

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Humphreys Elementary School
Unit 15743
Apo, AP (U.S. Military), United States 96271-5743**

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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) are accreditation divisions of AdvancED.

Quality Assurance Review Report

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About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

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

In April 2006, the 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 National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) came together to form one strong unified organization dedicated to education quality. That unified organization, known as AdvancED, creates the world's largest education community, representing 27,000 public and private schools and districts across the United States and in 65 countries worldwide and educating 15 million students.

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

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

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

2) Engage in continuous improvement. Schools implement a continuous improvement process that articulates the vision and purpose the school is pursuing (vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school effectiveness, and the school community (profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (plan); and documents and uses the results to inform what happens next (results).

3) Demonstrate quality assurance through internal and external review. Schools engage in a planned process of ongoing internal review and self-assessment. In addition, schools host an external Quality Assurance Review Team once every five years. The team evaluates the school's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards, assesses the efficacy of the school's improvement process and methods for quality assurance, and provides commendations and required actions to help the school improve. The team provides an oral exit report to the school and a written report detailing the team's required actions. The school acts on the team's required actions and submits a progress report following the review.

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

Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review

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

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

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

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

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

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

Using the Report - Responding to the Required Actions. The school uses the report to guide its improvement efforts. The school is held accountable for addressing the required actions identified in the report. The NCA CASI/SACS CASI State Office is available to assist schools in addressing the required actions. At prescribed intervals, the school must submit a progress report detailing the actions and progress the school has made on the team's required actions. The report is reviewed at the state and national level to ensure the school 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 following action from the commission.

Summary of Findings

A Quality Assurance Review Team representing the NCA CASI Department of Defense (NCA-CASI-DODEA), a division of AdvancED, visited the Humphreys Elementary School in Apo, AP (U.S. Military), United States on 02/13/2012 - 02/16/2012.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 2 members of the administrative team, 59 students, 10 parents, and 45 teachers. In addition, Military Command and Support Staff were interviewed. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by the school. Specifically, the team examined the school's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

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

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

Commendations

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

Commendation 1

Commendation Statement:

Staff members demonstrate leadership and accept responsibility for school improvement efforts.

Evidence:

The principal recognizes teacher leadership and encourages identified teachers to apply for membership on the school's improvement team. Teachers serving on the School Improvement Leadership Team lead most all efforts of the school improvement process and monitor the adherence to the standards.

Rationale:

Shared leadership within a school helps build capacity. Once these leaders have a good understanding of the school improvement process, they will be able to provide expertise in the area of adopted strategies, answer questions surrounding the improvement process, and build a culture that supports the school's vision of a positive, nurturing, and respectful learning environment for students, teachers, and the military community.

Commendation 2

Commendation Statement:

Military Command supports the vision and mission of the school.

Evidence:

The school has developed a positive relationship with Command and the principal communicates frequently about the needs of the school, staff, and students. Student enrollment increases have caused facility challenges, and the school's principal and Command have worked collaboratively to ensure all students have a safe learning environment that is well equipped. In addition, they are working together to facilitate the building of two new schools in the near future.

Rationale:

When people are linked by a common interest, they share a common purpose, mutual respect, and support each other in the efforts to achieve important goals. Communicating the school's vision and purpose with stakeholders builds strong relationships that help move the school forward. With two new schools in Camp Humphreys near future and school enrollment increasing, communication and support between the school and Command will be essential to ensure a smooth transition for students, teachers, staff, and parents.

Commendation 3

Commendation Statement:

Students are actively engaged in the learning process.

Evidence:

Classroom observations revealed students actively engaged in their learning throughout the school. In addition, student work samples displayed in the hallways and in classrooms suggest the school celebrates and recognizes student performance. It was evident that students took pride in their work. The school's reading and math strategies, CSR and UPSL, were implemented in small cooperative group settings.

Rationale:

Teachers who provide a learning environment where students delight in their learning and strive to succeed increase the odds of students investing in their own learning at a higher and deeper level. Students in these classrooms begin to demand meaning from their learning and connect it to things that truly matter to them. In other words, they see learning as enjoyable and look forward to the next challenge.

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 school effectiveness. The school will be held accountable for addressing each of the required actions noted in this section. Following this review, the school will be asked to submit a progress report on these required actions.

Required Action 1

Required Action:

Revise the School Improvement Plan so that it contains measurable student performance goals that are aligned to standards, supported by data with aligned strategies, and monitored for effectiveness.

