

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Osan Middle School
Unit 2037
APO, AP (U.S. Military), United States 96278-2037**

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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 Osan Middle School in APO, AP (U.S. Military), United States on 02/06/2012 - 02/09/2012.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 1 member of the administrative team, 15 students, 5 parents, and 32 teachers. In addition, Support Staff, Military Command and District Leadership 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:

The staff is actively involved and takes leadership in developing strategies that support the vision and focus of setting high expectations for all students.

Evidence:

In interviews the various groups could articulate what high expectations mean and describe experiences that moved them to realize this goal. Throughout the building there was evidence that supported the schools commitment to high expectations and the realization of the vision that was embraced by all groups.

Rationale:

Setting high expectations and developing a culture where all stakeholders are encouraged to stretch themselves educationally will help the individuals to realize their true educational potential.

Commendation 2

Commendation Statement:

The professional staff has developed an educational community that embraces the talents of individuals and is committed to utilizing the collective expertise of individuals to enhance the educational experiences provided to the students.

Evidence:

The observation of individuals from the community sharing their time and talents with the staff and students and the professional staff helping one another demonstrates the commitment to share expertise for the benefit of all. This was further developed through interviews with various groups who recognized the importance of this effort. It was also evident in the artifacts that were provided.

Rationale:

In any community of learners there is an array of individuals who have talents that could have a positive impact on the educational experiences and enrich what is provided to students. To be open to utilizing this expertise enables the school to expand the horizons of all involved and give additional meaning to the overall educational experience.

Commendation 3

Commendation Statement:

The staff and administration have established an educational environment that respects the uniqueness of every student and endeavors to meet their needs through relevant and creative experiences.

Evidence:

The observations revealed many creative approaches which provided students with activities that link the curriculum to everyday experiences. In interviews the linking of concepts to relevant experiences was described and seen as enriching the learning experience.

Rationale:

By linking learning to relevant experiences, ideas will be internalized and become a part of the student's knowledge base. This helps build connections that expand understanding and helps the student realize their unique capabilities.

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:

Develop a formal protocol to assist families, students, and staff to understand the vision and expectations of the school as transitions take place on an annual basis.

Evidence:

Osan is in the unique position of having staff, students, and families move in and out on an annual basis. The tour of duty for families is only two years and consequently changes in the population served is significant each year. During interviews it became apparent that some vital things were left to chance and consequently were missed as these transitions take place.

Rationale:

If the innovations are to be embedded and their full benefit realized, the school must have a formal means of induction that makes the various stakeholders aware of the expectations and informs them of the vision and commitment to high expectations.

Required Action 2

Required Action:

Coordinate the collection and analysis of relevant data to gauge the impact of the strategies designed to assist the school in realizing its vision of setting high expectations that will motivate and enable students to realize their educational potential.

Evidence:

The school is only two years old; however, it has developed an array of summative and formative assessments to measure progress. The results to date have not been statistically significant and have really set baseline data that can be used to gauge progress in the future. This was clearly displayed in the artifacts that were provided and was discussed by various staff during interviews.

Rationale:

Data are a critical part of the improvement process. It helps gauge the impact of the strategies the school is implementing to realize its goals. To effectively measure this progress the right data need to be collected, the appropriate analysis must take place, and conclusions need to be developed that will result in adjustments that will enhance the chances that the targets will be achieved.

Required Action 3

Required Action:

Focus on expanding the efforts to develop a scope and sequence that brings the curricular standards to life and promotes the idea of high expectations which are central to the vision of the school.

Evidence:

In both the interviews and artifacts there is evidence that the staff has begun to look at the standards and develop a scope and sequence in some areas. This was also evident in the observations of activities in the school and is

recognized by stakeholders outside of the school.

Rationale:

Developing a scope and sequence helps informally map the curriculum and causes the staff to unpack the standards. This helps enrich the educational experiences and will avoid duplication and redundancy that can take valuable time and resources away from the experiences that promote high expectations.

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 Osan Middle 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:

Osan Middle School has established a clear vision that is embraced by both internal and external stakeholders. The vision for Osan Middle School is, "Providing a Setting of High Expectations that Engage and Motivate all Students in a Successful Learning Environment." The school is only two years old and was formed by combining students from several locations. As a result the external and internal stakeholders came together in the initial year and after considerable deliberations, developed a vision of excellence that the school would pursue. While a systematic process was not evident, during the 2010-2011 school year, details were added to the vision and purpose in an effort to bring the vision to life. Teachers and leadership defined important key terms and communicated this purpose to the stakeholders. The vision is reviewed annually, is posted in classrooms and public areas within the school, is found on the school website and is prominently displayed in all publications. The publication and dissemination of the vision is critical because of the high mobility of the school population.

