



School Accreditation

A Handbook For Schools

October 2008

Table of Contents

Welcome	2
Resources	3
Introduction to School Accreditation	5
Overview	5
The School Accreditation Process: Responsibilities of the School	5
Role of the School Facilitator	6
Steps to School Accreditation	6
Chapter 1: Beginning the School Accreditation Process	8
Applying	8
Preparing for and Hosting the Readiness Visit	8
Moving to Candidacy	9
Chapter 2: Preparing for the Quality Assurance Review	11
Understanding the Quality Assurance Review	11
Working with the State Office and Quality Assurance Review Chair	11
Hosting the Pre-Visit Review with the Chair	12
Understanding the Standards Assessment Report	12
Completing the Standards Assessment Report	13
Developing the Visit Schedule	15
Preparing Artifacts for Review	16
Preparing the Principal's Overview	18
Preparing Brief Presentations on the Standards	18
Setting up Interviews	18
Understanding and Planning for the Instructional Tour	21
Understanding the Role and Purpose of Classroom Visits	21
Preparing the Presentation of the Team's Findings	22
Coordinating Team Logistics	22
Making Final Preparations	23
Chapter 3: Hosting the Quality Assurance Review	24
Attending to the Details	24
Keys to Success	25
Chapter 4: Continuing the Journey	26
Receiving the Written Report of the QAR Team	26
Receiving Notice of Accreditation Status and Celebrating with the Community	26
Acting on the QAR Team's Findings	26
Completing the Accreditation Progress Report	27
Maintaining Momentum	28
Conclusion	30
Appendix	31
Sample Quality Assurance Review Schedules	

Welcome

This brief handbook is designed to help you with the steps and logistics of the AdvancED School Accreditation Process – from beginning the process to preparing for and hosting the Quality Assurance Review to continuing the journey after the review.

The AdvancED Accreditation Process represents the unified accreditation process for 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). Schools seeking to earn and maintain NCA CASI or SACS CASI accreditation follow the AdvancED Accreditation Process.

Schools will find that this handbook complements the more thorough and substantive *AdvancED Accreditation for Quality Schools: A Practitioners' Guide*. The Guide provides a detailed overview of the three main components of accreditation – meeting standards, implementing a continuous improvement process, and demonstrating quality assurance. The Guide examines the importance of a systems approach to improvement, explaining the concepts of systemic, systematic, and sustainable improvement. In addition, the Guide includes helpful tools and discussion questions that schools can use as they engage in the accreditation process. The Guide can be purchased online at www.advanc-ed.org in the “Products and Services” tab.

If you have questions or need assistance during the process, please contact your AdvancED State Office. A directory of State Offices can be found at www.advanc-ed.org in the “About Us” tab.

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Resources

AdvancED provides a range of support and resources to assist schools in their pursuit and maintenance of accreditation.

Standards

AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools

The standards are the foundation of the accreditation process and can be downloaded at www.advanc-ed.org in the “Accreditation” tab.

Practitioners’ Guide

AdvancED Accreditation for Quality Schools: A Practitioners’ Guide

The Guide provides a detailed overview of the three components of accreditation – meeting standards, implementing a continuous process of improvement, and engaging in quality assurance. The Guide includes helpful tools and discussion questions at the end of each chapter. The Guide costs \$35 and can be purchased online at www.advanc-ed.org in the “Products and Services” tab.

Processes, Steps, and Procedures

Visit www.advanc-ed.org, click on “Accreditation,” then “School Accreditation.” You will find:

- An overview of the School Accreditation Process
- A brief outline of the Steps to School Accreditation
- Accreditation Policies and Procedures
- A Resources and Tools section that compiles in one location the key reports, documents, and guides that schools need throughout the process

Reports, Resources, and Tools

The following reports and resources can be accessed online at www.advanc-ed.org, “Accreditation” tab, then “School Accreditation,” then “Resources and Tools.”

Standards Assessment Report

The Standards Assessment Report is designed to serve as a valuable self-assessment and as a tool to help schools prepare for their Quality Assurance Review. The web-based report must be completed between six months and six weeks prior to the Quality Assurance Review.

AdvancED Standards Assessment Report Overall Assessment Rubrics for Schools

This document is a companion to the AdvancED Standards Assessment Report (SAR). After completing the indicators rubrics and answering the focus questions in the SAR, schools use this overall assessment rubric to indicate the level of implementation that most accurately reflects the school’s adherence to each standard.

Tutorials on Completing the Standards Assessment Report

Two e-learning videos have been created that can be downloaded for free from the website to assist schools in completing the Standards Assessment Report. The first tutorial is focused on collecting data for the report. The second tutorial reviews how to access, complete, and submit the web-based report.

Educational Practices Reference Guide

This guide serves as a resource to schools that want a reference point or examples of specific practices -- such as student-teacher ratios, class size guidelines, teacher qualification guidelines, etc. -- that are aligned with the AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools.

Examples of Evidence for Schools

This resource is designed to provide a starting point for school personnel as they consider the evidence available in their school that demonstrates the school's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards. Intended to be used in conjunction with and as a resource to the Standards Assessment Report, this document provides examples of practices and artifacts that the school might consider using to support its responses to the indicators and focus questions in the Standards Assessment Report.

Readiness for AdvancED Accreditation: A Self-Assessment of Readiness for Accreditation

This tool is designed to help school personnel assess their readiness for accreditation by examining the school's practices in relation to the research-based conditions, core tasks, and effective practices of continuously improving schools (NSSE, 2007).

Technical Guide to School and District Factors that Impact Student Learning

The Technical Guide is a research review of the core tasks, organizational conditions, and effective practices within schools and school systems that can contribute to improved student learning. AdvancED's seven accreditation standards and accompanying indicators are tied directly to this research review.

Products and Services

AdvancED offers a range of products and services to schools. Visit www.advanc-ed.org and click on the "Products and Services" tab for a current listing of publications, resources, and tools.

State Office Support

State Offices provide hands-on support and technical assistance to schools as they engage in the School Accreditation Process. Many states tap the expertise of trained Field Consultants to support schools. Schools can contact their state offices to learn more about the range of services and support available to them. A complete directory of State Offices is available at www.advanc-ed.org in the "About Us" tab under "State Offices."

Introduction to School Accreditation

Overview

The AdvancED School Accreditation Process provides schools with a comprehensive framework for continually improving student learning and school effectiveness. To earn and maintain accreditation, schools:

1. **Meet quality standards.** The AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools are derived from education research and best practice. They require that schools have a clear vision and purpose; have a rigorous curriculum taught through sound, research-based methods; collect, report, and use performance results; provide adequate resources and support for its educational programs; value and communicate with stakeholders; and have a commitment to continuously improve.
2. **Engage in a continuous process of improvement.** Schools implement an improvement process; whereby, they identify a shared vision, maintain a school-wide profile of the current reality, establish plans and assess the implementation of interventions, and document the results of their efforts to improve student learning and school effectiveness.
3. **Demonstrate quality assurance through internal and external review.** The school has in place quality assurance systems and processes to maximize effectiveness across the school to improve student performance. The school engages in regular internal self-review and hosts an external review once every five years.