Evidence:

Interviews and artifacts found evidence that the school's improvement plan is not consistently used to guide improvement efforts. The plan was written five years ago and most teachers and leaders were how the data are used to measure student performance against the goals to ensure effectiveness of the strategies.

Rationale:

Using the School Improvement Plan systematically to guide improvement efforts will be important for Humphreys American School (HAS) as student enrollment increases and new facilities open. Knowing that there are a high percentage of teacher and staff turnovers, having a written systematic school improvement process that is aligned to the school's vision and district's mission will help new teachers understand the school and district's priorities. In addition, they will be able to understand the school's current reality, identify expectations, standards, goals, learning strategies, and how assessments are used for decision making to help students, to adjust instruction, and/or to measure the impact of on student performance over time.

Required Action 2

Required Action:

Employ the expertise of district support staff and the resources they have to identify appropriate assessments for goals and effectively monitor progress of strategies in meeting goals.

Evidence:

The school has identified summative and many formative assessments to measure student performance and progress toward meeting school goals. There is some misunderstanding between assessment and strategy. (e.g. Guided Reading is listed as a reading assessment) Teachers and leaders were inconsistent in their response on how summative and common assessments measure progress in meeting goals and assessing the effectiveness of strategies. However most teachers clearly described how they used formative assessments to help guide daily instruction. There is also an interest in pursuing additional professional development in the area of assessment and school improvement.

Rationale:

Recognizing the needs of the school and providing training and coaching are critical to the school improvement process. To effectively implement a comprehensive and systematic school improvement plan, the school and its leaders need to request the expertise of the district's school improvement staff to identify appropriate assessments for goals to implement strategies and learn a process for effectively monitoring student achievement.

Required Action 3

Required Action:

Utilize the school administrative team to actively engage and facilitate all improvement efforts.

Evidence:

The principal has empowered teachers to become leaders in the school and interviews suggest that she has delegated the school improvement process to the School Improvement Leadership Team. However, only three teachers have served on this team for three consecutive years. To create an even greater urgency for principal leadership in this process, the school's two CSI chairs have accepted leadership positions outside the school. While well intended, this team has made random changes to assessments and strategies, thus impacting the effectiveness of the school's improvement efforts. Interviews suggest the principal and new assistant principal are in the early stages of developing a professional relationship and have not yet been established roles in the areas of school improvement.

Rationale:

It is essential that a systematic school improvement process be established and monitored by the school's administrative leadership team. Since there is high teacher turnover, it is important that both principals develop a clear understanding of the process, lead teachers in the design of a comprehensive school improvement plan, monitor the implementation of strategies, and be active participants in analyzing student performance data to ensure all students are learning and making progress toward meeting the school's goals.

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

Next Steps

The school should:

1. Review and discuss the findings from this report with all stakeholders.
2. Ensure that plans are in place to embed and sustain the strengths noted in the commendations section to maximize their impact on the school.
3. Develop action plans to address the 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's efforts to improve student performance and school effectiveness.
5. Following the Quality Assurance Review, submit the Accreditation Progress Report detailing progress made toward addressing the 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 state review and for action at the national level by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, which confers accreditation and communicates it to the school. Upon receiving its accreditation, the school should celebrate its achievement with the school community. The NCA-CASI-DODEA accreditation seals are available at www.advanc-ed.org/communicationskit for accredited schools and districts to post on their website and to use in school communications. Flags, door decals, diploma seals, and lapel pins are also available and can be ordered

from the website to help you share your accomplishment with your community.

Summary

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

Review of AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools

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

Standard 1: Vision and Purpose

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

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

Humphreys American School has established a vision that is aligned to the district's mission. In the fall of 2010 teachers, support staff, parents, students, and other external stakeholders, including base leadership, School Advisory Committee (SAC), Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO), were invited to participate in reviewing and revising the school's vision. The group identified strengths and important issues surrounding the school. The final vision was vetted by this team and introduced to teachers and staff who worked with students to write it in student friendly terms, using letters of the mascot, EAGLE, to help students understand. (e.g. E: Environment is positive, nurturing and respectful of students, teachers and the military community, A: Academic, artistic and physical expectations are high and individualized for each student.) Student made posters reflecting the school's Eagle vision were displayed throughout the school. A process for reviewing the vision each year was not evident.

