

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Kinser Elementary School**

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

Quality Assurance Review Report

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About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

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

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

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

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

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

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

Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Accreditation Recommendation. The Quality Assurance Review Team uses the findings from the onsite visit to make an accreditation recommendation that is reviewed 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 Department of Defense (NCA-CASI-DODEA), a division of AdvancED, visited the Kinser Elementary School in FPO, US-AP, US on 02/01/2010 - 02/04/2010.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 8 members of the administrative team, 12 students, 14 parents, and 16 teachers. In addition, 1 Base Commander, 10 Paraprofessionals and 7 Clerical 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.

- **The school has exhibited an on-going, authentic, and active focus on continuous school improvement.**

Extensive evidence of meetings and instructional activities in support of school improvement was seen by the team. The implementation of the Looking at Student Work process as a means of collaboratively gauging progress towards meeting the school's improvement goals was noted during the visit. Ongoing, school-based professional development is in place to support the staff focus on meeting the school's improvement goals.

School improvement, when actively done with commitment, is a process that benefits students by improving academic performance for all students.

- **In-house, staff-led professional development reflects a sense of shared ownership in the school**

improvement process.

An on-going and regular schedule of professional development activities is in place reflecting broad involvement of faculty members. Faculty members share responsibility for leading different professional development sessions. Professional development activities are aligned with the school's improvement efforts.

On-going, job embedded professional development has been shown to improve student achievement. Sharing the leadership role for the professional development sessions is an important indicator of shared leadership, commitment to the school, and an important attribute of a professional learning community.

- **The school has created and implemented a data spreadsheet to inform decisions for improvement of instruction and facilitate flexible instructional grouping, all in support of improving student achievement.**

Data spreadsheets for all classes were made available to the visiting team. The data spreadsheet contains performance data at the student level. Interviews revealed the use of those tools throughout the school.

Regular examination of student performance data is an indicator of a school using data to make instructional decisions.

- **The administration has assumed an active role in instructional leadership by visiting classrooms and meeting quarterly with teachers to review data sheets to determine how to best differentiate and improve instruction.**

Both interviews and artifacts revealed the practice of the leadership being actively involved in the use of the data spreadsheets and regularly meeting with faculty.

Schools improve as building leadership moves from management to providing instructional leadership. Discussing individual student performance with faculty members is an important attribute of instructional leadership.

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.

- **Implement more frequent and meaningful vertical articulation across the curriculum, with initial focus on basic math computational skills.**

Staff interviews revealed that prior work on vertical articulation had occurred and the staff desires to continue with and improve the outcomes of that work. Also, student performance data and interviews with staff reflect a need for improvement of students' basic math computation skills.

The vertical alignment of the curriculum is an essential part of providing a guaranteed curriculum to all

students.

- **Develop a plan and strategies to expand implementation of the balanced literacy writing components across the curriculum.**

The team was presented much evidence of the use of the reading components of the balanced literacy model but less of the writing aspects of balanced literacy. The writing instruction that was observed was inconsistent across grade levels.

The balanced literacy model is most effective as an instructional approach when used with complete fidelity. The addition of the writing components will increase the effectiveness of the approach.

- **Create and implement a building-wide strategy for faculty and staff to share and model exemplars of instructional differentiation.**

There has been on-site professional development on Using Data to Differentiate Instruction (UDDI). Staff members shared with the team an awareness of and a need for increased implementation of differentiated instruction.

Differentiating instruction is a system-wide initiative which can be supported at this school through processes the school has in operation. By having the staff share and model exemplars of differentiation, the practices will be spread among the faculty.

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, 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-DODEA accreditation seals are available at www.advanc-ed.org/communicationskit for accredited schools and districts to post on their website and to use in school communications. Flags, door decals, diploma seals, and lapel pins are also available and can be ordered from the website to help you share your accomplishment with your community.

Summary

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

Review of AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools

The primary requirement for accreditation is that the Kinser Elementary 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:

During the 2006-07 academic year, the school established a profile, vision, mission, and improvement goals in partnership with staff, parents, and community members. Based on available data and dialogue, a consensus was reached to address goals related to improving reading comprehension and problem solving. To insure that the vision and mission of the school remain current, the profile, vision, mission and goals are reviewed and updated at the beginning of each school year. The school has used the rubric developed by NCA CASI to evaluate its mission. Further, the school's mission and vision are consistent with and supportive of the DoDEA (Department of Defense Education Activity) mission and vision.