The internal stakeholders have focused a great deal of time and effort to internalize the essence of the vision and are very deliberate in using the vision to promote the well-being of the students served. The staff has identified four major concepts that help clarify the essence of the vision. These four concepts are high expectations (rigor), student engagement (relevance), student motivation (relationships) and a successful learning environment (results). Each of these concepts has been flushed out and consensus on the meaning has been established.

In addition, the students made posters located throughout the school. These student posters revealed their understanding of the vision and purpose of their school using flow charts and diagrams explaining the meaning in their own words. Student-led morning announcements delivered through their closed circuit television reminded teachers to work with their students on the Teaching and Learning Standard.

For high expectations the staff has developed a belief that each learner will meet the standards and realize their educational potential. Teachers told the QAR team that they intentionally work to have every student own their own learning. Students defined high expectations as individual goals that they set with their parents and teachers to reach excellence in their learning.

For engagement the learning has been designed to provide relevancy through accepted instructional approaches. Students were observed using Cornell Notes, and teachers described how they use formative assessments to improve instruction and address their two school-wide goals in reading and math.

For relationships there has been a conscious effort to develop productive relationships between staff and students. Student interviews revealed that they not only feel comfortable requesting academic assistance, but view their teachers as a caring and concerned ally in which they can confide. Teachers and staff work collaboratively as a whole and within goal and school improvement team meetings.

School improvement had to become more than something that is done. Because of the relative newness of the school, to make an impact the continuous improvement efforts adopted needed to be integrated into everything that is done on behalf of the students. The improvement efforts are visible and really are not an event but something that is truly embedded into everything that goes on at the school. Professional development activities and daily conversation reflects the school's commitment to the improvement process. Long term subs participate in school improvement activities and blend seamlessly into the school's culture of rigor, relevance, relationships, and results.

The school maintains and regularly updates a comprehensive profile that identifies the unique characteristics that guide the efforts of all involved. The school goals are a reflection of Terra Nova 3 assessment results and are focused and aligned with the school's vision. Teachers use formative assessment results to differentiate their instruction and monitor student performance. Teachers share their results within their department, and they are beginning to recognize the potential of a school-wide assessment system. Interviews with the School Improvement Leadership Team revealed passion and commitment to the school improvement process, and they could identify the next steps needed to monitor and revise the vision as they continue their improvement journey. Although the resources have been limited a conscious effort is made to apply the limited resources in a manner that promotes the essence of the vision. In an effort to broaden the impact the school has sought partners who would provide resources to augment the efforts finance by the budget provided. The school is also blessed with a Military Command and a community that is committed to providing opportunities that support the vision of excellence that has been embraced by the school.

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

- Leadership, teachers, students, and parents model the Osan Middle School vision. Rigor, relevance, relationships, and results are expectations that are modeled by all stakeholders.
- School goals are directly linked to the school's vision. School-wide interventions support both the reading and math goals.
- School improvement vocabulary is well understood by staff members and used as a part of every day instruction and conversation with students and parents.

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

- Develop a systematic protocol for updating the school's vision and purpose.
- Solicit input from parents as the vision and purpose evolves to ensure ongoing support.
- Compile a comprehensive profile that includes not only academic performance data, but also student behavior data that monitors the implementation of the Character Counts program.

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

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

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

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

The school is governed by policies and regulations that are developed by the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) in collaboration with stakeholders who serve these institutions. There is some flexibility to interpret and refine these regulations to meet the needs as identified by the military command and the district office. There is a fully developed faculty handbook that reflects the expectations inherent in these policies and regulations. All staff members are provided a copy at the beginning of the school year and these regulations are intended to guide their activities on behalf of the students they serve.

The families receive a copy of the parent handbook that contains the rules and regulations that impact their children during their enrollment in the school. This handbook is provided when the parents register the child for school. Several students stated, "The Principal knows all of our names and is everywhere, around every corner." Students also described the principal as supportive and approachable.