The school's vision is publicized on its website and in newsletters, handbooks, hallways, classrooms and spoken daily during morning announcements in some buildings. Elementary students were anxious to sing the "Eagle" song which celebrated the vision and promoted school pride. The school is beginning a school wide effort to recognize student behavior that supports the school's vision. Teachers identified the Eagle behavior intervention as an idea brought to the school by the assistant principal. Students receive Eagle bucks from teachers when they display positive behavior. Student interviews revealed that this initiative is not yet school wide and tickets are given to students randomly. They noted some teachers give tickets to only students in their class, others recognize any student, and some teachers choose not to participate.

The school's goals to improve reading comprehension skills and math reasoning skills support the schools vision. The school profile contains both perception data and student achievement results. Upon review of the School Improvement Plan (SIP), the QAR team noted some errors with assessment and strategies. This included the omission of a math strategy and a misunderstanding of Guided Reading as a formative assessment. Teacher interviews found teachers use several of the common assessments to guide instruction. In addition, classroom observations revealed teachers implementing the math strategy Understand, Plan, Solve, Look Back (UPSL) and the Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) strategy.

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

- The vision guides the teaching and learning process and supports a nurturing and goal oriented learning environment.

- The vision is displayed in student friendly language and visible in classrooms, hallways, newsletters and website. Students take pride in the school and support the school's vision and purpose.
- All stakeholders were involved in the revision and update of the school's vision.

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

- Conduct systematic annual reviews of the vision with internal and external stakeholders to ensure an ongoing understanding of the school's vision and goal progress.
- Implement the student behavior system school wide and monitor for effectiveness.
- Revise the School Improvement Plan to accurately reflect strategies and assessments.

Finding: Humphreys Elementary School has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

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

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

Humphreys American School is governed by the Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) policies and procedures which ensure the effective operation of the school. The principal and Military Command work collaboratively on issues unique to the school. An increase in student enrollment has impacted the school's facilities in recent years. A building designed for military training currently serves middle school students and approximately a block away, primary students receive their education in a remodeled army barrack. The principal and Military Command work diligently to ensure all buildings and materials are ready for students and staff to begin each school year. Two new schools will be built in the near future at Camp Humphreys. The elementary school is slated to open in the fall of 2014.

A teacher handbook outlines procedural guidelines and all teachers receive a copy of this document at the beginning of the school year. The principal noted she works within guidelines to ensure teachers receive materials and supplies necessary for instruction. Teachers reported the principal is a good steward of the budget and provides resources to them when requested.

Teachers may apply for membership to the School Improvement Leadership Team (SILT). This team advocates for the principal and they noted that she identifies teacher leaders and encourages some teachers to apply. The principal confirmed her desire to "grow leaders". Membership on the SILT changes periodically due to teacher turnover. During interviews with the SILT and teachers, the QAR team found that student performance data are collected, reported, and analyzed by the SILT. Upon review of the School Improvement Plan and interviews with teachers, the QAR team found errors and confusion amongst some teachers regarding assessments and the implementation of some interventions. Saturday School was recently implemented to assist targeted math students; however some teachers were unaware of this strategy. It was evident through interviews and observation that the SILT guides the school improvement process and communicates their work with the principal.

The principal has created a master schedule that allows for common grade level planning and collaboration. Teachers discuss results from formative common assessments and share instructional ideas that support school goals and strategies. Notes from these meetings are submitted to the principal. Teacher teams are moving from a grade level meeting format to a professional learning team format and note that both the principal and assistant principal attend some meetings.

Interviews and artifacts revealed minimal to passive administrative leadership involvement in the school improvement process. The assistant principal arrived at the school in October, and the principal has been at the school for four years. Relations between both principals appear to be just developing, and roles and responsibilities for the school improvement process have not yet been established.

While the principal ardently supported the efforts of her leadership team, she expressed frustration and concern with fluctuating or lagging student performance results and blamed circumstances for the outcome such as strained relations with teachers, teacher turnover, student mobility, new administration, and support needed from higher-level resources were reasons for problems associated with achievement trends and improvement efforts. Teachers identified the current assistant principal as a strong curriculum leader who had provided them with instructional ideas that had made a significant difference with instruction in their classrooms. Some teachers also reported that the assistant principal had recently introduced them to Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS), and teachers were encouraged to implement this idea using Eagle bucks to recognize positive student behaviors.

The staff is supervised in accordance with DoDEA policies and guidelines. Professional growth plans are developed collaboratively between the principal and teacher, and teachers are provided feedback on targeted growth goals. Classroom walkthroughs are conducted on a regular basis by both the principal and assistant principal. Written feedback is provided to teachers and they are encouraged to stop by the office for further discussion.