The Accreditation Process: Responsibilities of the School

The accreditation process is based on a five-year term accreditation. It is an ongoing process of meeting standards, engaging in continuous improvement, and demonstrating quality assurance. The following chart outlines how the process unfolds and the responsibilities of the school over the five-year term.

Timing	School's Responsibilities
Every year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adhere to the AdvancED standards.• Engage in ongoing self-assessment and continuous improvement.• Document results of improvement efforts.• Update school demographic and contact information.• Notify AdvancED of any substantive changes in the school's ability to meet the standards.
Between Six Weeks and Six Months before Quality Assurance Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare and submit the web-based Standards Assessment Report. The report helps the school prepare for the review and provides the review team with the basis for its evaluation.

Year of Quality Assurance Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for the Quality Assurance Review team, working with the Team Chair to establish the review schedule and make arrangements for the team. • Gather evidence and documentation in preparation for the team's review of the school's adherence to the standards. • Host the Quality Assurance Review team. Share the findings from the Quality Assurance Review team report with the school community. • Begin acting on the team's recommendations.
Year following the Quality Assurance Review Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act on the team's recommendations and document progress.
Two Years following the Quality Assurance Review Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act on the team's recommendations and document progress. • Submit the Accreditation Progress Report, a two-year progress report on the school's response to the team's recommendations.

Role of the School Facilitator

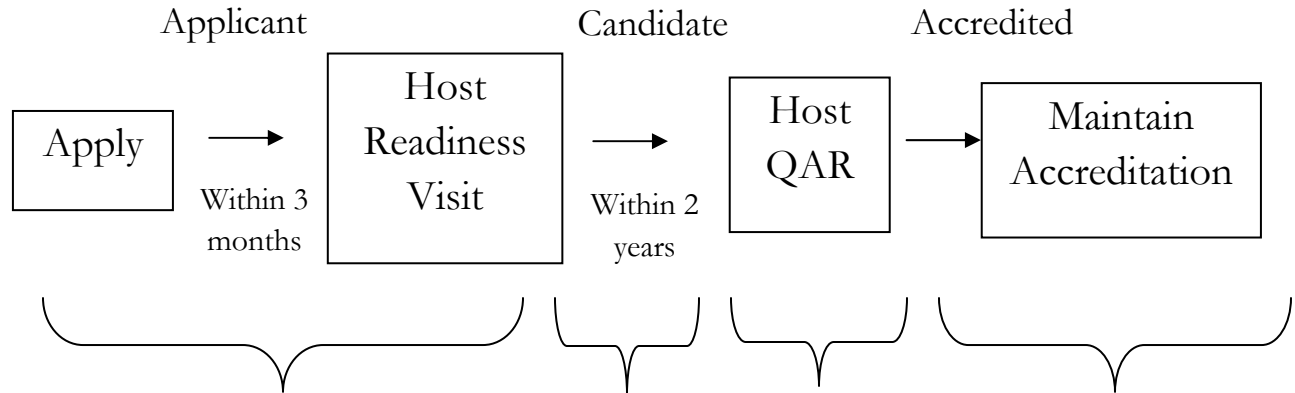
Often the Principal of the school assigns a senior staff member to facilitate the accreditation process for the school. The school facilitator:

- Serves as the key point of contact between AdvancED and the school;
- Works with the Quality Assurance Review Team Chair to prepare for and host the Quality Assurance Review;
- Oversees the accreditation process for the school;
- Supports school stakeholders throughout the accreditation process, answering questions and providing guidance;
- Ensures that all requirements of the accreditation process are met; and
- Manages the logistics and oversees the schedule for the Quality Assurance Review.

Steps to School Accreditation

The following flow chart depicts the steps to accreditation. As the school successfully completes these steps, it moves from Applicant to Candidate to Accredited status. This handbook is designed to assist the school with each of these steps. The sections of the workbook that address the various steps are highlighted in blue.

Steps to School Accreditation



Corresponding Chapters from this Handbook that address each step of the process

<p>Chapter 1: Beginning the Accreditation Process</p>	<p>Chapter 2: Preparing for the Quality Assurance Review</p>	<p>Chapter 3: Hosting the Quality Assurance Review</p>	<p>Chapter 4: Continuing the Journey</p>
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Chapter 1: Beginning the Accreditation Process

Applying

The school begins the accreditation process by reviewing the AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools and determining that it has both the school-wide commitment and the capacity to meet the standards. The school then completes and submits an application, available at www.advanc-ed.org, and application fee to AdvancED. The State Office is notified of the application and sends the Principal a Readiness Letter describing the expectations for the Readiness Visit, along with a Self-Assessment of Readiness for Accreditation tool.

Preparing for and Hosting the Readiness Visit

Purpose. The purpose of the Readiness Visit is to make a determination regarding:

- 1) The school's capacity to meet the standards;
- 2) The degree to which continuous improvement and quality assurance processes are in place in the school; and
- 3) The commitment of the school to meet the standards and adhere to all policies within the two-year candidacy timeline.

Participants and Length of Visit. The AdvancED State Office assigns one to two State Office representatives to conduct the Readiness Visit. The State Office representatives meet with the school leadership team, which, depending on the size and nature of the school, could include the Principal, School Accreditation Facilitator, Assistant/Associate Principals, and other stakeholders as determined by the school. The visit typically lasts two to four hours.

Preparing for the Readiness Visit. To prepare for the Readiness Visit, the school:

- 1) Studies the AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools to gain an understanding of the standards, indicators, and impact statements.
- 2) Reviews the AdvancED Accreditation Policies and Procedures and the Steps to Accreditation (available at www.advanc-ed.org/accreditation/school_accreditation) to ensure they can fulfill the requirements and steps involved in the accreditation process.
- 3) Completes the *Self-Assessment of Readiness for School Accreditation*. The self-assessment is sent to schools upon receipt and processing of their application. The self-assessment helps schools determine their readiness for accreditation by examining the school's practices in relation to the research-based conditions, core tasks, and effective practices of continuously improving schools. This research forms the basis of the AdvancED standards. By self-assessing against the research, the school can determine its capacity to meet the standards. Schools often involve their leadership team and board in the completion of the self-assessment.

Activities Conducted During the Visit. The Readiness Visit typically begins with a brief tour and overview of the school presented by the school leadership team. The AdvancED State Office representatives then meet with the school leadership to:

1. Review and discuss the school's Self-Assessment of Readiness.

The school leadership should be prepared to answer such questions as:

- Who completed the assessment?
- What did you learn about yourself as a school through the completion of the tool?
- What strengths and areas of improvement did you identify through the tool?