The school's mission, vision, and improvement goals are incorporated into documents, the school website, and displayed throughout the building to convey them to all stakeholders. Also, the same information is integrated into information about the school that is broadcast on the local cable television channel. The improvement goals guide the teaching and learning process and, if successfully addressed and met, will result in improved student achievement.

Kid-friendly versions of the school goals have been developed and posted in all classrooms to promote student and staff awareness and focus. Some staff and parents were vague in describing to the team how the school's mission and vision impact the day-to-day operation of the school.

Staff development is aligned with and supportive of the school's improvement goals, which, in turn, support the school's mission and vision.

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

- The school has been diligent in conducting a regular review and updating of its mission, vision, and improvement goals.
- The improvement goals are posted in classrooms and throughout the building in easy to understand, kid-friendly language.
- The faculty members are cognizant of and have committed themselves to addressing the schools improvement goals.

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

- Implement an ongoing strategy to more extensively engage parents and community members in

their understanding of and support for the school's mission, vision, and improvement goals.

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

Standard 2. Governance and Leadership

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

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

The leadership at both the district and building level have established procedures and policies focused on effective and safe school operation. A spirit and practice of positive communication and support exist between the school and military leadership. The principal participates in regular monthly meetings with the military leadership.

Faculty members shared with the team the belief that the school leadership is supportive, collaborative, and maintains an open door policy. Further, the team observed, and it was communicated by stakeholders, that the school leadership advocates the school's vision and its improvement efforts.

The principal employs a daily classroom visitation schedule of 5 classes per day for at least ten minutes each (5X10) as a strategy to stay in touch with building instruction.

Stakeholders have access to a variety of forums such as the School Advisory Council, Parent-Teacher Organization, and the Continuous School Improvement Leadership Team.

The team observed evidence of both administrative and teacher leadership focused on the analysis and improvement of student performance. There are regular and frequent faculty and team meetings to discuss school needs and to maintain a focus on improved student performance. Regularly scheduled in-house professional development opportunities provide a venue for faculty members to assume instructional leadership roles within the school. The team observed minutes and agendas that verified that shared leadership and ongoing dialogue related to school effectiveness occur on a regular and consistent basis. A process is in place for the orientation and mentoring of new faculty members.

Building policies and procedures, consistent with DoDEA policies and procedures, are in place for the evaluation of teacher performance and effectiveness.

Students are provided with leadership opportunities via such venues as student council and safety patrol.

While there are parents willing to support individual teacher and classroom activities, both staff and parents shared frustration at the lack of parent willingness to serve as volunteers in roles related to school improvement and decision-making.

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

- Many teachers have and are willing to assume and continue leadership roles in support of

continuous school improvement.

- There is broad staff consensus of a positive school climate and a supportive, family-like atmosphere.
- All professional staff serve as members of a continuous school improvement committee.

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

- Identify and subsequently implement strategies that have been employed by other school communities that focus on expanding parent engagement in the school decision-making process.
- Implement a school-wide program wherein each teacher is responsible for establishing one-on-one relationships with individual parents to engage in school activities beyond classroom needs that specifically relate to engagement in school improvement and input into the decision-making process.

Finding: Kinsler Elementary 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 school clearly defines expectations for student learning. The use of rubrics was observed, and student learning goals were posted as charts, graphs, and work displays. The daily schedules in many classrooms included the posting of curricular standards. The use of "purpose setting" for learning was evident. Grading criteria is available in both parent and student handbooks. Multiple grade levels consistently used Guided Reading, Read Alouds and Independent Reading as a part of the Balanced Literacy Model. Classroom visits revealed the use of Writer's Workshop, which included shared writing. Some classrooms included displays of student writing. There was evidence of questioning by teachers to determine levels of comprehension. Students were encouraged to explain their thinking on a variety of tasks and topics and displayed their ability to reflect on the questions posed.

Students indicated that there are opportunities to excel and be challenged. During student interviews, it was confirmed that learning expectations are clear. Teachers and staff are committed to engaging students in the learning process and to providing opportunities to excel.

Textbooks and reading materials are aligned to the learning goals and the curriculum.

The use of technology is evident in all areas of the school. Various types of technology were observed being used in teaching and learning; these included document projectors for Read Aloud, InFocus machines for reading, and a technology-enhanced classroom in which students were engaged and involved in research and problem solving. The school has two established computer labs with schedules that reflect utilization.