Students are provided leadership opportunities within the school. National Junior Honor Society students were observed selling healthy snacks during nutrition break to raise money for school planners. In addition, they were observed raising the flag and assisting younger students at street crossings.

During student interviews, younger students told the team they “loved” their school, and they could share their ideas or concerns with teachers. Student council members organize dances and raise money for school related projects. Older students were proud of their school, felt respected by their teachers, and could confide in a teacher if they had a concern.

Parents are provided meaningful roles on the School Advisory Council (SAC) and Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO). School related issues and concerns are brought to the SAC and shared with the principal. Parents noted they would like additional and timely feedback from the principal concerning issues brought to SAC. Of concern to parents was the downward trend of student performance data on the Terra Nova that is posted in the main office, and they were unaware of what was being done to address this problem. The principal offers a monthly Principal’s Tea to promote communication between the school and home.

The school offers a variety of extracurricular activities within the school. In addition, students are encouraged to participate in activities sponsored by the military community.

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

- The principal and military command work collaboratively to ensure students and teachers are provided a safe and well equipped learning environment.

- Teachers are identified as potential leaders by the principal and are provided leadership roles within the school.

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

- Identify and clarify leadership roles of the assistant principal and principal in the school improvement process.
- Develop learning teams to their potential so that they can plan, learn together, and problem solve instructional strategies to consistently increase student performance.
- Involve parents in updating communication efforts between home and school.
- Develop a process for communicating student assessment results to parents that allows them the opportunity to ask questions and understand improvement efforts.
- Pursue professional development opportunities in the area of school leadership, including principal mentoring, to ensure teachers are provided guidance and leadership with the implementation of strategies and the impact of these strategies on student performance through assessments.

Finding: Humphreys Elementary School has earned the overall assessment level of "Emerging" and has not met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 3: Teaching and Learning

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

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

Humphreys American School has implemented DoDEA standards and curriculum at all grade levels. Two school goals have been written in 'Strategic, Measurable, Attainable, Results-Oriented, Timebound' (SMART) goal format. Interviews with the SILT confirmed these goals were in direct response to students not meeting expectations in reading and math on assessments administered five years ago. The school is addressing specific reading comprehension and math skills which has allowed them to focus on instruction and strategies. In addition, teachers have incorporated strong standards based lesson plans that are designed to raise student achievement by making expectations clear for students.

The QAR team clearly detected instructional rigor in all classrooms and observed students actively engaged in learning throughout the school day. Students were observed using learning logs and organizers in cooperative learning settings while teachers facilitated feedback and engaged students in higher order thinking activities. Positive teacher relationships were evident and students spoke favorably about their teachers. Eligible students participate in the schools gifted program that provides individual and small group differentiated instruction in a variety of settings which includes instruction either in or out of the classroom. Several students identified math enrichment as the class that challenged their thinking and learning. Students eligible for additional time and support (Tier 2 & 3) receive small group instruction with an interventionist four days a week for 25 to 30 minutes. AVID is available to students in grades sixth through eighth,

The school's master schedule protects instructional time and allows grade level teachers to work together

to plan and discuss student performance and instruction. Teachers noted that increased dialog within grade levels or with teachers in their buildings have encouraged discussions surrounding school goals and strategies and have also improved their effectiveness in helping students in their classrooms. There appears to be isolated cases of vertical collaboration but this seems to be limited to teachers and staff working in the same classroom building.

Teachers were observed implementing the school's strategies. Students in both upper elementary and middle school classrooms were observed using the four Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) strategies. Primary students were observed using the 'What I KNOW, What I WANT to know, and What I LEARNED' (KWL) graphic organizer as stated in the School Improvement Plan. Middle school and students in grades third through fifth used the CSR Learning Log organizer to assist them with reading content and comprehending information in collaborative groups. At the primary level teachers were observed using the KWL graphic organizer and saw student work displayed in classrooms and hallways. Teachers throughout the school reported the strategy was useful in all subject areas and could be adapted to the learning needs of all students. In addition, the team observed students using the Understand, Plan, Solve, and Look Back (UPSL) strategy in math. This strategy was added this year due to lagging math skills on the Terra Nova 3 and for concern regarding the math vocabulary strategy implemented the previous year. A teacher described the UPSL strategy as a systematic structure to help students' problem solve and build math vocabulary. Through observation and review of the School Improvement Plan, the team found that teachers modify the CSR strategy according to reading ability and instructional time, thus altering the effectiveness of the strategy.

