

# AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality School Systems

for districts seeking or maintaining  
NCA CASI or SACS CASI District Accreditation



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## ABOUT AdvancED

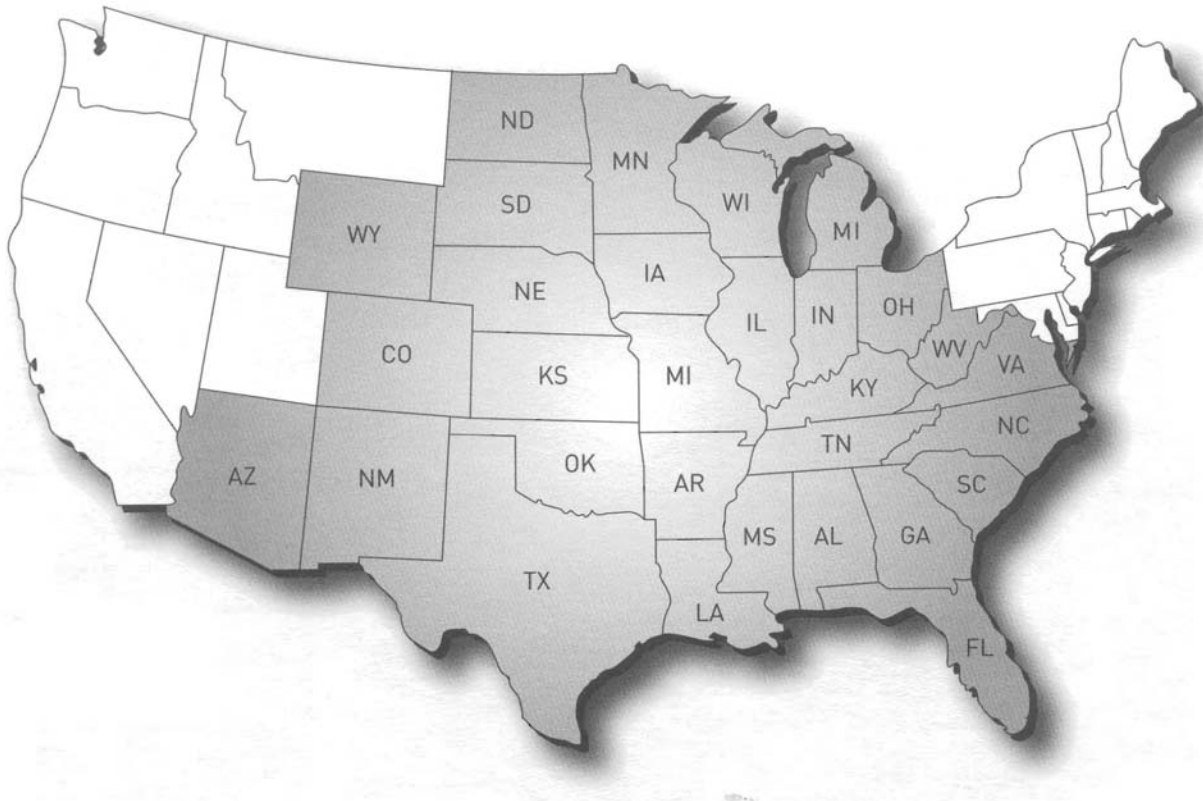
In April 2006, the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), and the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) came together to form one strong and unified organization under the name AdvancED.



Dedicated to advancing excellence in education,  
AdvancED works to:

- *Help schools and school systems maximize student success*
- *Build the capacity of schools and school systems to achieve excellence through high standards, quality assurance, and continuous improvement*
- *Bring together research and resources for student, school, and system improvement*

**NCA CASI, SACS CASI, AND NSSE SERVE SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS ACROSS THE NATION AND THE WORLD**



NCA CASI, SACS CASI, and NSSE also serve:

- Navajo Nation
- Department of Defense Educational Activity (DoDEA)
- Latin America

## ABOUT AdvancED (continued)

AdvancED is the world's largest education community, representing 23,000 public and private schools and districts in 30 states and 65 countries and serving close to 15 million students. Building on the strong state presence and volunteer networks of NCA CASI and SACS CASI, AdvancED leverages its size and global professional learning community to deliver the powerful combination of accreditation, research, and continuous improvement in a customized way to every school and district it serves.

As schools and districts gain access to the enhanced benefits of the global AdvancED community, they will continue to receive accreditation under the brand names of NCA CASI and SACS CASI. The NCA CASI and SACS CASI accreditation seals are recognized across the United States and around the world and will continue to be the seals used by AdvancED to bestow accreditation.

### Background

*NCA CASI and SACS CASI.* Founded in 1895, NCA CASI and SACS CASI accredit public and private schools and school systems in 30 states, the Navajo Nation, the Department of Defense Educational Activity Schools, and Latin America.

*NSSE.* NSSE is a non-profit educational research and development organization founded in 1933 to support the work of the regional school accreditation commissions in the United States. NSSE provides educational leaders with state-of-the-art resources, tools, and support services to enhance and promote student growth and school improvement through accreditation.

## ABOUT DISTRICT ACCREDITATION

AdvancED District Accreditation is a powerful systems approach to improving student performance results over time. District Accreditation recognizes that increasing student achievement involves more than improving instruction. It is a result of how well all the parts of the education system—the district, school, and classroom—work together to meet the needs of students.

