated need. Staff indicates that professional development is offered for district initiatives such as literacy across the content areas and these

opportunities are enabling them to employ better instructional strategies.

CY Middle School is communicating the results of improvement efforts to their stakeholders in a variety of ways. CY Middle School sends home Tuesday folders containing current student achievement data.

The Infinite Campus program is updated on a regular basis for students and parent access, and parent-teacher conferences are held regularly to inform parent about student achievement.

The CY Middle School Parent Connection Committee meets regularly with the administrative team and teachers to receive information about progress towards school goals and improvement efforts. CY Middle School engages in a continuous, reflective process of data review to assess their progress towards school goals and to make changes as needed.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Dean Morgan Middle School

Dean Morgan Middle School has demonstrated a commitment to improvement. The whole staff is engaged in two PLC days each month. They have after school programs that focus on student improvement; every student in the school is assigned an advisement class where the teachers monitor their grades, attendance, and interpersonal skills. On Wednesday, the advisement teacher gives the students their current grades. This allows all students the opportunity to monitor their individual progress and make adjustments as necessary to continue their learning process. At the end of each quarter, a celebration of success takes place. Students are rewarded for their academic achievement as well as their commitment to school attendance. On three Tuesdays each month the advisement class is focused on “Cowboy Values.” These lessons teach positive and desirable character traits. The advisement class also allows students time to read independently with some guidance from the classroom teacher. Each teacher sets class goals and encourages students to set individual goals. They are constantly asking students to stretch those goals, both individually and collectively.

The educators have made a commitment to continuous improvement with the implementation of both grade level and subject teams. They work to align the curriculum both horizontally and vertically so the scope and sequence for each class is aligned. The staff works in collaboration to develop grade level trends to guarantee they have training timed to instruction. Many of the staff is involved in summer meetings to develop common materials to ensure all students are getting the same quality instruction. The teachers have the opportunity to participate in professional development activities before school begins in the fall and again at mid-term each year. All certified personnel are trained in the programs used with the students; and a tremendous effort is made to bring all new staff “on board” with the current teaching methods and programs used. Several of the staff stated, “Teaching at Dean Morgan involves continual learning for all everyone.”

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Evansville Elementary

Evansville Elementary is engaged in a comprehensive cycle of continuous improvement that monitors a profile of their students, their performance, and instructional effectiveness; goals, interventions and review cycles are in place. This cycle is aligned with the vision and purpose of the school. Evansville is a

“Demonstration School” and has participated in a range of professional development that included Leadership Team training, Goal Team training, and Classroom Continuous Improvement including goal setting. All school improvement results are made available to internal and external stakeholders.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Fort Caspar Academy

Fort Caspar Academy is designated as a school of excellence in the district. The school has been able to sustain high levels of achievement for many years. Whether it is a school policy developed by the parents’ Governance Council or goals developed by goal teams, all stakeholders interviewed confirmed that decisions are data-driven. Data are reviewed constantly by Goal Teams to ensure that the school is continually addressing opportunities for improvement. PDSAs are used by both staff and students to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of all improvement actions. Goals and PDSAs are posted throughout the building. In addition, student achievement results on PAWS are posted by grade level at the entrance of the school, demonstrating the school’s commitment to continuous improvement.

Interviews and meeting minutes document that all stakeholders have the opportunity to participate in meaningful conversations and on committees dedicated to continuous improvement. Goal teams include both staff and parents, and leadership opportunities on those goal teams are open to all. The staff and parents regularly evaluate student achievement data to determine the impact and effectiveness of strategies and interventions used at the school. This has led to requests several times in the last few years for the district officials to allow the school to waive district processes and programs and continue to use processes and programs that are proven successes at Fort Casper. One example is using teacher assistants in the lower grades instead of lowering the class size to the district average of 17 and not having assistants. Fort Casper has student class sizes in all lower grades of 22-24, but their achievement rates are still over 90% proficiency. In addition to student assessment data, surveys are completed annually to address both student achievement and character values. Parents also use surveys such as the Homework Survey to address policies that will improve Fort Casper Elementary.

Parents report that not only is there a commitment to academic improvement of students, the focus on student achievement has helped many of them become better parents. Parents commit to ten hours a week of parent involvement, and several parents stated that at Fort Casper, it is more than parent involvement; it is parent investment. Parents are very proud of their school, and, in fact, would like to see more celebration of the achievements made.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Frontier Middle School

Opportunities for continuous learning are given to every Frontier employee. For the staff at Frontier, there are professional learning communities, a consultant for Title 1, quarterly Literacy 1st training, training in goal setting, and common time for collaborative staff meetings. The Frontier staff has also received professional development in the use of Milepost, RtI, and the use of the Promethean boards. The school utilizes Read 180, Literacy First, and Fast Math to help students achieve maximum performance levels.

The academic achievement needs of the students are a primary focus for their professional development. Money is placed in the budgets of the cafeteria and custodial funds to ensure a safe, healthy environment for all students. Monthly safe schools meetings are held to evaluate the concerns of the students and staff. Classified staff is allowed to attend trainings to improve skills with permission obtained in advance of the meeting. The school district offers a multitude of on-line professional development opportunities for both certified and classified staff. Frontier staff members stated, “Any professional development is available – if you want it. Sometimes it is a bit overwhelming!”

The staff uses the student planner to assist Frontier students in meeting and exceeding their individual goals for every academic area. The school uses MIRP and Fast Math to improve student performance in reading and math. Educators have been trained in the use of best practices and visit other schools to observe techniques helping them to reach both class and individual goals. During testing breakfast is served to every student helping ensure better performance on the tests. There is a strong focus on meeting the physical, emotional, social, and academic needs of all students. Teams meet to re-assess the growth of individual students. The number of students in the building is both an asset and a drawback. All staff knows every student, their names, and their station in life. With this relationship, it is possible to re-assess the needs of the students; these interactions help both the students and the staff to change and evolve.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Grant Elementary School

Grant Elementary School has a clear sense of vision, maintains a profile of students, employs goals and interventions to improve student performance, and documents and uses results to inform what happens next. Through the use of goal teams and the leadership team, the school ensures that the plans for school improvement are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school and the expectations for students. Through the School Improvement Team process, internal as well as external stakeholders look at the data together and determine resource allocation. Specific examples of this process were cited that involved pre-K decisions as well as staffing decisions in 4th and 5th grade.

Though Grant Elementary School continues to show growth, the leadership team members agree that they are improving but not fast enough. All are committed to accelerating growth. They are currently researching opportunities and have made plans for next steps based on work with Shipley. Six days of professional development for teachers (one per grade) are planned so that teachers can collaboratively look at alignment and higher level questions (using Bloom’s taxonomy and resources from Shipley.)

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Kelly Walsh High School

Kelly Walsh High School faculty and staff engage in the process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose of the school. All stakeholders can explain and are committed to continuous improvement, monitoring results and adjusting the plan as needed. Engagement in this process can be witnessed in the classroom, in the school hallways and in conversations with stakeholder groups. Students are taught to monitor their performance progress and plan for continued growth.

Continuous improvement is a way of work at KWHS that is displayed and modeled on a daily basis. The school population walks the talk of school improvement and puts into action the 'preparing for next step' purpose of the school. The continuous improvement plan is supported by the four pillars of excellence; academics, activities, athletics and acceptance as the guiding foundation to success and engagement of each student at KWHS. All stakeholders can communicate the vision and purpose. The faculty monitors student progress and connects students to interventions and accelerated programs of study in an attempt to connect to the needs of each student and find ways to engage the entire student body. The faculty communicates great pride in the systems they have in place.

Faculty members are offered professional development to meet the identified needs of improving the teaching and learning process. Teachers have been trained in the PSDA model and instructional strategies. The instructional facilitators are helpful in the process of connecting teachers to the professional development needs. Special education support staff indicated they are supported and have resources available to meet the changing needs of students. There is evidence of collaboration throughout the school.

The faculty employs a system of evaluation and review of documents to assure the school improvement efforts are focused on student performance and continued forward progress. The processes are active and engage all.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Manor Heights Elementary School

Manor Heights Elementary was designated last year as a school of excellence in the district for Language Arts. Although proud of this distinction, the school's focus is forward thinking, hoping that they can achieve this status in other areas. All stakeholders interviewed confirmed that decisions are data-driven. The staff in this school form one team to review their school improvement data, set goals and review results constantly to ensure that the school is continually addressing opportunities for improvement. Parents also report that they feel part of this process, as information is shared and input requested during each step of the process. PDSAs are used by both staff and students monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of all improvement actions. Goals and PDSAs are posted throughout the building. In addition, students monitor their own learning through constant input and review of their data notebooks. In addition parents are regularly updated by teachers on the progress of their children and the new learning targets drafted for the students.

Interviews and newsletters document that all staff members have the opportunity to participate in professional development activities dedicated to continuous improvement. Even parent reported that they appreciate the professional development for the staff and that they believe they have very well trained and highly qualified staff in their building.

Manor Heights also ensures that they are coordinating closely with district efforts. They have staff members represent their building on district goal committees, and they invite district-level staff to attend staff meetings and provide district perspectives on areas that will help them improve as a building. They believe that their understanding and use of the district's Essential Curriculum and data makes in-district transitions for students very smooth.

All staff, students and parents believe that their quest to constantly improve in academics and citizenship are helping them to become very well rounded. They make ongoing efforts to ensure that learning is challenging and exciting for their students.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Midwest School

Midway School is aggressively implementing an improvement plan, based on a well-articulated strategic plan, consistent with the school and district vision and goals. Additionally, targeted goals have been established, and are a central focus of pedagogical efforts. A student performance system that utilizes data from several assessments to inform curricular and pedagogical decisions has been implemented. This system is evaluated based on constant monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. Professional development (PD) for all school staff, and specific to improvement efforts, is required and embraced. The schools have a unique opportunity to organize and streamline PD opportunities toward specific school needs, and in vertically coordinated efforts with other system and district schools. School faculty, staff, and community stakeholders are involved in the planning efforts for Midwest curricular and system decisions. Communicating the results of improvement efforts is accomplished through a variety of media; student and stakeholder feedback is encouraged and integrated into planning. The entire Midwest educational community has embraced improvement efforts.

Finding:

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard. Highly Functional

Mills Elementary School

Mills Elementary School has established a commitment to continuous improvement by providing all stakeholders a two-way communication system where everyone is welcome to provide input. The school system has a vision and mission statement that is supported by all stakeholders and is aligned from the district level to the student level. The school has a strong commitment to excelling in all areas of learning. It is evident by walkthroughs, classroom observations and interviews Mills Elementary has an embedded school process system that aligns with the district's goals, consistent student performance, effectiveness and an assessment system that sets high expectations for all learners.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Mountain View Elementary School

The school has a clear plan for improvement. It uses a shared leadership model and has established formal processes to support the school improvement process. This school recognizes and is dedicated to improving the performance of their high needs' population, 79% free and reduced lunch and over 20% special education. The school's personnel are dedicated to student achievement, and to meeting the needs of each individual student. The teachers, administrators and staff are all aligned toward a shared vision for student achievement. They are dedicated to their work and their students. The staff feel that their "enthusiasm has been generated in part by the district's move to the continuous improvement process. It

is making them function as teams rather than individuals and appreciate that the whole school has a commitment to this work.” After collectively moving the school from being a Focused school to a school just shy, and soon to be, Excelling, everyone on this staff has a strong commitment to the improvement process having seen the positive results that it creates.

While the school has a functioning and enthusiastic parent association as well as parent representation on the school’s leadership team, they have a recognized difficulty involving parents in the school and the school improvement process. The faculty and administration discussed obstacles to participation that exist and recent efforts that they are undertaking to support improved parent participation in student education. The school and the parent association utilized a school improvement process to target improvement efforts. They report that the initiatives instituted thus far this year are showing signs of improvement in this area.

The school is advised to create a clear system of two-way communication and involvement of classified staff in the improvement efforts. While many are kept up-to-date and included in the process through a certified staff member, it is not consistent throughout the school.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Natrona County High School

Natrona County High School has a school improvement plan in place that aligns with the district goals. The vision and mission have been in place for many years and both focus on student learning. An opportunity exists to revisit the vision statement and purpose of the school by assembling a school improvement team that includes all stakeholder groups.

The continuous improvement process provides a chance for school-wide unified focus. The faculty is meeting in PLC groups once a week and beginning the process of using data to frame next steps. The faculty is proud of the work they are doing to expand the use of common assessments, common rubrics and instructional strategies. They are aligning this work with the improvement initiatives and collaborating to complete the work. Through the work in PLCs the faculty identifies professional development required to continue improvement initiatives and communicates those to the instructional facilitators.

Communication of progress should be ongoing and deliberate. Stakeholder groups felt positive about their school but were interested in additional information on the school status regarding student achievement and improvement initiatives. Staff members choose professional development that fits their needs and a few school-wide trainings have been presented to increase common practices and shared vocabulary regarding school improvement. Teachers have been trained in CRISS and the PSDA model. A site based plan for long term professional development to meet the needs of sustained continuous improvement should be initiated.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

North Casper Elementary School

It is evident through interviews, artifacts and observations that North Casper stakeholders have a mindset

of continuous improvement that uses the district vision as its foundation. The teachers revisit individual student results and reflect upon their instructional methods to accommodate student needs and to make learning meaningful. Goals and interventions are established through collaborated meetings and the outcomes are documented. The community is kept abreast of the data results through open communication and they are asked for assistance when needed. Students shared their concern about playground security. They would like the entry and recess gates to be secured during the school day. As a whole the students love their school and are extremely proud of their opportunities for learning.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Oregon Trail Elementary School

Oregon Trail Elementary has an embedded system of continuous improvement established with their school system. The plan includes strategies and implementation of scheduled meetings to address school improvement topics, surveys to all stakeholders, goal setting committees, an inclusive PDSA process that is in newsletters and on the website and continuous data meetings to view, review and document student learning.

The school improvement team consists of all stakeholders: parents, students, teachers, support staff, and administration. All stakeholders shared with the QAR interview team that they are communicated to and also have a voice in the continuous improvement plan. The stakeholders stated that the communication that is provided is sent home weekly, monthly, and quarterly represented by grade reports, data reports, newsletters and website information.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Paradise Valley Elementary School

Paradise Valley is engaging in a continuous process of improvement. They use their results to drive goals and look at instruction; the staff, both classified and certified, were able to verbalize what is needed to move towards higher student achievement based on the data. Moving their higher students to show gains on the NWEA will help them achieve Excelling School status in the district along with a vertical alignment through the grades. Students and teachers demonstrate the commitment to continuous improvement effectively through the use of PDSA throughout the school. Students and parents can explain the process and know where they are in the cycle. Students mentioned a PDSA “even in PE”. This is indicative of continuous improvement in action at the level that makes improvement most effective. A need that Paradise Valley expressed throughout the stakeholder interviews was training in technology.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Park Elementary School

Park Elementary School’s improvement team, including administration, certified teachers and parents,

states they have an active voice in the school's direction on continuous improvement. Communication to stakeholders regarding improvement planning and results are handled through newsletters, parent groups, staff meetings, and grade level meetings. Professional development is provided for staff to guarantee opportunities for continuous improvement, personal growth and to improve strategies for delivery of instruction for students. Staff indicated the professional development they received in Quantum Learning strategies has been highly successful, and instruction on teaching these strategies is incorporated into daily lessons and transitions between activities. Staff philosophy focuses on students being intrinsically motivated for academic success and gaining leadership skills, which is developed using the 8 keys for success through this program. Data information is shared among staff in the multi-aged classrooms to ensure curriculum alignment between the grade levels. Students have data folders, which are available for staff, students, and parents, which facilitates the students' opportunities to lead their own parent/student/teacher conferences. The students indicate they like to set their own goals, and have an opportunity to also set stretch goals. Parents appreciate that their students have an opportunity to be independent learners. Park Elementary has all of the elements of a continuous improvement system in place. However, monitoring the implementation of the school improvement plan, and analysis of data for use of driving instructional improvement is not yet fully realized.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Pineview Elementary School

Pineview Elementary school's vision, mission, goal teams, and PDSA cycle drive the day-to-day operation of the school. Goal teams meet regularly using a collaborative process for ongoing improvements. Alignment is evident throughout with a laser-like focus on increased student learning and achievement. New improvement efforts are clearly informed through the PDSA cycle.

Graphs and charts are strategically placed around the school building to inform all stakeholders of student achievement. The Thursday folders, monthly newsletter, front hall TV, and parent/teacher conferences all effectively communicate improvement efforts.

The instructional facilitator provides professional development that has a positive impact on student learning. Care is taken to protect instructional time. Time is also allotted for common planning and data mining.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Poison Spider Elementary School

Poison Spider follows an improvement plan aligned to the district that is based on their past success. They have a clear direction for where they want to go and a process for attaining their goals. The plan includes strategies developed by the Leadership Team as it reflected on their data. These include PDSA cycles, Professional Learning Community PDSAs, team PDSAs and Shipley coach professional development.

