

Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Saint Francis Catholic High School

Ernest D. Herrington, Jr., Principal

Review Dates: 03/13/2008 - 03/14/2008



AdvancED is the unified organization of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), and National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE).

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 two years 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. Two years 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 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), a division of AdvancED, visited the Saint Francis Catholic High School in Gainesville, Florida on 03/13/2008 - 03/14/2008.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed the Principal, 1 member of the administrative team, 23 students, 24 parents, and 14 teachers. In addition, Support Staff 4 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 school maintains a clear and consistent system of communicating with all stakeholders.**

This is evidenced by statements from stakeholder interviews and school publications. The use of EDline, email, monthly newsletters, and church bulletins provides continuous communication in all areas of school activities.

This focus has contributed to the school's climate of a caring, nurturing, supportive family.

- **Saint Francis Catholic High School has demonstrated consistent growth in the areas of academics, athletics, and community service while maintaining its Catholic mission.**

This is evidenced by its course offerings including the increase in Advanced Placement courses from 1 to 9 in four years, increase in electives, its outstanding Latin program, the number of Athletic District Championships

it has won, and the commitment to service to both the school and community.

This has contributed to the increase in enrollment and greater visibility in the community.

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. Two years following this review, the school will be asked to submit a progress report on these recommendations.

- **The construction of a needs assessment for the school improvement plan will insure prioritized goals and objectives specific to the school's greatest areas of need.**

Although the school is commended for its ambitious School Improvement Plan, evidence gleaned from the plan identified that an assessment and prioritization of goals and objectives for continuous school improvement would strengthen the plan.

The needs assessment will help the school focus on a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student improvement.

- **Implement additional guidance procedures to facilitate support services to students and parents.**

Parent and student feedback revealed a lack of understanding regarding the college application process and career exploration.

This would help meet the expectation that the community has of school support services.

- **Establish a technology committee representative of the school community to assess technology usage and current needs.**

The site visit revealed nonworking computers, outdated equipment, and lack of use by students and staff.

A written and implemented technology plan would enhance the integration of technology and enhance teachers' instructional strategies and student performance.

- **Implement a student assessment system to maximize teachers' ability to use the data gained from the system to improve instruction.**

The team found through teacher interviews and a review of the school's current assessment system that relevant data about student performance is not being collected, analyzed, or distributed to teachers in a meaningful and timely way. The school should provide opportunities for professional development to enhance this process.

The use of assessment data for the purpose of improving instruction and individual student performance will narrow the improvement efforts and provide more direction to the school.

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. Two years 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 SACS CASI logo is available through the SACS CASI website for schools to post on their website and in school communications. Flags, door decals, diploma seals, and more 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 Saint Francis Catholic High 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:

In parent, student, and community interviews, the mission statement was discussed as the cornerstone of who they are as Saint Francis Catholic High School. The mission statement is printed on the student handbook and planner; is visible in every classroom, and posted on the school website.

The five components of the mission statement are clearly demonstrated in the everyday life of the Saint Francis community. Service and Community are modeled by the faculty and also by the parents who are required to do 20 hours of volunteering for the school, but frequently do much more. The students are given opportunities to work at nonprofit agencies outside of school and they also determine the recipients of any of the fundraising for charity or liturgy collection monies. This voice encourages them to research needy projects and become more aware citizens. Faith is also modeled by the faculty who are Level 1 Catechist Certified. Liturgy is held once a week and the students are leaders. Prayer is the foundation of all that happens at the school; classes, meetings, sporting events, etc. begin and end in prayer. Honor and Scholarship are evident both inside and outside the classroom. Referrals for discipline are marginal and students feel comfortable and safe at the school. In the student interviews a 9th grader indicated that his class was welcomed and fit right into the school community. Students indicated that they did not believe that violations of the honor code were numerous. Most believe in the strength of character that is espoused by the school. Honor Societies are a source of pride for the students and the school and making the honor roll is respected. Fifty-two percent of the students were on the honor roll at the conclusion of the 2006-2007 school year. The strength of the curriculum offerings also attest to the emphasis on scholarship in the school.