District Accreditation applies the three pillars of accreditation—high standards, continuous improvement, and quality assurance—to the entire district to ensure alignment and support between and among the district and its schools. The District Accreditation process provides the district and all of its schools with a comprehensive framework for continually improving student achievement and district performance.

For the purposes of District Accreditation, a district may include school districts or systems, school corporations, diocesan school systems, or tribal

school coalitions. Coalitions of unrelated schools joined together for the purpose of school improvement may be considered districts based on review by AdvancED.

### **AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality School Systems**

The AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality School Systems form the foundation of District Accreditation. The standards build on NCA CASI's and SACS CASI's district accreditation standards. They are tightly aligned with the research on the factors that impact student performance (see the Appendix for a review of the research alignment) and were developed with broad input from practitioners and education experts. The standards apply to school systems within the 30-state region of NCA CASI and SACS CASI. Meeting these standards is one element of the accreditation process, as outlined on the next page.

## ABOUT DISTRICT ACCREDITATION (CONT'D)

Accreditation is a voluntary method of quality assurance developed more than 100 years ago by American universities and secondary schools. The goal of accreditation is to evaluate, verify, and improve an institution's quality.

*To be accredited, districts must:*

**1) Meet the AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality School systems and ensure that their schools meet the AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools**

The standards require that the district and its schools have a clear vision and purpose; have effective and responsive leadership; have a rigorous curriculum taught through sound, research-based methods; collect, report, and use performance results; provide adequate resources and support for its educational programs; and value and communicate with their stakeholders.

**2) Engage in continuous improvement**

To demonstrate continuous improvement, the district and its schools must implement an improvement plan based on student performance and school/community data that includes clear goals for raising the achievement of all students. The district and its schools also must document growth in student performance and organizational effectiveness.

**3) Demonstrate quality assurance through external review**

Districts must be evaluated by a team of professionals from outside the district on a periodic basis. The team engages the district staff in a healthy, professional dialogue about district improvement efforts, validates that the district meets the standards for accreditation, and provides feedback and makes recommendations concerning future efforts to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.

A detailed description of the AdvancED District Accreditation process can be found at [www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org).

## BENEFITS OF DISTRICT ACCREDITATION

### **Mark of Quality**

An internationally-recognized mark of quality at both the district and school level

### **Vehicle to Meet Government Requirements**

One unified and streamlined process for districts to use to assist in meeting and exceeding local, state, and national requirements

### **Focus and Common Language**

Shared focus and language of improvement across content areas and grade levels, as well as across individual schools, feeder schools, and district lines of responsibilities

### **Continuity and Collaboration toward Shared Vision**

Framework for continuity and collaboration in planning for improvement anchored in a shared vision for education across the system

### **External Review and Support**

Opportunity to gain valuable input, feedback, and support from peers

### **Best Practices**

Connection to the best practices of over 3,500 districts and 23,000 schools

### **Professional Development**

Annual conferences and state workshops on school and system improvement

### **Technical Assistance**

Customized assistance to maximize improvement efforts

### **Publications, Website, and Resources**

Guides, handbooks, primers, resources, tools, and website aimed at enhancing improvement efforts

## DEFINING THE STANDARDS, INDICATORS, AND IMPACT STATEMENTS

The **seven standards** described in this document are comprehensive statements of quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for districts to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness. As districts reach a higher level 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 has corresponding indicators and an impact statement.

The **indicators** are operational definitions or descriptions of exemplary practices and processes. Together, the indicators provide a comprehensive picture of each standard.

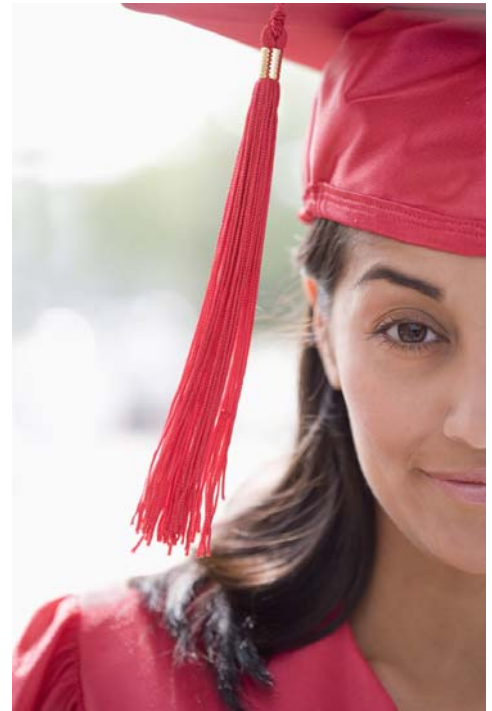
The **impact statement** describes characteristics, processes, and actions that would be observable and verifiable in a district that effectively implements the standard.

The standards, indicators, and impact statements focus on systems within a district and systematic methods of attaining high student performance and organizational effectiveness. The standards and indicators are not isolated, but are systemic. They are related to and support other standards and indicators. For example: Using student assessment data for making decisions is an indicator for Standard 4, Documenting and Using Results, because it is most closely related to this standard. However, data-based decision making is also an important aspect of effective leadership. A complete set of indicators for effective leadership can only be found when all of the standards are considered together. No one standard or set of indicators is complete without considering all seven as a collective whole. Consideration of this systemic “connectedness” is essential in understanding and applying the standards and indicators.

## USING THE STANDARDS AS AN ONGOING SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

Accreditation is an ongoing process of meeting standards, continuous improvement, and quality assurance demonstrated through internal and external review.