The school has developed a structure that is open to the comments and concerns of the parents and students. The parents are encouraged to voice their concerns and issues directly to the teacher and have access to the counselor and principal as well. The school also has a School Advisory Council that represents yet another venue at the school level where parents can communicate on issues that impact the education of their children. The parents are given an opportunity through the Interactive Comment Evaluation to rate the services they are receiving, and if this is done with identification, the comments are passed along to the principal in an effort to seek a constructive resolution to the issue. All parents are given an opportunity every other year to complete a Customer Satisfaction Survey which is sent to headquarters and the results are reported to the school. The Advisory Council on Dependent Education visits the school periodically and interviews some stakeholders.

Osan Middle School is a relatively small school at this time. Because of its size there is not only an expectation but a need that everyone takes a leadership role in the varied activities that enhance the opportunities for children and families. All staff are expected to be actively involved in the improvement process through participation and leadership of various committees. Teachers described how they have a voice in making important decisions through professional learning teams. Specifically, teachers commented on how they have a voice in scheduling, continuous school improvement goals and interventions, staff meetings, and professional development.

The staff is supervised on a regular basis in accordance with DoDEA policies and guidelines that outline the evaluation and supervisory process. All professional level educators develop professional growth plans and are provided feedback and opportunities on their individual professional growth targets. There is also an informal mentoring initiative that is specifically designed to maintain continuity in school improvement formative assessments and implementation of interventions. Most of the current professional development activities, out of necessity, have been focused on school improvement topics.

Parents and students are provided with opportunities to take leadership roles in various groups that influence the operation of the school. The parents are encouraged to be active in the Parent Teacher

Student Organization (PTSO) and SAC. Students are encouraged to be actively involved in the Student Council.

The principal and staff have developed a comprehensive system of measures which allow them to monitor student performance. It is clear that there is an expectation that all staff members, including support staff, are active participants in school improvement activities and shared leadership was a common trend. The school has embraced the concept of "together everyone achieves more" and students specifically stated, "We have no bullies at this school." Students went on to state they could tell their teachers and principal "anything" and that all students had strong social bonds.

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

- The principal advocates for all stakeholders to including students, teachers, parents, and the Osan community.
- The administrator develops teacher leaders by encouraging teachers to take active leadership roles to include teacher teaching teachers during professional development days and staff meetings, and fostering the initial stages of a professional learning community.
- Every staff member has a profile located on the common drive which can be accessed by every computer. These profiles specifically outline each staff members unique contributions to the school improvement effort.

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

- Solicit external stakeholders to be active in the continuous school improvement process.
- Provide opportunities for parents to familiarize them with the school improvement initiatives, e.g. parent university.
- Expand the professional learning opportunities to relevant topics that would support the efforts of staff to develop expertise in research based instructional practices.

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

Standard 3: Teaching and Learning

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

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

The relatively small size of Osan Middle School and the manageable pupil-teacher ratio has provided the opportunity for staff to get to know students individually and to develop approaches that are intended to address the student's individual educational needs.

The Department of Defense has adopted a rigorous curriculum that is used in all schools world-wide and is focused on the needs of the special population that the member schools serve. The curriculum is considered challenging by all stakeholder groups. The school has chosen, in partnership with the district staff, to move beyond the basic curricular documents and begin to develop a scope and sequence of

instruction built on the curriculum standards. In addition the teachers are developing both summative and formative assessments based on the DoDEA curricular standards.

Professional staff utilize recognized approaches that encompass researched based instructional methods. They have begun to use essential questions to focus learning in all content areas, graphic organizers to get students to organize their information into clusters and summary writing and notes to process and clarify their thinking. Professional development is provided to ensure that these methods are consistently implemented throughout the school. One teacher stated, "We want our kids to own their learning."

The school has adopted the practice of giving assessments at the beginning of the year to determine where the students are academically in all core academic areas. This is critical particularly when one considers the mobility of the students. The school has encouraged the practice of giving formative assessments during the year to help measure the impact of the interventions designed to ensure improvement in student performance. These formative assessments afford the opportunity to make mid-term course corrections to enhance the opportunity for children to be successful. The data collected are analyzed and shared so that instructions can be designed which will support the improvement goals while not compromising achievement in other areas. Professional staff participate in meaningful dialogue focused on the performance of students so that adjustments and modifications can be made to better address the deficiencies or lack of progress identified.