The admissions packet and the annual report record the school profile which is updated yearly. The school accepts students of all religious backgrounds and currently the non-Catholic population is twenty-four percent. The population is largely Caucasian (84%), but six other ethnic groups are represented. Financial Aid is offered and 26% of the students received tuition assistance. Students perform above the state and national averages on standardized test scores and with the first graduating class this year, a wide range of college acceptances have been offered. Most students completed more than the required number of community service hours a year. The student profile demonstrates aspects of the school mission statement.

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

- The involvement of all stakeholders in the establishment and review of the mission statement is noteworthy.
- The school's vision, mission, and values are reinforced by all stakeholders on a day-to-day basis.

- The adult stakeholders in the community actively model the components of the mission and reinforce the values of the school.

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

- The school should focus on increasing the diversity of the student body to reflect more of the greater Gainesville community.
- The school should do more outreach in the community at large and be a more visible part of that community. This would also increase marketability of the school.

Finding: Saint Francis Catholic High School has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 2. Governance and Leadership

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

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

The community's belief in the mission of Saint Francis Catholic High School is foundational and establishes a shared purpose and direction for improving student performance and school effectiveness. Parent and community stakeholders are given opportunities to provide input through in-house and NSSE opinion surveys, membership on various committees, and direct meetings with the principal or any member of the staff. Faculty, staff, and students have similar experiences for providing input although their daily contact within the school setting provides many more opportunities to contribute. The faculty, staff, and administration worked together for most of the last two years to evaluate the state of their school as they reviewed surveys, analyzed data using the Grade Quick software program and the College Board analysis of PSAT and SAT. They also evaluated curriculum and lesson design as they worked to incorporate more technology into instructional strategies. Dr. Tom Doyle from the Alliance of Catholic Education spent two days on site evaluating the school and his analysis was used to further instructional improvement. All of this documentation determined how the level of student performance could best be improved. Their overall emphasis was to evaluate the school's effectiveness and ascertain how to make Saint Francis even better. Interviews with parents, students, and faculty support the idea that the school is constantly striving to improve the learning and raise its overall effectiveness in meeting its vision and mission.

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

- The daily schedule allows for a forty minute study session at the end of the day before any athletic or social events can begin. This helps ensure that students can receive extra help and instruction. A Study Skills class is also available as an elective during the school day for those who need extra help. Both of these help provide for equality of learning and helps all students take part in extracurricular activities which encourage creativity or use of their other gifts and talents.
- The average class size of 15 helps students receive individual attention and should allow for greater student participation in discussion, group-related activity, and project based learning; all of these instructional techniques foster active learning and critical thinking.
- In the interview the parent and community stakeholders indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the school. The talk of "family" and the fact that parents believe that they are included as an active

participant in their child's education was repeated over and over. Students also indicated that their parents are partners in education because they have access to grades and course syllabus and the also are visible on campus due to their required volunteer hours.

- The school communication with all stakeholders through monthly newsletters, the school website, handbooks, prompt emails and phone calls meets the community expectations and contributes to the overall satisfaction with the school.

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

- As the school population continues to grow and more faculty and support staff are hired, this should enable the present staff to relinquish some of the responsibilities that they have embraced out of necessity. This transitioning should also provide further leadership opportunities for teachers, especially in the areas of curriculum design and instructional strategies.
- In analyzing student performance and learning strategies, the school should research additional testing or observation approaches that will allow for further tabulation of comparable data.
- The school should design an evaluation system that incorporates professional growth as a means of encouraging innovative strategies that increases learning, especially in the technology area.

Finding: Saint Francis Catholic High 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:

The curriculum offered at St. Francis Catholic High School is established by both the Diocese and the State of Florida. As the state periodically updates the Sunshine State Standards, the Diocese also reviews and modifies their curriculum standards every four years. St. Francis also takes into consideration college admissions criteria and requirements related to the Bright Futures Scholarship Program offered by the State of Florida. Interest surveys are generated each year to students and parents regarding new course selections for possible inclusion to the curriculum.