Through the accreditation process, staff members across the school system continuously review the standards and indicators to ensure that the standards are being met and to identify areas that may need to be strengthened or improved. This review challenges the school system to identify the data, information, evidence, and documented results that validate that it is meeting each standard.



ADVANCED ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS



## STANDARD 1: VISION AND PURPOSE

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

### Quality School System Indicators

*In fulfillment of this standard, the system:*

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

### Impact Statement

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

## STANDARD 2: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

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

### Quality School System Indicators

#### GOVERNANCE

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

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

**STANDARD 2: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP (cont'd)**

**LEADERSHIP**

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

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

**Impact Statement**

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

## STANDARD 3: TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

### Quality School System Indicators

*In fulfillment of this standard, the system:*

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

### Impact Statement

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

## STANDARD 4: DOCUMENTING AND USING RESULTS

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

### Quality School System Indicators

*In fulfillment of this standard, the system:*

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

### Impact Statement

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

## STANDARD 5: RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

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

### Quality School System Indicators

*In fulfillment of this standard, the system:*

#### **Human Resources**

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

#### **Financial Resources**

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

#### **Physical Resources**

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

**Support Systems**

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

**Impact Statement**

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

## STANDARD 6: STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIPS

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

### Quality School System Indicators

*In fulfillment of this standard, the system:*

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

### Impact Statement

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

## STANDARD 7: COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

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

### Quality School System Indicators

*In fulfillment of this standard, the system:*

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

### Impact Statement

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

**APPENDIX**

## ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOLS SYSTEMS: RESEARCH ALIGNMENT

The Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools Systems are aligned with current educational research and best practices. Research supporting the accreditation standards involves factors within the scope of a school or school district that directly contribute to student achievement. Original research findings, research syntheses, and meta-analyses, as well as research from the domains of policy and practice, support the accreditation standards. The research base and information concerning the methodology that yielded the taxonomy for school improvement that describes the research base was identified by the National Study of School Evaluation. A publication presenting the research base, *Technical Guide to School and District Factors Impacting Student Learning* published by NSSE, is available online at [www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org)

The taxonomy identifies three primary categories and twenty-nine subcategories of factors impacting student

achievement. To give the taxonomy utility for continuous improvement, the categories are described as “core tasks” to improve a school or school district. The NSSE research indicates that a school or school district seeking to improve student achievement needs to focus on three core tasks:

- **Ensure Desired Results** - by expecting results and monitoring performance toward achieving desired results
- **Improve Teaching and Learning** - by supporting students in their learning and maximizing teacher’s effectiveness
- **Foster a culture of Improvement** - by developing a learning community and leading for improvement

The taxonomy identifies subcategories of “effective practices” that contribute to each of the three core tasks. Collectively, these effective practices are powerful levers for improving student achievement.

## RESEARCH ALIGNMENT (CONT'D)

The seven Accreditation Standards for Quality School Systems are represented in each of the three core tasks.

### CORE TASK #1: ENSURE DESIRED RESULTS

Schools and districts ensure desired results for student learning by expecting certain results and then monitoring performance in achieving them. Schools or districts determine what they desire as performance results based on their expectations for student learning. Schools or districts that expect and ensure certain results:

- Implement a vision for student learning through goals and strategies
- Maintain high expectations for student achievement
- Maintain a relentless focus on improving student learning that permeates all levels of the school or district
- Are compelled by a common belief that, collectively, staff and other stakeholders can impact the desired results of the school or district

In addition, for a school or district to effectively monitor performance in order to produce the results it expects, it will:

- Use data to inform decision-making about teaching and learning
- Use a comprehensive assessment system to provide feedback for improvement in instructional practices and student performance
- Use classroom-based assessments to provide robust measures of students' academic, cognitive, and metacognitive skills
- Identify performance targets, indicators, and measures for comparing and improving a school or district's effectiveness
- Take appropriate and timely action to improve areas of identified needs

## RESEARCH ALIGNMENT (CONT'D)

### CORE TASK #2: IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

The ultimate goal of the continuous improvement process is to improve teaching and learning. Schools and districts that support students in their learning:

- Maintain school or district-wide expectations for student learning that reflect academic, cognitive, and metacognitive skills
- Deliver on these expectations for student learning through a curriculum that is coherent and rigorous
- Align an assessment system with curriculum that is enacted in the classroom through instruction
- Support the equitable opportunity of students to learn through individualization and differentiation
- Provide student support services and special programs to optimize individual student learning
- Support a student learning community that includes student involvement beyond the classroom and that offers a safe environment
- Involve families and the community in supporting children as learners

Equally important as supporting students is the district and its schools' support for teachers and the practices that maximize teachers' effectiveness. These practices help teachers:

- Use instructional strategies that provide students with focus, feedback, and sufficient opportunities to master skills
- Use appropriate strategies to assess students' academic, cognitive, and metacognitive skills
- Adapt instruction to meet individual needs and engage learners
- Maximize the use of time for instruction
- Create classroom environments conducive to learning
- Optimize technology and multimedia as learning tools

## RESEARCH ALIGNMENT (CONT'D)

### CORE TASK #3: FOSTER A CULTURE OF IMPROVEMENT

In addition to ensuring desired results and improving teaching and learning, the NSSE research indicates that schools and districts must cultivate an environment that has improvement embedded in its daily practices. The professional learning community will influence the impact of any improvement initiative. In order to foster a culture of improvement, learning community members:

- Share a common vision and goals that have student learning as the focus
- Improve individual and collective performance by coming together regularly for learning, decision-making, problem solving, and celebration
- Enhance continuously individual effectiveness through inquiry, practice, and peer reflection
- Support a culture of collegiality, collaboration, respect, and trust

Leaders of a professional learning community have a unique responsibility to:

- Share leadership for the improvement of teaching and learning throughout the district and its schools
- Articulate a compelling need for improvement and provide meaningful ways for the professional learning community to focus on its performance
- Engage in practices that support the ongoing improvement of teaching and learning

## RESEARCH ALIGNMENT (CONT'D)

### ORGANIZATIONAL CONDITIONS

In addition to the three core tasks of improving schools and districts, research by the National Study of Evaluation identified five “organizational conditions” within a school system that contribute to improved student achievement. All five organizational conditions are embodied in the Accreditation Standards for Quality School Systems. These organizational conditions for improving schools and school systems provide a solid foundation for continuous improvement.

- **Quality Teachers**—the recruitment, placement, and professional development of teachers to achieve the school or system’s vision of student learning
- **Effective Leadership**—the leader’s decisions and actions to support the vision of student learning
- **Quality Information**—the collection, management, and use of information to enable the school or school district to make informed decisions, take specific actions, and assess the results of improvement efforts that support the school’s or district’s vision of student learning
- **Policies and Procedures that Foster and Sustain Improvement**—the school’s or district’s development and implementation of policies and procedures that support improvement efforts
- **Resources and Support Systems to Sustain Improvement**—the allocation and deployment of human, technology, and material resources to target areas for improvement

**TABLE 1: ALIGNMENT OF QUALITY SYSTEM INDICATORS AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICES**

Tables 1 and 2 outline the alignment of the quality indicators for the accreditation standards with the effective practices that comprise the core tasks and the organizational conditions. The numbers in the tables pertain to the standards and corresponding indicators.

Core Task #1:Ensure Desired Results	Quality System Indicators
<i>Expecting Results</i>	
Implement a vision for student learning through goals and strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Establishes a clear and compelling vision and purpose for the system in collaboration with its stakeholders</li> <li>1.3 Identifies system-wide goals and measures to advance the vision</li> <li>1.5 Ensures that the system’s vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of schools, departments, and services</li> <li>1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate</li> <li>5.4 Ensures that staff are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school system and to meet federal and state law and regulations, if applicable</li> <li>7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)</li> <li>7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement</li> <li>7.3 Ensures that each school’s plans for continuous improvement is aligned with the system’s vision and expectations for student learning</li> </ul>
Maintain high expectations for student achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Develops, articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills</li> <li>3.5 Supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity</li> </ul>
Maintain a relentless focus on improving student learning that permeates all levels of the school or district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.5 Ensures that the system’s vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of schools, departments, and services</li> <li>1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate</li> <li>2.10 Provides direction, assistance, and resources to align, support, and enhance all parts of the system in meeting organizational and student performance goals</li> <li>3.5 Supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity</li> <li>3.7 Maintains articulation among and between all levels of schooling to monitor student performance and ensure readiness for future schooling or employment</li> <li>7.3 Ensures that each school’s plan for continuous improvement is aligned with the system’s vision and expectations for student learning</li> </ul>
Are compelled by a common belief that, collectively, staff and other stakeholders can impact the desired results of the school or district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.2 Communicates the system’s vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support</li> <li>6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning</li> </ul>

TABLE 1: (CONTINUED)	
Core Task #1:Ensure Desired Results	Quality System Indicators
<i>Monitoring Performance</i>	
Use data to inform decision-making about teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the system, its students, and the community</li> <li>3.3 Ensures that system-wide curricular and instructional decisions are based on data and research at all levels</li> <li>4.2 Ensures that student assessment data are used to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning</li> <li>4.3 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance</li> <li>7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)</li> </ul>
Use a comprehensive assessment system that provides feedback for improvement in instructional practices and student performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.2 Ensures that student assessment data are used to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning</li> <li>4.3 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance</li> <li>7.5 Provides research-based professional development for system and school personnel to help them achieve improvement goals</li> <li>7.6 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders</li> <li>7.7 Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement</li> </ul>
Use classroom-based assessments to provide robust measures of students' academic, cognitive, and metacognitive skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1 Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system's expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free</li> </ul>

**TABLE 1: (CONTINUED)**

Core Task #1: Ensure Desired Results	Quality System Indicators
<i>Monitoring Performance Continued</i>	
Identify performance targets, indicators, and measures for comparing and improving a school or district's effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1 Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system's expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free</li> <li>4.5 Uses comparison and trend data from comparable school systems to evaluate student performance and system effectiveness</li> <li>7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)</li> </ul>
Take appropriate and timely action to improve areas of identified needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.9 Maintains a system-wide climate that supports student learning</li> <li>7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)</li> </ul>