2. Provide an overview of the AdvancED standards.

The State Office representatives highlight each of the seven standards and discuss with the school its perception on its ability to meet the standards within the two-year candidacy time frame.

3. Discuss the accreditation process.

The State Office representatives engage the leadership team in a discussion of the steps to accreditation, answering any questions the team might have. The school should be prepared to answer questions related to its processes for improvement and methods of quality assurance.

4. Outline next steps.

The visit concludes with a discussion of next steps. The State Office representatives explain that they will prepare a brief report, the Readiness Visit Report, summarizing the findings from the visit.

Based on the visit, the State Office representatives make a determination as to the school's readiness for accreditation. If the representatives believe the school would benefit from more time to address specific areas of need, they will recommend that the school remain in Applicant status. If this is the case, the school will receive specific instructions regarding necessary next steps. If the representatives believe the school is ready for accreditation, they will recommend that the school move to Candidate status.

Moving to Candidacy

If the school is recommended for Candidacy, the State Office sends the school a candidacy letter that outlines the next steps of the accreditation process which include:

- 1) Addressing any recommendations noted in the Readiness Visit Report;
- 2) Ensuring that the school meets all standards;
- 3) Identifying dates for the Quality Assurance Review; and
- 4) Preparing for the Quality Assurance Review.

The Candidacy Letter includes a Visit Date and Team Member Expertise Request Form. The form asks the school to:

- **Identify three preferred dates to host the Quality Assurance Review visit.** The visit needs to be scheduled within two years of the Readiness Visit. Visit date requests must be made at least 6 months prior to the preferred dates.
- **Indicate any specific expertise** the school would like members of the Quality Assurance Review team to have based on the needs facing the school.

Most schools identify and submit their preferred visit dates and desired expertise shortly after receiving their Candidacy letter. This provides them with a targeted time frame for their visit and helps them begin preparing for the Quality Assurance Review.

Upon receiving the school's preferred dates and desired team member expertise, the State Office selects and sends a letter confirming the dates for the visit to the school. The letter provides instructions for preparing for the review.

Chapter 2: Preparing for the Quality Assurance Review

Understanding the Quality Assurance Review

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

- Evaluate the school's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards.
- Assess the efficacy and impact of the school's continuous improvement process.
- Assess the effectiveness of the school's methods for quality assurance.
- Identify strengths deserving of commendations and provide recommendations to improve the school.
- Make an accreditation recommendation for national review.

Composition. The Quality Assurance Review team is comprised of a nationally-certified Team Chair and team members selected for their expertise and fit with the school's needs. The number of team members varies depending on the size of the school. The State Office appoints the Team Chair and assigns team members at least three months prior to the school's review. The school is provided the name and contact information for the Team Chair and all team members.

Activities of the team. The Quality Assurance Review occurs over a one- to two-day period. Over the course of the review, the team engages in **artifact review, interviews, observations, and professional deliberations**. These activities help the team gather and analyze evidence to determine how the school is meeting the standards. In addition, to ensure that all the standards receive proper attention and focus, team members are assigned to focus on a specific standard. Team members are trained to approach every activity during the visit with an eye for how the school is meeting the standards, looking for strengths and suggestions for improvement.

The Standards Assessment Report. The guiding document for the Quality Assurance Review is the school's Standards Assessment Report (SAR). The school completes and submits the electronic SAR between six months and six weeks prior to its Quality Assurance Review. The SAR engages the school in a comprehensive review of each of the seven AdvancED standards. It guides the school's internal review and becomes the basis for the Quality Assurance Review Team's external review.

Working with the State Office and Quality Assurance Review Team Chair

Having a general understanding of the purpose and functions of the Quality Assurance Review helps the school prepare for a successful review. In addition, the school has the ongoing support of the AdvancED State Office and assigned Team Chair.

The State Office is available to support the school with all aspects of the School Accreditation Process – from informing and engaging stakeholders to completing the Standards Assessment Report to providing technical assistance in responding to the team's recommendations. Schools are encouraged to use their state offices as a resource and partner in their accreditation and continuous improvement efforts.

The Team Chair is also available to support the school. As the visit date approaches, the school works closely with the Team Chair to:

- Establish the visit schedule;
- Coordinate logistics for the team;
- Address any questions and/or concerns related to visit preparation;
- Host a Pre-Visit Review with the school approximately four weeks prior to the review; and
- Ensure the school is ready for the review.

Hosting the Pre-Visit Review with the Chair

Approximately four weeks prior to the Quality Assurance Review, the Team Chair conducts a Pre-Visit Review with the school to ensure that the school is ready to host a successful Quality Assurance Review. This review can occur through conference call or an on-site visit.

During the review, the Chair/Vice Chair meets with and/or contacts the Superintendent and School Facilitator to:

1. Review the Standards Assessment Report for quality and completeness.
2. Review artifacts assembled for the team.
3. Discuss the interview schedule and confirm interviewees. Ensure interviewees include a broad and representative cross section of the school community.
4. Confirm details for the Oral Exit Report.
5. Ensure the schedule and necessary logistics to accommodate the team have been finalized.
6. Answer any questions the school has with regard to the Quality Assurance Review.

The following sections of this chapter will help ensure that schools are ready for this Pre-Visit Review and well-prepared for the Quality Assurance Review.

Understanding the Standards Assessment Report

As stated earlier, the guiding document for the Quality Assurance Review is the school's Standards Assessment Report (SAR). The school completes and submits the SAR between six months and six weeks prior to its Quality Assurance Review. The SAR is a web-based report that the school completes and submits online. Many schools like to work on the SAR in a Microsoft Word format so that it can be shared and worked on by multiple groups, finalized, and then transferred to the online form. The Microsoft Word file can be downloaded from the Home Page of the AdvancED website at www.advanc-ed.org.

The SAR engages the school in an in-depth review of each of the AdvancED standards. Each standard review is comprised of four sections: 1) considering the evidence; 2) indicators rubric; 3) focus questions; and 4) an overall assessment. Following is a brief outline of each of these four sections.

Considering the evidence. The section entitled “considering the evidence” allows school personnel to think about the practices and/or processes being implemented in the school that support its responses to the indicators rubric and focus questions. This section helps school

stakeholders engage in a discussion about how it knows it is adhering to the standards. The section is not intended to engage the school in a collection of evidence, but rather in thoughtful dialogue about how it can demonstrate that quality practices, conditions, and results are occurring in the school. The section asks, “What practices/processes are being implemented, and are they effective?” or said another way, “How do we know we are doing what we say we are doing?” You can access examples of evidence on the online version by simply clicking on the “considering the evidence” link for each standard. The examples can also be accessed as a standalone Microsoft Word document entitled “Examples of Evidence” from www.advanc-ed.org.