Several teachers demonstrated knowledge of multiple intelligences as well as the willingness and ability to

expand their teaching to a variety of learning styles. Evidence of co-teaching was also observed in a variety of classrooms.

The professional teaching staff designs and implements research-based strategies and activities as well as meets regularly to share best practices and provide support for their colleagues. Grade level, staff, and Continuous School Improvement (CSI) agendas exhibit the use of meeting time to reflect on student performance data, focus on professional growth, and determine effective instructional design and delivery.

The team observed evidence of project-based activities and learning centers. In interviews, students shared an overwhelming feeling that their teachers were invested in the learning process and that they regularly tried new and exciting ways to teach.

A positive school climate is reflected in the teaching and learning environment. Principal, staff, and parents shared that the school provides a wonderful sense of community, support, and involvement for both student learning and family life.

Concerns were shared and the team observed evidence of a need for improvement in the vertical articulation of the curriculum. Specifically, there is a lack of action plans and evidence of follow through to improve curricular and programmatic vertical articulation. Data and information communicated to the team also reflected a need for improvement of students' basic math computation skills.

While there has been on-site professional development on Using Data to Differentiate Instruction (UDDI), staff members shared with the team an awareness of and a need for increased implementation of differentiated instruction.

The team observed a plethora of reading supportive of Balanced Literacy, but not as much evidence of writing supportive of improved reading comprehension. The focus on writing instruction was not consistently evident across the grade levels.

While there were some examples of activity on problem solving, the team did not see broad focus on the problem solving goal across the curriculum.

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

- Diverse and effective instructional strategies are employed such as learning centers, hands-on and manipulative activities, effective questioning, technology-rich and technology-supported instruction, teacher modeling, diverse student grouping to support learning, and graphic organizers.
- The school exhibits abundant examples of instructional practices aligned with and supportive of the school's improvement goal related to improved reading comprehension.
- Evidence exists of active student engagement in the learning process .
- Extensive student work aligned with the school's improvement goals is displayed.

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

- Implement more frequent and meaningful vertical articulation across the curriculum, with initial focus on basic math computational skills.
- Establish a formalized structure and schedule for teachers to observe the presentation of unique, effective, and exemplary lessons by their peers.
- Develop a plan and strategies to expand implementation of the Balanced Literacy writing module across the curriculum.
- Create and implement a building-wide strategy for faculty and staff to share and model exemplars of instructional differentiation.

- Explore and implement instructional activities that will result in increased focus on the problem solving goal across all curricular areas.

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

Standard 4. Documenting and Using Results

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

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

The school uses formative and summative assessments to document performance data and uses this information to guide decisions relating to instruction and the effectiveness of interventions. The staff uses a number of assessments to analyze student performance in the classroom setting. Performance data are used to create flexible groups and opportunities to re-teach and re-learn information inside the classroom. Data from a variety of reading assessments are used to identify and place students into programs provided by the Literacy Support Specialist or in the classroom. Results from standardized and school-based local assessments are shared with stakeholders through a variety of meetings, conferences, websites, and the school data wall. Teachers meet quarterly with the principal to review and share data. The team examined documents that indicate that training and community briefs about DoDEA system-wide standardized assessments are conducted by the school annually.

Staff development in the area of assessment and data use is ongoing. Evidence was reviewed that showed that staff development has been conducted by school experts in how to analyze and use data from standardized and local assessments. The team was able to examine a copy of the school-created CSI Operations Manual that contains information on the assessments used and includes copies of forms and data spreadsheets.

The team reviewed logs and conducted interviews that indicated that performance data are reviewed and analyzed with a goal of not only improving student performance but also improving teacher effectiveness. One of the processes used for this is Looking at Student Work (LASW). Using this process, the school made a data informed decision to increase and improve on the existing CSI interventions for both goal one and goal two. The LASW meetings were cited by staff members as being effective for identifying promising classroom practices and areas of student need.

In addition to student performance data, the school makes use of other sources of data that are available to ensure they are meeting the needs of the community and all stakeholders. These sources include DoDEA sponsored Customer Satisfaction Surveys and others such as surveys of former students. The data from these instruments were reviewed and provided information that lead to training and further communication with stakeholders.

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

- The creation of a school specific "data spreadsheet" is used to guide decisions for improvement of instruction and facilitate flexible instructional grouping.