The selection and monitoring of strategies are done by the SILT with the assistance of the expertise from staff members who are familiar with approaches that have the potential to move the goals forward. At this time the selection process and the evaluation of the strategies are a work in progress. The external stakeholders play little or no active role in developing the plan designed to move the goals forward. Assessment results indicate the school is not producing the desired results and the SILT is dedicated to finding new strategies that have the potential to change the direction of progress toward reaching the goals. Monitoring the effectiveness of the strategies is a work in progress.

The QAR team observed teachers maximizing student learning time to the fullest when students traveled between buildings engaging students in vocabulary and math activities as they commuted between buildings on campus. Student safety is under surveillance from several angles including cameras throughout, staff supervision and daily inspection by the Administrative Operations team

Interviews disclosed a desire for increased time to collaborate to strengthen the understanding of the data collected school wide and to design instructional practice that increases student achievement. There were mixed reactions amongst parents regarding classroom instruction and curriculum. Most parents agreed the school's curriculum and instruction challenged their child's learning. Some parents expressed concern for the declining test results and worried about how their child would perform at their next school. Overall, parents felt comfortable contacting their child's teacher with questions or concerns.

Technology is integrated within classrooms. The QAR team observed teachers utilizing Elmos, document cameras and Smartboards to support their instruction. Students were familiar and comfortable with instructional technology, used this technology to share their work, and received immediate teacher feedback. It is evident that as technology continues to grow at the school, teachers and students will continue to embrace and expand their use of technology in the learning environment.

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

- Students are actively engaged in the learning process in all classrooms throughout the school.

- A master schedule supports collaborative planning time for teachers to discuss student performance and instruction.
- Teachers are invested in the academic success of their students.

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

- Research and implement effective assessments that are aligned to goals and strategies.
- Implement strategies with fidelity to ensure effectiveness.
- Provide time for vertical collaborative meetings to discuss curriculum, strategy implementation, student performance results, and instruction.

Finding: Humphreys Elementary School has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 4: Documenting and Using Results

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

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

The school is currently using some assessments that have limited alignment with student expectations. Goal One system-wide assessments include the Terra Nova 3rd Edition and the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) K-3. Goal One local assessments include the Scholastic Reading A-Z, Literacy Place Assessment, Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), and the PK Creative Curriculum Print and Book Concept Observation Checklist. Goal One formative assessments include Reading Street Unit Tests, Problem of the Day, Guided Reading Groups, and Holt Literature. However, the Literacy Place Assessment is a summative assessment given at the end of units that are no longer part of the curriculum and Guided Reading is not an assessment. These items do not yield reliable information to measure student learning. The DRA has been recently replaced with the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS). The Goal Two system-wide assessment is the Terra Nova 3rd Edition and local assessments include the Math Local Assessment K-5, PK Creative Curriculum Numbers and Operations Observation Checklist, and the Middle School Problem Solving Assessment. School Improvement Leadership Team members interviewed indicated the school is developing a comprehensive assessment system on clearly defined performance measures and plans to administer the assessments in the near future.

The Terra Nova 2nd Edition Science and Math, CTB/McGraw-Hill InView Assessment and the Naglieri Non-Verbal Ability Test were used to determine strategies to improve student performance. Goal One strategies selected were KWL Charts with the subsequent addition of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) and Goal Two strategies selected were Teaching Math Vocabulary for Reasoning and Communicating with the subsequent additions of the Vocabulary Graphic Organizer, UPSL Graphic Organizer, and UPSL Scoring Rubric. The InView Assessment and Naglieri Test were not repeated to determine the systemic impact of the initial intervention strategies selected. Consequently, there is little evidence to support a system to assess student performance on expectations for student learning and to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction.

The school communicates the results of student performance and school effectiveness to all stakeholders, however most of the parents and students interviewed did not understand the results, and therefore the results were not meaningful or useful to them. Through classroom observations, the QAR team noted that some teachers did not understand how to use data. There was no evidence that the school uses comparison and trend data of student performance from comparable schools in evaluating its effectiveness.