Indicators rubric. The indicators rubric enables the school to assess the degree to which practices and/or processes are in place that indicate adherence to the standard and indicators. For each indicator, the school may check if the practices and/or processes are highly functional in the school, operational, emerging, or not evident. The school should use the rubric as an opportunity to ask itself challenging questions and to respond with accurate answers geared toward self-improvement. After completing the rubric, the school can quickly see areas of strength and opportunity. The section asks, “To what degree are the noted practices/processes in place?”

Focus questions. The focus questions allow the school to expand on and think more deeply about the responses to the indicators rubric. The focus questions provide an opportunity for the school to describe the systematic and systemic processes that are in place to support its ability to meet the indicators. The section asks, “How are the practices/processes implemented?”

Overall assessment rubric. The overall assessment describes how well schools are implementing practices and/or processes and the impact these practices and/or processes have on student results and overall school effectiveness. The overall assessment helps schools judge where they are in relation to each standard. The “operational” level is required in order to demonstrate meeting the standard. The section asks, “How well are we meeting the standard overall?” In addition to this section being integrated into the online Standards Assessment Report, we have made the overall assessment rubric available as a standalone Microsoft Word document that can be downloaded at www.advanc-ed.org.

Peer-to-peer practice. In addition to the review of each standard, the SAR includes a section that requires the school to submit a peer-to-peer practice. The submission allows the school to highlight a practice that it feels is indicative of the quality work occurring in the school. The review team may refer to the practice and use it as the basis for identifying other successful practices occurring in the school. In addition, the practice is included in the online AdvancED Resource Network where it can be accessed by other AdvancED schools and districts. Further detail on submitting a peer-to-peer practice is provided in the Standards Assessment Report.

Completing the Standards Assessment Report

Using the online tutorials. AdvancED has developed two brief online video tutorials to assist you in preparing to complete the Standards Assessment Report. These can be accessed at www.advanc-ed.org. Click on Accreditation, School, then Resources and Tools. The tutorials can be found in the list of resources. Schools will want to view these tutorials before beginning the process of completing the Standards Assessment Report.

Establishing a plan. The Standards Assessment Report serves as the vehicle to engage the school in meaningful internal review. Schools that engage in a thorough and purposeful internal review benefit the most from the accreditation process. In fact, many schools rate the internal review, which is guided by the Standards Assessment Report, as the most powerful aspect of the accreditation process. The Principal and/or School Facilitator should work with school leadership to develop a plan with clear timelines, strategies, and responsibilities to ensure that the SAR is completed on time, has the involvement of a broad cross-section of stakeholders, and provides an accurate depiction of the school.

Allowing the right amount of time. The amount of time that schools devote to the internal review and completion of the SAR varies from school to school. Some schools are able to complete the SAR in a six-month time frame; others use a year to 18 months. The key determinants in the amount of time it takes are the school's sophistication and experience in implementing a systems approach to improvement and its overall commitment and buy-in from stakeholders.

Gaining experience and training. During this process, schools find it helpful to have representatives from the school serve on Quality Assurance Review (QAR) teams to other schools. This helps them gain a greater understanding of the QAR process and how to prepare for a successful QAR. Schools also send teams to training sessions on the accreditation process, seek advice from other schools that have hosted their QAR, obtain technical assistance from their AdvancED State Office, and consult with their Team Chair. Many schools have found that the *AdvancED Accreditation for Quality Schools: A Practitioners' Guide* available for purchase at www.advanced.org/products_and_services provides valuable resources and tools to support their internal review and completion of the Standards Assessment Report.

Organizing to complete the SAR. Schools use a wide range of strategies for organizing themselves to conduct their internal review and complete the Standards Assessment Report. All of the strategies rely on the broad involvement of school and community stakeholders. Some sample strategies that schools have used are provided below; however, schools should design strategies that best fit their unique needs and circumstances.

- **Standard teams.** Some schools form teams to review assigned standards. The teams are comprised of staff members who represent a range of positions, departments, and grade levels and community members. The teams work to review the standard, self-assess against the indicators rubric, respond to the focus questions, and make an overall assessment regarding the school's level of adherence to the standard. They then share their work with the other standard teams and school leadership for review, validation, and final refinement.
- **Cross-functional internal review team.** Some schools create one team, representing all school stakeholders, to review all standards and prepare a draft SAR that is then distributed widely for input and feedback. The document is then refined and finalized.
- **Focus groups.** Some schools conduct a range of focus groups of school stakeholders, using the indicators rubric and focus questions of the SAR to guide the discussions. School leaders gather input from these focus groups and use the input to help inform the completion of the SAR. School leaders with primary responsibility for particular standard areas draft and complete their respective sections of the SAR.

Considering the evidence. Regardless of the strategies used to complete the report, the school considers the evidence that addresses the question, “How do we know we are doing what we say we are doing?” The school should be able to provide the evidence to support the ratings it gives itself in the indicators rubric and the overall assessment for each standard. For example, if the school rates a particular practice as “highly functional,” the school should be able to produce evidence to support that rating.

The “Examples of Evidence” resource mentioned earlier is designed to help schools as they consider the evidence supporting each standard. This resource can be downloaded from the Home Page of the AdvancED website at www.advanc-ed.org.

Seeking feedback and support. As the school engages in its internal review, it is encouraged to seek feedback and support from the AdvancED State Office. State Office staff are available to provide ongoing guidance and direction to ensure a meaningful internal review and a quality SAR.

Developing the Visit Schedule

The School Facilitator works with the Quality Assurance Review Team Chair to develop the visit schedule. Following is an overview of key components of a school Quality Assurance Review visit.

Key Components of a Typical Quality Assurance Review Schedule

Evening before review (or early morning of the review)

Team meeting for orientation (2-3 hours)

Activities During Visit

School Overview and Standards Presentations

- Principal provides general orientation to Team
- School personnel provide brief presentation on the school’s adherence to each of the seven standards and highlight key artifacts related to the standard

Interviews

- Team interviews school leadership and improvement team, teachers, parents and community members, support staff, and students (each interview lasts approximately 45 minutes)

Artifact Review

- Team reviews school artifacts (this occurs on an ongoing basis)

Observations

- Principal and/or designee provides an instructional tour of the school
- Team conducts classroom visits
- Team makes general observations through the visit

Professional Deliberations

- Team meets to examine the data collected and reach consensus regarding the team's findings

Meeting with the Principal

- Prior to the delivery of the Oral Exit Report, the Team Chair meets with the Principal to review the team's findings and discuss the team's recommendations

Oral Exit Report

- Team chair provides oral exit report to school stakeholders and at the conclusion of the review

A sample schedule template is provided in the Appendix for the school to adapt and use.