TABLE 1: (CONTINUED)	
Core Task #2: Improve Teaching and Learning	Quality System Indicators
<i>Supporting Student Learning</i>	
Maintain school or district-wide expectations for student learning that reflect academic, cognitive, and metacognitive skills	<p>3.1 Develops , articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills</p> <p>6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders</p>
Deliver on these expectations for student learning through a curriculum that is coherent and rigorous	<p>3.1 Develops , articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills</p> <p>3.2 Establishes expectations and supports student engagement in the learning process, including opportunities for students to explore application of higher order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning</p> <p>3.10 Ensures that curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals</p> <p>4.6 Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance that is supported by multiple sources of evidence</p>
Align an assessment system with curriculum that is enacted in the classroom through instruction	<p>3.1 Develops, articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills</p> <p>4.1 Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system’s expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free</p>
Support the equitable opportunity of students to learn through individualization and differentiation	<p>3.5 Supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity</p>
Provide student support services and special programs to optimize individual student learning	<p>5.11 Provides and coordinates support services that meet the health, counseling, nutrition, safety, co-curricular, transportation, and special learning needs of all students</p> <p>5.12 Provides student support services coordinated with the school, home, and community</p>
Support a student learning community that includes student involvement beyond the classroom and offers a safe environment	<p>5.7 Maintains sites, facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, orderly, and healthy environment</p>
Involve families and the community in supporting children as learners	<p>2.11 Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership</p> <p>6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning</p>

TABLE 1: (CONTINUED)	
Core Task #2: Improve Teaching and Learning	Quality System Indicators
<i>Maximizing Teaching Effectiveness</i>	
Use instructional strategies that provide students with focus, feedback, and sufficient opportunities to master skills	3.4 Supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice
Use appropriate strategies to assess the performance of students' academic, cognitive, and meta-cognitive skills	3.4 Supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice 4.1 Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system's expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free 4.3 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance
Adapt instruction to meet individual needs and engage learners	3.2 Establishes expectations and supports student engagement in the learning process, including opportunities for students to explore application of higher order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning 3.4 Supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice 3.8 Supports the implementation of interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning
Maximize the use of time for instruction	3.6 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning
Create classroom environments conducive to learning	3.1 Develops , articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills 3.4 Supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice
Optimize technology and multimedia as learning tools	3.11 Coordinates and ensures ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials needed for effective instruction

**TABLE 1: (CONTINUED)**

Core Task #3: Foster a Culture of Improvement	Quality System Indicators
<i>Developing a Professional Learning Community</i>	
Share a common vision and goals that have student learning as the focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Establishes a clear and compelling vision and purpose for the system in collaboration with its stakeholders</li> <li>1.2 Communicates the system’s vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support</li> <li>6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders</li> <li>7.4 Ensures that each school’s plan for continuous improvement includes a focus on increasing learning for all students and closing gaps between current and expected student performance levels</li> </ul>
Improve individual and collective performance by coming together regularly for learning, decision-making, problem solving, and celebration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.11 Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership</li> <li>3.7 Maintains articulation among and between all levels of schooling to monitor student performance and ensure readiness for future schooling or employment</li> <li>5.3 Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff</li> <li>6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning</li> <li>7.5 Provides research-based professional development for system and school personnel to help them achieve improvement goals</li> </ul>
Enhance continuously individual effectiveness through inquiry, practice, and peer reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board</li> <li>5.3 Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff</li> <li>7.5 Provides research-based professional development for system and school personnel to help them achieve improvement goals</li> </ul>
Support a culture of collegiality, collaboration, respect, and trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.9 Maintains a system-wide climate that supports student learning</li> <li>6.2 Uses system-wide strategies to listen to and communicate with stakeholders</li> <li>7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement</li> </ul>

**TABLE 1: (CONTINUED)**

Foster a Culture of Improvement	Quality System Indicators
<i>Leading for Improvement</i>	
Share leadership for the improvement of teaching and learning throughout the school and district	2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board 2.11 Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership 2.12 Assesses and addresses community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction 7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)
Articulate a compelling need for improvement and provide meaningful ways for the professional learning community to focus on its performance	2.11 Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership 5.3 Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff 7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)
Engage in practices that support the ongoing improvement of teaching and learning	5.3 Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff 7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results) 7.5 Provides research-based professional development for system and school personnel to help them achieve improvement goals of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)

**TABLE 2: ALIGNMENT OF QUALITY SYSTEM INDICATORS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONDITIONS OF IMPROVING SCHOOLS**

Organizational Conditions	Quality System Indicators
Quality Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.13 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel</li> <li>5.1 Establishes and implements processes to recruit, employ, retain, and mentor qualified professional and support staff to fulfill assigned roles and responsibilities</li> <li>5.2 Establishes and implements a process to assign professional and support staff based on system needs and staff qualifications as may be required by federal and state law and regulations (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience)</li> <li>5.3 Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff</li> <li>5.4 Ensures that staff are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school system and to meet federal and state law and regulations, if applicable</li> </ul>
Effective Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the system</li> <li>2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership authority of the administrative head of the system</li> <li>2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations</li> <li>2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board</li> <li>2.5 Builds public support, secures sufficient resources, and acts as a steward of the system's resources</li> <li>2.6 Maintains access to legal counsel to advise or obtain information about legal requirements and obligations</li> <li>2.7 Maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations</li> <li>2.8 Provides for systematic analysis and review of student performance and school and system effectiveness</li> <li>2.9 Creates and supports collaborative networks of stakeholders to support system programs</li> <li>2.10 Provides direction, assistance, and resources to align, support, and enhance all parts of the system in meeting organizational and student performance goals</li> <li>2.11 Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership</li> <li>2.12 Assesses and addresses community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>2.13 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel</li> <li>3.7 Maintains articulation among and between all levels of schooling to monitor student performance and ensure readiness for future schooling or employment</li> <li>3.9 Maintains a system-wide climate that supports student learning</li> <li>5.6 Ensures that all financial transactions are safeguarded through proper budgetary procedures and audited accounting measures</li> <li>5.8 Establishes and implements written security and crisis management plans with appropriate training for stakeholders</li> <li>6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning</li> <li>6.2 Uses system-wide strategies to listen to and communicate with stakeholders</li> <li>6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the system</li> </ul>