- One-on-one quarterly meetings between teachers and the principal support the review of data.
- Frequent meetings have been implemented that focused on the review of data and the discussion and planning of supportive staff development.
- The school has developed and implemented a set of common quarterly local math assessments.
- The school's broad implementation of the process for Looking at Student Work has contributed to enhanced staff development and instruction.

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

- Improve the school's CSI Operations Manual to include more detailed instructions and examples on how to implement interventions supportive of both improvement goals.
- Investigate using technology to create digitally recorded sessions to enhance professional development by creating files that can be viewed or accessed on-demand by any staff member.
- Utilize the skills of current staff to model effective use of available assessment data to improve classroom instruction and student performance.
- Develop and implement school-wide administration procedures and standardized scoring rubrics specific to the school's local assessments.

Finding: Kinsler Elementary 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 fully utilizes the DoDEA process for recruiting and employing all personnel. Only individuals who are fully qualified are considered for positions. After individuals report to the school, they are assigned a mentor to assist them in their new responsibilities. The mentor assists them with all aspects of the new position and specifically addresses the expectations for continuous school improvement. The school principal assigns all individuals to positions within the school based upon their qualifications, interests, and aptitudes. All requirements for certification and credentials are carefully followed.

Professional development activities at the school are a source of engagement and pride for the faculty. All members of the faculty actively participate. Faculty members serve as "students" and "instructors" in various professional development sessions. Many of the school-based sessions are led by teachers. The team saw clear evidence of professional development calendars and training agendas. Many of the professional development activities are connected to and supportive of the interventions in the school improvement efforts.

The overall budget and number of staff at the school are appropriate given the number of students and available funding. The class sizes are small with a large number of specialist teachers and support staff. The administrative staff was increased this year to allow more time for the principal to engage in support

for instruction. The school reports the half time assignment of several specialist teachers is a constraining factor. The team heard evidence that the library may lack sufficient books at certain reading levels. All financial transactions are conducted through approved DoDEA channels including audits and oversight.

The school is clean and orderly. The site is well maintained, appropriately lighted, and fenced for security. The school has needed security and crisis management plans and conducts required safety and crisis drills on a regular basis. Because of the proximity to the ocean, they are one of the few schools on Okinawa conducting tsunami drills. The school has good support for their technology and facility infrastructure.

The team heard conflicting reports concerning safety on the school grounds. Staff and parents report feeling that students are safe and comfortable while at school. Students reported that they did have some fears while at school, particularly on the playground. They reported bullying and identified locations on the school grounds where incidents occur. Students expressed the desire for additional adult supervision and monitoring while outside.

The school has a full-time counselor who provides a wide range of services both within and outside the classrooms. The services include classroom guidance, sponsoring Club USA (a support club for students with deployed parents), supporting students in addressing bullying issues, and a wide range of other issues. A full range of services for students with special needs is provided. Services of all types – referral, assessments, instruction, and transition are provided.

Parents and students shared with the team some frustration at the apparent lack of higher level, age-appropriate reading materials for all students in the school library.

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

- The school has been successful in the hiring and support of a committed and well-trained professional and support staff.
- Sufficient financial and capital resources are in place to address the mission of the school.
- Staff members are engaged in leading professional development activities for other staff members.
- Flexible staffing has been implemented to provide for a half time position in support of increased student performance in math.

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

- Examine the allocation of available resources to ensure that adequate materials are in place to provide all students with access to high interest books at all reading levels.
- Investigate and resolve the perceived issues related to school safety by conducting follow-up interviews with students and their parents. Explore alternative assignments to provide for additional recess supervision or other actions as warranted.

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

Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

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

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

The school consistently fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning. The team reviewed numerous artifacts including: PTSSO agendas, SAC minutes, and calendars that reflect a continuous commitment to this standard. Parents are reached out to in many ways, starting at the beginning of the school year with parent orientations, ice cream socials, and parent conferences and continuing with newsletters, emails, and school-wide announcements.

Data from the 2008-2009 school survey reflects the school's success related to this standard: Of the parents who responded (52), 90% said that the staff listens carefully when they express their opinions or concerns, and 96% said that the school encourages involvement at school related events. Team interviews of students, parents, and staff members confirmed that the school promotes collaboration with its stakeholders.

The school has established a variety of internship and partnership agreements with community-based businesses and agencies. For example, the school has established relationships with the command, single marines, fire department, DARE officer, and bus personnel to enhance the overall safety and security of the students.

Parents and community members regularly volunteer time in the school and district. During the school in-brief and during parent interviews, it was confirmed that stakeholders are involved in many aspects of the school's mission and daily operation.