Preparing Artifacts for Review

In preparation for the Quality Assurance Review team's arrival, the school makes artifacts (documents, assessment data, plans, policies, etc.) available to the team that it references in its Standards Assessment Report and any additional artifacts it feels demonstrate the school's adherence to one or more of the standards. These can be made available in written or electronic formats. Many schools post files on webpages or place them on disks or thumb drives.

Included with the artifacts that the school provides in support of its Standards Assessment Report, the school provides the following essential artifacts for team review. The list is organized by standard area; however, many artifacts will address more than one standard area. Schools may call the artifacts by different names than those provided below and should provide whatever comparable artifacts they maintain.

Essential Artifacts**Vision and Purpose**

- School vision and mission statement
- School annual report to the community (or comparable document)
- School demographic and community profile information
- Other _____

Governance and Leadership

- Organization/staffing chart
- School policy manual
- Personnel manual

- Student and Parent handbooks
- Personnel evaluation plan
- Other _____

Teaching and Learning

- Relevant curriculum guides (and accompanying artifacts such as pacing guides)
- School calendar with number of instructional days and teacher work days
- Media services and technology plan
- Other _____

Documenting and Using Results

- Student performance data
 - o Trend data – past three years, multiple assessments
 - o Comparative data with other like schools
- Government report cards and/or accountability ratings (including Adequate Yearly Progress data)
- Student assessment plan (including short-cycle/formative assessments and summative assessments)
- Other _____

Resources and Support Systems

- Professional development plan (including induction program for new staff)
- Number of staff members and student-teacher ratios
- Annual budget
- Latest financial audit
- Facilities maintenance plan and long-range facilities plan
- Crisis management and other emergency plans
- Other _____

Stakeholder Communication and Relationships

- Stakeholder perception data
- Other _____

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

- School improvement plan including results of improvement efforts
- Other _____

Preparing the Principal's Overview

At the beginning of the Quality Assurance Review, the Principal welcomes the Quality Assurance Review team and provides an overview of the school. The purpose of the Principal's remarks is to set the tone and context for the visit. The following questions are designed to assist the Principal in thinking about the type of content to include in his/her remarks:

- What will help the team quickly gain an understanding of the school's challenges, strengths, and opportunities?
- What information will best convey what the school is trying to accomplish for students?
- How is the school meeting the needs of its students – currently and over time?
- What does the school want the team to look for? What advice/support would the school like the team to provide over the course of the visit?

Team members find it helpful when the Principal's comments include an overview of the school vision, basic demographic information about the school, a description of challenges, an overview of key programs and improvement initiatives, and a snapshot of student performance results using multiple measures over time.

The Principal's overview typically lasts between 30 and 45 minutes. It is helpful to provide team members with a copy of the Principal's comments for use and reference during the visit.

Preparing Brief Presentations on the Standards

Typically, following the Principal's overview, school personnel provide brief presentations on each of the seven AdvancED Standards. The presentations provide the QAR team with a general overview and description of how the school is meeting each standard. The overview lasts approximately one hour. The following questions are designed to help school personnel as they develop the presentations for the overview:

- What does the school most want the team to know about each standard as the team begins its work?
- What information about each standard does the school wish to highlight and/or clarify from the Standards Assessment Report?
- What artifacts does the school wish to bring to the team's attention that help demonstrate the school's adherence to one or more standards?
- What processes and practices does the school wish to explain that demonstrate how the school is meeting the standard?
- What does the school want the team to look for and/or verify with regard to each standard as it conducts its review?

Setting Up Interviews

Purpose and coordination. A critical component of the Quality Assurance Review is interviews of school stakeholders. The purpose of the interviews is to provide an opportunity for the QAR team to gather information from a variety of stakeholders about the school's adherence to the AdvancED accreditation requirements. The Principal and/or School Facilitator, with support from the school

leadership team, identifies, invites, and schedules stakeholders to be interviewed by the Quality Assurance Review Team.

Structure of the interviews and questions asked. The interviews last between 45 minutes and one hour. They begin with a brief overview of the purpose of the interviews and the role of the Quality Assurance Review team. The team members and the interviewees then introduce themselves. Following these introductory activities, the team asks approximately 9-10 broad questions which address each of the AdvancED standards, the school's profile, and the school's methods for quality assurance. The questions are tailored as appropriate for each stakeholder group. The school may request a copy of the sample interview questions from the Team Chair. Some schools share the sample questions with interviewees so that they can prepare in advance for the questions that will be asked.

Stakeholder groups to be interviewed. The team interviews the following stakeholder groups:

- School leadership and improvement team
- Teachers
- Parents and community and board members
- Support staff
- Students

The school and Team Chair may add to and/or adapt the groups interviewed as appropriate for the school setting.

Selecting interviewees. The following guidelines are designed to help the School Facilitator in identifying stakeholders to be interviewed.

Guidelines for Identifying Stakeholders to Be Interviewed

Stakeholders should collectively:

- Reflect the school's broader community
(socio-economic levels, race and ethnicity, neighborhoods served by the school, etc.)
- Provide a range of view points and perspectives
(strong and active supporters of the school, critics of the school, those who are less involved, etc.)
- Represent all levels and departments in the school
(e.g., different grade levels and different subject areas)
- Represent all major categories of positions in the school
(e.g., leadership, administrative, teaching, guidance, and support functions)
- Include individuals who can discuss the school's strengths and challenges

The overarching questions to ask when identifying stakeholders to be interviewed are:

- Will the stakeholders collectively provide an accurate assessment of the school for the QAR team?

- Do the stakeholders collectively have enough knowledge of the school’s practices with regard to the AdvancED standards to yield meaningful information?
- Will the stakeholders collectively yield information that will prove valuable to the school in its continuous improvement efforts?

While it may be tempting to identify only those stakeholders who are active and strong supporters of the school, it does not maximize the insights and richness of the findings that can emerge from these interviews that ultimately benefit the school’s improvement efforts.

Inviting interviewees. The Principal and/or School Facilitator should begin inviting stakeholders to be interviewed as soon as it has finalized the visit schedule (approximately six weeks prior to the visit). Following is sample language that can be adapted and used as appropriate when inviting stakeholders to participate in the interviews.

Sample Invitation to Potential Interviewees

Dear <insert name>,

You are cordially invited to participate in <insert name of school>’s upcoming accreditation review by serving on a stakeholder interview team.

<insert name of school>’s Quality Assurance Review will take place <insert dates>. The review is led by a team of professionals from inside and outside the state. During the review, the Quality Assurance Review team conducts interviews with a range of school stakeholders, reviews school documents and student performance data, and makes professional observations to determine the degree to which the school meets standards for accreditation. The team shares its findings in oral and written formats and makes an accreditation recommendation for national review. The school uses the findings from the team to further its continuous improvement efforts.