TABLE 2: (CONTINUED)

Organizational Conditions	Quality School System Indicators
Effective Leadership (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders</li> <li>6.5 Provides information that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders</li> <li>7.8 Allocates and protects time for planning and engaging in continuous improvement efforts system-wide</li> <li>7.9 Provides direction and assistance to its schools and operational units to support their continuous improvement efforts</li> </ul>
Quality Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the system, its students, and the community</li> <li>3.3 Ensures that system-wide curricular and instructional decisions are based on data and research at all levels</li> <li>3.11 Coordinates and ensures ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials needed for effective instruction</li> <li>4.1 Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system's expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free</li> <li>4.3 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance</li> <li>4.4 Provides a system of communication which uses a variety of methods to report student performance and system effectiveness to all stakeholders</li> </ul>
Policies and Procedures that Foster and Sustain Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate</li> <li>2.1 Establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the system</li> <li>2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations</li> <li>2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board</li> <li>3.7 Maintains articulation among and between all levels of schooling to monitor student performance and ensure readiness for future schooling or employment</li> <li>3.10 Ensures that curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals</li> <li>4.4 Provides a system of communication which uses a variety of methods to report student performance and system effectiveness to all stakeholders</li> <li>4.7 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations</li> <li>5.8 Establishes and implements written security and crisis management plans with appropriate training for stakeholders</li> <li>7.4 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement includes a focus on increasing learning for all students and closing gaps between current and expected student performance levels</li> <li>7.8 Allocates and protects time for planning and engaging in continuous improvement efforts system-wide</li> </ul>

TABLE 2: (CONTINUED)

Organizational Conditions	Quality School System Indicators
Resources and Support Systems to Sustain Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.11 Coordinates and ensures ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials needed for effective instruction</li> <li>4.7 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations</li> <li>5.2 Establishes and implements a process to assign professional and support staff based on system needs and staff qualifications as may be required by federal and state law and regulations (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience)</li> <li>5.4 Ensures that staff are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school system and to meet federal and state law and regulations, if applicable</li> <li>5.5 Engages in long-range budgetary planning and annually budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement</li> <li>5.6 Ensures that all financial transactions are safeguarded through proper budgetary procedures and audited accounting measures</li> <li>5.7 Maintains sites, facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, orderly, and healthy environment</li> <li>5.9 Implements processes and plans for maintaining and improving sites, facilities, and equipment</li> <li>5.10 Provides technology infrastructure and equipment that is up-to-date and sufficient to accomplish the system's goals</li> <li>7.9 Provides direction and assistance to its schools and operational units to support their continuous improvement efforts</li> </ul>

**TABLE 3: ALIGNMENT OF QUALITY SCHOOL AND SCHOOL SYSTEM INDICATORS**

Quality School Indicators	Quality School System Indicators
<b>STANDARD 1: VISION AND PURPOSE</b>	
1.1 Establishes a vision for the school in collaboration with its stakeholders	1.1 Establishes a clear and compelling vision and purpose for the system in collaboration with its stakeholders
1.2 Communicates the vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support	1.2 Communicates the system's vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support
1.3 Identifies goals to advance the vision	1.3 Identifies system-wide goals and measures to advance the vision
1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the school, its students, and the community	1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the system, its students, and the community
1.5 Ensures that the school's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process	1.5 Ensures that the system's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of schools, departments, and services
1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate	1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate
<b>STANDARD 2: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP</b>	
2.1 Establishes policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the school	2.1 Establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the system
2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the administrative head of the school	2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership authority of the administrative head of the system
2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations	2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations
2.4 Employs a system that provides for analysis and review of student performance and school effectiveness	2.8 Provides for systematic analysis and review of student performance and school and system effectiveness
2.5 Fosters a learning community	2.9 Creates and supports collaborative networks of stakeholders to support system programs
2.6 Provides teachers and students opportunities to lead	2.11 Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership
2.7 Provides stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership	
2.8 Controls curricular and extracurricular activities that are sponsored by the school	5.11 Provides and coordinates support services that meet the health, counseling, nutrition, safety, co-curricular, transportation, and special learning needs of all students
2.9 Responds to community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction	2.12 Assesses and addresses community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction
2.10 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel	2.13 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel
	2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board
	2.5 Builds public support, secures sufficient resources, and acts as a steward of the system's resources
	2.6 Maintains access to legal counsel to advise or obtain information about legal requirements and obligations
	2.7 Maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations
	2.10 Provides direction, assistance, and resources to align, support, and enhance all parts of the system in meeting organizational and student performance goals

