

Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Seoul Middle School

Darrell Mood, Principal

Review Dates: 02/10/2009 - 02/12/2009



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

Quality Assurance Review Report

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

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

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

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

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

Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Summary of Findings

A Quality Assurance Review Team representing the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), a division of AdvancED, visited the Seoul Middle School in APO, AP (U.S. Military) on 02/10/2009 - 02/12/2009.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed the Principal, 1 member of the administrative team, 41 students, 23 parents, and 48 teachers. In addition, 12 support staff and 16 school improvement team members 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:

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

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

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

Commendations

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

- **The climate and atmosphere at the school are very positive, students are well-behaved, staff is collegial and respectful of one another, and the students and the administration provide support and encouragement to all.**

Interviews with all stakeholders emphasize the very positive atmosphere, and the team observed this environment during its time in the school.

A positive climate supports student learning.

- **The incorporation of AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) strategies throughout the school provides all students with effective techniques and skills to become good students and lifelong learners.**

AVID strategies are incorporated into the interventions for the school improvement goals, and all students use such techniques as Cornell Notes, common binders, agendas, critical thinking activities, questioning techniques, and real world applications of knowledge.

Students who have a tool kit for learning become lifelong learners.

- **Parents and community members actively support the school through the provision of human and fiscal resources.**

Volunteer PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) members sell snacks daily during nutrition break; stakeholders are active members of school committees and volunteer on a regular basis in support of the programs for children.

Strong and consistent stakeholder support enhances the programs for students.

Recommendations

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

- **Embed the current effective and efficient CSI (Continuous School Improvement) processes and procedures within the school culture so they are not dependent on a few individuals.**

Currently, the process is driven by the administration and the school improvement leadership team. Staff and administration are highly mobile in DoDEA (Department of Defense Education Activity), and changes in leadership are inevitable.

As people transfer in and out of the school, the vigor and enthusiasm of the CSI process will be maintained if it is a part of the culture.

- **Expand the use of formative assessments (assessment for learning) to document student growth throughout the year.**

Summative (end of year) assessments are reviewed and analyzed; formative assessments are limited in application as a measurement of student growth.

Formative assessments support and validate on-going growth, and results can be used to identify students who need remediation, to inform instruction quickly, and to diagnose intermediate successes and weaknesses.

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

Next Steps

The school should:

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

Resources

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

Celebrating Accreditation

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

Summary

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

Standards for Accreditation

The primary requirement for accreditation is that the Seoul 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:

The mission statement was developed several years ago through a consensus process that included a variety of stakeholders. It is reviewed annually at the beginning of the school year and adjusted as appropriate. The first phrase of the mission was added recently. "SAMS serves as a caring part of our military community devoted to the academic and social advancement of all students, inspiring them to become lifelong learners and responsible global citizens. "

The mission statement is posted in all classrooms and published in the school newsletter, on websites, in student agendas, and on SharePoint and GradeSpeed. It is communicated to stakeholders on many occasions, e.g., PTO, SAC (School Advisory Council), faculty meetings.

The teaching and learning process is guided by the mission as evidenced by the commitment of resources to support the tenets of the mission, e.g., responsible global citizens (fund raisers, environmental club, clothing drive, videos for bus safety and appropriate movie behavior), lifelong learners (clubs, extra-curricular activities), academic advancement (courses for high school credit, academic support classes, AVID materials). A profile of the school and its community is developed, maintained on a regular basis, and utilized as goals and interventions for school improvement are selected.

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

- The school profile is a working document that is current and accurate.
- All stakeholders are aware of the mission statement.

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

- Ensure that the mission is applied to student expectations and interpreted appropriately by all stakeholders, especially students and parents.

Finding: Seoul Middle 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:

A “learning community” climate encourages teachers to initiate new programs or ideas and supports the growth of teachers as instructional leaders. Stakeholders are given meaningful roles in the decision-making process creating a culture of participation and ownership. Staff and student input are sought in support of school improvement endeavors.