On <insert day>, the Quality Assurance Review team will be interviewing several stakeholder groups. We would like the team to interview you as part of the <insert interview group> at <insert time> in <insert location>. The interview will last approximately <insert allotted time for interview> minutes. We believe that you have experience, knowledge, and insights that would enhance the team’s understanding of our school.

Please reply to this invitation by <insert date>. I hope you can participate in this exciting and valuable process.

Sincerely,
<Principal>

Preparing interviewees. After stakeholders accept the invitation to serve on an interview team, the school sends a brief note to confirm the interview date, time, and location. The note should emphasize the importance of being on time. The note should repeat some of the information from the invitation letter that highlights the purpose and activities of the team. Depending on the

stakeholder being interviewed, the school may wish to include supporting materials such as a copy of the school's Standards Assessment Report and a list of the sample questions that may be asked in the interview (as noted earlier, these can be obtained from the Team Chair).

Understanding and Planning for the Instructional Tour

The Principal or his/her designee should lead the instructional tour of the school, which typically lasts 30 to 45 minutes. The tour should occur when classes are in session and should be scheduled to avoid the start of school, passing periods, and lunch.

The purpose of the tour is to allow the Quality Assurance Review team to see instruction in action and to view the implementation of key improvement initiatives in the school; it is not a facilities tour. For example, if the school is focused on literacy, the Principal may wish to show the team a literacy lab where specialists are working one-on-one with students, classrooms where literacy coaches are aiding teachers in instruction, the media center where literacy is reinforced, a music class where literacy concepts are integrated into the curriculum, the teacher workroom where samples of student work are on display and an intervention wall tracks student's literacy progress, etc.

During the instructional tour, the Quality Assurance Review team looks and listens for:

- The nature of the overall learning environment – how welcoming is it, does it support student learning, are teachers and students actively engaged in the learning process
- The use of a variety of instructional and assessment methods
- The implementation and monitoring of improvement priorities in the classroom and throughout the school
- The role all staff play in the teaching and learning process

Understanding the Role and Purpose of Classroom Visits

During the Quality Assurance Review, team members will visit a variety of classrooms. The purpose of classroom visits is to view teaching and learning in action and to corroborate information obtained from interviews and artifacts. Typically lasting five to ten minutes, the visits provide an opportunity to see how improvement initiatives are translated into the classroom and to view the impact on teachers and students. The visits allow the team to check for alignment from the administrative to the classroom level.

The Principal and/or School Facilitator should notify teachers that the team may visit their classrooms during the review. The Principal and/or School Facilitator should explain the purpose of the visit, emphasizing that the team is observing processes and activities in the school; they are not evaluating teachers. Team members are instructed to be as unobtrusive as possible and to not disrupt the learning process. Teachers should conduct class as usual.

Preparing for the Presentation of the Team's Findings

Meeting with the Team Chair

When the team has finished its deliberations and solidified its findings, the Team Chair meets with the Principal and any staff members he/she designates to participate in the meeting to hear the team's findings. The School Facilitator schedules the meeting time and location and ensures all participants are informed of the meeting. The meeting provides an opportunity for the Team Chair to discuss the team's findings with the Principal, answer questions, and address any concerns. The Team Chair reviews the Oral Exit Report with the Principal prior to it being shared with the broader staff and school community.

Planning for the Oral Exit Report

At the conclusion of the Quality Assurance Review, the Team Chair presents the team's findings in the Oral Exit Report, which is typically delivered to school staff and community members. Questions are not taken during the Oral Exit Report (the meeting with the Team Chair prior to the presentation of the Oral Exit Report is the venue for questions). The Principal and/or School Facilitator schedules the time for the Oral Exit Report and ensures all desired participants are informed of the meeting. Schools find that the more stakeholders they involve in hearing the Oral Exit Report, the greater buy-in they achieve in acting on the team's findings. The school should consider inviting all faculty and staff members, parent and community groups, district leadership (if applicable), and board members to the Oral Exit Report.

Logistics. The Principal and/or School Facilitator coordinates the logistics pertaining to the board meeting, including:

- Inviting participants
- Preparing a room for the meeting to occur with appropriate seating and audio/visual
- Providing a computer, LCD projector, and screen for the Oral Exit Report presentation which will be delivered via PowerPoint slides
- Providing a podium and/or table from which the Team Chair can deliver the findings
- Providing a microphone, if needed

Agenda. The Principal typically begins the meeting with welcoming comments that last approximately five minutes. The Principal explains the work the school has undertaken as part of the accreditation process and provides an overview of the Quality Assurance Review team's role and activities. The Principal then introduces the Team Chair who introduces the rest of the team and begins the Oral Exit Report. The Team Chair's report lasts 20-25 minutes. Following the report, the Principal thanks the team and concludes the meeting.

Coordinating Team Logistics

The school is responsible for coordinating the logistics associated with the Quality Assurance Review. The following checklist is intended to assist with this task.

- Coordinate transportation, if necessary, to and from the school for the team members for each day of the visit.
- Secure hotel room reservations for team members, if necessary.
- Make all meal arrangements for the team for each day of their stay (and coordinate any necessary transportation to meals, such as dinner in the evenings).
- Reserve meeting space at the hotel or school for each night of the visit. The meeting room should be organized as a hollow square, with enough chairs to accommodate all members of the team. A screen, LCD projector, power cords (2-3), flip chart paper (at least one full pad), markers (at least one for every member of the team), masking tape, and sticky notes (standard square size, at least one pad for each member of the team). Water and light refreshments are appreciated.
- Reserve a team meeting room at the school where the team can work, discuss their findings, and review artifacts. The room should include power cords for multiple computers.
- Secure rooms for the interviews.
- Ensure the logistics pertaining to the presentation of the Oral Exit Report (outlined earlier) are addressed.
- Make name badges for the team members and ensure that school personnel wear their name badges.
- Prepare information packets for the team's arrival (often including a hard copy of the school's Standards Assessment Report, the final schedule, and other school-specific materials). Please note that team members are not allowed to accept gifts from the school (school pens, pads of papers, and other items to assist the team with their work are acceptable to provide).

Making Final Preparations

Following is a checklist to help the school address final preparations for the Quality Assurance Review Team.

- At least a week prior to the Quality Assurance Review team visit, confirm all details related to the schedule.
- Ensure that all stakeholders involved in the review have a copy of the QAR team schedule.
- E-mail and/or send a reminder to all interviewees.
- Make sure that artifacts are accessible and ready for review.
- Confirm lodging reservations for the team, if applicable.
- Confirm transportation arrangements for each day of the visit, if applicable.
- Confirm meals and dinner reservations for the team.

Chapter 3: Hosting the Quality Assurance Review

By following the guidelines outlined in Chapter 2, the school should find that it is well-prepared for the Quality Assurance Review. Chapter 2 provides a detailed overview of each component of the visit and how to prepare for it. This chapter provides brief tips to help the school host a successful Quality Assurance Review.