The school's leadership team includes classified staff. Other classified staff believes they are part of the team and that they have a voice in the decisions within the classroom as well as in the school.

Communication of the data is provided in multiple ways. An annual report is provided to all stakeholders,

which is also published in the school newsletter and individual student results are provided to parents at parent conferences. Elementary level results are more readily shared than middle school level results. The school website is not utilized as much as it could be for this purpose. Parents indicated that they have an active voice in the school's direction. They stated that they are critically aware of the progress of the students and the school. The staff was presented with professional development opportunities by the principal. ALL staff were allowed to participate in the professional learning community and Shipley training. There is a plan to continue development in these two areas.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational.

Powder River School

Powder River follows an improvement plan aligned to the district. They have a clear direction for where they want to go and a process for attaining their goals. This teacher is included in professional development and planning with the Poison Spider Elementary teachers. She and her assistant take personal responsibility as well to learn what they need to help their students.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Red Creek Elementary School

Red Creek Elementary School practices a process of continuous improvement centered on student achievement. This plan is aligned with state and district goals and is made visible through the work of the school community. Administrators, teacher, students and parents understand the connection between student achievement and the implementation of a continuous process of improvement as well as the strategies needed to improve student learning.

The continuous improvement process is aligned with the district; school and student missions that clearly identify what the district, school and students must do to prepare students to move successfully to the next grade. Planning for instruction is based on data analysis and strategies are differentiated to meet the needs of diverse learners.

The school community understands communication is an essential component of continuous improvement. The teacher makes contact with each parent regarding student learning using informal discussions during student drop off and pick up time, telephone conversations with parents, through the monthly distribution of a school newsletter and bi-annual parent-teacher conferences.

The Red Creek School teacher collaborates weekly with staff at Alcova School and monthly at Sagewood School, focusing on the use of student achievement data to inform instructional planning. Each morning students review their mission and connect their work to their mission, goals and learning objectives of the District Essential Curriculum. Students maintain data folders containing the student mission statement, and results of their NWEA, weekly Spelling, Reading, Math, and Multiplication Two Minute tests (Math facts). Students and teachers discuss the data and make adjustment in goals where needed. These data conversations are further pursued bi-monthly when students take their data folders home to share the results of their work and assessments with their parents.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Roosevelt High School

Roosevelt High School is engaged in a continuous improvement process to improve student learning through their work in professional learning communities (PLC). They are in their second year of implementation of the PLC model and are so committed to the PLC process that they have asked for, and received, permission from the district to continue the PLC journey rather than adopt the Baldrige Model of continuous improvement that the rest of the district has adopted. Elements of a profile were provided; however, evidence of a continuously maintained profile containing a current description of students, the community, student performance and school effectiveness was not present. School staff are involved and dedicated to the continuous improvement process, aligned to school and district goals, and efforts are being made to include other stakeholders to a greater extent. The school data wall has greatly informed students, parents and other stakeholders. Students and staff also articulated how it has motivated students to excel and to take responsibility for and ownership for their own learning. Staff report that resources and support for professional development are available when requested. Results of improvement efforts are communicated and celebrated with stakeholder groups. Positive postcards are sent home to parents celebrating student academic and behavioral success. Roosevelt High School evaluates and documents the effectiveness of its continuous improvement process and is involved in an ongoing continuous process of school improvement that is dedicated to providing positive outcomes for their students. It is their hope that they will be allowed to continue the PLC process to reflect on teaching and learning and continue their journey towards achieving school and district goals.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Sagewood Elementary School

Sagewood Elementary serves as an exemplar as a school that engages in a continuous process of improvement that consistently, across stakeholder groups, articulates the vision and purpose the school is pursuing. The staff demonstrates a deep knowledge of its students, the student's performance, and individual needs to increase academic achievement. The staff clearly collectively shares the responsibility for facilitating achievement for ALL students and employs goals and interventions in a thoughtful, systemic, systematic way that is designed to be sustainable. Results are used to inform what happens next; goal achievement indicates that new, appropriate goals must be set. The vision of the school community is as follows: "Sagewood is a place where students can learn and teachers can teach." All school rules and norms are aligned with this vision. All stakeholders are knowledgeable of the vision and school improvement efforts. Professional development is strategically provided to staff members to help them implement improvement interventions to achieve improvement goals; staff members are held accountable for implementing collaboratively agreed upon instructional strategies through principal walkthroughs, self evaluation and collegial support.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Southridge Elementary School

Southridge Elementary School demonstrates commitment to continuous improvement that focuses on student achievement. The school uses data to align student need to instruction and intervention for ALL students (Flooding). The student with the help of the teacher uses individual student data to step learning goal. The student goals are measured often to ensure the gap is filled. The school's improvement plan aligns with the district vision and expectation of student learning. A system is in place to share with all stakeholders. Parents are engaged in student learning and achievement. The instructional facilitator provides professional development that has a positive impact on student learning. Care is taken to protect instructional time. Time is also allotted for common planning and data mining. Results are communicated to the parents through weekly folders, monthly principal newsletters, and parent teacher conferences (often student-led).

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Summit Elementary

Summit Elementary fully implements and monitors the continuous improvement progress of all of the students. The school improvement leadership team, comprised of parents, certified and classified staff, work together to ensure the process of continuous improvement remains their vision for student success in all aspects of the “whole” child which includes, educational, social, and emotional success. Professional development activities targeting the school goal of continuous improvement are provided for all staff, including 7 Habits, Leader in Me, and teacher/principal led. It should also be noted support and classified staff has a continuous improvement committee and each area has its individual plan of improvement. Students are engaged in monitoring their own progress daily through the plus/delta process. Students, parents and teachers provide the supportive environment for continuous improvement in the 7 Habits, leadership and academics. Efforts are systemic and fully embedded; however the school is less than two years old, which prevents the analysis of significant progress.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

University Park Elementary School

University Park Elementary School meets the Excelling School status as determined by NCSD, and has for several years. This in itself speaks of their commitment to improvement. Teachers have ten days of professional development, eight of which are at the building level. Mentors are used for new teachers, as well as instructional facilitators. The principal has walkthroughs and the district-developed evaluation system that measures growth. Peer observations are used within the building to look at excellence and align teaching vertically throughout the grades. Grade level meetings are weekly, as the principal has built this into the master schedule. Mentors are used to build teacher effectiveness. The leadership team discussed building master teachers in order to have model classrooms for new staff to observe with the help of their instructional facilitator. Both soft and hard data were used to build their goals. A unique goal was added to the SIP recently that states teams and staff members will implement a systems approach to school improvement as measured by school data. This includes a system to monitor classrooms, goal teams, and staff members. The team believes that University Park has highly effective practices in place for continuous improvement, but noted that the district could be more supportive with technology training.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Verda James Elementary School

Student, teacher, and stakeholder interviews show that Verda James Elementary School engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision of the school. They employ goals and interventions to improve student performance via collaborated meetings and documented results. Their school improvement plan, Guide to Success, and PDSAs are in place to ensure that plans for continuous improvement are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school and expectations for student learning. Goal 1 for Verda James Elementary School is that 100% of the students will be reading at grade level. They recognize the obstacles to achieve this but stated they will challenge students to go beyond their current abilities. The school has communicated this goal to their stakeholders. Teachers have been given collaborative meeting time throughout the day in order to work on their goals.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Operational

Willard Elementary School

Willard Elementary School has a well-established collaborative culture that supports its school improvement efforts. Repeatedly throughout the QAR team visit, teachers, parents, community members, and students shared that this school is a friendly and inviting community of people dedicated to doing what it takes to meet the needs of their students. The school is viewed by all stakeholders as valuing the contributions of every stakeholder. In particular, parent participation is considered not only necessary but critical to the school improvement process. The school has a well-developed shared leadership structure that includes an experienced building leadership team and school improvement goal teams. This school recognizes the needs of their student population, 75% free and reduced lunch and over 20% special education. They utilize their data and stakeholder input to make instructional and programmatic decisions to improve student performance. All stakeholders are aligned toward a shared vision for student achievement now and for the future.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Willow Creek Elementary School

Willow Creek Elementary School is aggressively implementing an improvement plan, based on a well-articulated strategic plan, consistent with the school and district vision and goals. Additionally, targeted goals have been established, and are a central focus of pedagogical efforts at Willow Creek. A student performance system that utilizes data from several assessments to inform curricular and pedagogical decisions has been implemented. This system is evaluated based on constant monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. Professional development (PD) for all school staff, and specific to improvement efforts, is required and embraced. The school has a unique opportunity to organize and streamline PD opportunities toward specific school needs, and in vertically coordinated efforts with Midwest school. The teacher and community stakeholders are involved in the planning efforts for Willow Creek curricular

and school decisions. Communicating the results of improvement efforts is accomplished through individualized efforts; student and stakeholder feedback is encouraged and integrated into planning. The Willow Creek educational community has embraced improvement efforts.

Finding:

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

Woods Learning Center

The cycle of continuous improvement is embedded in the instructional process in the classrooms and building at Woods Learning Center. It begins with students setting and reviewing the goals they set for their learning with teachers as their elbow partners, through teacher reflection of their craft, to the staff's commitment to continue personal professional development. The vision and purpose reflected in the philosophy is the foundation for student learning and progress expectations. Professional development has been offered at the district level to support the standard assessments and curriculum available within the building.

Finding

Based on the evidence reviewed, the team members assign the following overall assessment level for this standard: Highly Functional

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

- In schools where the framework for continuous improvement is in place, major progress toward meeting goals for increasing student achievement has been achieved. The continuous improvement process is a strong tool toward team-building for school improvement activities.

Opportunities - The team offers the following opportunities for improvement in this standard area:

- Involve more stakeholders, both internal and external, in the development and implementation of the continuous improvement process to establish higher degrees of commitment to and ownership of its successes and outcomes.

Finding: Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational," indicating that the Natrona County School District #1 has met the accreditation requirements for the "Commitment to Continuous Improvement" standard.

Quality Assurance Findings

The Quality Assurance Review Team examined the effectiveness of the district's methods for quality assurance. The team reviewed the district's practices and methods to monitor and document improvement, provide meaningful feedback and support across the district, ensure that AdvancED standards are met and strengthened, and regularly collect, use, and communicate results. The team provides the following findings in this area.

Description

Natrona County School District #1 has in place several robust methods for quality assurance. These include the development of district vision and mission statements, and a strategic plan centering on five long-term goals. There is substantial evidence of district-wide buy-in for the goals and alignment of individual school improvement plans with the district plan. The plan provides a framework for aggregation of results, which are reported regularly to the district office as well as to the public at large through formal reports.

The district plan is very concise, consisting of five goals, with one aligned objective, strategy, and activity per goal. This is in marked contrast to many school district's tendency to overload their plans with multiple strategies and activities. In addition, the plan sets forth clearly the district's quality assurance goal of 100% of students performing at a high level, reflecting the superintendent's non-negotiable expectation that "We will work with urgency to improve student performance results."

The district has committed itself to the PDSA continuous improvement process. A thoughtful process of monitoring and communicating the improvement efforts is in place at the district office. A common language and method of capturing the improvement cycle is being replicated throughout the district, even reaching individual students' learning process. District protocols include consistent meeting management processes, e.g., ground rules, plus/delta evaluations.

The district is intentional in its methods of collecting, using, and communicating results through its establishment of the District Data Review (DDR), a formal process for evaluating each school's performance using trained teams of evaluators. The district has communicated clearly major components of the process, including training of data reviewers. The DDR results in ratings of schools as Excelling, Unclassified, or Focus schools; these designations are helpful in determining the kind and amount of district-level support. Although the superintendent communication to the QAR team his conviction that "one can't punish people into excellence," i.e., that the designations are intended not to be punitive, work remains to ensure that all stakeholders have full understanding and trust in the process.

"Collaborative Journey of Continuous Improvement," the district's current document on its COMPACT, sets forth important history of the educational culture of the district, particularly the crisis year of 2001. Since then the COMPACT, amended four times (most recently in April 2011), has provided a foundation for collaboration and problem-solving in the district as a whole. Many stakeholders expressed understanding of the need for collaboration, despite the desire for school autonomy, particularly given the highly transient student population within the district. The motto "Join the Journey," which appears as footer on every page of the document, has the potential to resonate strongly with all stakeholders in Natrona County.

District staff members keep abreast of accreditation standards through attendance at state AdvancED meetings and serving on accreditation teams. The district set up a peer review/walkthrough process to prepare schools for the QAR team visit and to help them assess their compliance with school standards.

Strengths

- Historical evidence substantiates the COMPACT has been integral to the operations of the district administration.
- Internal stakeholders voice the expectation that they are all supposed to work together and are beginning to understand the benefits of developing Natrona students not just those of a particular school.
- The district's planning documents reflect its commitment to work with urgency to improve student performance.
- District leadership uses the district data review to evaluate school performance and to differentiate district support.

Opportunities

- Reflect on the concept of “trust” in this learning community. Develop a systemic understanding of how “trust” supports students.
- Systematically develop an understanding of the information in the document, “Collaborative Journey of Continuous Improvement,” with all stakeholders.
- Utilize the COMPACT to systematically use results to support and evaluate quality assurance.
- Consider using “Join the Journey” in a highly visible format to communicate with all stakeholder groups.
- Embed periodic review of district- and school-level accreditation standards into the peer review routines and/or District Data Reviews. This will be especially useful in light of the revision of accreditation standards in 2012-13.

Schools Visited

The Quality Assurance Review team visited the following schools during the visit to the Natrona County School District #1 on 10/23/2011 - 10/27/2011.

Willow Creek Elementary	24135 Willow Creek Rd	Kaycee	Wyoming	82639-9551
Dean Morgan Junior High	1440 S Elm St	Casper	Wyoming	82601-4118
Manor Heights Elementary	3201 East 15th	Casper	Wyoming	82609-3002
Willard Elementary	129 North Elk	Casper	Wyoming	82601-2715
North Casper Elementary	1014 Glenarm	Casper	Wyoming	82601-1200
Bar Nunn Elementary School	2050 Siebke Dr	Bar Nunn	Wyoming	82601-9577
Sagewood Elementary School	2451 Shattuck	Casper	Wyoming	82601
Midwest School	PO Box 368	Midwest	Wyoming	82643-0368
Southridge Elementary	2300 Bellaire Dr	Casper	Wyoming	82604-3242
Kelly Walsh High School	3500 E 12th St	Casper	Wyoming	82609-3125
Fort Caspar Academy	4100 W 38th St	Casper	Wyoming	82604-4453
Crest Hill Elementary	4445 S Poplar Street	Casper	Wyoming	82601
Alcova Elementary	PO Box 106	Alcova	Wyoming	82620-0106
Woods Learning Center	500 South Walsh	Casper	Wyoming	82609-2381
Poison Spider Elementary	14200 Poison Spider Rd	Casper	Wyoming	82604
Natrona County High School	930 South Elm	Casper	Wyoming	82601
Centennial Junior High	1421 S Waterford	Casper	Wyoming	82609-94
Mills Elementary	P.O. Box 268	Mills	Wyoming	82644-0268
Summit Elementary School	c/o Natrona County District #1	Casper	Wyoming	82601
University Park Elementary	600 N. Huber Drive	Casper	Wyoming	82609-1827
Grant Elementary School	1536 Oakcrest	Casper	Wyoming	82601
Roosevelt High School	140 East K Street	Casper	Wyoming	82601
Oregon Trail Elementary School	6332 W Buckboard Road	Casper	Wyoming	82604-82604-

Natrona County School District #1

Mountain View Elementary	400 North Third	Casper	Wyoming	2478
Red Creek Elementary	15651 State Highway 487	Casper	Wyoming	82604-8736
Verda James Elementary School	701 Carriage Lane	Casper	Wyoming	82609-2433
Cottonwood Elementary School	1350 W 15th Street	Casper	Wyoming	82604
Evansville Elementary	P.O. Box E	Evansville	Wyoming	82636-0766
CY Middle School	2900 Cyclone Blvd	Casper	Wyoming	82604-4590
Casper Classical Academy	900 S. Beverly	Casper	Wyoming	82601
Frontier Middle School	900 S Beverly St	Casper	Wyoming	82609-2862
Pineview Elementary School	639 Payne Avenue	Casper	Wyoming	82609
Park Elementary School	140 W 9th	Casper	Wyoming	82601
Paradise Valley Elementary	22 Magnolia	Casper	Wyoming	82604
Powder River Elementary	PO Box 75	Powder River	Wyoming	82648-75

Conclusion

The commendations and required actions in this report are designed to focus the school district on those areas that will have the greatest impact on student performance and system effectiveness. While powerful in potential, the commendations and required actions only have meaning when acted upon by the school district and its schools. The strength of this report lies in the school district's commitment to using the findings to continuously improve. The key is action. The school district 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 required actions for improvement that the school district will need to address. Following this review, the school district will be required to submit a progress report summarizing its progress toward addressing the team's required actions.