Teachers have a wide variety of opportunities to lead as evidenced by the numerous leadership roles available. Staff serves as team leaders, department leaders, curriculum implementation facilitators (CIFs), continuous school improvement (CSI) chairpersons or members, committee chairpersons, club sponsors, case study committee (CSC) members, student support team (SST) members, teacher representative on PTO, SAC members, student monitors during breaks and in the hallways, and student teacher supervisors. Teachers report that administration considers them one team. Internal structures and procedures facilitate buy-in to the process. Committee leadership is often rotated and shared. Grade level teams meet once or twice a week, and articulation with teams occurs vertically by departments. Each grade level consists of two teams, the blue team and the white team. The blue team supports students receiving special education services, and the white team supports students receiving English language learner services. General education students are served by both teams.

All stakeholders have ownership in and/or share leadership of the CSI process. Students are provided many opportunities to be leaders as evidenced by the active student council, publishers of the “Barks and Bites” newsletter, Bulldog ambassadors, peer mediators, and representative on SAC. Students created bookmarks and posters featuring the school improvement goals that are used by staff and students.

Administration and teachers have an open door policy. Parents are welcomed in the school and classrooms and feel they have opportunities to get involved. This is evidenced by their participation as after school tutors, AVID tutors, SAC members, and PTO board and committee members.

The administration is responsive to the curricular and extra-curricular needs of the students. All activities are under the auspices of the school with careful consideration of community expectation and stakeholder satisfaction. Activity buses allow students to participate in after school activities such as clubs and study trips.

All applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations are followed. An evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel is implemented. Policies and procedures are reviewed at the beginning of the school year. Training to deal with student behavior is provided, and rules and expectations are listed in student agendas and portfolios. A discipline committee is established, and students have the opportunity to be trained and serve as peer mediators. The team reviewed the intervention monitoring system used to analyze and review implementation of goals one and two.

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

- A wealth of leadership roles is afforded staff, students, and parents.
- Stakeholders have meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of

- participation, responsibility, and ownership.
- The administration promotes a positive atmosphere and empowers stakeholders.

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

- Enhance the current system of student performance analysis to include documented evidence of student growth during the school year.
- Develop and implement a plan for individual teachers to self-assess and to make adjustments in implementation of the interventions.

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

Standard 3. Teaching and Learning

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

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

Teaching and learning provide a consistently high level of engagement among students. Student work is displayed throughout the classrooms and serves as evidence of progressive academic achievement. The curriculum provides a wide range of subjects that includes 10 courses available for high school credit. Chinese language instruction was added to the curriculum to meet student-parent requests and increase the academic rigor of course selections.

Teachers are adept at chunking instruction to maximize student learning during the 85 minute periods. Data from multiple sources are used to inform instruction. Students monitor their own learning through rubric analysis of the writing process intervention and through the SQ3R (Survey Question Read Recite Review) intervention. DoDEA standards, the mission statement, and interventions for goals 1 and 2 are consistently displayed in classrooms. Both teachers and students have regular and ready access to instructional technology that is supportive of the curriculum. Some examples include access to interactive whiteboard technology, computers, multimedia projectors, video labs, and online research databases. Students in all grades create and personalize their own digital portfolios highlighting progressions of their learning.

Teachers are positive role models and actively participate in assemblies and nutrition breaks. They make themselves available before and after school, as well as in seminar to provide extra academic assistance. Teachers meet regularly to discuss student work and CSI interventions. The goal committees provide feedback to teachers to assist them in increasing their instructional capacity. Teachers routinely use appropriate humor to engage students in the learning process. Student active participation in the school improvement process is evidenced by use of the common binder, regular use of Cornell Notes, SQ3R, the writing process, and Bloom's taxonomy (a previous year's intervention). Several opportunities exist for extra-curricular and co-curricular activities through club participation, Bulldog ambassadors, peer tutors, peer mediators, and student government. Administrators, teachers, parents, and community members take a collaborative approach to building a safe, supportive, and friendly school climate. Parents and students recognize that the positive climate of the school is a direct result of open dialogue and genuine solicitation of improvement by teachers and administration in regards to all facets of the learning process.

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

- Engagement by stakeholders in multiple aspects of the learning process establishes a positive climate of support and involvement in the school.
- School improvement interventions are widely implemented in all disciplines.
- AVID practices are inherent in the interventions and instructional practices; 85% of the faculty is trained in AVID strategies.
- Opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills to real world applications are abundant.

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

- Develop a plan to train all teachers in AVID practices.
- Engage all teachers in consistent implementation of a wide range of AVID strategies in addition to those included in the interventions.