The visit schedule serves as the primary guide for the review. The Principal and/or School Facilitator manages the schedule and ensures that all activities of the review occur as planned. The Principal and/or School Facilitator should maintain the schedule and extra copies at all times during the visit. He/she should be available for questions and to help the team access needed information throughout the visit. It is a good idea for the Principal and School Facilitator to provide the Team Chair and members with his/her contact information (including cell phone) and the names and contact information of other school staff should questions or emergencies arise.

Attending to the Details

Once the review team has arrived, the School Facilitator ensures that all details unfold as planned.

Arrival and Orientation

- Confirm lodging and dinner reservations for the team, if applicable.
- Provide team members with hard copies of any information needed for the review. Often, the school supplies name badges, a hard copy of its Standards Assessment Report, a final schedule, and additional school-specific materials. Please note that team members cannot accept gifts from the school (school name/logo items of nominal value such as pens and notepads designed for use during the visit are acceptable).
- Check to see that the meeting room for the team's evening orientation is properly set-up (hollow square with enough seats to accommodate the team, flip chart paper, sticky notes, markers, masking tape, LCD projector, power cords, screen, any school artifacts that the school wants in the team's work room, water and refreshments).

Day One

- Ensure all team members have transportation to the school.
- Make sure the team's meeting room at the school is ready and meets the team's needs.
- Ensure easy access to artifacts the team will need.
- Manage the schedule and ensure that all activities stay on schedule.
- Provide lunch for the team.
- Make available coffee, water, and light refreshments throughout the day for the team.
- Provide transportation to the hotel, if needed.
- Ensure dinner reservations are confirmed and transportation is provided, if needed.
- Ensure that the team's meeting room at the hotel (if applicable) is ready for the team.

Day Two

- Ensure all team members have transportation to the school.
- Make sure the team's meeting room at the school is ready and meets the team's needs.
- Ensure easy access to artifacts the team will need.
- Manage the schedule and ensure that all activities stay on schedule.
- Provide lunch for the team.
- Make available coffee, water, and light refreshments throughout the day for the team.
- Prepare for the final meeting between the Chair, Principal, and any designated staff.
- Set up the room for the presentation of the Oral Exit Report (see details in Chapter 2).
- Complete the evaluation forms provided by the Team Chair.
- Ensure team members' transportation needs are addressed.

Keys to success

Schools that have hosted Quality Assurance Reviews offer the following advice to their colleagues.

- **Be open and honest with the team.** The more authentic and accurate your responses are to the team, the better able the team is to assess the strengths and needs of the school.
- **Stay on schedule.** Use the schedule to guide the visit.
- **Communicate with all stakeholders about the visit;** the more people who know about the visit and the activities of the team, the better. Be as open and transparent about the process as possible.
- **Use and refer to the Standards Assessment Report.** The self-assessment is perhaps the most valuable component of the review process. The Standards Assessment Report represents the work and thinking of a broad range of stakeholders. Reference it regularly with the team so that it is used to maximize the team's time and their ability to provide meaningful feedback to the school.
- **Share and encourage the team to review specific artifacts** that you feel are critical to the team's understanding of your school.
- **Highlight the areas where you need the team's assistance.** The earlier in the process that the team discovers the challenges the school is facing, the more time the team has to consider and craft powerful recommendations to support the school in addressing those challenges.
- **Remember, you get out of a process what you put into it.** The school has the ability through its own commitment to the process to make the most out of the Quality Assurance Review. The more committed the school is to gaining valuable support and feedback from peers, the more likely the school is to receive a meaningful Quality Assurance Review.

Chapter 4: Continuing the Journey

While the majority of this handbook is devoted to preparing for the Quality Assurance Review, the majority of the school's time is spent following the review, acting on the team's findings and continuing the journey of the accreditation process. This chapter reviews the key activities that occur on an ongoing basis as schools seek to maintain their accreditation and continuously improve.

Receiving the Written Report of the Quality Assurance Review Team

At the conclusion of the Quality Assurance Review visit, the Team Chair works with the team to finalize the written report of the team's findings and recommended accreditation status. The report is submitted for review to an AdvancED Reader who reads and finalizes the report to ensure quality. After the Reader finalizes the report, it is sent to the school, State Office, and Team Chair. The school receives the report within 20 working days of the visit.

Upon receipt of the written report, the school communicates the QAR team's findings to internal and external stakeholders. Sharing the results of the visit with a wide range of stakeholders helps educate the school community about the school's accreditation and garners buy-in with regard to next steps that the school will take to address the findings in the report.

Receiving Notice of Accreditation Status and Celebrating with the Community

The Quality Assurance Review team's recommended accreditation status is submitted to AdvancED for state and national review and action. The national AdvancED Accreditation Commission, the body that grants accreditation, reviews and acts on all accreditation status recommendations. After the Commission has taken action on the school's accreditation status, a letter is sent to the school confirming its accreditation status.

Upon receiving the accreditation letter, the school communicates its final accreditation status to internal and external stakeholders. The school receives and displays a certificate of accreditation. Press releases, flags, Q&A guides, and more are available from the AdvancED website at www.advanc-ed.org to help schools share and celebrate their accreditation with their community. Practices that many schools find useful include: sharing information about their accreditation with parents at every "Back to School Night" through brochures and/or handouts; including the NCA CASI or SACS CASI accreditation seal on their website, school stationery, and student transcripts; posting information about accreditation in a regular column of their school newsletters; and including a section on accreditation in their annual reports to the community.

Acting on the QAR Team's Findings

The Quality Assurance Review team report serves as a resource to the school as it furthers its continuous improvement efforts. The school celebrates and strengthens the successes and accomplishments noted in the team's commendations. The school builds on these accomplishments, enhancing their impact across the school.

The team's recommendations identify areas of needed action designed to enhance school effectiveness and improve student learning. The school is held accountable for making progress on each of the team's recommendations. Two years following the review, the school submits a report (discussed in the next section) which details the progress made on the recommendations.

To begin acting on the team's findings, the school reviews the full team report with school stakeholders. In addition to spending time discussing the team's commendations and recommendations, the school studies the detailed description of strengths and opportunities for improvement provided in each of the standard reports. These reports provide greater clarity, guidance, and direction on the commendations and recommendations. Should questions arise during this process, the school seeks clarity from the QAR Team Chair and/or AdvancED State Office.

After thorough review of the QAR team's findings, the school establishes a plan of action, engaging a representative group of stakeholders in the process. The school determines what this plan looks like and how it puts the plan into action to ensure ongoing progress. The plan typically outlines next steps related to the team's findings, including actions to strengthen commendations and clear strategies for addressing recommendations. In addition, the plan includes implementation strategies and methods for monitoring, documenting, and analyzing results.