The Quality Assurance Review Team expresses appreciation to the district leadership, members of the professional staff, students, parents and other community representatives for hosting the review team. The team wishes the district and its students much success in the quest for excellence through NCA-CASI-WY accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Dr. Michael E. Lodico, Chair/Lead Evaluator
- Dr. Sharon A. Knudson, Vice Chair (NCACASI)
- Mrs. Beth Lougee, Team Member (Hulett K-12 School)
- Mrs. Toni Neiman, Team Member (Hulett School)
- Ms. Sandra Neiman, Team Member (Crook County School District #1)
- Dr. Rene' M. Ground, Team Member (Flowing Wells School District #8)
- Ms. Margie Simineo, Team Member
- Ms. Tammy Wise, Team Member (Tulsa Job Corps Center)
- Dr. Anita W. Brown, Team Member (Dougherty County School System)
- Ms. Beth Marlatt, Team Member (Hulett K-12 School)
- Ms. Mary Jayne Jordan, Team Member (Sundance Secondary School)
- Ms. Kelsey Lewis, Team Member (Red Top Meadows)
- Dr. Harriet L. Jaworowski, Team Member (Rock Hill School District)
- Mr. Josh Mosser, Team Member (Briar Woods High School)
- Dr. Angelique C. Seifert Ph.D., Team Member (Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System)
- Ms. Paula Swartzberg, Team Member (DeKalb County School System)
- Ms. Paula Steele, Team Member (Perry Public Schools)
- Dr. JoAnn Stevens, Team Member
- Ms. Carolyn D. White, Team Member (Idabel High School)
- Mr. Kenny D. Bridges, Team Member (Karval School District RE-23)
- Dr. Steve Morgan, Team Member
- Dr. Gary Gerber, Team Member (Retired - Broken Arrow Public Schools)
- Ms. Ann S. Ward, Team Member
- Dr. Richard L. Schoonover, Team Member (Schoonover Consulting)
- Mrs. Maureen Ryff, Team Member (Wheatland High School)
- Ms. Shannon Harris, Team Member (Star Valley High School)
- Jody Rakness, Team Member (Worland Middle School)
- Mrs. Denise Herman, Team Member (Worland Middle School)
- Mrs. Gayle A. Kendall, Team Member (Sweetwater Co District No 1)
- Ms. Debbie Varras, Team Member (Sweetwater County School District #1)
- Mr. Brian Brandon, Team Member (Pronghorn Elementary School)
- Mrs. Stanetta Twiford, Team Member (Glendo School)
- Kathy Morsett, Team Member (Libbey Elementary School)
- Mrs. Michelle Tarver, Team Member (Little Powder Elementary/Middle Sch)
- Dr. Robert Krisko, Team Member (RMK Services)
- Ms. Linda Wolfskill, Team Member (Moorcroft Elementary School)
- Mrs. Teresa Brown, Team Member (Crook County School District)

AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems

The AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems are comprehensive statements of quality practices and

conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school districts to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness. As school districts 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 system establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system.

Governance and Leadership

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

Teaching and Learning

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

Documenting and Using Results

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

Resource and Support Systems

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

Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

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

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

**ACTION SUMMARY SHEET
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

DATE: June 12, 2012

ISSUE: Institutional Schools Accreditation

BACKGROUND: Each year the SBE accredits certain institutional schools in Wyoming. The components of accreditation are monitored and evaluated by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA) in cooperation with the Wyoming Department of Education. The areas reviewed in accreditation include Vision and Purpose, Governance and leadership, Teaching and Learning, Document and Using Results, Resources and Support Systems, Stakeholder Communications and Relationships, and Commitment to Continuous Improvement. All Wyoming schools are required to focus on student performance and improve student achievement through their school improvement plans. Quality contacts are made annually with each school, and accreditation visits are conducted on site using a five-year cycle. All institutional schools received an on-site accreditation visit in the 2008-2009 school year. All schools must complete a two-year progress report following the on-site visits on each overall recommendation, regardless of the scores received. It is a process which reflects true continuous school improvement, as we work with each school throughout the school year, and any necessary changes are made along the way.

Findings: The following institutional schools have accomplished the tasks required of them for the 2011-2012 school year and have been evaluated in accordance with the evaluative criteria associated with those tasks.

SUGGESTED MOTION: I move that the following Wyoming institutional schools be granted full accreditation:

Big Horn Basin Children's Center (Northwest BOCES)
Colter High School (Wyoming Boys' School)
C-V Ranch (Region V BOCES)
Mae Olson Education Center (Cathedral Home for Children)
Normative Services
Powder River Basin Children's Center (Northeast BOCES)
Red Top Meadows
St. Joseph's Children's Home
Southeast Wyoming Detention Center (formerly Jeffrey C. Wardle Academy)
Wyoming Behavioral Institute (Accredited as a Supplemental Education Program)
Wyoming Girls' School

SUGGESTED MOTION: I move that the following Wyoming institutional schools be granted accreditation with follow-up:

Youth Emergency Services, Inc.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION ATTACHED:

- a. Institutional Schools Accreditation Summary
- b. Accreditation Progress Reports

PREPARED BY: Dianne Frazer
Educational Program Consultant, Standards and Learning Division

APPROVED BY: _____

ACTION TAKEN BY STATE BOARD: _____ **DATE:** _____

Accreditation Progress Report Recommendations
 AdvancED

School	APR Visit Date	# of Required Actions	# of Required Actions Completed	Emerging Standards	Standards Recommendation	Accreditation Status Change Recommendation
Youth Emergency Services	In Progress – due 8/31/12	3	0	#1, #4, & #7	None	No Change
Wyoming Behavioral Institute	9/21/2011	2	2	#3, #4	#3 Operational #4 Operational	Accredited
Southeast Wyoming Detention	10/2011	7	7	#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7	#1 Operational #2 Operational #3 Operational #4 Operational #5 Operational #6 Operational #7 Operational	Accredited
Jeffrey City Elementary	2/2012	3	3	#4, #7	#4 Operational #7 Operational	Accredited
North Elementary	2/2012	3	3	#4, #7	#4 Operational #7 Operational	Accredited



Accreditation Progress Report

Southeastern Wyoming Juvenile Center

Mr. Nate Munter, Director

3304 E. I-80 Service Road
Cheyenne, Wyoming, United States 82009

Prepared for the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review

Report Status : Accepted

Report Open Date : June 7, 2011

Report Due Date : September 9, 2011

Report Submitted Date : August 25, 2011

Report Accepted Date : October 10, 2011

Accreditation Progress Report

Contents

1.0 About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI	3
2.0 Introduction to the Accreditation Progress Report	4
3.0. Summary	5
4.0. Required Action 1	7
4.1. School Response	7
4.2. Reviewer Response	8
5.0. Required Action 2	9
5.1. School Response	9
5.2. Reviewer Response	10
6.0. Required Action 3	11
6.1. School Response	11
6.2. Reviewer Response	12
7.0. Required Action 4	13
7.1. School Response	13
7.2. Reviewer Response	14

1.0 About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

Background. Dedicated to advancing excellence in education worldwide, AdvancED provides accreditation, research, and professional services to 27,000 schools in 65 countries. AdvancED provides accreditation under the seals of 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).

The Accreditation Process.

To earn and maintain accreditation, schools must:

- 1. Meet the AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems.**

Schools demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school systems to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.

- 2. Engage in continuous improvement.**

Schools implement continuous improvement focused on improving student performance and school effectiveness.

- 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 required actions to help the school improve. The school acts on the team's required actions and submits an Accreditation Progress Report at prescribed intervals following the Quality Assurance Review.

The AdvancED accreditation process 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.

2.0 Introduction to the Accreditation Progress Report

Purpose

The Accreditation Progress Report (APR) is a critical component of the AdvancED accreditation process. It engages the school in a detailed review and analysis of the steps it has taken to address the required actions made by the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review (QAR) team. Completing the report helps the school focus and reflect on its continuous improvement efforts.

It is the responsibility of the school to address each of the QAR report's required actions within the 5-year term accreditation. Deadlines for completion of the report are based on the school's accreditation status and must be met to maintain accreditation. Some schools may complete multiple reports during the 5-year term to demonstrate that they have fully addressed the required actions.

Structure of the Report

The APR is organized around the required actions in the school's QAR team report. The APR lists the required action from the report along with the rationale and evidence supporting the required action. The school then indicates the progress that it has made toward meeting the required action and provides a more detailed response describing the actions it has taken and the results obtained. The school provides a response for each of the QAR team required actions.

Following the school's response is the reviewer's response. Each APR is read by an AdvancED reader in the state or regional office who reviews the school's response to determine if the required action has been met. The reader provides his/her assessment of the progress the school has made and then offers comments to the school. If required actions remain in progress or not addressed, a new APR will be created with a new deadline for completion. As noted earlier, the school must address the required actions within the 5-year accreditation term.

Conclusion

The Accreditation Progress Report is a useful report for members of the school and broader community. It helps community members see and monitor the ongoing improvement efforts of their school. It demonstrates how the school uses its accreditation for the ongoing benefit of the students it serves.

3.0. Summary

1.1. Based on the actions taken by your institution to address the required actions provided by the QAR team, what has been the impact on your institution's overall effectiveness?:

The actions taken by SWJC to address the required actions provided by the QAR team has impacted SWJC's overall effectiveness by becoming more systematic in educational processes. Data driven decision making by all educational staff supports student success. The actions taken by SWJC have also included opening up opportunities for growth and collaboration with all stakeholders by improved lines of communication and cooperation for serving the best interest of all students.

The Vision statement, "We provide youth with an innovative approach to life-long learning", and the Mission statement, "We support and advocate for youth by fulfilling individual educational needs", serve as the foundation for all decision making driving the educational program.

The Educational Department Goals guide the Educational team to fulfill the following:

- We ensure a safe educational environment.
- We model life-long learning.
- We ignite a hunger for academic curiosity.
- We enrich each individual's educational growth.
- We encourage the development of successful decision making.

The Educational team has been impacted in many ways. The department feels the three most important areas of impact are the systematic process, data driven decisions, and growth and collaboration of all stakeholders.

1.2. What would you consider to be challenges that still lie ahead and how do you plan to address those challenges?:

The challenges that still lie ahead for the Educational team of SWJC are the ability to run more state standardized testing, such as MAP, to gather and access more reliable data to drive the school improvement plan and the students' individual learning plans.

One way SWJC addresses this challenge is to continue to look for funding options in order to obtain federal and state monies while collaborating closely with stakeholders. SWJC has a unique student body that brings with them myriad needs and challenges. In order to meet all these needs, curriculum must be updated, teachers require more professional development, and assessment systems to better gauge student needs must be put in place.

SWJC will meet these challenges head on and will not only improve the quality of service for the students, but the educational team will become more cohesive and move forward to fulfill the school improvement process that aligns all functions of the school with the high expectations for student learning.

1.3. How will you use the insights gained from your accreditation activities to inform and enhance your quality assurance and school improvement efforts?:

SWJC will use the insights gained from the accreditation activities to inform and enhance our quality assurance and school improvement efforts by taking all accreditation team members recommendations and using them to guide the process of improvement to move forward. SWJC will continue to hold high standards of accountability by incorporating the NCA standards of excellence in our day to day work and planning.

SWJC has used feedback from the QAR and the previous APR to help guide our school improvement efforts.

SWJC will continue to use the knowledge and experience of the accreditation team to enhance the quality of student services and educational provisions offered.

Southeastern Wyoming Juvenile Center hosted a Quality Assurance Review team on 03/11/2009 - 03/12/2009. Through interviews with school stakeholders, classroom observations, and a review of school documents and student performance results, the team developed a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) report detailing its findings from the visit. The full report can be viewed at www.advanc-ed.org.

The QAR report contained commendations and required actions for the school. The school is responsible for addressing each of the required actions in the report. At prescribed intervals based on the school's accreditation status, the school must complete an Accreditation Progress Report. Below, please find the required actions from the QAR report and the school's response to each required action. Following the school's response is the reviewer's progress response and comments.

4.0. Required Action 1

Source: QAR

Date: 2009-04-06

Required Action:

Research, develop, implement, and maintain a quality, comprehensive and continuous school improvement process that includes mission/vision, profile, planning and implementation, and monitoring results.

Evidence:

There was little to no evidence of documentation of a continuous school improvement process. The team did find a recently developed school profile with limited data and no school improvement goals. The teachers that were interviewed did not have an understanding of AdvancED or accreditation requirements. Teachers could not articulate school improvement goals or school-wide interventions. There was very limited data, and it was not connected to school improvement. Obviously, because a school improvement process was limited, there was no evidence that any school improvement efforts had been communicated to stakeholders.

Rationale:

A continuous school improvement process is one of the pillars of accreditation. Schools must actively implement a collaborative and on-going research-based school improvement process that aligns all functions of the school with expectations for student learning.

4.1. School Response

Progress Status: In Progress

Response:

SWJC has incorporated ongoing continuous improvement efforts. The Vision and Mission statements in place still appropriately serves the facility. Educational staff will review the current Educational Vision and Mission statements on October 24-25 to determine if any changes are needed to meet student and stakeholder expectations.

The documentation in place includes weekly grade progress sheets given to students and stakeholders; weekly student attendance is monitored and tracked for earning credits;

parent and school surveys continue to be sent to former clients' home schools and parents/guardians for program impact. When credits or seat time is achieved, grade sheets go out to students and stakeholders, also monthly education reports are sent to stakeholders.

This documentation follows the goals of SWJC by documenting individual students educational growth, sharing documentation with stakeholders instills an assurance of life-long learning and the importance of instilling academic curiosity. The vested interest in the students futures ensures successful decision making in all aspects of education and daily life choices.

SWJC is accredited by NCA, whose accreditation process is the foundation for guiding the school improvement process. This is a research based organization with indicators of each standard that serve as a basis of our decision making for setting educational goals and objectives.

4.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response: Completed

Comments for Institution: The APR team met with the Education Director and the Registrar to review the progress made on the Required Actions provided during the most recent APR in September, 2010. The educational staff reviews the school improvement plan, student achievement goals, strategies used to work toward those goals, and the progress made on the goals at their weekly meetings. There is a plan and schedule in place for the educational staff to review the current Educational Vision and Mission statements on October 24-25, 2011 to determine if any changes are needed to meet student and stakeholder expectations. A new slogan, "Courage to Change" has been adopted by SWJC to meet other certifications and accreditations. The APR team encouraged the Educational leaders to consider the work that has been done by other departments when reviewing the educational purpose and direction statements so there will be alignment throughout the organization.

An action plan with assigned student interventions, assumed roles, timelines, and record of completions that guides the school improvement process has been developed. It was developed by the Education Department and all teachers were involved in the process. More external providers of technical assistance were accessed during the process of building the action plan to help with training of staff, obtain professional development for staff, and maintain the focus of improving the achievement of each student.

The school has sufficiently addressed the required action of the Quality Assurance Review and the Accreditation Progress Report teams. As detailed in the school's response and verified by the APR visiting team, the school has developed a school improvement plan with vision and mission statements that serve the needs of students, staff, and stakeholders. The staff has an action plan to guide their work towards improving student achievement and staff capacities that will enhance the quality of the school improvement process. The school is encouraged to embed and sustain these strategies to ensure continued results and to implement strategies to collect and analyze

more trend data and monitor the effectiveness of their strategies.

The APR team reviewed the Commitment to Continuous Improvement indicators. The team determined that the school has developed a school improvement plan and is providing professional development for school personnel to help them implement improvement interventions to achieve improvement goals. They have initiated the process to monitor and communicate the results of improvement efforts as well as to evaluate and document the effectiveness of these efforts to stakeholders. The APR team noted evidence to indicate the school is meeting the Commitment to Continuous Improvement standard at the Operational level in accordance with the standard rubric.

5.0. Required Action 2

Source: QAR

Date: 2009-04-06

Required Action:

Build the understanding, commitment and support of community stakeholders. Seek collaboration and shared leadership among stakeholders to enhance student success.

Evidence:

The team was only able to interview one stakeholder (youth worker). There was no evidence that collaboration exists with stakeholders in the development of a vision or in the school improvement process. The team did not encounter evidence that the school elicits stakeholders' expertise, knowledge or skills to enhance the work of the school.

Rationale:

Effective communication and relationships with stakeholders improve overall success of students and the school.