The school does not demonstrate verifiable growth in student performance. A review of performance data for 3 years on the Terra Nova 3rd Edition shows a decrease in Language, Math, and Social Studies, no change in Reading, and an increase in Science. The same review also shows an increase in the number of students scoring in the bottom national quartile in Language, Math, and Social Studies, no change in Reading, and a decrease in Science. Local assessments yielded similar results.

The school collects and maintains a data room where teachers can access student performance results.

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

- A Data Room is available to stakeholders.
- Student work is displayed and celebrated throughout the school.

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

- Revise the comprehensive assessment system to accurately measure the impact of the selected strategies on student achievement.
- Eliminate unreliable performance measures for student learning. (e.g. Literacy Place, Guided Reading)
- Train stakeholders to obtain the skills to analyze and use data, so it is more meaningful and useful to guide instruction and monitor student performance trend data.
- Compare student performance results from comparable schools to determine effectiveness.
- Consult with the District CSI Instructional Support Specialist (ISS) and utilize all available District resources in the school improvement process.

Finding: Humphreys Elementary School has earned the overall assessment level of "Emerging" and has not met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 5: Resource and Support Systems

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

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

The school employs highly qualified and certified staff and follows the prescribed DoDEA policy and regulations. Staff is assigned to responsibilities that align with their qualifications and certifications and the staffing ratios are within the guidelines prescribed.

Teacher turnover is a concern of the school noting most teachers leave after their third year. This year alone, twenty three teachers/staff are new to the school. However there is a core of experienced staff that

helps to stabilize the overall operation of the school. Despite the turnover the mentoring of new staff is minimal at best. New staff is settled into their positions and provided assistance by their colleagues for operational concerns. (e.g. housing, base passes, logistics) Interviews found that new staff members have to seek out information and ask questions to become familiar with the strategies and the direction of the improvement efforts. Staff members described the process, “I sought out my team members to ask about the areas of emphasis and took the initiative to seek help.” Consequently depending on the initiative and curiosity of the individual they could bring themselves up to speed on what is being done to move the improvement efforts forward.

There is collaboration between staff in a variety of areas. The administration has developed a schedule that promotes horizontal collaboration. There are regular grade level meetings and specialist meetings during team planning time. This effort promotes sharing of information and discussion of students and strategies that will potentially improve instructions. There is very little vertical articulation and in some cases with specialists there is little interaction between the elementary and middle school colleagues. Collaboration when it exists is within a level and little happens between the elementary and middle school staff. It is almost operated as two separate schools.

Support staff is familiar with the school’s vision and described how their work supports the teaching and learning process. Office administrative assistants and building maintenance personnel have developed positive relationships with students and take pride in the school and staff. They view their role as “doing whatever is necessary” to ensure the success of students.

The school has received adequate funding from DoDEA to carryout it vision and purpose. The administration allocates the funds to ensure the implementation of improvement initiatives and address the adopted curricular standards. The district audits the budget on a regular basis and there are clear procedures that deal with the expenditure of the resources provided. Financial records are kept up to date and the status of the individual accounts is monitored at the school.

Priority is given to the safety and security of the facility and all personnel who utilize the school. There is a detailed crisis plan and the required safety drills are scheduled on a regular basis. The student’s safety is a very high priority situation and despite the arrangement and age of the facilities great care is taken to provide a good educational environment for both staff and students. Students are involved in creating a safe environment. The Junior National Honor Society acts as crossing guards to get students and staff safely across a busy street at the beginning and end of the day.

There are places that students with issues or concerns can go to seek help. At the student meetings it was clear that the teachers and counselor are the individuals seen as providing help and guidance. At present the school faces a challenge as they try to replace their veteran counselor who only recently retired. The position is vacant at present but has been posted and interviews and screening is underway. In the interim the teachers have picked up the slack so that the student’s needs are taken care of. Student behavior is a high priority and the overall climate is very good. Several behavior modification initiatives are being developed and implemented such as the Positive Behavioral Intervention System (PBIS) which is being used by a majority of the elementary staff.

There are special needs staff at the school who serve students with identified special needs. The staff has a process for identifying students and work together to develop an individual education plan that address their need. Students are self-contained or mainstreamed based on the analysis of their needs and a determination of what is in the best educational interest of the child. There are also individuals who provide extra help for students who are struggling but do not qualify for special education services. Some staff have assignments to provide additional instruction to augment what the child receives in their regular

class room. (e.g., reading specialists math tutors, advisory period, Saturday School)

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

- The staff is highly qualified and assigned to responsibilities that take advantage of their certification and professional capabilities.
- There are many opportunities for students to seek additional help for educational challenges they face in the regular classroom.
- The professional staff is very sensitive to the needs of the students and when situations arise, such as the counseling vacancy, they fill the void so that the students are cared for.
- Safety and security are extremely high priority and all necessary drill and precautions are taken to ensure a safe and secure educational environment.
- The staff is very dedicated to maximizing the physical resources despite a facility that is logistically challenged.