Quality School Indicators	Quality School System Indicators
<b>STANDARD 3: TEACHING AND LEARNING</b>	
3.1 Develops and implements curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning	3.1 Develops, articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills
3.2 Promotes active involvement of students in the learning process, including opportunities for them to explore application of higher-order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning	3.2 Establishes expectations and supports student engagement in the learning process, including opportunities for students to explore application of higher order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning
3.3 Gathers, analyzes, and uses data and research in making curricular and instructional choices	3.3 Ensures that system-wide curricular and instructional decisions are based on data and research at all levels
3.4 Designs and uses instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that are research-based and reflective of best practice	3.4 Supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice
3.5 Offers a curriculum that challenges each student to excel, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity	3.5 Supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity
3.6 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning	3.6 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning
3.7 Provides for articulation and alignment between and among all levels of schools	3.7 Maintains articulation among and between all levels of schooling to monitor student performance and ensure readiness for future schooling or employment
3.8 Implements interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning	3.8 Supports the implementation of interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning
3.9 Monitors school climate and takes appropriate steps to ensure that it is conducive to student learning	3.9 Maintains a system-wide climate that supports student learning
	3.10 Ensures that curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals
3.10 Provides comprehensive information and media services that support the curricular and instructional programs	3.11 Coordinates and ensures ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials needed for effective instruction
3.11 Ensures that all students and staff members have regular and ready access to instructional technology and a comprehensive materials collection that support the curricular and instructional program	
<b>STANDARD 4: DOCUMENTING AND USING RESULTS</b>	
4.1 Establishes performance measures for student learning that yield information that are reliable, valid, and bias free	4.1 Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system's expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free
4.2 Develops and implements a comprehensive system for assessing progress toward meeting the expectations for student learning	
4.3 Uses student assessment data for making decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning processes	4.2 Ensures that student assessment data are used to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning
4.4 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness and uses the results to improve student performance	4.3 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance
4.5 Communicates the results of student performance and school effectiveness to all stakeholders	4.4 Provides a system of communication which uses a variety of methods to report student performance and system effectiveness to all stakeholders
4.6 Uses comparison and trend data of student performance from comparable schools in evaluating its effectiveness	4.5 Uses comparison and trend data from comparable school systems to evaluate student performance and system effectiveness
4.7 Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance	4.6 Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance that is supported by multiple sources of evidence

Quality School Indicators	Quality School System Indicators
<b>STANDARD 4: DOCUMENTING AND USING RESULTS (CONT'D)</b>	
4.8 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations	4.7 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations
<b>STANDARD 5: RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS</b>	
5.1 Recruits, employs, and mentors qualified professional staff that are capable of fulfilling assigned roles and responsibilities	5.1 Establishes and implements processes to recruit, employ, retain, and mentor qualified professional and support staff to fulfill assigned roles and responsibilities
5.2 Assigns professional staff responsibilities based on their qualifications (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience)	5.2 Establishes and implements a process to assign professional and support staff based on system needs and staff qualifications as may be required by federal and state law and regulations (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience)
5.3 Ensures that all staff participate in a continuous program of professional development	5.3 Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff
5.4 Provides and assigns staff that are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school	5.4 Ensures that staff are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school system and to meet federal and state law and regulations, if applicable
5.5 Budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement	5.5 Engages in long-range budgetary planning and annually budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement
5.6 Monitors all financial transactions through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system	5.6 Ensures that all financial transactions are safeguarded through proper budgetary procedures and audited accounting measures
5.7 Maintains the site, facilities, services, and equipment to provide an environment that is safe and orderly for all occupants	5.7 Maintains sites, facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, orderly, and healthy environment
	5.9 Implements processes and plans for maintaining and improving sites, facilities, and equipment
5.8 Possesses a written security and crisis management plan with appropriate training for stakeholders	5.8 Establishes and implements written security and crisis management plans with appropriate training for stakeholders
5.9 Ensures that each student has access to services that include, but are not limited to, counseling, appraisal, staff consulting, referral, and educational and career planning	5.11 Provides and coordinates support services that meet the health, counseling, nutrition, safety, co-curricular, transportation, and special learning needs of all students
5.10 Provides appropriate support for students with special needs	5.12 Provides student support services coordinated with the school, home, and community
	5.10 Provides technology infrastructure and equipment that is up-to-date and sufficient to accomplish the system's goals
<b>STANDARD 6: STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIPS</b>	
6.1 Foster collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning	6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning
6.2 Has formal channels to listen to and communicate with stakeholders	6.2 Uses system-wide strategies to listen to and communicate with stakeholders
6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance	6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance

the work of the school	the work of the system
<b>Quality School Indicators</b>	<b>Quality School System Indicators</b>
<b>STANDARD 6: STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIPS (CONT'D)</b>	
6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders	6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders
6.5 Provides information about students, their performance, and school effectiveness that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders	6.5 Provides information that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders
<b>STANDARD 7: COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT</b>	
7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement 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).	7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)
7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement	7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement
7.3 Ensures that plans for continuous improvement are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school and expectations for student learning	7.3 Ensures that each school's plans for continuous improvement is aligned with the system's vision and expectations for student learning
	7.4 Ensures that each school's plans for continuous improvement includes a focus on increasing learning for all students and closing gaps between current and expected student performance levels
7.4 Provides professional development for school personnel to help them implement improvement interventions to achieve improvement goals	7.5 Provides research-based professional development for system and school personnel to help them achieve improvement goals
7.5 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders	7.6 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders
7.6 Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement	7.7 Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement
	7.8 Allocates and protects time for planning and engaging in continuous improvement efforts system-wide
	7.9 Provides direction and assistance to its schools and operational units to support their continuous improvement efforts

## GLOSSARY

**Appreciation of diversity.** Develops awareness, understanding and respect for differences, beliefs, and traditions of ethnic and cultural groups

**Articulation.** The process of comparing the content of courses that are transferred between educational systems or schools.