5.1. School Response

Progress Status: In Progress

Response:

SWJC strives for effective communication and relationships with stakeholders to improve overall success of students and the school. This success relies on the collaboration between internal and external stakeholders opening sharing information to achieve a positive result for each student.

The documentation in place includes weekly grade progress sheets given to students and stakeholders; weekly student attendance is monitored and tracked for earning credits; parent and school surveys continue to be sent to former clients' home schools and parents/guardians for program impact. When credits or seat time is achieved, grade sheets go out to students and stakeholders, also monthly education reports are sent to stakeholders.

Students complete an educational survey upon exiting the program that is tracked in a spreadsheet that is documented in the facility's marketing brochure. This survey gives feedback on how well students achieved educational goals. Student's feelings of success in setting and achieving goals while at SWJC carry forward to the student's home school where organization, interest in learning, and asking questions for clarification will continue to serve the student throughout their academic career. The coordination of efforts amongst the Educational Staff, Therapeutic Staff, and Medical Staff is evident in a weekly clinical meeting addressing the student's overall program needs. The three departments are present in all students' MDTs, progress meetings, and courts which allows collaboration among all stakeholders.

5.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response: Completed

Comments for Institution:

Students who attend SWJC are placed at this location by court order. The educational leaders have a standing call with the local school district weekly, and frequent contact occurs to discuss plans and collaborate on meeting individual student needs. Daily staff meetings are held each morning to coordinate strategies of meeting student needs with the entire facility staff. The question of what do students at SWJC really need is always the focus. Community employers, parents of students, and other stakeholders are surveyed to get input on what students need after exiting this institution.

Students are surveyed at release time to provide information on the educational program alone, and to provide their perceptions about their whole therapeutic program on a separate survey. Another survey is sent to students two months after release to learn about their transition.

Surveys to resident schools where students' transition are sent two to four months after release to seek information from stakeholders. Phone call follow-ups are usually necessary to obtain the information. The information is used to make changes in instruction, processes in the department, and curriculum revisions. Regular reports are submitted to state agency oversight departments and other regulatory agencies.

The school has sufficiently addressed the required action of the Quality Assurance Review Team. SWJC has sought varied methods to reach out to community and institutional stakeholders to seek input for making changes toward improving services to all students who enter and pass through this system.

The APR team reviewed the Stakeholder Communication and Relationships indicators. The team found that the school has fostered collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning. They have solicited the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the school. They have initiated the process to monitor and communicate the results of improvement efforts as well as to evaluate and document the effectiveness of these efforts to stakeholders. The APR team noted evidence to indicate the school is meeting the Standard 6, Stakeholder Communication and Relationships, at the Operational level in accordance with the standard rubric.

6.0. Required Action 3

Source: QAR

Date: 2009-04-06

Required Action:

Research and implement progress assessments that address a broad curricular base to drive instruction, deliver progress information, and develop trend data to direct the school improvement process.

Evidence:

The school uses the STAR Reading assessment. The data did not seem to be connected to Student Learning Plans or instructional decisions. There was no evidence of trend data derived from formative assessments to support a school improvement process. The Metropolitan Assessment was previously used but was discontinued due to billing issues. Sporadic and unconnected data was evident (Woodcock, WIAT and WRAT) but not connected to student learning.

Rationale:

Research strongly supports the implementation of a comprehensive assessment and data collection system as one of the keystones in educational reform and the school improvement process. The practice of connecting appropriate data to a systemic and systematic school improvement process will improve student achievement. A comprehensive data system provides meaningful and accurate information that is useful to school leaders, teachers and stakeholders in understanding student performance and school effectiveness.

6.1. School Response

Progress Status: In Progress

Response: Every student at SWJC has in individual student learning plan. This plan is driven by baseline data of STAR Reading and Math, state standardized testing results from home school districts, most importantly are the educational needs determined by the MDT that serve as a framework for the educational plan to ensure all needs are met.

To ensure students are on track with their educational plans, more rigorous curriculum has been put in place that is more closely aligned with not only Laramie County School District, but each student's home school district. This curriculum is selected based on each students instructional level as well as grade level to better close the educational gap demonstrated in a large percentage of the student body. The standard course material is delivered through Pearson texts, AGS accommodates students struggling with reading comprehension, as well as differentiated education being further met with Extra Learning.

Due to small number of students at any time, all SWJC staff can be quickly briefed on the individual educational statuses of each student. SWJC gathers data from prior schools and along with the data gathered here, determine what is each students educational needs. Educational delivery needs then are based on all of the student data gathered. Measures of progress for each student are measured on a weekly and monthly basis to determine that the appropriate academic skills are developed and are reinforced for academic success.

Our data system provides meaningful and accurate information that is useful to school leaders, teachers and stakeholders in understanding student performance and school effectiveness.

6.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response: Completed

Comments for Institution:

Students come to SWJC for treatment as ordered by the court system. Typical stays are from 45 days to 6 months. Because of most of the students' physical, mental, and social condition upon their arrival at the center, it is difficult to assess progress from the entry date. The APR team heard that it takes at least the first 30 days to get students to the state of being able to "reactivate prior knowledge." The center references STAR Reading and Math for student growth measures. These assessments are stand-alone measures that are research-based for instructional decision making. The assessments provide readily-available access and results to teachers and students. Other assessments given at the school are Ansel Casey assessment for life skills inventory and course-based teacher-developed or text-provided tests. Most assessment data is made available to the center by the resident schools. Multi-disciplinary team (MDT) documents are also referenced about where to best meet student needs.

It is good practice to document each score for each student and keep records in their Individual Learning Plan (ILP) folders. A connection between these scores and the effects of teacher instruction is trend data. Since your students are at the center for a short time, your major trend data will be on teacher impact and these measures.

After reviewing the school's response, supplemented and supported by interviews and artifact books the APR team rates this required action as completed. The school has taken the necessary steps to address the required action made by the Quality Assurance Review team. However, the APR team strongly suggests improvement of documentation of student progress measures to show how progress is tracked, implemented, deployed, and evaluated to impact instructional decisions. SWJC is performing activities that need to be recorded in a way that communicates to reviewers what has been done. Evidence in the artifacts book is not sufficiently reflected in the school's response to the APR report.

The APR team reviewed the Documenting and Using Results Standard indicators and interviewed the school leadership team. The team determined the school uses a comprehensive assessment system which includes summative assessments, formative assessments, perception data from surveys, and common local assessments. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful

to school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts. The team noted evidence to indicate the school is now meeting the standard at the Operational level, in accordance with the standard rubric.

7.0. Required Action 4

Source: QAR

Date: 2009-04-06

Required Action:

Establish opportunities for the entire school educational team to become knowledgeable about and commit to the Wyoming State accreditation, the AdvancED standards, and recommendations for school improvement. Additionally, it is recommended the school develop a system to allow and support shared leadership roles and responsibilities for all educational staff. Specifically, academic staff would benefit from leadership and staff development opportunities related to the school improvement process.

Evidence:

In the school's policies and procedures, it is stated that the education be incorporated into as many aspects of the overall program as possible. It was clear to the team from interviews that the educational staff had little shared leadership roles as related to school improvement. There did not seem to be a connection between school improvement efforts and staff development and/or allocation of resources. Inconsistency between written policy/procedure and observations was apparent. Non-compliance with Wyoming standards regarding highly qualified staff appeared to be an issue that needs to be addressed. The current educational director has only been in formal leadership for approximately two months. Technical assistance in the area of school improvement is necessary for the leadership to adequately advocate for school improvement efforts.

Rationale:

Strong governance and leadership promote overall student performance and school effectiveness.

7.1. School Response

Progress Status: In Progress

Response: The Educational team at SWJC understands the accreditation process and is committed to ensuring the standards are fulfilled.

Every member of the educational staff at SWJC is a PTSB certified teacher or substitute teacher and instruct in their areas of expertise. SWJC is also expanding the resources of the qualified staff to better accommodate the students' needs through continuing professional development.

All educational staff collaborates on a daily basis to discuss student needs, share resources, and verify the individual student learning plan is being fulfilled. Members of the educational staff meet weekly with Therapeutic and Medical staff to continuously monitor student needs and meet any developing conditions. The educational staff also collaborates with the Therapeutic and Medical staff on a monthly basis to complete student DFS reports. The Educational staff is aware of the Wyoming State Instructional Standards and not only understands their meaning and importance but ensures students' academic success by aligning all curricula to meet these high standards of achievement.

SWJC has received technical assistance from WDE staff members in the area of school improvement that is necessary for the leadership to adequately advocate for school improvement efforts. Educational staff attended the spring NCA conference in Casper and will attend the fall NCA conference in Cheyenne, to learn more about how to improve overall student performance and school effectiveness.

7.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response: Completed

Comments for Institution: The center's leaders have demonstrated commitment and a deeper understanding of their participation in the accreditation process. They are passionate about fulfilling the leadership roles and responsibilities. They have involved the staff who know the goals and have offered their professional input on the status toward the goals as they report on their daily contact with the actual instructional delivery. Staff members are bringing in areas of expertise, knowledge of student needs, and analysis of student achievement progress. Staff input drives school improvement efforts. The leadership team acknowledged that it does not make sense to implement school improvement efforts if staff does not have an understanding of the work. The leadership team has facilitated the education department working together and receiving professional development to build a better understanding of the accreditation process and its work. As a result, the education department has become a stronger, more supportive team in working together towards improved student achievement.

Next steps will be to develop processes for documenting the involvement of progress made by all staff members in the educational department. Examples of documentation are meeting agendas, meeting minutes, action plans with edits noted as plan items are completed, and new items are added, with names of responsible persons and completion dates recorded. Other examples to consider are the tracking of student progress while they are at SWJC with trend data collected and tracked by each staff member to note what is working well and what could be improved. Documentation serves as verification of progress made--where we are now, where we will need to go, and how we might get there.

The school has sufficiently addressed the required action of the Quality Assurance Review team. The school has implemented a range of strategies that attend to the areas noted in the QAR team's required action. The school is encouraged to embed and sustain these strategies to ensure continued results.

The APR team reviewed Governance and Leadership Standard 2 indicators. Review of statements and other artifacts provided evidence to indicate the school is now meeting the standard at the Operational level in accordance with the standard rubric.



Accreditation Progress Report

Wyoming Behavioral Institute

Ms. Minda Smith

2521 E 15th Street
Casper, Wyoming, United States 82609

Prepared for the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review

Report Status : Accepted

Report Open Date : June 7, 2011

Report Due Date : September 9, 2011

Report Submitted Date : September 9, 2011

Report Accepted Date : October 10, 2011

Accreditation Progress Report

Contents

1.0 About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI	3
2.0 Introduction to the Accreditation Progress Report	4
3.0. Summary	5
4.0. Required Action 1	6
4.1. School Response	6
4.2. Reviewer Response	7

1.0 About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

Background. Dedicated to advancing excellence in education worldwide, AdvancED provides accreditation, research, and professional services to 27,000 schools in 65 countries. AdvancED provides accreditation under the seals of 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).

The Accreditation Process.

To earn and maintain accreditation, schools must:

1. Meet the AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems.

Schools demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school systems to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.

2. Engage in continuous improvement.

Schools implement continuous improvement focused on improving student performance and school effectiveness.

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 required actions to help the school improve. The school acts on the team's required actions and submits an Accreditation Progress Report at prescribed intervals following the Quality Assurance Review.

The AdvancED accreditation process 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.

2.0 Introduction to the Accreditation Progress Report

Purpose

The Accreditation Progress Report (APR) is a critical component of the AdvancED accreditation process. It engages the school in a detailed review and analysis of the steps it has taken to address the required actions made by the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review (QAR) team. Completing the report helps the school focus and reflect on its continuous improvement efforts.

It is the responsibility of the school to address each of the QAR report's required actions within the 5-year term accreditation. Deadlines for completion of the report are based on the school's accreditation status and must be met to maintain accreditation. Some schools may complete multiple reports during the 5-year term to demonstrate that they have fully addressed the required actions.

Structure of the Report

The APR is organized around the required actions in the school's QAR team report. The APR lists the required action from the report along with the rationale and evidence supporting the required action. The school then indicates the progress that it has made toward meeting the required action and provides a more detailed response describing the actions it has taken and the results obtained. The school provides a response for each of the QAR team required actions.

Following the school's response is the reviewer's response. Each APR is read by an AdvancED reader in the state or regional office who reviews the school's response to determine if the required action has been met. The reader provides his/her assessment of the progress the school has made and then offers comments to the school. If required actions remain in progress or not addressed, a new APR will be created with a new deadline for completion. As noted earlier, the school must address the required actions within the 5-year accreditation term.

Conclusion

The Accreditation Progress Report is a useful report for members of the school and broader community. It helps community members see and monitor the ongoing improvement efforts of their school. It demonstrates how the school uses its accreditation for the ongoing benefit of the students it serves.

3.0. Summary

1.1. Based on the actions taken by your institution to address the required actions provided by the QAR team, what has been the impact on your institution's overall effectiveness?:

The overall effectiveness by addressing the required actions provided by the QAR team is that we are using data to drive instruction and to make appropriate adjustments to instruction and curriculum. By using assessment tools, we have an understanding of what each student is capable of doing, as well as, where our strengths and weaknesses are. The assessment data is used to set goals with students and the students and instructor monitor progress bi-monthly. Our data has shown that the students have improved in on task behavior and are more involved in wanting to learn.

1.2. What would you consider to be challenges that still lie ahead and how do you plan to address those challenges?:

What we consider challenges would be getting school information to the parents, Technology software and accommodating the different levels of our students. We plan to address these challenges by developing a brochure that is given to the parents address's the makeup of our school and what is being taught in the classrooms. This will become part of the information packet that is given to the parents. The students have weekly goals that are graphed for writing, math and behaviors. The graph's will be placed in the students charts for therapists and doctors to review and share with family. The teachers or Director of Education will meet with the families monthly about the students progress. We will be implementing a reading program that will give us information that will help us address the different levels and individualize their learning in reading. We are developing building wide support by the family meetings and discussing how they are progressing in school during staffing which is done weekly.

1.3. How will you use the insights gained from your accreditation activities to inform and enhance your quality assurance and school improvement efforts?:

We will use the insights gained from our accreditation activities by looking at the school assessments, as well as, the student and parents surveys that allows us to triangulate the data to see where many of our students are struggling, and it allows us to see not only the parent concerns, but also the students concerns. With this information, we will be able to make changes to enhance our school.

Wyoming Behavioral Institute hosted a Quality Assurance Review team on 02/03/2009 - 02/04/2009. Through interviews with school stakeholders, classroom observations, and a review of school documents and student performance results, the team developed a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) report detailing its findings from the visit. The full report can be viewed at www.advanc-ed.org.

The QAR report contained commendations and required actions for the school. The school is responsible for addressing each of the required actions in the report. At prescribed intervals based on the school's accreditation status, the school must complete an Accreditation Progress Report. Below, please find the required actions from the QAR report and the school's response to each required action. Following the school's response is the reviewer's progress response and comments.

4.0. Required Action 1

Source: QAR

Date: 2009-03-08

Required Action:

Use a comprehensive assessment system to set expectations for student learning, evaluate effectiveness, provide feedback for students and staff.

Evidence:

The team found through review of the Standards Assessment Report (SAR) and by interviewing staff and students there is not a comprehensive student assessment system that would provide evidence of student acquisition of skills and growth over time.

Rationale:

Lack of a data system does not allow the school as a whole to use data for program improvement. An assessment system provides timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, effectiveness, and results from improvement efforts.

4.1. School Response

Progress Status: Completed

Response: When a student moves to our residential program, the student's public school is contacted. There is a contact person for each student from their home school. When contacting the school, the school and WBI discuss the classes the student was in and their progress. At this time, we also see if the student is on an IEP and ask that it be sent so WBI can continue to follow the student's IEP goals. We then develop an academic plan for that student, as well as, get the student's records. The student is assessed within five days using the Woodcock Johnson III assessment test. When the student first arrives in the classroom, each teacher individually sits with the student and finds out what the student's strengths, weakness, behaviors are and what motivates them. The teachers then setup an academic goal for writing, math and a behavioral goal. The teachers use the Woodcock Johnson III to help decide what other assessments the student might need.

We are in the process of changing our math assessment form Key Tracker to Star Math. In math, the teacher used the math assessments place the student where that student is struggling at in math. In language arts, the teacher uses pre and post writing using the 6 traits +1 rubric. Every day the teachers' assess the student's and average weekly the student's goals and graph the goals weekly. The students have a folder where the graphs are placed so they can see their progress.

