

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Brother Rice High School**

7101 Lahser Road
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, United States 48301

**Mr. John Birney
Mr. Michael Bugenski, Chairperson - NCA-CASI-MI Team**

Review Dates: 04/20/2010 - 04/21/2010



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

Quality Assurance Review Report

Contents

About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI 3

Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review 4

Summary of Findings 5

 Commendations 5

 Required Actions 7

 Next Steps 8

Review of AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools 10

 Standard 1. Vision and Purpose 10

 Standard 2. Governance and Leadership 11

 Standard 3. Teaching and Learning 13

 Standard 4. Documenting and Using Results 15

 Standard 5. Resource and Support Systems 16

 Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships 18

 Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement 19

Conclusion 21

Appendix 22

 Quality Assurance Review Team Members 22

 AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools 22

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 Michigan State Office (NCA-CASI-MI), a division of AdvancED, visited the Brother Rice High School in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, United States on 04/20/2010 - 04/21/2010.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 5 members of the administrative team, 35 students, 14 parents, and 19 teachers. In addition, support staff were interviewed. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by the school. Specifically, the team examined the school's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

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

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

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

Commendations

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

- **The engagement of the alumni group provides a role model for students that encourages student achievement and character development.**

Interviews with students, staff, and stakeholder groups including alumni, all indicated a strong support for the school and its mission. Data indicated that nearly one half of all living alumni return to the school for various activities. Students interviewed reported that attending Brother Rice is a generational commitment with parents attending the school and continuing a tradition that has spanned two generations.

Consistency of vision and mission create a clear and focused purpose for the school that keeps the focus on achievement and service and serves to encourage high achievement within the school community.

- **The culture and mission of the school is unique, understood, and communicated by all stakeholders.**

Interviews with students, faculty, support staff, parents, and alumni all revealed a clear statement of purpose. An examination of a number of artifacts, including publications and the school web site demonstrated a clear purpose and mission of the school and its tradition of providing a Catholic education focused on development of the body, mind, and soul of all students.

A learning community with a clearly focused and articulated vision and mission creates a culture that is observable and impacts learning for all members of the community.

- **The leadership of the Chief Executive Office (CEO), Board, and administrative team ensures the stewardship of Catholic education.**

Interviews with students, staff, parents, and board members consistently praised the leadership of both the CEO and the High School Principal. The Board of Directors (the school's governing body) was also recognized for its visionary leadership and credited for keeping the school focused on its mission and adapting to a changing world.

Visionary leadership from the governing body and its chief executive officer are crucial for the continued success of the school.

- **The conservative approach to fiscal management provides for stability and long-term planning and growth.**

A review of the school's strategic plan, capital expansion programs, and financial audits clearly demonstrates a fiscally responsible approach to budgeting and successful fund raising to update the school plant and equipment.

Fiscal stability, as well creative planning, is an essential responsibility of managing any organization.

- **The peer mentoring program, known as the Band of Brother, is integrated into the school day and provides leadership and team building opportunities for all students.**

Review of program objectives and interviews with students indicated a high degree of responsibility taken by students in the operation of the school. Student leadership of activities and programs demonstrated a high degree of student engagement in both the classroom and in the extra curricular and community service programs. Discipline data suggested a significant reduction in disciplinary problems, disruptions, and altercations between and among students.

Student involvement that takes responsibility for the development of a learning community enhances learning and prepares students to be successful in college and life.

- **The approach to educating the whole person (The Mind, Body, and Soul approach) is communicated and reflected among all stakeholders.**

Interviews with students, staff, parents, and stakeholders demonstrated that all members of the community were able to articulate the mission and vision of the school while citing the long tradition of Catholic Education. Brother Rice High School is focused on developing the whole student. High test scores are viewed as a by-product of the system. The mission of the school revolves around making sure that when students leave they are not only knowledgeable individuals, but have also developed a spiritual orientation

to the world they are entering. Being prepared for college is vital to the mission. Being a healthy Christian man is of great importance.

A clear and focused mission and vision that can be articulated by all stakeholders increases the ability of a school to be successful.

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.

- **Address security and safety issues that have been identified and documented during previous reviews.**

A review of previously documented reviews of security and security recommendations by outside agencies revealed that those recommendations had not been put in place. A tour of the facility revealed a need to meet those recommendations as soon as possible. Interviews with students and stakeholders did not mention any immediate concerns.

A safe and secure environment, as well a plan to deal with any possible emergency, is essential to maintain a learning environment.

- **Expand, align, and sustain professional development opportunities that are based on researched practices and the needs of staff.**

A review of the school's improvement plan indicated a need for an expansion of professional development activities based on several new initiatives and interventions in language arts and the student project program. Little evidence was presented that demonstrated that a professional development plan was based on data or staff need. Interviews with staff members provided further insight as teachers voiced concern about a need for more staff development.

Professional development is a key component for a learning community to create a culture of continuous improvement.