The school provided the team with artifacts such as calendars, agendas, and minutes of parent meetings that reflect formal channels for stakeholders communication. The staff shared the perception that the principal has an open-door policy and that they meet weekly in various forums to ensure collaboration on the school goals and needs.

Parents shared the feelings that the staff and principal are friendly and approachable. Additionally, parents noted that their children were extremely happy about the after school activities, and parents feel that students seem to be sufficiently challenged.

During interviews, stakeholders affirmed that they have a variety of opportunities to be formally involved in the life of school and district. Besides several teacher individual webpages, a webpage is dedicated to parents and community members.

The school uses multiple methods to communicate the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders such as brochures, pamphlets, newsletters, parent-teacher conferences, and the parent/student handbook. Parents and students are involved in developing individualized learning plans for students.

The school provides information about students, their performance, and school effectiveness that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders using GradeSpeed, parent-teacher conferences, and published

policies regarding reporting schedule and report cards.

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

- The school has implemented multiple strategies for communicating with its stakeholders.
- The school leadership has published a master calendar for CSI, SAC, faculty, and PTO meetings that allow for frequent collaboration.

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

- Develop and implement a strategy wherein individual teachers form one-one relationships with parents as a means beyond classroom volunteers to encourage expanded parent involvement in school decision-making in support of the school's improvement efforts.

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

Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

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

There was evidence of a focus on continuous improvement throughout the school. Teachers have posted the mission, vision, and goals in their classrooms.

Data sheets have been developed by the school to provide insights into ways teachers can differentiate instruction through flexible grouping and monitoring student learning in support of the school's improvement goals. Teachers use data to provide one-on-one tutoring and use a variety of techniques to solve problems. Weekly and/or daily instructional standards were observed to be posted in some, but not all, classrooms. The professional development plan provides guidance in how teachers are to implement the CSI goals of reading and problem solving.

While the principal shared with the team the perception that there is significant and widespread involvement of the faculty with the CSI team activities, he also expressed the belief that there is still some room for improvement.

Various documentation reflected staff engagement in CSI, such as agendas for the Continuous School Improvement Leadership Team (CSILT), quarterly assessment meetings, CSI teacher unit meetings, vertical articulation meetings, advisory council, and LASW. Throughout the visit, the staff reaffirmed their involvement with CSI through their implementation of lessons using read aloud, independent reading, various problems solving techniques, use of the problem solver, reading challenge, guided reading, and the use of computers to reinforce the goals.

The principal and staff have taken an active role in aligning the mission and vision to the goals; however, not all staff were able to articulate how the mission and vision tie into day-to-day classroom operation.

Teachers maintain assessment data sheets to document individual student progress toward meeting the school's improvement goals. To further reinforce the use of the interventions, the principal and teachers are involved in collaboratively reviewing the data collected from teachers to determine areas that students need additional instruction or support. There was evidence that some teachers are using differentiated instruction, various adaptive and instructional software, and direct instruction in reading and vocabulary skills.

A CSI Operations Manual communicates the CSI plan to staff. The manual includes the goals written in kid-friendly language. The manual also includes information on the assessment instruments, interventions, list of various software, training dates posted on the calendar, implementation time frame (year long), and a list of committee members.

The principal frequently visits classrooms and provides feedback to teachers in a timely manner. The principal and teachers meet quarterly to review the results of the data gathered to make informed decisions on how to improve student performance. A collaborative approach supports teachers' continuous efforts toward the implementation of the reading and problem solving goals.

A school-based staff development and monitoring plan aligned with school's improvement goals are in place.

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

- Administration takes an active role in visiting classrooms and meets quarterly to review teachers' data sheets to determine how to best differentiate instruction for students who need additional support.
- There are extensive artifacts reflecting that the school engages in continuous school improvement.

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

- Ensure that all teachers can clearly articulate the school's mission, vision, and improvement goals and how they are integrated into their daily instruction.
- Expand instructional focus on strategies in support of the school's problem solving goal.

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

Conclusion

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

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

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

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Mr. John Metcalfe, Chair (Fremont County District No 1)
- Dr. William Munsell, Vice Chair (University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center)
- Dr. Christopher Racek, Team Member (Sasebo Elementary School)
- Donna Aponte, Team Member
- Ms. Maria Rubio, Team Member (DoDEA Pac/DDESS Guam)
- Dr. William Hill, Team Member

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.