To provide a data system that is meaningful and useful to leaders, teachers and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, effectiveness and results for improvement efforts WBI has developed a climate survey for both students and parents. This allows WBI to assess WBI's strengths, as well as, where WBI needs to make improvements. WBI will track the success of the students' transition from WBI back to their home school. This will be implemented at the beginning of this school year (2011-2012). The students that will be tracked will have thirty days or more of treatment. WBI will contact their school after thirty days of discharge and inquire about the students' progress using a standard questionnaire. WBI is in the process of collaborating with Natrona County School District to also collect data that would be useful with helping students transition back into school. We will then formulate a school improvement goal after gathering the data regarding the students' success.

4.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response: Completed

Comments for Institution: During the APR visit on September 21, 2011, the team noted that students in this institutional site are usually placed by parents after receiving recommendation from a mental health professional. The average stay for a student at WBI is 30 to 45 days. WBI staff contact the resident school as soon as a student arrives. School records, IEP's, and any assessment information available are requested.

The assessment system that measures student learning, evaluates staff effectiveness, and provides feedback for students and staff has been expanded. Survey data of students at WBI provides staff with needed information to make more informed instructional decisions for each student. Follow-up survey data has been developed for measuring student and parent perceptions of academic progress while at the institution and during the transition from WBI back to their resident school. Plans are in place to implement a process of follow-up calls to recently released students and their resident school to verify transition status and gather perception data.

The Woodcock Johnson assessment instrument is used for making decisions about student instructional planning along with the information provided by the student's resident school. Two focused instructional areas are Writing and Math. Students collaborate with staff to develop goals in these two content areas after completing pre-tests in both subjects. The corporate directive states that all students will have an individual learning plan. Pre and Post Writing assessments are tracked by progress made according to the 6+1Trait® Writing. Key Tracker is used for Math pre and post assessments and individualized practice on skills are tracked.

After pre-assessment results, teachers and students develop individual goals in Writing,

Math, and behavior. Differentiated instruction is provided each student with appropriate intervention strategies to align with these goals. Students track a daily graph of progress on their goals with the guidance from the teachers. The graph is maintained in student folders.

Maintaining trend data is challenging for this type of setting. Students are present for a very short time which causes concern by WBI staff about the validity of pre and post assessments. During the APR visit, discussion proceeded to clarify that pre and post assessments are considered necessary to make planning decisions. Teachers and students analyze student graphs to identify trends in student achievement and evaluate instructional effectiveness.

Survey results are a component of the accreditation process. The APR team relayed that AdvancED surveys will be made available. Information about the surveys and how to use the results will be made available at the upcoming School Improvement Conference.

Information gathered from interviews, WBI's response, and other artifacts indicate this required action has been completed. WBI has taken the necessary steps to address the required action made by the Quality Assurance Review team and have initiated a systematic process to track the deployment and analysis of the results of existing interventions. WBI will need to implement strategies to collect and analyze more trend data and monitor the effectiveness of those strategies.

The APR team reviewed the Documenting and Using Results Standard indicators and interviewed WBI improvement leadership team. The team determined WBI uses a comprehensive assessment system which includes formative and summative assessments, and perception data from surveys. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts. The team noted evidence to indicate WBI is now meeting the standard at the Operational level, in accordance with the standard rubric.



Accreditation Progress Report

Youth Emergency Services, Inc.

Mr. Craig Lorenz, Director

905 N. Gurley
Gillette, Wyoming, United States 82716

Prepared for the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review

Report Status : In Progress

Report Open Date : October 10, 2011

Report Due Date : August 31, 2012

Report Submitted Date : Unknown

Report Accepted Date : Unknown

Accreditation Progress Report

Contents

1.0 About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI	3
2.0 Introduction to the Accreditation Progress Report	4
3.0. Summary	5
4.0. Required Action 1	6
4.1. School Response	6
4.2. Reviewer Response	6
5.0. Required Action 2	7
5.1. School Response	7
5.2. Reviewer Response	7
6.0. Required Action 3	7
6.1. School Response	8
6.2. Reviewer Response	8

DRAFT

1.0 About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

Background. Dedicated to advancing excellence in education worldwide, AdvancED provides accreditation, research, and professional services to 27,000 schools in 65 countries. AdvancED provides accreditation under the seals of 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).

The Accreditation Process.

To earn and maintain accreditation, schools must:

- 1. Meet the AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems.**

Schools demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school systems to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.

- 2. Engage in continuous improvement.**

Schools implement continuous improvement focused on improving student performance and school effectiveness.

- 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 required actions to help the school improve. The school acts on the team's required actions and submits an Accreditation Progress Report at prescribed intervals following the Quality Assurance Review.

The AdvancED accreditation process 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.

2.0 Introduction to the Accreditation Progress Report

Purpose

The Accreditation Progress Report (APR) is a critical component of the AdvancED accreditation process. It engages the school in a detailed review and analysis of the steps it has taken to address the required actions made by the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review (QAR) team. Completing the report helps the school focus and reflect on its continuous improvement efforts.

It is the responsibility of the school to address each of the QAR report's required actions within the 5-year term accreditation. Deadlines for completion of the report are based on the school's accreditation status and must be met to maintain accreditation. Some schools may complete multiple reports during the 5-year term to demonstrate that they have fully addressed the required actions.

Structure of the Report

The APR is organized around the required actions in the school's QAR team report. The APR lists the required action from the report along with the rationale and evidence supporting the required action. The school then indicates the progress that it has made toward meeting the required action and provides a more detailed response describing the actions it has taken and the results obtained. The school provides a response for each of the QAR team required actions.

Following the school's response is the reviewer's response. Each APR is read by an AdvancED reader in the state or regional office who reviews the school's response to determine if the required action has been met. The reader provides his/her assessment of the progress the school has made and then offers comments to the school. If required actions remain in progress or not addressed, a new APR will be created with a new deadline for completion. As noted earlier, the school must address the required actions within the 5-year accreditation term.

Conclusion

The Accreditation Progress Report is a useful report for members of the school and broader community. It helps community members see and monitor the ongoing improvement efforts of their school. It demonstrates how the school uses its accreditation for the ongoing benefit of the students it serves.

3.0. Summary

1.1. Based on the actions taken by your institution to address the required actions provided by the QAR team, what has been the impact on your institution's overall effectiveness?:

1.2. What would you consider to be challenges that still lie ahead and how do you plan to address those challenges?:

1.3. How will you use the insights gained from your accreditation activities to inform and enhance your quality assurance and school improvement efforts?:

DRAFT

Youth Emergency Services, Inc. hosted a Quality Assurance Review team on \${qarVisitStartDate} - \${qarVisitEndDate}. Through interviews with school stakeholders, classroom observations, and a review of school documents and student performance results, the team developed a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) report detailing its findings from the visit. The full report can be viewed at www.advanc-ed.org.

The QAR report contained commendations and required actions for the school. The school is responsible for addressing each of the required actions in the report. At prescribed intervals based on the school's accreditation status, the school must complete an Accreditation Progress Report. Below, please find the required actions from the QAR report and the school's response to each required action. Following the school's response is the reviewer's progress response and comments.

4.0. Required Action 1

Source: QAR

Date: 2008-11-09

Required Action:

Collaboratively rework the vision and shared purpose for the academic program. Focus the collaboration process on clearly defined expectations for student learning as well as school effectiveness and include school staff, students, and relevant external stakeholders.

Evidence:

The team observed the vision statement: "To provide students a highly structured, individualized, and supportive educational setting." Interviews with stakeholders provide a fairly consistent theme of their understanding of the stated vision for the school. The vision statement is focused on the quality of the learning environment that is especially vital with at-risk students. In recent years, a collaborative review process for the vision is not evident nor is the vision statement suitable to guide student learning expectations or school effectiveness.

Rationale:

A school's vision is the primary foundation to focus efforts on student achievement. When the vision is clearly visible in the educational environment and on school correspondence and documentation, it builds stakeholder understanding and support for the shared purpose and is a framework for a school culture focused on the instructional program and student achievement.

4.1. School Response

Progress Status:

Response:

4.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response:

Comments for

Institution:

5.0. Required Action 2

Source: QAR

Date: 2008-11-09

Required Action:

Research, develop, implement, and maintain a quality, comprehensive and continuous school improvement process that includes mission/vision, profile, planning and implementation, and monitoring results.

Evidence:

There was little to no evidence of documentation of a continuous school improvement process. The team found no formally organized school profile, action plans, staff development plans, or corresponding evidence of a continuous school improvement effort.

Rationale:

A continuous school improvement process is one of the pillars of accreditation. Schools must actively implement a collaborative and on-going research-based school improvement process that aligns all functions of the school with expectations for student learning.

5.1. School Response

Progress Status:

Response:

5.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response:

**Comments for
Institution:**

6.0. Required Action 3

Source: QAR

Date: 2008-11-09

Required Action:

Research and implement progress assessments that address a broader curricular base to drive instruction, deliver progress information, and develop trend data to direct the school improvement process.

Evidence:

Currently, the school relies heavily on Woodcock Johnson for progress testing. Generally the use of the Woodcock Johnson is not recommended as a pre and post test assessment. According to Woodcock Johnson, the test design is better suited to diagnose learning disabilities and determine discrepancies. It is a time-intensive test that has to be administered one on one. Additionally, the limited data generated do not seem to be meaningfully connected to decision making, research-based interventions, or school improvement efforts.

Rationale:

Research strongly supports the implementation of a comprehensive assessment and data collection system as one of the keystones in educational reform and the school improvement process. The practice of connecting appropriate data to a systemic and systematic school improvement process will improve student achievement.

6.1. School Response

Progress Status:

Response:

6.2. Reviewer Response

Progress Response:

**Comments for
Institution:**

DRAFT

**ACTION SUMMARY SHEET
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

DATE: June 12, 2012

ISSUE: Alternative School Schedule Approval

BACKGROUND: Wyoming Statute 21-2-304(b)(viii) and 21-4-301 provide the opportunity for school districts to apply for a waiver to the statutory requirement for schools to be in session for 175 student contact days each year. Districts may request a one year or two year approval for an alternative schedule for any or all of the district schools by submitting an application. The application must include educational objectives, a description of the proposed schedule and copy of the proposed calendar, a description of the methods to be used to evaluate improved student achievement, evidence of two advertised public meetings, public comment records, and evidence of meeting required hours for each grade level.

The following school districts have submitted all required materials and are submitted for approval of Alternative School Schedules:

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 2012 ALTERNATIVE SCHEDULE REQUESTS

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ALTERNATIVE SCHEDULE SUMMARY	YEARS APPROVED
1) Carbon CSD #1 (Rawlins – Little Snake River Valley School and Cooperative High School)	150 day schedule for Little Snake River Valley School and Cooperative High School (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013 2013-2014
2) Converse CSD #1 (Douglas – 5 Rural Schools)	153 day schedule for White, Moss Agate, Shawnee, Walter Creek, and Dry Creek Schools (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013 2013-2014
3) Crook CSD #1 (Sundance)	168 day schedule	2012-2013 2013-2014
4) Fremont CSD #2 (Dubois)	171 day schedule	2012-2013 2013-2014
5) Fremont CSD #6 (Pavillion)	155 day schedule (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013 2013-2014
6) Fremont CSD #24 (Shoshoni)	173 day schedule for grades 7-12 169 day schedule for grades K-6	2012-2013 2013-2014
7) Lincoln CSD #1 (Diamondville)	167 day schedule for grades 9-12 175 day regular schedule for grades K-8	2012-2013 2013-2014
8) Sublette CSD #9 (Big Piney)	170 day schedule	2012-2013
9) Uinta CSD #4 (Mountain View)	165 day schedule	2012-2013 2013-2014
10) Uinta CSD #6 (Lyman)	148 day schedule (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013 2013-2014

**ACTION SUMMARY SHEET
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

INFORMATION ONLY:

The following school districts have provided letters stating they intend to continue with their approved Alternative Schedules for the 2012-2013 school year:

Campbell CSD #1
Carbon CSD #2
Johnson CSD #1
Laramie CSD #2
Lincoln CSD #2
Park CSD #16
Sheridan CSD #1
Sheridan CSD #3
Sweetwater CSD #1

Fremont CSD #14 provided a letter stating their intention to return to a standard 175 day schedule for all schools.

SUGGESTED MOTION/RECOMMENDATION: That the alternative schedules for the above listed schools be approved for the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION ATTACHED:

1. Alternative Schedule Summary
2. Proposed Alternative Calendars from 10 districts.

PREPARED BY: Dianne Frazer

APPROVED BY: _____

ACTION TAKEN BY STATE BOARD: _____ **DATE:** _____

COMMENTS:



Wyoming Department of Education

Cindy Hill, Superintendent of Public Instruction
 Hathaway Building, 2nd Floor, 2300 Capitol Avenue
 Cheyenne WY 82002-0050

Phone: 307-777-7675 Fax: 307-777-6234 Website: edu.wyoming.gov

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ALTERNATIVE SCHEDULES

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION CONSIDERATION

June 12, 2012 Summary

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ALTERNATIVE SCHEDULE SUMMARY	REQUEST APPROVAL FOR YEAR(S)	2011 AYP STATUS/ OTHER RESULTS												
Carbon #1 (Rawlins – Little Snake River Valley School and Cooperative High School)	<p>150 day alternative schedule for Little Snake River Valley School (LSRV) and Cooperative High School (CHS) alternative high school program. (♦ 4 day week)</p> <p>Educational objectives:</p> <p>LSRV: Offer daily and weekly opportunities for remediation and enrichment meeting the individual needs of each student.</p> <p>Increase student achievement by providing uninterrupted academic time</p> <p>Improve attendance for both students and teachers.</p> <p>CHS: Increased student/teacher contact time in core subjects.</p> <p>Provide 90 minutes each day of intensive reading intervention.</p> <p>Provide incentives for improved attendance.</p>	2012-2013 2013-2014	<p>PAWS Data:</p> <p>LSRV:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1133 947 1382 1100"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Rd</th> <th>Ma</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3-6</td> <td>93.4</td> <td>93.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7-8</td> <td>80.3</td> <td>73.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>72.2</td> <td>83.3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>CHS: Unable to report due to low numbers of students tested.</p> <p>AYP:</p> <p>LSRV: Met AYP in all areas for all subgroups. Not in school improvement. K-12 school.</p> <p>CHS: Met AYP in all areas for all subgroups except graduation rate. In School Improvement Year 6 due to graduation rate.</p>		Rd	Ma	3-6	93.4	93.1	7-8	80.3	73.6	11	72.2	83.3
	Rd	Ma													
3-6	93.4	93.1													
7-8	80.3	73.6													
11	72.2	83.3													

<p>Carbon #1, cont.</p>	<p>Provide monthly scheduled PLC time for teacher collaboration.</p> <p>Improve attendance for rural students.</p> <p>Increase time available for work and families.</p> <p>Method of evaluation:</p> <p>Data will be collected and analyzed from: MAP, PAWS, BOE, Common Assessments, ACT, Work Keys, DIBELS, WIDA, Unit and Chapter Tests, Running Records, and Aims Web. CHS will also review career portfolios.</p>		<p>Alternative HS.</p> <p>District: Met AYP in all areas. Not in district improvement.</p> <p>Grad Rates: 09-10: 86.44% 10-11: 71.97%</p> <p>Evaluation: Both schools report successfully meeting stated objectives for the past two years.</p>																					
<p>Converse #1 (Douglas – 5 Rural Schools)</p>	<p>153 day alternative schedule for White, Moss Agate, Shawnee, Walter Creek, and Dry Creek Schools (♦ 4 day week)</p> <p>Educational objectives:</p> <p>Provide teacher collaborative and professional development time focusing on curriculum, assessments, and school improvement.</p> <p>Maximize instruction time to increase student achievement and attendance.</p> <p>Protect academic time and alleviate disruptions.</p> <p>Decrease student travel time.</p> <p>Method of evaluation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze all comparable statistics (achievement and behavioral) within the 2012-2014 school years. Summarize statistics related to attendance and student achievement. Analyze annual student survey 	<p>2012-2013 2013-2014</p>	<p>PAWS Data: Rural schools aggregated.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1133 911 1386 1178"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Rd</th> <th>Ma</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>83.3</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>66.6</td> <td>33.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>100</td> <td>66.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>87.5</td> <td>87.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>87.5</td> <td>75.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>AYP: Schools: White, Moss Agate, Shawnee & Dry Creek schools all met AYP. None in school improvement. Walter Creek is a new school this year & no data is available. All K-8 schools.</p> <p>District: Met AYP in all areas except grad rate. Not in district improvement.</p>		Rd	Ma	3	83.3	100	4	66.6	33.3	5	100	66.6	6	87.5	87.5	7	100	100	8	87.5	75.0
	Rd	Ma																						
3	83.3	100																						
4	66.6	33.3																						
5	100	66.6																						
6	87.5	87.5																						
7	100	100																						
8	87.5	75.0																						