**Best practice.** Actions, processes, or interventions that are based in research or supported by results and are most likely to achieve the desired goal or performance level

**Bias free.** Referring to measures of student performance, measures that are bias free are not discriminatory against any group of students due to stereotyping, unequal opportunity, or lack of language familiarity

**Climate.** The situation or atmosphere that prevails at a particular time or place

**Collaborative networks.** A large and widely distributed group of people that communicate and cooperate with one another and work together as a unit or system

**Communication.** The exchange of information between persons, for example, by means of speaking, writing, or using a common system of signs or behavior

**Comprehensive assessment system.** A system and processes for gathering, managing, analyzing, and disseminating data from multiple measures needed by the system and staff to make informed decisions, monitor performance and effectiveness, determine gaps in performance, identify needs (including professional development), and report results

**Continuous improvement.** Ongoing process of improving performance and the effectiveness of relationships among the school's systems, processes, and people

**Continuously maintains.** Regularly and purposefully updates and disseminates information and data

**Curriculum.** An instructional plan captured in a document that describes the content (knowledge, skills, and dispositions) of what students are to learn

**Data.** Numbers, words, sounds, or images that have not yet been arranged into meaningful patterns (e.g. assessment data and artifacts)

**Direction.** Guidance emanating from a shared vision and feedback to schools from the district

**Diversity.** Ethnic, socioeconomic, gender, group, and/or cultural variety

**Equity.** The quality of being just, impartial, and fair; in the educational setting, equity includes insuring that all students have a fair and equal opportunity to access and benefit from all educational opportunities

**Expectations for student learning.** Knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students are expected to acquire as a result of their school experience

**Evidence.** Documentation and analysis of information for a particular purpose

**Governing Board.** The legal body comprised of a panel of persons who develop policies for the school system

**Impact statement.** Characteristics, processes, and actions that would be observable and verifiable in a district that effectively implements the standard

**Implementation of interventions.** Taking intentional actions identified to meet improvement goals

**Improvement efforts.** Actions taken as part of an improvement plan to improve student performance

**Indicator.** See Quality system indicator

**Information services.** The department within a school system that is responsible for the collection, organization, and retrieval, analysis, and distribution of data to be used by others

**Instructional effectiveness.** The daily practices that guide student learning and the learning community

**Instructional technology.** The use of technology to enhance the teaching and learning process

**Instructional time.** Time devoted to acquiring knowledge, skills, and attitudes

**Intervention.** Intentional actions that are identified to meet improvement goals

**Learning community.** Colleagues who come together regularly to learn, make decisions, and

solve problems in a meaningful and professional manner

**Learning process.** A series of actions directed toward acquiring knowledge, skills, or attitudes

**Media Services.** The department within a school system that is responsible for audio-visual equipment used in the teaching and learning process

**Measures.** Instruments that gather various data for the purpose of making a formative or summative judgment

**Necessary conditions.** The five research-based conditions of improving schools and school systems that are the foundation of continuous improvement

**Organizational effectiveness.** The necessary conditions for improving student learning

**Plan.** Actions needed to implement interventions for an improvement goal in each target area for improvement

**Performance indicators.** An index or composite of measures used to gauge the levels of performance or effectiveness of a part of the system for the purpose of monitoring results

**Policies.** Sets of principles adopted by the governing body of the school system that form the legal foundation of the school system

**Professional staff.** Staff in a school system that have completed university degree programs, are state certified in their area of expertise, and have a direct impact on teaching and learning, for example, teachers and administrators

**Profile.** Description of a system's current reality; students, their performance, school effectiveness, and the school and community contexts for learning

**Purpose.** The reasons a system exists as defined by its mission, beliefs, values, philosophy, and/or goals

**Quality system indicator.** The operational definition of the practices, processes, or products required of a system as they relate to meeting accreditation standards

**Reliability.** The extent to which a measure can be depended on to provide consistent, error-free data

**Research based.** Programs, process, interventions, or practices that are supported by research resulting from

scientific or quasi-scientific designs, using valid and reliable measures, and resulting in verifiable and repeatable positive results.

**Results.** Changes that are directly related to interventions

**School effectiveness.** The research-based practices that impact student performance and the organizational conditions of improving schools

**Stakeholders.** Staff, students, parents, community members, and others who have a vested interest in the schools and their system

**Standards.** The seven established qualitative conditions for excellence required of all accredited systems

**Steward.** To hold in trust for another; to be accountable for the well-being of another or an organization

**Student performance.** Knowledge, skills, or attitudes demonstrated by a student

**Support services.** The ancillary services provided in a school system that help maintain the teaching and learning process for all students, including those with special needs

**Student performance.** Knowledge, skills, or attitudes demonstrated by a student

**System effectiveness.** The research-based practices that impact student performance and the organizational conditions of improving school systems

**Systematic.** Processes that are repeatable and predictable rather than anecdotal and episodic

**Systemic.** Interdependent functions within a system that work together to improve results

**System-wide.** Impacting all systems within a school district - - district, school, departments, grade levels, classroom, and student

**Validity.** The extent to which a measure is capable of producing information that is meaningful

**Vision.** An expression of the ideal or desired state of student learning and/or organizational operations based on expectations that are possible to achieve

## CONTACT US:

NCA CASI and SACS CASI operate as accreditation divisions of AdvancED, serving schools and districts through state offices. For more information about the *Accreditation Standards for Quality School Systems*, please contact your NCA CASI or SACS CASI state office. You can visit [www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org) for a listing of state offices or call the AdvancED Accreditation Department at 800-525-9517.

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