The school implements its strategies for responding to the team's finding, tracks the progress it is making, and is prepared to answer the questions, "What steps have been taken? What progress has been made? How do you know you've made an impact?"

Completing the Accreditation Progress Report

Two years following the QAR visit, AdvancED sends a letter to the school superintendent requesting an Accreditation Progress Report detailing the school's progress in addressing the recommendations from the QAR team report. The report asks the school to summarize its actions to date related to each of the team's recommendations. In addition to the summary, the school is asked to classify the current status of each recommendation in one of three categories:

1. **Completed** – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The school has documented evidence that supports fulfillment of the recommendation.
2. **In Progress** – The school is currently engaged in actions and processes but has yet to fully implement steps necessary to address the recommendation.
3. **Did Not Address** – The school has not taken any action for one or more of the following reasons: a) it lacks the resources necessary to address the recommendation; or b) it fully intends to address the recommendation but has yet to initiate action.
4. **Rejected With Rationale Provided** - The school has not taken any action because it professionally disagrees with the recommendation and does not believe that fulfillment of the recommendation will help the school improve (the summary statement must provide substantive evidence to support this claim).

It is the responsibility of the school to address (except recommendations that are rejected with cause as noted above) each of the recommendations within the 5-year term accreditation.

The school completes the report and submits it to AdvancED for review and action at the state and national level. The school receives feedback from AdvancED on the report and notice of any action taken by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission.

Maintaining Momentum

Accredited schools understand and honor the concept of continuous improvement. They are dynamic, in motion, and continuously evolving with an unrelenting focus on becoming better on behalf of the students they serve. Quality schools operate as learning communities by possessing healthy cultures where individuals collectively analyze practices and results, engage in professional learning and dialogue, take meaningful action, and assume responsibility for results.

When the visit concludes and progress reports are filed, the commitment and action continues. Schools remain focused on improving organizational effectiveness and student learning.

Strengthening the three pillars of accreditation. On an ongoing basis, accredited schools adhere to the AdvancED standards, engage in continuous improvement, and demonstrate quality assurance. As schools continuously improve, they monitor, build capacity, and grow more effective in each of these activities.

Accredited schools aim to exceed the AdvancED standards and aspire to reach ever higher levels of quality. Practices within each standard are strengthened to increase effectiveness. Schools use the standards to engage in regular self-assessment and to guide ongoing improvement.

Systemic processes for continuous improvement provide a framework for purposeful and strategic growth. Schools continue to address each element of quality improvement processes (vision, profile, plan, results). These elements should be regularly reviewed and thoughtfully revised at all levels of the school to maximize relevance and impact. Successful practices are embedded into the culture to ensure sustainability while new interventions are identified and tested. Results are documented, analyzed, and used to inform decisions and actions.

Accredited schools maintain quality assurance through practices and methods that: monitor and document improvement; provide meaningful feedback and support across the school; ensure that AdvancED standards are met and strengthened; and regularly collect, use, and communicate results.

AdvancED is available to support schools as they further their improvement efforts. Schools are encouraged to take advantage of AdvancED's web-based resources, publications, workshops, conferences, and on-site technical assistance as they continue on their journey of improvement.

Sustaining Interest and Commitment. Competent and committed educators are the key to sustained improvement. Schools recognize the importance of enhancing the capacity of staff through continued professional learning that is aligned with organizational purpose, improvement goals, and QAR recommendations. Staff confidence comes from having the knowledge, understanding, and skills to thrive while engaging in professional practice. School leaders who create conditions and provide resources to optimize performance and professional growth find the most success in sustaining improvement.

Successful schools shape a culture of learning, collaboration, and high expectations for staff and students and weave it into the fabric of the school. All staff are encouraged to grow through action, experimentation, and reflection. Successes are identified, celebrated, and embedded into practice.

Educators are motivated by their collective mission to impact students and make a difference in their lives. Schools that find the most success with the accreditation process ensure that the connection between accreditation initiatives and student learning is established and understood by all stakeholders.

Conclusion

Congratulations on your commitment to accreditation. As you engage in the accreditation process, you will find that all elements of your school become stronger. Your school will become more sophisticated as a system, as its understanding of systems improvement increases. The entire school community and, most importantly, students benefit, as the school works to improve its systems and processes to increase school-wide effectiveness and enhance student learning.

AdvancED looks forward to supporting you throughout the school accreditation process. We hope this Handbook has been helpful, and we welcome any feedback you have on improving its usefulness. Please feel free to share your comments with us at accreditation-info@advanc-ed.org.

Appendix

Sample Quality Assurance Review Team Schedule

Sample Quality Assurance Review Team Schedule Two-day Visit

<Insert Date> **Quality Assurance Review Team Arrives**
 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm Team dinner at (location)
 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Team Orientation Training/Meeting (location)

<Insert Date>

Time	Event	Team Meets With
7:45 a.m.	Arrival at school	
8:00 – 8:30 a.m.	Meet with school principal for school overview	Principal and appropriate staff (school leadership team)
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Listen to standards presentations	Principal and appropriate staff
9:00 – 9:45 a.m.	Instructional Walkthrough	Principal or designee
9:45 – 10:00 a.m.	Classroom visits (5 – 10 min.) Break	Conducted by QAR team
Ongoing	Evidence Gathering Activities (artifact review, classroom visits, interviews, and observations) Members of the team may rotate on and off interview teams to allow time for visits to classrooms, artifact review, and observations.	
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Interview	School leadership team
11:00 – 11:45 a.m.	Interview	Teachers
11:45 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch	

12:30 – 1:30 p.m.	Interview	Students
1:30 – 2:30 p.m.	Interview	Support Staff
2:30 – 2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45 – 3:30 p.m.	Interview	Parents, community, and board members
3:30 – 4:30 p.m.	Team work session and artifact review	
4:30 – 5:30 p.m.	Return to hotel	
5:30 – 7:00 p.m.	Dinner (location TBA)	
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Debriefing, discussion, initial drafting of standard narratives, recommendations, and commendations	

<Second day - Insert Day>

Time	Event	Team Meets With
7:45 a.m.	Arrival at school	
Ongoing	Gather additional evidence and clarify information that was unclear; team work time	
8:00 - 11:30 a.m.	Interviews, artifact review, classroom visits, observations, meetings with staff members	Additional stakeholders as needed
11:30 – 12:15 p.m.	Lunch (working)	
12:15 – 2:00 p.m.	Work session to finalize decisions, complete standard narratives, recommendations, commendations, and oral exit report	
2:00 – 2:30 p.m.	Discuss findings with principal	Principal and/or designee
2:30 – 3:00 p.m.	Finalize oral exit report and concluding meeting of team (evaluations disseminated and expense reimbursements completed)	
3:15 – 3:45 p.m.	Oral exit report given by QAR chair	Principal and school stakeholders
4:00 p.m.	Visit Concludes	