Converse #1, cont.	<p>information K-8.</p> <p>4. Analyze annual community survey.</p> <p>5. Analyze annual certified and classified survey and parent survey.</p> <p>6. Review alternative program goals, concepts, and data in conjunction with school improvement goals.</p>		<p>Grad Rates: 09-10: 77.44% 10-11: 87.42%</p> <p>Evaluation: Provided data reports and evaluation summary indicating all stated goals met.</p>																								
Crook #1 (Sundance)	<p>168 day alternative schedule</p> <p>Educational objectives:</p> <p>Increased student time-on-task.</p> <p>Increased teacher time-on task.</p> <p>Method of evaluation:</p> <p>Improvement in teacher effectiveness and student learning will be evaluated using the MAP and district assessments at the start and end of the school year with stakeholders at each school.</p>	2011-2012 2012-2013	<p>PAWS Data:</p> <p>District:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1135 632 1383 936"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Rd</th> <th>Ma</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>85.3</td> <td>93.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>92.3</td> <td>90.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>83.4</td> <td>82.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>90.3</td> <td>93.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>69.8</td> <td>82.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>80.0</td> <td>82.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>85.2</td> <td>75.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>AYP:</p> <p>District: Met AYP in all areas. Not in district improvement.</p> <p>Schools: All schools met AYP, none in school improvement.</p> <p>Grad Rates: 09-10: 92.86% 10-11: 90.72%</p> <p>Evaluation: Reported achieving all stated goals.</p>		Rd	Ma	3	85.3	93.7	4	92.3	90.8	5	83.4	82.8	6	90.3	93.1	7	69.8	82.6	8	80.0	82.4	11	85.2	75.0
	Rd	Ma																									
3	85.3	93.7																									
4	92.3	90.8																									
5	83.4	82.8																									
6	90.3	93.1																									
7	69.8	82.6																									
8	80.0	82.4																									
11	85.2	75.0																									
Fremont #2 (Dubois)	<p>171 day alternative schedule</p> <p>Educational objectives:</p> <p>Reduce disruption of academic time due to activities.</p> <p>Provide time for remediation, make-up</p>	2012-2013 2013-2014	<p>PAWS Data:</p> <p>District:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1135 1667 1383 1894"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Rd</th> <th>Ma</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>91.7</td> <td>83.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>84.6</td> <td>84.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>100</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>75.0</td> <td>93.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>93.3</td> <td>60.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Rd	Ma	4	91.7	83.3	5	84.6	84.6	6	100	100	8	75.0	93.8	11	93.3	60.0						
	Rd	Ma																									
4	91.7	83.3																									
5	84.6	84.6																									
6	100	100																									
8	75.0	93.8																									
11	93.3	60.0																									

<p>Fremont #2, cont.</p>	<p>work, and other student assistance on Friday.</p> <p>Provide time for professional development, building and district improvement activities, curriculum alignment and collaboration for teachers.</p> <p>Method of evaluation:</p> <p>Student achievement data is collected using MAP, DIBELS, Body of Evidence, district assessments, PAWS, and ACT which is analyzed to determine student achievement and improved student learning..</p>		<p>Grades 3 and 7 could not be reported due to small number of students tested.</p> <p>AYP: District: Met AYP. Not in district improvement. Schools: One school missed AYP for Additional Indicator. None in school improvement. Grad Rates: 09-10: 77.78% 10-11: 90.48% Evaluation: Reported meeting all stated goals.</p>																								
<p>Fremont #6 (Pavillion)</p>	<p>155 day alternative schedule (♦ 4 day week)</p> <p>Educational objectives:</p> <p>Maximize learning time by limiting interruptions.</p> <p>Assure students are home by 6:00 pm daily.</p> <p>Provide time for professional development for staff.</p> <p>Provide Friday school remediation and enrichment opportunities.</p> <p>Maximize academic time by scheduling in-school discipline on Fridays.</p> <p>Improve parent/student communication with regular parent notification of at-risk status.</p>	<p>2012-2013 2013-2014</p>	<p>PAWS Data:</p> <p>District:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1133 1108 1383 1411"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Rd</th> <th>Ma</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>76.7</td> <td>93.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>83.3</td> <td>69.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>63.3</td> <td>80.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>53.1</td> <td>51.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>68.8</td> <td>59.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>86.2</td> <td>69.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>83.9</td> <td>64.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>AYP: District: Met AYP. Not in district improvement. Schools: One school missed AYP for Additional Indicator. None in school improvement. Grad Rates:</p>		Rd	Ma	3	76.7	93.3	4	83.3	69.4	5	63.3	80.0	6	53.1	51.6	7	68.8	59.4	8	86.2	69.0	11	83.9	64.5
	Rd	Ma																									
3	76.7	93.3																									
4	83.3	69.4																									
5	63.3	80.0																									
6	53.1	51.6																									
7	68.8	59.4																									
8	86.2	69.0																									
11	83.9	64.5																									

Fremont #6, cont.	<p>Provide time for staff collaboration.</p> <p>Method of evaluation:</p> <p>Analyze data from: PAWS, MAP, DIBELS, attendance records, discipline records, Friday school attendance, surveys.</p>		<p>09-10: 75.00% 10-11: 80.00%</p> <p>Evaluation: Application includes data indicating stated goals were met.</p>																								
Fremont #24 (Shoshoni)	<p>173 day alternative schedule for grades 7-12 169 day alternative schedule for grades K-6</p> <p>Educational objectives:</p> <p>Improve attendance by being sensitive to farming schedules.</p> <p>Increase student performance and attendance.</p> <p>Method of Evaluation:</p> <p>Review student achievement based on MAP, PAWS, and other assessments.</p> <p>Student attendance data will be analyzed.</p>	2012-2013 2013-2014	<p>PAWS Data:</p> <p>District:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1133 541 1386 848"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Rd</th> <th>Ma</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>45.5</td> <td>69.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>76.0</td> <td>76.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>71.4</td> <td>76.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>80.8</td> <td>88.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>82.8</td> <td>51.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>52.4</td> <td>52.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>84.6</td> <td>69.2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>AYP:</p> <p>District: Met AYP. Not in district improvement.</p> <p>Schools: All schools met AYP. None in school improvement.</p> <p>Grad Rates: 09-10: 90.00% 10-11: 86.36%</p> <p>Evaluation: Information in the application indicates the additional time for teachers to plan and evaluate data has had an impact.</p>		Rd	Ma	3	45.5	69.6	4	76.0	76.0	5	71.4	76.2	6	80.8	88.5	7	82.8	51.8	8	52.4	52.4	11	84.6	69.2
	Rd	Ma																									
3	45.5	69.6																									
4	76.0	76.0																									
5	71.4	76.2																									
6	80.8	88.5																									
7	82.8	51.8																									
8	52.4	52.4																									
11	84.6	69.2																									

<p>Lincoln #1 (Diamondville)</p>	<p>167 day alternative schedule for grades 9-12. 175 day regular schedule for grades K-8.</p> <p>Educational objectives:</p> <p>Provide opportunities to experience new activities which will broaden students' vision of life.</p> <p>Provide remedial instruction for students not meeting standards in math, reading, writing and science.</p> <p>Method of Evaluation:</p> <p>Evaluate MAP results for growth.</p>	<p>2011-2012 2012-2013</p>	<p>PAWS Data:</p> <p>District:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1133 264 1382 569"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Rd</th> <th>Ma</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>65.3</td> <td>95.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>76.4</td> <td>91.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>81.1</td> <td>83.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>79.6</td> <td>68.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>66.0</td> <td>71.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>82.4</td> <td>70.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>55.3</td> <td>68.4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>AYP:</p> <p>District: Met AYP. Not in district improvement.</p> <p>Schools: All schools met AYP. None in school improvement.</p> <p>Grad Rates: 09-10: 82.22% 10-11: 90.91%</p> <p>Evaluation: Review of data resulted in a change in the calendar, returning grades K-8 to a traditional calendar and retaining the alternative calendar for grades 9-12.</p>		Rd	Ma	3	65.3	95.9	4	76.4	91.9	5	81.1	83.8	6	79.6	68.2	7	66.0	71.7	8	82.4	70.6	11	55.3	68.4
	Rd	Ma																									
3	65.3	95.9																									
4	76.4	91.9																									
5	81.1	83.8																									
6	79.6	68.2																									
7	66.0	71.7																									
8	82.4	70.6																									
11	55.3	68.4																									
<p>Sublette #9 (Big Piney)</p>	<p>170 day alternative schedule.</p> <p>Educational objectives:</p> <p>Provide time for teachers to collaborate on curriculum and assessment design.</p> <p>Improve attendance by providing days for appointments and family activities.</p>	<p>2012-2013</p>	<p>PAWS Data:</p> <p>District:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1133 1520 1382 1824"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Rd</th> <th>Ma</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>50.9</td> <td>80.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>84.6</td> <td>74.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>66.7</td> <td>74.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>83.6</td> <td>80.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>75.4</td> <td>80.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>79.6</td> <td>79.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>59.1</td> <td>54.6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Rd	Ma	3	50.9	80.7	4	84.6	74.4	5	66.7	74.1	6	83.6	80.0	7	75.4	80.7	8	79.6	79.6	11	59.1	54.6
	Rd	Ma																									
3	50.9	80.7																									
4	84.6	74.4																									
5	66.7	74.1																									
6	83.6	80.0																									
7	75.4	80.7																									
8	79.6	79.6																									
11	59.1	54.6																									

<p>Sublette #9, cont.</p>	<p>Increase professional development opportunities.</p> <p>Method of Evaluation:</p> <p>Monitor MAP, PAWS, and district summative assessment data to determine whether student learning improved.</p>		<p>AYP: District: Met AYP. Not in district improvement. Schools: One school missed AYP for all students in math. None in school improvement. Grad Rates: 09-10: 80.39% 10-11: 88.89% Evaluation: First time request, no evaluation.</p>																								
<p>Uinta #4 (Mountain View)</p>	<p>165 day alternative schedule.</p> <p>Educational objectives:</p> <p>Improve student learning opportunities.</p> <p>Improve student and staff attendance</p> <p>Increase professional development opportunities.</p> <p>Method of Evaluation:</p> <p>Evaluate student achievement using MAP, PAWS, and formative assessment data. Also, use achievement and growth requirements in the Wyoming Accountability in Education Act.</p>	<p>2012-2013 2013-2014</p>	<p>PAWS Data: District:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1133 888 1386 1192"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Rd</th> <th>Ma</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>59.1</td> <td>88.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>84.9</td> <td>80.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>80.4</td> <td>85.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>90.2</td> <td>96.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>83.0</td> <td>80.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>73.3</td> <td>73.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>76.7</td> <td>75.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>AYP: District: Met AYP. Not in district improvement. Schools: All schools met AYP. One school in holding for year one school improvement. If they meet AYP this year they will be out of improvement. Grad Rates: 09-10: 86.27% 10-11: 84.85%</p>		Rd	Ma	3	59.1	88.6	4	84.9	80.3	5	80.4	85.7	6	90.2	96.1	7	83.0	80.9	8	73.3	73.3	11	76.7	75.0
	Rd	Ma																									
3	59.1	88.6																									
4	84.9	80.3																									
5	80.4	85.7																									
6	90.2	96.1																									
7	83.0	80.9																									
8	73.3	73.3																									
11	76.7	75.0																									

Uinta #4, cont.			Evaluation: Report stated goals met.																								
Uinta #6 (Lyman)	<p>148 day alternative schedule. (♦ 4 day week)</p> <p>Educational objectives:</p> <p>Reduce absenteeism.</p> <p>Reduce need for subs.</p> <p>Improve instruction by reducing interruptions during class time.</p> <p>Increase number of course options and access to remedial learning.</p> <p>Method of Evaluation:</p> <p>Survey results from stakeholders. Attendance records. Enrollment and dropout rates. ACT, PAWS, MAP, & DIBELS data. Public comment.</p>	2012-2013 2013-2014	<p>PAWS Data:</p> <p>District:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1133 380 1383 680"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Rd</th> <th>Ma</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>67.2</td> <td>82.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>82.1</td> <td>78.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>80.4</td> <td>84.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>84.3</td> <td>80.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>70.4</td> <td>70.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>81.4</td> <td>74.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>70.3</td> <td>67.6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>AYP:</p> <p>District: Met AYP. Not in district improvement.</p> <p>Schools: One school missed AYP for Math for the IEP subgroup. This school is in school improvement year one.</p> <p>Grad Rates: 09-10: 87.88% 10-11: 89.71%</p> <p>Evaluation: District evaluation of past 2 years indicates all stated goals were met.</p>		Rd	Ma	3	67.2	82.8	4	82.1	78.6	5	80.4	84.3	6	84.3	80.4	7	70.4	70.9	8	81.4	74.6	11	70.3	67.6
	Rd	Ma																									
3	67.2	82.8																									
4	82.1	78.6																									
5	80.4	84.3																									
6	84.3	80.4																									
7	70.4	70.9																									
8	81.4	74.6																									
11	70.3	67.6																									

The following districts were approved in June 2011 for 2 year Alternative School Schedules and have submitted letters indicating they will continue with the approved schedules for the next school year:

- Campbell CSD #1, Westwood High School, 144 day schedule.
- Carbon CSD #2, Saratoga schools & H-E-M School, 154 day schedule; Encampment School, 168 day schedule; Hanna Elementary, Medicine Bow Elementary, and Elk Mountain Elementary schools, 171 day schedule.
- Johnson CSD @1, Buffalo schools, 171 day schedule, Kaycee schools, 167 day schedule.
- Laramie CSD #2, 173 day schedule.
- Lincoln CSD #2, Cokeville schools, 153 day schedule, Star Valley High School, 164 day schedule.

- Park CSD #16, 148 day schedule.
- Sheridan CSD #1, 148 day schedule.
- Sheridan CSD #3, 148 day schedule.
- Sweetwater CSD #1, Farson-Eden School, 146 day schedule, remainder of district, 171 day schedule.

Fremont CSD #14 had operated with an approved Alternative School Schedule of 174 days last year. The district submitted a letter indicating they will return to a regular 175 day schedule.

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
ALTERNATIVE SCHEDULES**

June 2012

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ALTERNATIVE SCHEDULE SUMMARY	YEARS APPROVED
1) Campbell CSD #1 (Gillette – Westwood High School)	144 day schedule for Westwood High School (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013
2) Carbon CSD #1 (Rawlins – Little Snake River Valley School)	150 day schedule for Little Snake River Valley School (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013 2013-2014
3) Carbon CSD #2	154 day schedule for Saratoga Elementary School, Saratoga Middle/High School, H-E-M Junior/Senior High School (♦ 4 day week) 168 day schedule for Encampment K-12 School 171 day schedule for Hanna Elementary, Medicine Bow Elementary, and Elk Mountain Elementary Schools	2012-2013
4) Converse CSD #1 (Douglas – four Rural Schools)	153 day schedule for four Rural Schools (White, Moss Agate, Shawnee, Walter Creek, and Dry Creek Rural Schools) (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013 2013-2014
5) Crook CSD #1 (Sundance)	168 day schedule	2012-2013 2013-2014
6) Fremont CSD #2 (Dubois)	171 day schedule	2012-2013 2013-2014
7) Fremont CSD #6 (Pavillion)	155 day schedule (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013 2013-2014
8) Fremont CSD #24 (Shoshoni)	173 day schedule for grades 7-12 169 day schedule for grades K-6	2012-2013 2013-2014
9) Johnson CSD #1 (Buffalo)	171 day schedule (Buffalo) and 167 day schedule (Kaycee)	2012-2013
10) Laramie CSD #2 (Pine Bluffs)	173 day schedule	2012-2013
11) Lincoln CSD #1 (Diamondville)	167 day schedule for grades 9-12 175 day regular schedule for grades K-8	2012-2013 2013-2014
12) Lincoln CSD #2 (Afton)	153 day schedule for Cokeville schools (♦ 4 day week) 164 day schedule for Star Valley High School	2012-2013
13) Park CSD #16 (Meeteetse)	148 day schedule (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013
14) Sheridan CSD #1 (Ranchester)	148 day schedule (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013
15) Sheridan CSD #3 (Clearmont)	148 day schedule (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013
16) Sublette CSD #9 (Big Piney)	170 day schedule	2012-2013
17) Sweetwater CSD #1 (Rock Springs)	171 day schedule 146 day schedule for Farson-Eden School (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013
18) Uinta CSD #4 (Mountain View)	165 day schedule	2012-2013 2013-2014
19) Uinta CSD #6 (Lyman)	148 day schedule (♦ 4 day week)	2012-2013 2013-2014



Wyoming statute 21-16-1307 outlines the Success Curriculum requirements for the Hathaway Scholarship Program. Since its inception, there has been a lot of discussion and debate around the impact the Success Curriculum has had on certain high school programs around the state. During the 2011 legislative session, a bill (HB 0013) was introduced to provide options for students who might favor Fine and Performing Arts and/or Career-Vocational Education courses in place of the required Foreign Language courses. That part of the bill did not pass, and the Hathaway Success Curriculum requirements remain as follows:

- Honors (\$1600 per semester)/Performance (\$1200 per semester)
 - ⇒ Four (4) years of math including Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry and one *additional math* course
 - ⇒ Four (4) years of language arts
 - ⇒ Four (4) years of science including one *additional science* course
 - ⇒ Three (3) years of social studies
 - ⇒ Two (2) sequenced years of foreign language
- Opportunity (\$800 per semester)
 - ⇒ Four (4) years of math including Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry and one *additional math* course
 - ⇒ Four (4) years of language arts
 - ⇒ Four (4) years of science including one *additional science* course
 - ⇒ Three (3) years of social studies
 - ⇒ A demonstration of proficiency on the state standards for foreign cultures and languages
- Provisional Opportunity (\$800 per semester)
 - ⇒ Three (3) years of math, two of which must include Algebra I, Algebra II or Geometry
 - ⇒ Language arts – high school graduation requirements
 - ⇒ Science – high school graduation requirements
 - ⇒ Social Studies – high school graduation requirements
 - ⇒ A demonstration of proficiency on the state standards for foreign cultures and languages

Success Curriculum courses are expected to provide rigorous educational experiences for high school students that will prepare them for a post-secondary education and reduce the need for remediation in college. All Success Curriculum courses must be aligned to the Wyoming Content & Performance Standards.

