

**Report of the  
Quality Assurance Review Team  
for  
Saint Vincent de Paul**

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US

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*North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) are accreditation divisions of AdvancED.*

# Quality Assurance Review Report

## Contents

About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI .....	3
Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review .....	4
Summary of Findings .....	5
Commendations .....	5
Required Actions .....	6
Next Steps .....	7
Review of AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools .....	9
Standard 1. Vision and Purpose .....	9
Standard 2. Governance and Leadership .....	10
Standard 3. Teaching and Learning .....	11
Standard 4. Documenting and Using Results .....	12
Standard 5. Resource and Support Systems .....	13
Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships .....	14
Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement .....	15
Conclusion .....	17
Appendix .....	18
Quality Assurance Review Team Members .....	18
AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools .....	18

## About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

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

In April 2006, the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), and National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) came together to form one strong unified organization dedicated to education quality. That unified organization, known as AdvancED, creates the world's largest education community, representing 27,000 public and private schools and districts across the United States and in 65 countries worldwide and educating 15 million students.

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

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

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

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

# Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Accreditation Recommendation.** The Quality Assurance Review Team uses the findings from the onsite visit to make an accreditation recommendation that is reviewed 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 NCA CASI Indiana State Office (NCA-CASI-IN), a division of AdvancED, visited the Saint Vincent de Paul in Fort Wayne, US-IN, US on 02/16/2010 - 02/17/2010.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 4 members of the administrative team, 22 students, 13 parents, and 33 teachers. In addition, support staff were interviewed. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by the school. Specifically, the team examined the school's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

1. Vision and Purpose
2. Governance and Leadership
3. Teaching and Learning
4. Documenting and Using Results
5. Resource and Support Systems
6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships
7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

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

## Commendations

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

- **Collaborative atmosphere prevails in the school.**

The entire staff models collaborative learning. Kindergarten through second grade teachers collaborate as a group; third through fifth grade teachers collaborate as a separate group; sixth through eighth grade teachers collaborate as a junior high group. Collaboration also occurs across disciplines. The principal's role of modeling collaborative engagement emanates to teacher perceptions of collaboration as learning.

Responsibility that is shared among collaborators for student learning eliminates redundancy of lessons and creates an upward spiral of achievement.

- **All individual stakeholders have a clear sense of their roles and responsibilities.**

The team frequently observed multiple adults working with students directly while other student groups

were on task with assigned work. Students move about the building with and without supervision demonstrating equally good behavior. Parents understand the opportunities to participate and the responsibilities for being informed. The governing structure of the school board is clearly understood and accepted.

Learning opportunities for all students are increased when the support system includes their peers and the adults around them.

## Required Actions

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

- **Seek ways to incorporate higher-level thinking skills, strategies, and interventions in program planning.**

Members of the Saint Vincent de Paul community enjoy safety and gain confidence in familiarity. Although service projects, talent development, and special needs inclusion all are visible, people who are not directly engaged in the parish and the school could benefit from increased access to the benefits of the Saint Vincent de Paul community.

Patterns of thought and processes of instruction, including interventions, while successful for individual student growth in academics, can also inhibit independent and divergent thinking. The Catholic identity is a strong factor which should promote individual uniqueness and offer strength for challenges found in real world experience.

- **Expand formal collaboration for kindergarten through eighth grade and beyond. Teachers in grades five through eight should understand what is involved in third through fifth grades and kindergarten through second grades so that vertical understanding encompasses kindergarten through grade eight and beyond. Conduct vertical curriculum collaboration with the enhanced awareness of interventions and differentiated instruction.**

Teachers have and use protected time for collaboration at their own levels, kindergarten through second, third through fifth, and sixth through eighth. Interventionists provide timely academic support to both the students and the teachers.

As the impact of interventions provides overall increased achievement, teachers in later grades will be dealing with students who have greater skill and will be prepared for greater challenges with higher expectations.

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

## Next Steps

The school should:

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

## 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](http://www.advanc-ed.org/resourcenetwork), provides an online network of peer-to-peer practices, best practices, and resources and tools designed to help schools with their improvement efforts. Available any where, any time, the network can be queried for information on a variety of school improvement subjects. The AdvancED Research and Development division provides research, handbooks, and tools to assist schools with continuous improvement. In addition, your state office provides hands-on professional development and ongoing technical assistance. Contact your state office for more information on the range of resources available to you.