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

- Focus on providing a set of structured mentor activities to ensure that new staff is provided direction that will give fidelity to the curricular and improvement initiatives.
- Create opportunities for vertical grade meetings to build capacity in meeting the school's goals.

Finding: Humphreys Elementary School has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 6: Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

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

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

The school promotes collaboration and open communication with its stakeholders. Parents are actively involved in the Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO) and the School Advisory Council (SAC). Middle school parents are starting to take an active role in presenting and helping with the awards assembly. Additionally, parents are invited to a monthly Principal's Tea where they keep up to date on school happenings.

A "Welcome Brief" for new parents, informing stakeholders about overall school data, communications, and school rules and expectations is held at the beginning of the year as new families arrive to the installation. This event is sponsored by both Military Command and the school. Parents may access the school handbook on-line. Stakeholders are invited and encouraged to volunteer in individual classrooms and at PTSO events.

The SAC provides an official forum for parents to express their ideas and concerns with school and community officials, however interviews found that follow through is viewed as inconsistent. There is evidence that a lack of understanding is shown in dealing with the needs of military families. Stakeholders are also able to access the DoDEA Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Communication is on-going and frequent between the Military Command and principal regarding facilities, enrollment, and resources. Command is very supportive of the school, students, and families. Command encourages teachers to participate in extra-curricular activities and base sponsored events.

The school utilizes community expertise to enhance learning opportunities. Army Community Service sponsored this year's Red Ribbon Week activities, the fire department taught fire safety in October, and military units volunteer their time with students and activities. Military Command is looking forward to helping support the school with expertise in the area of STEM.

During faculty meetings, teachers and staff have opportunities to share ideas, plans, and successes within the school and grade-levels. Faculty members can e-mail their presentation requests to the principal, who will add them to the meeting agenda.

The school utilizes multiple means to communicate student progress to parents. These communication channels include GradeSpeed, report cards, parent/teacher conferences, progress reports, phone calls, and e-mails. Parents and students responded favorably regarding GradeSpeed and the benefits that come with this technology to communicate between home and school. Although test scores and data are sent home throughout the year, parents conveyed a lack of knowledge in interpreting these assessment results and would be receptive to opportunities to learn more about this data regarding their student.

Additionally, communication with parents is maintained through classroom newsletters and monthly principal's newsletters. The school's website is updated regularly to show happenings and events. The monthly newsletter highlights news from the office, student activities, school calendar, staff biographies, and notes from the nurse.

Student expectations were evident in the school's displays of student work samples. This was also validated through interviews with students and teachers. Students discussed high behavior and character expectations, which can result in them earning "Eagle Bucks".

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

- The military command is an active participant in the collaborative effort between the school and the community.
- The school employs multiple methods to disseminate and communicate information to stakeholders.
- Teachers respond quickly to parent e-mails and communicate student progress in classes. Parents feel teachers are very willing to listen to parents and work to solve any problems.

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

- Disseminate overall student performance and school effectiveness to stakeholders in a more meaningful way.
- Increase the utilization of expertise, both internal and external, to facilitate the school improvement process.
- Organize and facilitate evening family nights that highlight the CSI process, goals, and strategies.
- Offer a "Welcome Brief" frequently as new families arrive to ensure understanding of the expectations, school improvement process, and operations of the school.

Finding: Humphreys Elementary School has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

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

Humphreys American School has established an improvement structure that should facilitate the planning, gathering and analyzing of data, identifying a vision, setting goals, choosing strategies, developing an action plan, implementing the strategies and finally evaluating the results. External stakeholders do not play an active role in the improvement committee process. All professional staff is actively involved in one or more of the improvement sub-committees. The committees and subcommittees meet on a regular basis and the staff takes responsibility for the activities assigned to that committee. Coordination of activities, follow through, and attention to detail at times is lacking

The vision was developed to drive the activities that impacted improvement efforts. The vision is displayed in classrooms, public areas of the school, and in publications that are sent to internal and external stakeholders. The vision is not reviewed on a regular basis and when a review takes place, the majority of the work is done by the internal stakeholders. The external stakeholders play a passive role in the process which captures the values and beliefs encompassed in the vision statement. The students are aware of the vision and a conscious effort has been made to put it into student friendly language and the primary students have developed a school song to capture the essence of the vision.