Presently, some Career-Vocational courses are used as *additional* courses in *math* and *science* because the course content is aligned to math or science standards (as well as the Career-Vocational Education standards). Examples of Career-Vocational Education courses allowed for *additional math* or *science* courses for the Hathaway Success Curriculum are **business math** and **agricultural science**. Even though students may receive Career-Vocational Education credit for these courses, Hathaway allows these courses to count toward the *math* and *science* Success Curriculum requirements.

Courses that incorporate a substantial portion of standards from *math* and *science* (or any of the core content areas) are reviewed and considered for the Hathaway Success Curriculum (HSC) through the HSC course verification process.

**STATE BOARD of EDUCATION Action Planning Subcommittee
ACTION PLAN**

GOAL: To identify the SBOE action planning “form” and “process.”

Essence: Providing SBOE with action planning guidance.

ACTION STEPS	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	PROGRESS UPDATE
Identify action planning form to be used by SBOE.	June 2012 SBOE Meeting		
Identify action planning processes to be used by SBOE at each meeting. <u>Recommending:</u> How will action planning be utilized in each SBOE mtg. ...(enter additional suggestions regarding process here)	June 2012 SBOE Meeting Belenda, Pete, and Sue We are recommending that we use the Goals of the Strategic Plan to guide the action plan and review progress at each board meeting		The subcommittee member will develop action plans for each of the Strategic goals and present to the SBOE.

**GOAL #1
ACTION PLAN**

GOAL: Develop effective and efficient internal policy processes.

Essence: Providing SBE with guidance on improving education in Wyoming

ACTION STEPS	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	PROGRESS UPDATE
Schedule internal policy review to assure that policy guide the practice and State Statute	September 2012	Board and Board Attorney	

**GOAL #2
ACTION PLAN**

GOAL: Develop and implement a plan to systematically engage the Wyoming Department of Education, school districts, and the Joint Education Committee, among others.

Essence: Providing SBE with guidance on improving education in Wyoming

ACTION STEPS	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	PROGRESS UPDATE
Invite superintendents to SBOE meetings.			
Ask State Board member to attend local school board meetings.			
Develop an action plan for these goals at the State Board's planning retreat.			
SBOE Liason attend JEC and overview			

WDE events, include info. in weekly report to SBOE. 5. Survey school districts to understand needs and develop plan(s) to address recurring themes. 6. Invite UW Ed. Dept. to present routinely at SBOE meetings			
--	--	--	--

GOAL #3
ACTION PLAN

GOAL: To support continued improvement in education including student achievement and growth, educator evaluations, school improvement plans, and accreditation.

***Essence:** Providing SBE with guidance on improving education in Wyoming*

ACTION STEPS	DUE DATES	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	PROGRESS UPDATE
Review Chapter 6 Accreditation rules and regulations in relation to WAEA.	June 2012 SBOE Mtg	WDE staff	
Gather suggestions from stakeholders concerning revisions for rules	June - August 2012	SBE Coordinator Paige Fenton Hughes; WDE staff	
Present recommendations to SBE for action	September 2012 SBOE Mtg	SBE Coordinator Paige Fenton Hughes; WDE staff	
Participate in Phase II accountability discussions concerning educator evaluations via Accountability Advisory Committee	June-December 2012	Cindy Hill, Sue Belish, SBE Coordinator Paige Fenton Hughes;	

**ACTION SUMMARY SHEET
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

DATE: June 12, 2012

ISSUE: Adoption of 2013 Wyoming State Content and Performance Standards

BACKGROUND:

After completing the required review process in April of 2012 the WDE is submitting the final draft of the Wyoming Foreign Language Content and Performance Standards for State Board of Education approval.

SUGGESTED MOTION/RECOMMENDATION:

The WDE has overseen a process for review of the Standards through multiple meetings, revisions, and public feedback. Now presented the 2013 Draft Wyoming Foreign Language Content and Performance Standards for adoption by the State Board of Education.

PREPARED BY : Robin Holbrook

APPROVED BY: _____

**Christine Steele
State Board of Education Liaison**

ACTION TAKEN BY STATE BOARD: _____ DATE: _____

COMMENTS:

WYOMING FOREIGN LANGUAGES CONTENT AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION

“The ability to communicate effectively with people across languages and cultures is a critical skill in the 21st century.” (The Essentials of World Languages, Grades K-12, 2007) Global literacy includes the skills and knowledge to be able to communicate with others. In today’s world, students are globally connected and must be prepared for encounters with people from other cultures. The ability to communicate effectively in a language other than English is called “proficiency” and is marked by the students’ ability to use another language and to have appropriate understanding of other cultures. The Wyoming foreign language standards indicate the essential learning that students must master to achieve proficiency in a language other than English.

Mission:

All students will be able to use a language other than English to engage in meaningful conversation, to understand and interpret spoken and written language, and to present information, concepts, and ideas, while also gaining an understanding of other cultures. Through language study, they will make connections with other content areas, compare the language and culture studied with their own, and participate effectively in a global world.

Vision: An education in foreign language fosters a population that:

- Communicates linguistically and culturally in more than one language at a level of language proficiency to function in a variety of situations and settings.
- Participates effectively in a global world.
- Exhibits attitudes, values, and skills that indicate a positive disposition and understanding of cultural differences and that enhance cross-cultural communication.
- Values language learning for its long-term worth in fostering personal, work-related, and/or financial success in our increasingly interconnected world.

RATIONALE

Philosophy and Goals:

The Wyoming foreign language standards and benchmarks are grounded in the national *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006). They were developed by consulting standards in the United States and internationally, as well as examining the latest research and best practices on second-language acquisition. The revised foreign language standards are meant to be inclusive for all languages taught in Wyoming schools, including Native American Languages and American Sign Language (ASL).

Revised Standards:

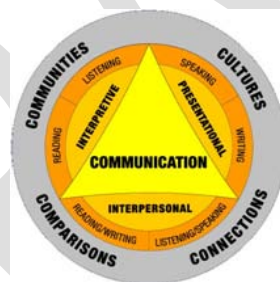
The foreign language standards lay the foundation for creating local curricula and related assessments. Changes that led to the revised standards are:

- The Wyoming foreign language content standards, adopted from the five National Standards (Communication, Culture, Communities, Connections and Comparisons) have been reorganized into three standards that focus on the three modes of communication: Interpersonal, Interpretive and Presentational. The four other national standard areas (Culture, Communities, Connections and Comparisons) are now woven into the three communication standards.
- Foreign language content is both linguistic and cultural. It includes personal, social, and inter-disciplinary topics. Both linguistic and cultural content statements have been added to benchmarks to provide a culturally authentic context for the proficiency descriptive levels.
- Linguistic content varies and is dependent on the mode of language use. Proficiency does not occur at the same rate for all students in all skill areas. For example, a student may perform at the Novice-High level in speaking and the Intermediate-Low level in reading.
- These standards promote college, career readiness, and global awareness. The 21st century themes identified in the *Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework* are incorporated in many of these content statements. Students spiral through this content with increasing depth and sophistication as they attain higher levels of language proficiency. Therefore, the extent to which a theme is addressed at a given point in time depends on age and developmental appropriateness, as well as on proficiency level.

- The *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* contains four strands: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. These four strands are represented in the National Standards for Learning Languages by the Communication standards (Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational) and the level of proficiency demonstrated. In addition, the standards of the other four areas for learning languages – Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities – also support and are aligned with the Common Core. These standards describe the expectations to ensure all students are college, career, and world-ready.

Foreign Languages Standards:

The reorganization of the previous two standards into three revised standards reflects the framework, graphically depicted below, that was developed for the 2004 National Association of Educational Progress (NAEP) in foreign languages.



The NAEP graphic illustrates the overarching goal of language instruction is the development of students’ **communicative skills** (the central “C” of five Cs in the graphic is for “communication”). Students should be provided ample opportunities to engage in conversations, present information to a known audience, and interpret authentic materials in the language of study. In addition to developing linguistic proficiency, a meaningful context for language must be established. The four Cs in the outer ring of the graphic (**Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities**) provide this meaningful context for language learning. These contexts stress (1) the integration of culture; (2) the study and reinforcement of content from other disciplines; (3) the comparison of target and native languages and cultures; and (4) opportunities to interact with native speakers of languages. As such, the four Cs serve as the basis for instructional activities and are fully embedded within the foreign language communication objectives.

Wyoming Foreign Languages Standards:

In the **Interpretive Mode** of communication, (**Standard 1**) students demonstrate understanding of spoken and written communication within appropriate cultural contexts. Examples of this kind of “one-way” reading or listening include cultural interpretations of printed texts, videos, online texts, movies, radio and television broadcasts and speeches. Beyond the Novice level, “interpretation” differs from “comprehension” because it implies the ability to read or listen “between the lines” and “beyond the lines”.

In the **Interpersonal Mode** of communication, (**Standard 2**) students engage in direct spoken and/or written communication with others. This communication should mimic spontaneous and real-world interactions. Examples of this “two-way” communication include conversing face-to-face, participating in online discussions or videoconferences, instant messaging and text messaging, and exchanging personal letters or email messages.

In the **Presentational Mode** of communication, (**Standard 3**) students present, orally and/or in writing, information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers with whom there is no immediate interaction. Examples of this “one-to-many” mode of communication include a presentation to a group, posting an online video or webpage, creating and posting a podcast or videocast, and writing an article for a newspaper.

Language Proficiency Levels:

Unlike other Wyoming Content Standards areas, the foreign language standards are benchmarked by proficiency levels rather than grade levels. Language learners can be expected to move through levels of proficiency at different rates. In addition, language learners may demonstrate differing proficiencies depending upon the communicative mode in which they are functioning (Interpersonal, Interpretive, or Presentational). The proficiency levels were derived from the *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners* (ACTFL, 1998) and the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines—Speaking, Writing, Listening, and Reading* (ACTFL, 2012). The levels are outlined in the following proficiency statements:

The **Novice Level** Communicator is limited to using memorized vocabulary in highly predictable/practiced situations.

- **Novice-Mid Level:** Students communicate *using memorized words and phrases* to talk about familiar topics related to school, home, and the community.
- **Novice-High Level:** Students communicate *using words, lists, and simple sentences* to ask and answer questions, discuss interdisciplinary topics studied, and handle simple transactions related to everyday life.

The **Intermediate Level** Communicator is able to create with the language for basic survival needs: asking and answering simple questions, and dealing with situations or transactions.

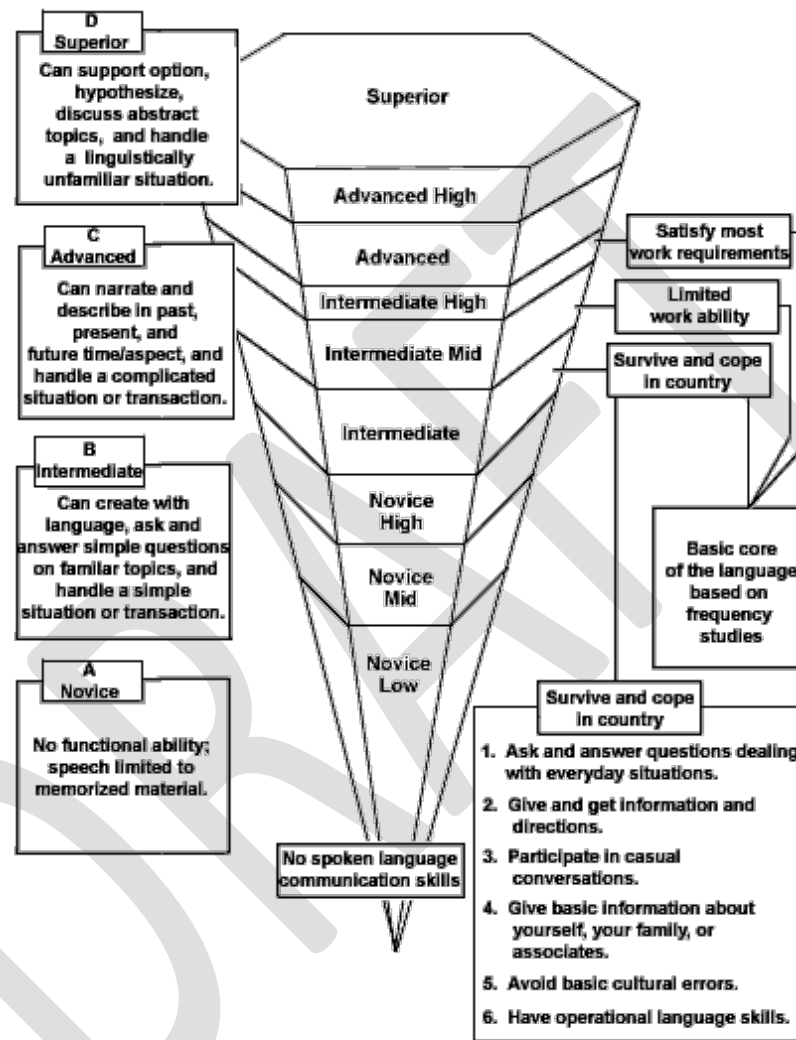
- ****Intermediate-Low Level:** Students communicate *using simple sentences* to ask and answer questions, discuss inter-disciplinary topics studied, and handle uncomplicated transactions related to everyday life.
- **Intermediate-Mid Level:** Students communicate *using strings of sentences* to ask and answer questions, discuss inter-disciplinary topics studied, and handle slightly complicated transactions related to everyday life.
- **Intermediate-High Level:** Students communicate *using connected sentences and paragraphs* to handle complicated situations on a wide-range of topics.

The **Advanced Level** Communicator can narrate and describe across time frames with increasing accuracy, engaging in more sophisticated interactions.

- **Advanced-Low Level:** Students communicate *using paragraph-level discourse* to handle complicated situations on a wide-range of topics.

****The Wyoming State definition of proficient student performance is Intermediate-Low. This proficiency level was chosen as the expectation of language learners to show they have operational language skills. Students at this level possess the basic language skills necessary to function in real life situations and daily interactions.**

The above proficiency level guidelines are for all foreign languages taught in the state of Wyoming. Students of American Sign Language and Native American Languages will also be responsible for meeting these same standards, but exceptions will be allowed pertaining to written assessments as neither language group contains a written language. As written languages are developed and recognized in the Native American communities, these students will be required to meet the written performance assessments.



This pyramid, created by Dr. Helene Curtain, shows the increase in time necessary to obtain a higher level of performance. As the pyramid denotes, it takes more hours of instruction to get from “advanced” to “superior” than it does to move from a “novice” level of proficiency to an “intermediate” level, hence the reason for an inverted pyramid

The following sections are designed to highlight the differences between the 2008 and 2013 Wyoming Foreign Language Standards.