## Celebrating Accreditation

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

**Summary**

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

# Review of AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools

The primary requirement for accreditation is that the Saint Vincent de Paul demonstrates that it meets the seven standards for accreditation. The findings of the Quality Assurance Review Team regarding the standards for accreditation are summarized on the following pages.

## Standard 1. Vision and Purpose

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

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

The Vision of Saint Vincent de Paul is “Building a community in Christ for today and tomorrow.” This clear and succinct Vision is the result of a refining process initiated by Monsignor several years ago, to move from a series of eight belief statements and seven Mission statements. The Vision is followed by the Mission statement, which clarifies how the Vision will be enacted. “The Mission of the Saint Vincent de Paul community is to enable all students to live their Catholic faith and achieve academic success.” The Vision and Mission are highly visible throughout the school as posters and as tag lines on student worksheets. The classroom doors are all decorated with various ways of illustrating the Vision. These decorations were part of Catholic Schools Week; they were left up for the team visit.

Another clarification of the Mission is visible in a writing project conducted in one of the classrooms. It resulted in a poster, comprised of the essays of three students, explaining what the Vision and Mission means to them. During the interviews, students were able to recite the Vision statement and they were also able to express in their own words what the Vision means. In fact, many of the responses to interview questions, with a focus on one of the other standards, revealed how deeply embedded the Vision is in the culture of the school. This was evidenced with every group and all stakeholders that were interviewed.

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

- All stakeholders are committed to the Vision and Mission and embraces it as their own.
- Outreach to the community is predicated on the Vision and Mission.
- The Vision and Mission drives the learning process.

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

- Incorporate the school goals/action plan matrix into the School Improvement Plan document.
- Examine the introductory information for the School Improvement Plan to ensure that its statement of the Vision and Mission are consistent with the updated statement of the Vision and Mission as it appears in the introductory information for the Strategic Plan.
- Clarify the relationship between the Strategic Plan and the School Improvement Plan.

**Finding:** Saint Vincent de Paul has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

## Standard 2. Governance and Leadership

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

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

The governance of the school is multi-faceted but clear. The team learned that all members of the staff and faculty, and all students have a role to play. The over-arching guidance of the school comes from the school board. The board is comprised of the principal, the pastor, and twelve individual stakeholders appointed from other parish committees for precise terms of service. The school board emphasized that it serves in an advisory role. Minutes from the school board meetings are available to all stakeholders. In addition, there is a strategic plan which includes multiple committees (athletics, development, discernment, facilities, finance, fine arts, orientation, policy, strategic planning, vision/mission, technology), and applies to both the school and the church. The School Improvement Plan functions as a product of the Academic Committee of the Strategic Plan. Each faculty member is on a minimum of one committee.

Governance occurs through differentiation of responsibilities for leadership roles, so that teachers have full awareness of how pivotal they are. Collaboration includes the principal and other administrators and support staff in a manner that teachers say generates a sense of engagement and support. Collaboration also means that there is a horizontal curriculum alignment within grade levels. Vertical curriculum alignment sometimes occurs with kindergarten through second, third through fifth, and sixth through eighth divisions. Sometimes curriculum alignment is cross-disciplinary, and less frequently, curriculum alignment occurs in kindergarten through eighth grades. Opportunities for teachers to lead abound.

Leadership roles are clearly understood in a collegial setting. Even the upper level students have leadership opportunities, such as conflict resolution mediators, roles for which they are trained.

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

- A culture of collegiality prevails.
- Trust and camaraderie pervade the atmosphere of the school.
- All stakeholders who engage in leadership roles find their participation to be meaningful.
- Governance is viewed as an opportunity for learning collaboratively.

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

- Encourage stakeholders, who are not directly involved in leadership roles, to become more engaged in leadership responsibilities.

**Finding:** Saint Vincent de Paul has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" and has met this standard for accreditation.

## Standard 3. Teaching and Learning

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

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

Research-based curriculum begins with the Rigby Literacy by Design program which was adopted four years ago. Prior to this, and in a state of ongoing but stalled revision, is the diocesan core standards which replicate the Indiana Academic Standards for Learning. Interventions abound; interventions occur as a direct result of test results with some teacher observations, also providing anecdotal but valued evidence.