St. Francis has established policies and procedures in which the faculty receives professional development, establishes personal goals, and are observed and evaluated at least twice a year with pre- and post-observation conferences. Faculty members are provided with subject area objectives and maintain weekly lesson plans. The visiting team would also like to commend the faculty and staff on their use of technology to keep parents and the community informed of news, student grades and attendance, and activities associated with the school. However, it was noted by parents, students, and staff that technology is becoming outdated and needs to be replaced.

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

- Student access to technology is available before, during, and after school hours. This variety of technology motivates and enhances student learning.

- Implementation of Edline software enables the school to promote school activities, post grades and assignments along with syllabi through internet access for students and parents.

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

- Staff development activities should include technology training for faculty and staff for incorporation into classroom.
- A full time support person for technology is needed. Support of technology within the school is limited to a part-time employee which hinders the educational process.
- The school should survey parents, students, and staff regarding technology and performing fine art courses which might be added to the curriculum as the school increases their enrollment.
- The school should further develop research based teaching with emphasis on higher level critical thinking skills.

Finding: Saint Francis Catholic High 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:

St. Francis Catholic High School meets the intent of the standard based on the evidence observed during the visit. Student learning is measured by subject area teachers via tests, quizzes, projects, and portfolios. In addition, students are assessed with semester and end of year exams. There are a limited number of subject area common exams because there are many single classes. More common exams will be available as the school grows.

The school uses the PSAT for 10th and 11th graders, the SAT and the ACRE (religious test) for national, state, local and Diocesan averages. These results are shared with the stakeholders via monthly newsletters, emails, Edline and Grade Quick.

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

During meetings, students and parents expressed satisfaction with the school's communication system. Parents are informed of what their child is doing through the various avenues of communication. Additionally, teachers are very accessible to parents and students and are available before and after school for tutoring or conferences. Parents can also contact them through email when needed.

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

- St. Francis needs to show comparison data for student improvement and student learning. A pre-exam (standardized or teacher-made) given to students at the beginning of the year and then at the end of the year would show improvements or areas in need of improvement for students.
- As more teachers are trained to interpret data, they will be able to make better use of the information and apply the findings to improve their teaching in order to help students become more successful.

Finding: Saint Francis Catholic High School has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 5. Resource and Support Systems

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

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

The school's resources and support services effectively meet the needs of students. The school recruits certified teachers and teachers who are in the process of obtaining certification in the subject areas they teach. Due to the size of the school, several of the faculty members are required to teach more than one course. The majority of staff and faculty participate as sponsors of extracurricular activities and clubs. To compete with the local school district, teacher salaries are set to equal 100% of the pay scale of the School Board of Alachua County. All first year teachers are assigned a mentor who provides them with guidance and assistance throughout the school year. All teachers are required to participate in professional development. The principal meets with teachers approximately six times a year to assess development and provide evaluative feedback. Teachers develop a professional development plan at the beginning of the school year that involves pre-planning goal setting and end-of-year self-evaluation.

The leadership team engages in an ongoing financial process to ensure that the allocation of financial resources is supportive of the school's vision, educational programs, and its plans for school improvement. Financial decisions are made in keeping with the school's mission and vision. The school employs a full-time development person to raise additional funds to support school programs and capital projects. Financial reports are made monthly to the School Board Finance Committee, School Superintendent, and the Diocesan Fiscal Manager and accounting records are audited annually by an independent auditing firm. The diocese provides monetary assistance to meet the annual school budget.

The leadership team ensures a safe and orderly environment through active supervision of students and attention to school wide implementation of the code of student conduct. An Emergency Procedures Guide is published and distributed to all staff. Frequent inspections of physical plant, learning environments, and athletic facilities are conducted on an ongoing basis. Professional development in the area of emergency response is necessary to improve staff knowledge and understanding of specific emergency procedures.

In the area of guidance services, the school has procedures to review incoming and current student data for the purpose of academic placement. The school is developing school-wide data analysis procedures to improve student academic progress monitoring and individualized guidance services. Guidance services include assisting students and parents with college preparation, college application processes, and counseling concerning PSAT, SAT, and AP exams. Individual student counseling is available upon request.