The school has a detailed profile which is updated on a regular basis. It represents a description of the demographic information and captures the unique local insights. It identifies the logistical challenges the school faces with its facilities and the mobility of staff, students, and families.

The improvement goals were developed several years ago and were based on analysis of multiple sources of data. In some instances the data used were not valid, accurate, or appropriate. Use of data is inconsistent and in some instances they do not align with the goal targets. This inconsistency leads to an implementation of strategies that result in uneven results which concern some of the stakeholders. This was made clear in several of the interviews, most notably the session held with parents and community members.

There are a number of means used to communicate with stakeholder groups. Newsletters, school web site, Principal's Tea, and SAC are used to communicate goals and school improvement efforts to external stakeholders. Teachers and staff utilize a significant portion of their staff meeting time or professional development day for discussing the improvement efforts and familiarizing themselves with the initiatives that are designed to move the process forward. School-wide professional development has been focused on the improvement effort however some individual professional development goals are not aligned with improvement activities. The district has specialists who are responsible for supporting improvement efforts. They have specific expertise that will provide direction for the school. These resources, although available, have been only marginally utilized and in some instances coordination and scheduling of these activities has been challenging.

The implementation and facilitation of the improvement plan is a critical component that is lacking in the school. The implementation is inconsistent and there is little coordination between the various internal

stakeholders. The leadership has inconsistently facilitated the activities which have impacted on the fidelity of the effort. The leadership needs to be an active partner in the process and accept responsibility to ensure that things are coordinated and that activities are consistent within the school.

The interpretation of data has been a challenge primarily because some of the data points are inappropriate. Some staff expressed a need for additional professional development so they can identify appropriate sources of data and analyze data to support the improvement efforts. There were some adjustments to the strategies in response to the lack of progress but whether these were carefully thought out or simply reactions are unclear. The lack of understanding of data goes beyond the internal stakeholders. External stakeholders expressed concern about the trend of achievement data and identified difficulty in interpretation of the data. Some effort needs to be put toward providing stakeholders with an understanding of the data and the data should be adjusted to reflect a user friendly format. The evaluation of data is limited and has marginal alignment to the effectiveness of the improvement initiatives.

The action plan is a critical component in the improvement protocol. In order to be valuable and build capacity, the action plan needs to be reflective of what is currently being done to support and promote the improvement effort. Unfortunately the action plan has not been recently updated to reflect what is currently being done. Some of the adjustments in strategies that were implemented to address the lack of improvement were not included in the most recent revision of the action plan. (e.g., Understand, Plan, Solve, and Look Back (UPSL)).

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

- The school has a detailed profile which is updated on a regular basis and reflects the demographics and unique local insights.
- All internal stakeholders play an active role in the development and implementation of the improvement initiatives.

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

- Commit to utilizing the expertise provided by the specialists at the district level to improve and strengthen the overall improvement process.
- Engage in professional development focused on the identification of appropriate data sources, analysis of data, and the application of data to further the improvement effort and address the improvement targets identified by the goals adopted.
- Provide opportunities for external stakeholders to be active participants in the improvement process and help these stakeholders gain an understanding and meaning of the data collected and applied to goal attainment.
- Develop action plans that are detailed and accurately reflect what is currently being done to address the priority areas of improvement that are captured in the goals.
- Align and coordinate all improvement efforts school wide to ensure the fidelity of the overall improvement effort.
- Direct the leadership of the school to be actively involved and engaged in the improvement process and facilitate the activities of the school wide effort to ensure a consistent implementation.

Finding: Humphreys Elementary School has earned the overall assessment level of "Emerging" and has not met this standard for accreditation.

Conclusion

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

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

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

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Mrs. Jill J. Bramlet, Chair/Lead Evaluator
- Dr. Gerald K. Freitag, Vice Chair (Cardinal Stritch University)
- Tracy Stockdale, Team Member
- Mr. Edgar Romero, Team Member
- Andrea Elliott, Team Member
- David W. Dinges, Team Member (DoDEA Pacific)

AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools

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

Vision and Purpose

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

Governance and Leadership

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

Teaching and Learning

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

Documenting and Using Results

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

Resource and Support Systems

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

Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

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

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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