Differentiation is always a challenge in the traditional class setting. At Osan Middle School specific support programs have been established to address issues that are identified with individual students. This practice includes students who are struggling to meet expectations as well as those students who have demonstrated they are exceeding expectations. Some of the specific support services include AVID program, Read 180, Compensatory Math Programs, English Language Learners, Special Needs Programs and innovations designed to address the need of the gifted learner. One of the unique practices is school-wide academic checks each week on Tuesday. Any student who has received an "F" as reflected on the electronic grade record is required to invest twenty five minutes with the school counselor and psychologist for general intervention. In addition identified students attend a mandatory after school study session. Although not fool-proof, it is yet another attempt to meet the individual needs of students and to pursue the vision of excellence the school community embraces. In addition, the block schedule with a seminar period is seen as a means to maximize the impact of instructional time available.

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

- Expectations for students are clearly defined in all curricular areas to improve student success and achievement.
- Initiatives are in place to address students' needs who are not meeting expectations in classes and to support higher achievement and improvement throughout the school.
- All students and teachers are aware of the academic goals and actively engaged in interventions to meet these goals.
- Data are gathered on student performance and used to guide instruction.

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

- Analyze how Cornell Notes are used throughout the school and form a consistent, school-wide protocol for teaching, assessing, and improving Cornell Notes.
- Structure a method of collecting artifacts, meeting with other staff members, and critiquing student samples as a team in order to improve in a cohesive approach.
- Implement higher-order critical thinking skills in the intervention that encourages students to analyze and criticize information.

Finding: Osan Middle 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 has developed a comprehensive system of formative and summative assessments designed to measure the academic achievement and progress of the students. This comprehensive program consists of three tiers of assessment, DoDEA mandated assessments, school level assessments, and classroom assessments. They have developed a comprehensive assessment calendar that serves as a road map for measuring student progress, not only toward the adopted improvement goals but addresses all relevant areas of student learning. There is an effort to utilize triangulation to address the analysis of data and identification of areas of need. The analysis is designed to identify the priority areas for the development of smart goals that drive the improvement process. In each of the goal target areas the data have been collected; however, the results to date have not produced statistically significant results. Some of the assessments have been given only in the past year, and hence, the data collected really represent baseline data from which future changes can be analyzed.

Staff engage in a detailed analysis of pre/post test data. This reflects the administration of the summative assessment for the English/Language Arts and the Math initiatives. A specific protocol has been developed to address the administration of these pre/post tests. The analysis is being done at the department level, and all staff serve on one of the goal teams. The primary focus of these conversations is on how instruction in their related areas may support the goal achievement without compromising overall achievement in other areas.

The second effort is in the area of formative assessments. These assessments are linked to the targeted objective performance indices. The individual departments engage in a detailed analysis of the formative data to evaluate the performance of students on these indices. The primary focus is the development of modifications to instruction that will guide efforts in the subsequent quarter. This in essence helps focus efforts to make adjustments when less than expected results are noted. It clearly allows for mid-course corrections which enhance the opportunities to address the specific goal areas and gauges the impact of the strategy that has been adopted to address the goal area.

The school keeps comprehensive records of student progress, and this information is shared with parents to enhance the partnership designed to help students realize their academic potential. The Grade Speed electronic grade program, parent/teacher conferences, website, and newsletters provide parents with an overview of the schools' effort to address its identified improvement areas, and in individual conferences they provide the parent with specific information on their individual child's progress.

The school also compares its results with other schools within the district as well as throughout DoDEA to determine whether it is on track to meet the expectations outlined in the student performance portion of the

comprehensive strategic plan.

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

- The school has developed a three-tiered system of assessment which includes DoDEA mandated assessments, school-level assessments, and classroom assessments.
- Staff actively participate in professional development designed to help analyze data provided by assessments and use the information to inform instruction.
- The formative assessments are linked to the objective performance indices and focus on development of modifications to instruction that will guide efforts in the next grading period.
- Information on academic performance is shared with parents in a timely manner utilizing the capabilities of Grade Speed.

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

- Collaborate and communicate within and between departments to maximize the impact of using the formative data to adjust and inform instruction.
- Provide additional training for staff so they can better utilize the assessment information available to make adjustments to the instruction provided.
- Engage parents and students in training designed to maximize the effectiveness of the capabilities inherent in the Grade Speed system.
- Monitor the results of objective performance indices to develop trend data that will enable staff and students to evaluate progress toward achieving the priority goals that were adopted.

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

Standard 5: Resource and Support Systems

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

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

The school employs certified staff that are well qualified for their positions. Staff are assigned to content areas that are covered by their respective certifications. Because of the size of the school, class size has been optimal, and it provides the staff member the opportunity to know the students and adjust instruction to meet their needs. Staff are required to stay current in their area of assignment through professional development and additional education. The current staff is diverse in experiences and length of service.