Finding: Seoul 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:

School-wide assessment results are provided to all staff at the beginning of each school year. These include TerraNova scores for all students in grade six through eight in the core content areas, Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) scores for all students in grade six through eight, Kid Test language arts scores for all sixth and eighth graders, and Literacy Place scores for sixth graders. The data committee analyzes the data and develops reports. The teachers review these results to make recommendations for student placement in teams and specialized classes. Many students take the PSAT and counselors review the results with students and send them to parents.

Both summative and formative assessments are used by teachers and administrators to monitor student progress and to adjust instruction. The teachers for each grade level team review data (e.g., end of unit tests) from their work with students and identify those students who need remediation or additional instruction. Tutoring and assistance are provided to students during the seminar class held every other day or at after school sessions.

Student performance in goal areas is not consistent and scores declined on some assessments. In the school improvement plan, nine assessments are identified to assess student performance in each of the two goal areas. From the baseline year to year one, there was improvement in only four of the nine assessments in each goal area. The school improvement team modified the interventions for each of these goal areas and is expecting increased student performance in the spring 2009 assessments.

The monitoring committees receive a cumulative folder from each teacher that includes examples of implementation of the interventions. The contents are reviewed and feedback is provided to the teacher

monthly. All students have a common binder and an agenda that they bring to every class. These are basic AVID organizational strategies.

Both students and parents have access to student performance data using GradeSpeed via the Internet. The school maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system.

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

- Digital portfolios are created by all students each year to share their personal growth and academic success in each class.
- Rubrics are used by many teachers to ensure student success in completing assignments and tasks.

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

- Develop and implement a plan to utilize formative assessments to monitor student improvement.
- Obtain and analyze comparison and trend data of student performance from comparable DoDEA schools.
- Create and implement a plan to administer a writing assessment three times a year to determine student writing needs, to monitor progress in writing, and to determine success in writing.

Finding: Seoul 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 staff is qualified and experienced; 58% have advanced degrees and 53% have more than six years of experience. Teachers new to the school attend orientation sessions and are assigned a mentor. All teachers complete a professional growth plan; every teacher is evaluated multiple times each year. CIFs work with teachers—both new and experienced—to provide standards-based training, to determine staff development needs, and to monitor student progress.

Professional development for all staff is not limited to the required safety and security presentations but includes activities to implement the interventions in the school improvement plan, instructional practices for teaching in the 85 minute block, and applications such as use of technology. Staff is surveyed each year to identify professional development needs.

Teachers are asked to provide a list of needed resources; the principal supports the requests as much as possible from the school budget. These requests may include instructional materials, field trips, seminar activities, or clubs. The PTO raises money to support the school through the sale of snacks during the daily nutrition break; a \$200 grant is given annually to each grade level team.

The school site and facilities are well maintained; however, the facilities may not be optimal for instruction. Services and equipment ensure a safe and orderly environment. A common cafeteria for students in

grades kindergarten through 12 impacts the daily schedule. All financial transactions and expenditures and all student records are closely examined by DoDEA district staff each year.

Guidance is provided to students by two guidance counselors each assigned to half of the students. They provide services to students such as reviewing standardized assessment scores, participating in grade level team meetings, conducting group sessions, overseeing the students who conduct peer mediation, and working with students on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). In addition, an ASACS (Adolescent and Substance Abuse Counseling Service) counselor is assigned to the school. Academic support includes critical thinking, AVID, after school tutoring, English as a second language, seminar groups for tutoring and remediation, Read 180, and academic support seminars. Additional student assistance includes the peer mediation program, Bulldog ambassadors (to help students new to the school), and a Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) club.

Student activities include club day (held during the seminar period) with about 40 clubs from which students can choose and after school clubs and activities that continue some of the activities held during the seminar period, e.g., National Honor Society, Pawprint (the yearbook), Barks and Bites, Junior Science Symposium, Math Counts, intramural sports, and many clubs such as art, chorus, drama, environmental, and ski.

A wide range of elective courses is available in addition to high school credit level courses that begin for seventh grade students. Middle school students can graduate with high school credits from a choice of 10 courses. Technology is used throughout the school. SMART Board technology, large screen monitors, and graphing calculators are seen in many classrooms, and classroom computers and computer labs are available for instruction and student projects.