Through the process of assessing the standards and preparing the Standards Assessment Report, teachers engaged in vertical, horizontal, and inter-disciplinary curriculum articulation, an opportunity for which they expressed appreciation and a hunger for more opportunities for this structure of collaboration. The intent is to make learning feel like a spiral to students, not a repetition.

Interactive articulation with the high school, which receives over 80% of the graduates, is apparent in mathematics, intentional in language arts, and largely disconnected in computer science. Teachers all indicated a sense of disconnection from the real content of these subject areas at the high school level, and some expressed fear that secondary teachers are so locked into their curricula that student needs, academic achievement, and the potential of students may be taken too lightly.

Instructional technology is readily available, even abundant. All but three classrooms have Smart Boards. A Clicker Technology apparatus is available for check-out by teachers. The team noted that the abundance of the instructional technology, while very impressive, pales in comparison to the effectiveness of its use as an instructional tool and not an end in itself.

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

- Special education teachers collect data weekly, and communicate it immediately to the teachers, to provide and revise meaningful interventions suited to the individual student.
- Differentiated instruction is provided through centers and one-on-one instruction.
- Students expressed awareness of what they are doing and why it is important.

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

- Incorporate the diocesan standards into daily instruction consistent with the vision to articulate clear and measurable expectations for student learning from a comprehensive perspective.
- Strengthen and formalize the vertical articulation from Saint Vincent de Paul to Bishop Dwenger High School.

**Finding:** Saint Vincent de Paul has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

## Standard 4. Documenting and Using Results

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

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

The school uses North West Evaluation Association (NWEA), and Indiana Statewide Tests of Educational Progress (ISTEP+) scores, as well as STAR reading (grades 1-6). Terra Nova was in use until 2006. NWEA was phased in over the next two years, additional grade levels are being added gradually for budgetary considerations.

AIMSweb is an online assessment of literacy skills to measure the impact of instructional programs. Adopted four years ago, AIMSweb is geared to measure the five components of literacy: phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, fluency, and letter-sound identification. These components of literacy are congruent with the Literacy by Design curriculum.

The team did not hear the faculty voluntarily offer to discuss the results of the NWEA scores or the ISTEP+ test results in any details, but the team's investigation of ISTEP+ test scores indicated excellent performance, and also evidence of appropriate remediation where needed. Investigation of NWEA scores revealed that teachers' immediate response to the lack of growth in NWEA scores resulted in immediate interventions. The team also learned that students create and monitor their own growth goals based on the NWEA standards and process.

The team did ask if any interventions had been discarded. Writing had been the goal prior to reading. There had been different rubrics for language arts teachers, different rubrics for different grade levels, and much confusion despite intentional professional development. However, it was reported that a reading goal could be justified and was more likely to provide opportunities for cohesive growth. The principal noted that the next goal on the horizon is likely to be math, with particular attention to problem solving.

With AIMSweb in grades kindergarten through three, there is a very short feedback loop for instructional purposes; so short that, as soon as a student is no longer in need of an intervention, he or she is returned to class to rejoin the group. Response to intervention is viewed as a tool for differentiation. Differentiation of instruction occurs as a result of the use of assessments.

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

- Commitment to the use of data to ensure student learning and growth is evident.
- Individual responsibility is generated in students, as they set their goals and monitor their own progress.
- Familiarity with data collection and use is understood well at the kindergarten through second grade level, at the third through fifth grade level, and at the sixth through eighth grade level.

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

- Create a visual to demonstrate how the school manages and uses the assessments to provide interventions in kindergarten through eighth grade.
- Use this visual to unify stakeholders understanding of how the data profile reflects the school's

- goals, and progress towards achieving them.
- Ensure that data collection does not overwhelm the professional judgment of the trained professionals.

**Finding:** Saint Vincent de Paul 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 is home" to staff and faculty, as it emphasizes individual progress based on student ability and need. Faculty members receive professional development tied to the goals; the goals are chosen based on the results of the test scores and research-based interventions. Teachers are expected to know their own interventions, but also be aware of the kind of interventions that are at work elsewhere; however, the team did not see evidence of formal structures to ensure that this occurs.

Half of the tuition for each student is paid by the parish. Multiple examples of contributions from the parish are visible, from furniture and Smart Boards, to driving for field trips. The last decade has seen the school's development of a sustained program for children with special needs, and the approach of individualizing and differentiating instruction has spilled over to include all students. A Talent Development teacher is in the building, and interacts with students and teachers. Multiple service-oriented projects are obvious in the school. They have sponsored a sister school in Honduras, and numerous campaigns for Haiti have been initiated.