Standards

2008 Wyoming Foreign Language Content and Performance Standards	2013 Wyoming Foreign Language Content and Performance Standards
<p>Two Standards:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communication 2. Culture 	<p>Three Standards that focus on the three modes of communication:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interpretive Mode 2. Interpersonal Mode 3. Presentational Mode
<p>Benchmarks: specify what students are expected to know and be able to do at the end of each of the benchmark grade levels (4, 8, and 11)</p>	<p>Benchmarks: specify what students are expected to do within each standard.</p>
	<p>Performance Guidelines: specify how well students demonstrate language ability at various points along the language learning continuum:</p>
<p>Performance Level Descriptors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Below Basic 2. Basic 3. Proficient 4. Advanced 	<p>Proficiency Levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Novice-Mid 2. Novice-High 3. Intermediate-Low (Proficient) 4. Intermediate-Mid 5. Intermediate-High 6. Advanced-Low

Coding

2008 Wyoming Foreign Language Content and Performance Standards	2013 Wyoming Foreign Language Content and Performance Standards
<p>Grade-span and individual grade-specific benchmarks are identified by their content area, grade, standard number and benchmark number.</p> <p>Example: FL2.1.1</p> <p>Foreign Language, Grade 2, Standard 1, Benchmark 1</p>	<p>Benchmarks are set at the Proficient (Intermediate –Low) level for each standard. Performance guidelines are provided to guide educators as students move through different levels of proficiency.</p> <p>Example: FL1.IL.1</p> <p>Foreign Language, Standard 1, Intermediate-Low, Benchmark 1</p>

Performance Level Descriptors

2008 Wyoming Foreign Language Content and Performance Standards	2013 Wyoming Foreign Language Content and Performance Standards
Proficient: Grade 11	Proficient (Intermediate-Low)
<p>In order to understand and be understood in the worldwide community, eleventh grade students who perform at the proficient level communicate in a limited way in a language other than English. They depend upon memorized vocabulary, non-verbal cues, and a cooperative communication partner to perform tasks such as providing and obtaining simple information for personal use, acquiring goods and services, and expressing opinions and needs. They demonstrate awareness that other cultures have different cultural products, practices, and perspectives.</p>	<p>The Intermediate level communicator is able to create with the language for basic survival needs: asking and answering simple questions and dealing with situations or transactions. Intermediate-Low level students communicate using simple sentences to ask and answer questions, discuss inter-disciplinary topics studied, and handle uncomplicated transactions related to everyday life.</p>

Content Area	Foreign Languages		
Standard I	Interpretive: All students will be able to use a foreign language other than English to understand and interpret spoken and written language, concepts, and ideas, while also gaining an understanding of the perspectives of other cultures. Through language study, they will make connections with other content areas, compare the language and culture studied with their own, and participate in home and global communities.		
Proficiency Level	Code	Benchmarks	Performance Guidelines
Intermediate Low		<p>1. Student will perform at Intermediate Low level while listening to a culturally authentic audio source.</p> <p>2. Student will perform at Intermediate Low level while viewing a culturally authentic audio-visual source.</p> <p>3. Student will perform at Intermediate Low level while reading culturally authentic printed material.</p>	<p>In culturally authentic audio, audio-visual and print materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the main idea, theme, and supporting details • compare and contrast ideas and messages of the target culture to one's own culture • infer the meaning of some highly contextualized, unfamiliar words

Interpretive Performance Guidelines

Code	Novice-Mid	Novice-High	Intermediate-Low	Intermediate-Mid	Intermediate-High	Advanced-Low
FL1.IL.1	<p>In culturally authentic audio materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognize familiar words and phrases • demonstrate comprehension of simple requests, directions and messages contained 	<p>In culturally authentic audio materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognize familiar words and phrases • demonstrate comprehension of simple conversations and messages • identify the main idea and infer the meaning of some highly contextualized, unfamiliar words 	<p>In culturally authentic audio materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the main idea, theme, and most supporting details • compare and contrast ideas and messages of the target culture to one’s own culture • infer the meaning of some new, unfamiliar words 	<p>In culturally authentic audio materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyze information • paraphrase the main idea • compare and contrast elements • infer meaning of some unfamiliar words 	<p>In culturally authentic audio materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critique and synthesize information and ideas in a variety of formats • identify most supporting details • infer meaning of new, contextualized words and phrase • identify some cultural perspectives and interpret the author’s intent 	<p>In culturally authentic audio materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate comprehension of language and nuances of culture • analyze and synthesize text • identify and analyze intent and supporting details • infer meaning of some unfamiliar words and phrases • identify some cultural perspectives

Code	Novice-Mid	Novice-High	Intermediate-Low	Intermediate-Mid	Intermediate-High	Advanced-Low
FL1.IL.2	<p>In culturally authentic audio-visual materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognize familiar words and phrases demonstrate comprehension of simple requests, directions and messages contained 	<p>In culturally authentic audio-visual materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognize familiar words and phrases demonstrate comprehension of simple conversations and messages identify the main idea and infer the meaning of some highly contextualized, unfamiliar words 	<p>In culturally authentic audio-visual materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify the main idea, theme, and most supporting details compare and contrast ideas and messages of the target culture to one's own culture infer the meaning of some new, unfamiliar words 	<p>In culturally authentic audio-visual materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyze information paraphrase the main idea compare and contrast elements infer meaning of some unfamiliar words 	<p>In culturally authentic audio-visual materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> critique and synthesize information and ideas in a variety of formats identify most supporting details infer meaning of new, contextualized words and phrase identify some cultural perspectives and interpret the author's intent 	<p>In culturally authentic audio-visual materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate comprehension of language and nuances of culture analyze and synthesize text identify and analyze intent and supporting details infer meaning of some unfamiliar words and phrases identify some cultural perspectives

Code	Novice-Mid	Novice-High	Intermediate-Low	Intermediate-Mid	Intermediate-High	Advanced-Low
FL1.IL.3	<p>In culturally authentic print materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognize familiar words and phrases demonstrate comprehension of simple requests, directions and messages contained 	<p>In culturally authentic print materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognize familiar words and phrases demonstrate comprehension of simple conversations and messages identify the main idea and infer the meaning of some highly contextualized, unfamiliar words 	<p>In culturally authentic print materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify the main idea, theme, and most supporting details compare and contrast ideas and messages of the target culture to one's own culture infer the meaning of some new, unfamiliar words 	<p>In culturally authentic print materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyze information paraphrase the main idea compare and contrast elements infer meaning of some unfamiliar words 	<p>In culturally authentic print materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> critique and synthesize information and ideas in a variety of formats identify most supporting details infer meaning of new, contextualized words and phrase identify some cultural perspectives and interpret the author's intent 	<p>In culturally authentic print materials, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate comprehension of language and nuances of culture analyze and synthesize text identify and analyze intent and supporting details infer meaning of some unfamiliar words and phrases identify some cultural perspectives

Content Area	Foreign Languages		
Standard II	Interpersonal: All students will be able to use a foreign language other than English to negotiate meaning through the spoken or written exchange of information, concepts, and ideas, while gaining an understanding of the relationships among the products, practices, and perspectives of other cultures. Through language study, they will make connections with other content areas, compare the language and culture studied with their own, and participate in home and global communities.		
Proficiency Level	Code	Benchmarks	Performance Guidelines
Intermediate Low	FL2.IL1 FL2.IL2	1. Student will perform at Intermediate Low level in spoken communication (2 way) 2. Student will perform at Intermediate Low level in written communication (2 way)	Students use unrehearsed, simple sentences independently to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask and respond to questions • express needs • give and follow a series of spoken commands • ask for and give permission • request, suggest, and make arrangements • express and support opinions and preferences • make requests and arrangements • extend, accept and decline an invitation • exchange information • initiate, sustain and close conversations related to familiar topics while using some culturally appropriate vocabulary, idiomatic expressions and gestures from the target culture

Interpersonal Performance Guidelines

Code	Novice-Mid	Novice-High	Intermediate-Low	Intermediate-Mid	Intermediate-High	Advanced-Low
FL2.IL.1	<p>Students use memorized words, phrases, and short sentences in spoken communication to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask and respond to simple questions state needs make requests express preferences exchange information give and follow simple spoken commands related to familiar topics while using some culturally appropriate gestures and intonation 	<p>Students use words, lists, memorized phrases, and simple sentences in spoken communication to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> initiate, maintain and end a conversation ask and respond to questions make requests express needs express and support opinions and preferences give and follow a series of spoken commands ask for and give permission request, suggest, and make arrangements extend, accept, and decline an invitation related to familiar topics while using some culturally appropriate gestures and intonation 	<p>Students use simple sentences independently in spoken communication to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask and respond to questions express needs give and follow a series of spoken commands ask for and give permission request, suggest, and make arrangements express and support opinions and preferences make requests and arrangements extend, accept and decline an invitation exchange information initiate, sustain and close conversations related to familiar topics while using some culturally appropriate vocabulary, idiomatic expressions and gestures from the target culture 	<p>Students use strings of sentences in spoken communication to initiate, maintain, and end short conversations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> asking and responding to questions expressing needs giving and supporting opinions asking for and giving permission making requests and arrangements extending, accepting, and declining an invitation related to familiar and some unfamiliar topics while using some culturally appropriate vocabulary, idiomatic expressions and gestures from the target culture 	<p>Students participate in extended conversations using connected sentences and paragraphs in spoken communication to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> narrate and describe across a wide-range of topics both familiar and unfamiliar compare and contrast offer and support opinions persuade someone's point of view make and change plans offer advice handle a situation with a complication give, respond to, and ask for clarification using variety of time frames while using culturally appropriate vocabulary, idiomatic expressions and gestures from the target culture 	<p>Students use paragraph-level discourse in spoken communication to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> narrate and describe across a wide-range of topics infer meaning of unfamiliar words in new contexts compare and contrast infer meaning of unfamiliar words offer and support opinions persuade a point of view make and change plans offer advice and handle a situation with a complication give, respond to, and ask for clarification on detailed and complex spoken and written directions, commands and requests using a variety of time frames while using culturally appropriate vocabulary, idiomatic expressions and gestures from the target culture

Code	Novice-Mid	Novice-High	Intermediate-Low	Intermediate-Mid	Intermediate-High	Advanced-Low
FL2.IL.2	<p>Students use memorized words, phrases, and short sentences in written communication to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask and respond to simple questions state needs make requests express preferences exchange information give and follow directions related to familiar topics while using some culturally appropriate language 	<p>Students use words, lists, memorized phrases, and simple sentences in written communication to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> initiate, maintain and end a conversation ask and respond to questions make requests express needs express and support opinions and preferences give and follow instructions ask for and give permission request, suggest, and make arrangements extend, accept, and decline an invitation related to familiar topics while using some culturally appropriate language 	<p>Students use simple sentences independently in written communication to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask and respond to questions express needs give and follow a series of written commands ask for and give permission request, suggest, and make arrangements express and support opinions and preferences make requests and arrangements extend, accept and decline an invitation exchange information initiate, sustain and close conversations related to familiar topics while using some culturally appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions 	<p>Students use strings of sentences in written communication to initiate, maintain, and end short conversations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> asking and responding to questions expressing needs giving and supporting opinions asking for and giving permission making requests and arrangements extending, accepting, and declining an invitation related to familiar and some unfamiliar topics while using some culturally appropriate vocabulary, and idiomatic expressions 	<p>Students participate in extended conversations using connected sentences and paragraphs in written communication to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> narrate and describe across a wide-range of topics both familiar and unfamiliar compare and contrast offer and support opinions persuade someone's point of view make and change plans offer advice handle a situation with a complication give, respond to, and ask for clarification using variety of time frames while using culturally appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions 	<p>Students use paragraph-level discourse in written communication to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> narrate and describe across a wide-range of topics infer meaning of unfamiliar words in new contexts compare and contrast infer meaning of unfamiliar words offer and support opinions persuade a point of view make and change plans offer advice and handle a situation with a complication give, respond to, and ask for clarification on detailed and complex written directions, commands and requests using a variety of time frames while using culturally appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions from the target culture

Content Area	Foreign Languages		
Standard III	Presentational: All students will be able to use a foreign language other than English to present information, concepts, and ideas, while also gaining an understanding of the perspectives of other cultures. Through language study, they will make connections with other content areas, compare the language and culture studied with their own, and participate in home and global communities.		
Proficiency Level	Code	Benchmarks	Performance Guidelines
Intermediate Low	FL3.IL.1 FL3.IL.2	1. Students will present at the Intermediate Low level in a spoken presentation. 2. Students will present at the Intermediate Low level in a written presentation.	Students use simple sentences, repetitive structures, culturally appropriate vocabulary and a few idiomatic expressions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce brief, creative presentations on familiar topics • retell or summarize information • describe and narrate *While using reference tools during the editing process.

Presentational Performance Guidelines

Code	Novice-Mid	Novice-High	Intermediate-Low	Intermediate-Mid	Intermediate-High	Advanced-Low
FL3.IL.1	<p>To create a spoken presentation, students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use basic information at the word and memorized-phrase level 	<p>To create a spoken presentation, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recombine basic information at the word and simple sentence level on familiar topics 	<p>To create a spoken presentation, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use simple sentences and repetitive structures on a variety of familiar topics 	<p>To create a spoken presentation, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use strings of sentences by combining and recombining simple facts and ideas on known topics 	<p>To create a spoken presentation, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use connected sentences and paragraphs to narrate and describe in different time frames when speaking about everyday events and situations 	<p>To create a spoken presentation, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use paragraph-length discourse to report, narrate and describe in different time frames when speaking about a variety of events and situations

Code	Novice-Mid	Novice-High	Intermediate-Low	Intermediate-Mid	Intermediate-High	Advanced-Low
FL3.IL.2	<p>To create a written presentation, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use basic information at the word and memorized-phrase level 	<p>To create a written presentation, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recombine basic information at the word and simple sentence level on familiar topics 	<p>To create a written presentation, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use simple sentences and repetitive structures on a variety of familiar topics 	<p>To create a written presentation, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use strings of sentences by combining and recombining simple facts and ideas on known topics 	<p>To create a written presentation, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use connected sentences and paragraphs to narrate and describe in different time frames when writing about everyday events and situations 	<p>To create a written presentation, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use paragraph-length discourse to report, narrate and describe in different time frames when writing about a variety of events and situations

DRAFT

Glossary

Assessment: Tasks that evoke demonstration of knowledge and skills in ways that they are applied in the real world. Assessment looks for what students can do, rather than what they cannot.

Benchmark: A level of performance, or outcome against which students will be measured.

Culturally authentic material: Books, tapes, videos, games, and realia that have been produced for use by native speakers of the target language. Culturally authentic materials are intended for the target language from the target language and are not teacher produced.

Interpersonal Communication: Direct spoken or written communication with others with opportunities for negotiation (e.g., conversing face-to-face, participating in online discussions or videoconferences, instant messaging and text messaging, exchanging personal letters or e-mail messages).

Interpretive Communication: Spoken and written communication within the appropriate cultural context. Examples of “one-way” reading or listening include cultural interpretations of print, video, and online texts, movies, radio and television broadcasts, and speeches. Author or speaker is not available for communication.

Mode: Language modes place the primary emphasis on the purpose of communication and the context in which it happens, rather than on any one skill in isolation.

Presentational Communication: Presentations are given through spoken and/or written communications about information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers with whom there is no immediate interaction. Learners have opportunities to research, edit, and revise product to present a polished final spoken or written presentational task. Examples of this “one-to-many” mode of communication are making a presentation to a group, posting an online video or webpage, creating and posting a podcast or videocast, and writing an article for a newspaper.

Proficiency: The level of communicative competence. It refers to what an individual is able to do with language in all skill areas. Levels are based in part on the Interagency Language Rater (ILR) and are comparable to the Common European Framework Reference (CEFR)

Skills: The four basic language skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are related to each other by the mode of communication (spoken or written) and the direction of communication (receptive or productive).

References

The foreign languages standards revision committee used a variety of resources representing a broad range of perspectives to inform its work. Those references include:

- ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign languages) (<http://actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1>)
 - ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners 1998 (<http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3327>)
 - ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – Speaking, Writing, Listening, and Reading (http://www.actfl.org/files/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012_FINAL.pdf)
 - Alignment of the National Standards for Learning Languages with the Common Core State Standards (http://actfl.org/files/Aligning_CCSS_Language_Standards_v6.pdf)
- New Jersey World Languages Standards (<http://www.nj.gov/education/cccs/standards/7/>)
- National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006
- “The Essentials of World Languages K-12: Effective Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (Priorities in Practice) by Janis Jensen, Paul Sandrock, and John Franklin
- “Standards for Foreign Language learning in the 21st Century” by National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project Staff
- Partnership for 21st Century Skill Framework (<http://www.p21.org/overview/skills-framework>)

- Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (<http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards>)
- 2004 National Association of Educational Progress (NAEP) in foreign languages (<http://www.nagb.org/publications/frameworks/FinalFrameworkPrePubEdition1.pdf>)
- Interagency Language Roundtable (<http://www.govtilr.org/>)
- “Common European Framework of Reference: Learning, Teaching, Assessment” (CEFR) (http://www.coe.int/t/DG4/Portfolio/?M=/main_pages/levels.html)

DRAFT