SharePoint is used to help teachers create their own webpages and participate in their own learning sessions. A written crisis management plan and security plan with appropriate training is in place.

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

- Students use computer technology to create a digital portfolio each year.
- An active PTO supports the school with resources and volunteers.
- The antiquated facilities are adapted and modified to successfully meet the varied needs of the educational program.

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

- Increase the involvement and opportunities for all staff to support the improvement process.

Finding: Seoul Middle School has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" 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:

Stakeholders support the school and its programs through a variety of collaborative activities, e.g., serving as guest speakers for classes, providing food for special events and class projects, serving on SAC and PTO, sponsoring student activities. Community stakeholders provide resources for student events, e.g., ice cream for parties, coupons for honor roll students.

Communication with parents and other stakeholders is regular and utilizes a variety of media. The school and district each publish a monthly newsletter, and students publish a periodic newsletter (Barks and Bites). Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year with the third quarter conference being student-led to showcase their digital portfolios. Grades are distributed to parents/guardians quarterly. Electronic media is also used for communication purposes, e.g., email between parents and teachers, Internet, Intranet. GradeSpeed and/or SharePoint identify student expectations and allow parents, students, and teachers to have immediate access (via Internet) to student grades, assignments, projects, calendars, digital portfolios, teacher websites, and other pertinent data. Students and teachers utilize Gaggles accounts to communicate via email.

Parent and student surveys are distributed, and the results are analyzed to solicit satisfaction information. Both administration and teachers have an open door policy and encourage parents and other stakeholders to visit the school whenever they wish. Parents are actively involved with the school in a variety of ways. PTO volunteers sell snacks every day during nutrition break at the "Dawg House," and all profits support programs for students. Parents and teachers serve as tutors in AVID and the after school program, sponsor clubs, and are represented on the school improvement team, SAC, and the Installation Advisory Council (IAC).

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

- Parents actively and consistently support the school and its programs.
- The implementation of GradeSpeed and SharePoint is a force in ensuring positive communication among parents, students, and teachers.

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

- Communicate the results of the improvement activities to all stakeholders regularly and in a format they can understand.

Finding: Seoul Middle School has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" 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 school engages in a continuous school improvement process that actively employs goals and interventions to improve student performance. Stakeholders were involved in determining the improvement plan goals and interventions through faculty meetings and a review of the school data. The school developed two goals that support reading and writing in the curriculum. The first goal focuses on the ability to gain information from all areas of the curriculum using SQ3R while goal two is to improve writing across the curriculum by using the writing process. Students document the SQ3R intervention using Cornell Notes, higher level thinking questions, AVID strategies, and Bloom's taxonomy. The school establishes a supportive atmosphere where stakeholders are aware of goals and interventions through posters, SharePoint, school websites, student common binders, agendas, and parent nights.

Teachers incorporate the continuous improvement process into their programs by modeling expectations through rubrics, checklists, and student conferences to ensure academic advancement for students. Tutoring, Reading 180, learning strategies, AVID classes, and seminars are implemented to support the needs of all students. School personnel engage in professional development through university credits, support groups held by CSI chairpersons, and collaboration within the school improvement monitoring committees. The staff monitors and communicates student progress by collecting monthly student work samples and reviewing the interventions within a monitoring committee. The monitoring committee evaluates the effectiveness of the interventions and formulates strategies for improvement. There was no evidence that improvement results are distributed to all stakeholders.

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

- The monitoring committees effectively monitor the implementation of the interventions.
- Student work is posted throughout the school, and clear expectations are communicated to the students.
- Leadership from the school improvement team and CSI chairpersons actively reinforces the school goals and encourages staff involvement.
- Assessment data are reviewed annually to determine if adjustments to the interventions are appropriate.

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

- Rotate leadership and membership on school improvement committees to provide continuity of the continuous improvement process.
- Expand the distribution of ongoing assessment results to all stakeholders.
- Develop a rubric or checklist to ensure that interventions are based on multiple factors not just student performance results.

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

Conclusion

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

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

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

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Ms. Catherine Baird, Chair
- Mr. Al Monetta, Vice Chair (NCA CASI Michigan Office)
- Mr. Michael Johnson, Team Member (Pacific: Okinawa)
- Michelle Moore, Team Member (Yokota Middle School)
- Mrs. Tammy Maassen, Team Member (Humphreys Elementary 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.