The needs of students are met, and the school is committed to providing sufficient resources to enable these students to achieve at their highest level, meet all special needs, and comply with all applicable regulations. The process of data analysis and instructional modification are supplemented by special support programs and services focused on the unique needs of these special students. The school counselor and psychologist provide regular general intervention for students who have failing grades. These weekly meetings are augmented with mandatory weekly study sessions supervised by a certified staff member. In regards to communication, parents reported that teachers respond to e-mails and phone

calls immediately and are student-centered.

The school receives adequate funding, and that funding is allocated to support the vision of the school. The allocation of funds is a collective effort with input from a committee of teacher leaders who consider and prioritize expenditure requests. This involvement helps bring a level of ownership to the process on the part of the professional staff. The leadership of the school is committed to allocating resources to support the improvement initiatives. Financial transactions are audited annually, and DoDEA provides continuous budget oversight. There is an effort to establish a Student Activity Fund (SAF) in accordance with applicable regulations for student support that is not able to be funded with the limited appropriated funds. This fund will be administered by a fund custodian, bookkeeper, and committee of teachers.

Osan Middle School is one of the newest facilities in the district. As such both the facility and equipment are maintained in a manner that provides a safe and orderly educational environment for students, staff, parents, and the community. There is a designated crisis team, and the school has a published crisis management plan. The district provides applicable training for all employees so they are able to deal with all situations that present themselves. The support staff believes their work directly impacts student performance, and the transportation director noted that he is on every bus with kids before and after school, developing relationships.

Because the school is new, the effort to build a strong well developed community support structure is a work in progress. The mobility of the families also contributes negatively to having a developed and active support group. The growth in the school has also led to an above average turnover in staff. The induction program for new staff is still a work in progress, and most of the mentoring initiatives come from the district level. A more focused induction program which is aligned with the vision of the school and provides a protocol for the interventions would be desirable.

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

- Initiatives are in place to support students with a variety of needs, e.g. AVID, SPED, gifted.
- Weekly grade checks are a part of the school procedures and failing students are provided additional support and opportunities to improve.
- Students feel comfortable talking with any teacher, and the Character Counts program is effective throughout the school.

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

- Create a written protocol for informing parents of course selections at the middle school and the requirements for advanced placement classes at the high school.
- Improve parents' understanding of the Terra Nova by developing and distributing information which outlines how to "read and understand" the test results.

Finding: Osan Middle 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 communicates information and gathers feedback from stakeholders about students, their performance, and school effectiveness through a number of channels. Some of these are active and some are passive. The school's website has become an effective tool to provide up-to-date information to external and internal stakeholders. The school also has a weekly newsletter that is sent to all parents. Grade Speed is an active communication channel through which parents receive timely grade alerts if their child's grade falls below an acceptable level. This level can be set by the parent, which makes it a unique tool to strengthen the partnership between the home and the school. Students reported that they also have a Grade Speed account and check it regularly. Their only concern was that some teachers do not keep Grade Speed up to date. Parent interviews revealed not all parents are signed up for Grade Speed, but they are encouraged to do this during Parent Teacher conferences.

Parents' concerns and ideas are sought through a variety of means. Parents reported the principal and teachers respond to all concerns and questions within twenty four hours. During the parent interview, the QAR team found that there is a deep sense of pride and that parents feel their students are provided with strong instruction. There is also a conscious effort to seek parent satisfaction with the services being provided. It is hoped these avenues will not only enhance communication but will strengthen the partnership between the school, DoDEA, and the family. The parents can voice their ideas and opinions through a variety of means, e.g., direct communication with the teacher, counselor, principal or School Advisory Council. At the community level the parent can complete an interactive evaluation (ICE) that the principal must respond to within a set period of time. This provides the vehicle to rate the services provided to the students. Every other year DoDEA provides a Customer Satisfaction Survey. The ideas gathered from all of these vehicles is used to facilitate change and improvement that will assist children and enhance their educational experience. The Customer Satisfaction survey data are available on the website, and it is evident that this information was considered in the development of the school-wide goals.