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

- Decisions regarding staffing are closely aligned to student needs and instructional priorities.
- Clear emphasis on benefits to students and their achievement guides all decisions.
- Professional staff development for teachers is consistent with the needs of the teachers.
- Initiatives align with interventions.

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

- Find a way to make clear that professional development is being driven by the goals of the School Improvement Plan, and not based on the interventions alone.
- Evaluate interventions in terms of how they connect back to the initial rationale for selecting the goals.
- Investigate means to integrate the diocesan standards into daily instruction, consistent with the Vision, so that clear and measurable expectations for student learning become more specific to the academic disciplines.

**Finding:** Saint Vincent de Paul has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" and has met this

standard for accreditation.

## **Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships**

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

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

Stakeholders are proud of their school, their graduates, their faculty, their staff, their children, and their future. The administrative teams are designed to foster communication, with an awareness of the importance of early detection of problems, to lead to proactive leadership that forestalls and even prevents problems, or at least minimizes the consequences of issues. Sometimes, even the potential problems result in new practices that improve the school tremendously.

Power School, the media connection, keeps parents informed of the progress of their own students. Updates in information occurs in real time. Formal channels include the school board, strategic planning committee, and Saint Vincent de Paul Days, to celebrate volunteers in particular, and all members of the community in general. Children write thank you notes during Catholic Schools Week to the volunteers using a large database list of volunteers. Communication to parents occurs through weekly newsletters, church bulletins, school board meetings, strategic planning committee, and parish rewards program.

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

- The interconnectedness of the school and the parish ensures a sense of belonging for all stakeholders, including staff, faculty, parents, administrators, students, and parents involved in the parish without children at the school.
- Stakeholder familiarity with the processes and procedures at the school is heightened by the administrative attentiveness to stakeholder input.
- School board familiarity with budgetary procedures and expectations promotes good stewardship.

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

- Affirm and encourage the partnering initiatives with the local hospital, for wellness education and practices for families, which includes on-site stakeholders.
- Investigate ways of partnering with additional agencies, particularly educational ones, for ways to provide additional avenues for engagement. Examples might include cadet teaching, practicum students from the universities, and career education by graduates.
- Encourage stakeholders, who are not directly involved in leadership roles, to become more engaged in leadership responsibilities.

**Finding:** Saint Vincent de Paul has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

## Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

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

The commitment to continuous improvement at Saint Vincent de Paul is apparent. The five-year Strategic Plan is updated each year. Stakeholder involvement in the processes of continuous improvement is available through committee work, through reading of minutes, through attendance at board meetings, and through simple communication with other stakeholders. Decisions are weighed against the Vision; either the decision is made to do something because it enacts the Vision, or the decision is made to not follow through on an idea because it insufficiently supports the Vision. Discussion occurs at the building level and at the board level regularly.

Gathering information from students is important to assessing interventions for the established goal.

Friends and Ambassadors for Catholic Education (FACE) is a group dedicated to an endowment fund for scholarships, and other ways of preserving the future of the school at the its current level of vitality, or beyond. Professional development is regarded as a key to continuous improvement because teachers are learning new, research-based ways to identify, meet, and shape student needs, instructionally as well as religiously.

Reading for pleasure is an intervention for the reading comprehension goal. Information gathered from students for assessing their attitudes toward reading for pleasure is an integral part of current activities; teachers recognize that reading for pleasure is a future means for students to continue learning effectively and independently.

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

- School Improvement Action Plan Matrix is clearly, and intentionally, designed and followed with both clarity and intentionality.
- The value of a Catholic education and a Catholic identity is closely tied to the academic growth of the students.

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

- Investigate means and possibilities of attracting male instructional staff.
- Generate a time line for sustaining current level of engagement with the goal.
- Anticipate increased use of updated diocesan curriculum.

**Finding:** Saint Vincent de Paul has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

## Conclusion

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

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

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

# Appendix

## Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Dr. Kathleen Sherman, Chair (NCA CASI AdvancED)
- Ms. Elizabeth Richards, Team Member (St. Mary's School)
- Mr. Stan Warner, Team Member (Saint Ambrose School)

## AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools

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