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

- The school recruits, employs, and mentors qualified professional staff.
- The school Finance Committee monitors all financial transactions through a yearly auditing system.
- The school maintains a safe and orderly school campus through the implementation of the student code of conduct and the school mission/vision.
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- The school possesses a written security and emergency procedures plan.
- A program of continuous teacher professional development is utilized to improve instructional practices.

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

- Additional support may be necessary to meet the needs of students and parents related to matriculation to two-year and four-year colleges.
- Additional training may be necessary in the area of emergency planning and procedures to increase staff knowledge and understanding of expectations
- Additional teacher professional development in the area of technology will enhance curriculum and instruction.
- Guidance should consider developing an academic four-year plan for all students.

Finding: Saint Francis Catholic High School has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

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

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

St. Francis Catholic High School fosters effective communication with the stakeholders by updating their website, conducting new parent orientations to answer questions and generate input, surveying the stakeholders, conducting quarterly parent/student/teacher conferences and soliciting knowledgeable stakeholders to assist with various academic endeavors. The school communicates information to the stakeholders about students, their performance, and school effectiveness by holding an annual Open House. A monthly newsletter is mailed home and parents and students have access to student progress through Edline. Church bulletins and/or local media publish student academic and athletic achievements. Email is used to inform all stakeholders of athletic events or community service projects.

Interviews with various stakeholders indicated the school was doing a good job of keeping everyone informed and there is evidence of a positive working relationship among the stakeholders and the school. The interviews also indicated that the principal has an open door policy and stakeholders are welcome to come in and discuss any issues with the principal and/or staff.

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

- Parents, students, and staff indicated that there is a true sense of community among all the stakeholders and the school. Working relationships and open communication is present on the school site and in the community.
- Parents were satisfied with the communications received from the school and that the school fosters a learning community that is responsive to community expectations.

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

- Teachers need to insure that updates to the Edline for parents and students are done in a timely manner.

- The guidance department needs to increase communication with parents and students as to timelines, deadlines, and requirements for college submissions.
- Increased communication between the Parent School Association and the School Board would be beneficial.

Finding: Saint Francis Catholic High 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:

St. Francis High School is committed to continuous improvement as evidenced in the site visit and interviews with the stakeholders. An action plan has been developed that includes areas that need the most attention. The principal meets at least six times a year with each teacher to discuss and develop teaching plans and professional goals. Profiles are created for each student to determine proper placement in classes and targeted areas have been determined for improvement through identification of gaps between current and expected student performance.

Stakeholders are surveyed periodically to ensure alignment of the goals for student learning with the vision and purpose of the school. More than half of the persons surveyed believed the school is providing a high quality instructional program.

Professional development is provided for teachers and each new teacher has a mentor who provides assistance and direction for these teachers to be successful. An Academic Council was created to monitor the improvement plan and communicate with the principal and departments any issues or concerns regarding implementation of the plan. The principal plays a key role in keeping the teachers informed of the implementation process and observes teachers at least twice a year with pre and post conferences held to discuss findings.

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

- There is ongoing communication among the school and the stakeholders. Parents and students can go to Edline and monitor their academic progress, get assignments, and communicate with the teachers.
- After school mentoring and tutoring is provided for all students and required for those needing extra help. Accommodations and strategies are implemented for students needing academic assistance or have a 504 plan.

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

- Professional development needs to be based on information obtained from a needs assessment survey of teachers.
- Stakeholders, other than school personnel, need to be part of the School Improvement Planning Committee.

Finding: Saint Francis Catholic High 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. Two years 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 Ernest D. Herrington, Jr., 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 SACS CASI accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Ms. Beth Rattie, Chair (Osceola County School District)
- Mrs. Carmen Chaves, Team Member (Timber Creek High School)
- Chester Gregory, Team Member (Forest High School)
- Mrs. Jean Hoffman, Team Member (Bishop Moore Catholic High School)
- Mr. Patrick Wnek, Team Member (Levy County School District)

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.