The challenge with a new school and a mobile clientele is to develop partnerships with external stakeholders to enhance the opportunities for students in school and further the growth in their educational abilities. The school has focused on establishing a strong relationship with the Air Force Family Readiness Center. This center provides the ability to publicize opportunities for members of the community to volunteer in the schools. This helps bring the collective expertise of the community into the school to further the scope and relevance of the services being provided to students. The QAR team observed military and parent volunteers working with students. Military Command expressed pride in the school's Science Fair and the strong support and volunteerism this activity brings to the school. The PTSO has a position of volunteer coordinator to develop a pool of volunteers that can be utilized for targeted activities such as field trip chaperones, club/activity support, teacher appreciation week, etc. This is very much a work in progress, and although some partnerships and participation have been achieved, there is a desire to expand the volunteer pool. The parent interview revealed there are many "silent members" of the PTSO that are just a phone call away that will provide support to the school when requested.

Other than Grade Speed, the need to communicate with external stakeholders in a timely and understandable manner is progressing. Parents requested an opportunity to receive additional information

about Terra Nova results and other assessments. They were also unclear how students are selected for honors classes and access advance placement programs at the high school. This, if achieved, will bring additional expertise into the school to help work toward the realization of the essence captured in the vision statement of the school.

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

- Parents have a clear understanding of the school's vision and support the high expectations held by the principal and teachers.
- Immediate contact is made to parents and community stakeholders when questions or concerns arise.
- The school's vision of rigor, relevance, relationships and results are regularly communicated to all stakeholders.

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

- Provide an opportunity for parents to meet with teachers to discuss assessment results and detail the Terra Nova results.
- Communicate the process used for determining the eligibility for honors courses at the middle school and advance placement classes at the high school.

Finding: Osan Middle 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:

The fact that the school is only two and one half years old is both a blessing and a challenge. It is a blessing in that it has forced the entire staff to focus on the school improvement efforts. It is a challenge in that many of the initiatives are unfinished, and the opportunity to evaluate the impact of the plan is limited at best.

At the school it is easy to see the efforts because of the need to not only be very committed but to be very visible with the efforts to provide the setting for the high expectations that are captured in the vision the school has set. There is a conscious effort on the part of all staff to engage and motivate all students so that the learning environment will provide an atmosphere where success is attainable.

There is a well-developed and up-to-date profile that brings the data to life, highlights the uniqueness of the community, and articulates a plan to address the priority goals developed from the data analyzed. The improvement efforts are communicated both internally and externally. Involvement both in the communication and process of improvement is more active for internal stakeholders and more passive for external stakeholders. In part, the pace of the effort limits the external participation. However, the school has used channels such as newsletters and parent meetings to communicate what is happening and why. An improvement brochure has been developed to disseminate the improvement message in the

community. The infrastructure is in place and has been aligned with the vision. The level of community involvement in the active development and expansion of the plan is something that is a work in progress.

The commitment is evident in the goal teams which require active participation by all internal stakeholders. Not only are they asked to participate, but the size of the staff and the complexity of the task force individuals to assume leadership roles to move the initiative forward. There is an obvious effort to build bridges between the standards, the curriculum, instruction, and local assessment. The school improvement plan is built on a foundation of student achievement data which are carefully analyzed and discussed in order to develop the strategies to move the plan forward. The resources are focused on the plan and its goals, and the staff works collaboratively to direct all resources toward the desired end as expressed by the adopted improvement goals.

The rapid pace of the development and implementation of the plan has unfortunately left no time for evaluation of the efforts. The plan over the next several years will provide data that will help in making decisions that will shape the future, but at this point the plan has not been operational long enough for this to happen. The local assessments are new, and therefore, the data collected to date really are baseline data which can be used in the future to evaluate the effectiveness of the improvement efforts.

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

- The school has a well developed and detailed profile which guides the overall improvement process.
- The entire staff is actively involved in the improvement process, and in many cases they play a leadership role in moving the process forward.

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

- Collect and evaluate sophisticated and selective data to determine trends in student performance and inform decision making in the continuous school improvement process.
- Focus on embedding the improvement process into the culture of the school.

Finding: Osan Middle School has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has 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

- Dr. Gerald K. Freitag, Chair/Lead Evaluator (Cardinal Stritch University)
- Mrs. Jill J. Bramlet, Vice Chair
- Mr. Kristopher R. Kwiatek, Team Member
- Ms. Rachel L. Geesa, Team Member (Seoul American Middle School)

AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools

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

Vision and Purpose

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

Governance and Leadership

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

Teaching and Learning

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

Documenting and Using Results

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

Resource and Support Systems

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

Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

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

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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