- **Validate all interventions and innovations in order to promote a culture of data driven decision-making.**

The school is involved in many innovative approaches to learning. There are several interventions and programs that are unique and appear to be effective programs. There is, however, a lack of program evaluation data. Interviews with staff and stakeholders revealed a high degree of satisfaction with the documentation of specific surveys done on a consistent basis. While overall test scores are high for the majority of students, an examination of individual program effectiveness is needed.

Clearly focused evaluation creates a culture that makes decisions based on data that leads to a clear appraisal of all innovations and programs.

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-MI 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 Brother Rice High School demonstrates that it meets the seven standards for accreditation. The findings of the Quality Assurance Review Team regarding the standards for accreditation are summarized on the following pages.

Standard 1. Vision and Purpose

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

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

The school has effectively established a vision for the school that is based on the seven Essential Elements of an Edmund Rice Christian Brother Education. It was observed that the Essential Elements and mission statement are displayed in every classroom. When interviewed, individuals from each group of stakeholders were able to summarize the mission of the school (to educate the mind, body, and soul of the students). Stakeholders were also familiar with the origins of the mission and vision of the school and support efforts directed toward its actualization. Some confusion emerged between the overarching vision of the school and the “Vision 2010” plan that addresses capital improvements, such as building renovations.

The mission and vision of the school is included in artifacts such as the Parent/Student Handbook, Faculty/Staff Handbook, the Coaching Staff, Student Athlete & Parent Handbook, Course Description Handbook, and the school website. Other publications such as *Rice Today: Linking The Brother Rice Community* include versions of or discussions regarding the mission of the school.

The school’s Strategic Plan includes goals for integrating the Brother Rice mission and Essential Elements into the recruitment process and the orientation of new faculty members and family members. It also calls for the Essential Elements to be posted and introduced to students, parents, faculty, and coaches. The plan also emphasizes the role of the Essential Elements in the realm of physical education and athletics.

Brother Rice continuously maintains a profile of the school, its students, and the community through The Warrior Times alumni newsletter, the Honor Roll of Investors publication, and its School Profile fliers. Interviews with parents and teachers evidenced stakeholder knowledge of the school profile, including statistical information regarding graduation rates and college attendance. The competitive nature of enrollment at the school demonstrates informed decisions on the part of parents and students regarding the school’s profile and relative performance. The school profile is not posted on the website, making it less readily available to the public.

The required curriculum at the school demonstrates alignment with the vision and mission of the school to educate the mind, body, and soul of the students. Evidence for academic alignment with the vision includes requiring students to complete four credits of Theology in the course of their high school career. Students are also required to perform fifteen hours of Christian service per year in keeping with the

Essential Elements' call to "Stand in Solidarity with those Marginalized by Poverty and Injustice". The Student Performance Goals in the School Improvement Plan are in keeping with the school's mission to promote life-long personal growth.

The mission of the school and the Essential Elements that the school was founded on remain unchanged and are not subject to review. The approaches for actualizing the vision and purpose of the school, such as strategic planning, show review by stakeholders as evidenced in meeting minutes and agendas. Due to the market driven nature of enrollment at Brother Rice, parents and students essentially endorse the vision and purpose of the school each time they enroll and pay tuition. Evidence supporting this point of view can be seen in the consistent annual enrollment rates, graduation statistics, and alumni support through endowments. The school maintains a rigorous schedule of updating its instructional plan and its strategic plan.

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

- Stakeholders universally support the vision and purpose of the school.
- The vision of Brother Rice is actualized in many aspects from academic success to athletic competition, and through an overwhelming sense of community.
- The school communicates its vision to its numerous feeder schools, including over 50 parishes that send students from Catholic elementary schools
- The school vision and mission are focused, clear, and uncomplicated.
- The vision and mission of the school clearly outline the rigorous expectations of the curriculum, as well as the extra curricular and community service programs.

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

- Provide more school profile information on the website and in publications, enhancing community awareness of the school.
- Expand the current mission statement to include a unifying and concise vision statement that encapsulates both the Essential Elements of Catholic Education and the Strategic Plan upon its revision.

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

Standard 2. Governance and Leadership

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

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

The school has in place policies and procedures that provide for effective operations of the school. A review of the policy manual and interviews with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and board members indicated that the administrative head of the school, who is known as the President, operates with all the prerogatives of leadership and management. A Board of Directors operates clearly within the parameters of policy making and oversight.

The leadership of the school also employs a principal and assistants, including directors of athletics, extra curricular activities, and community service programs, under the complete direction of the school.

The school adheres to all state, federal and local ordinance and laws. Though not required as a private school, Brother Rice follows all the guidelines and requirements established by the Michigan Department of Education. All students take the state proficiency test known as the Michigan Merit Exam. Data is used on a regular basis to evaluate both academic and non-academic programs.

A system of program and staff evaluation is ongoing and utilized to make personnel decisions. Teachers and staff are continually given opportunities to lead both academic and extra curricular programs. Adequate time is provided for committee meetings and professional learning community activities. Faculty are provided with some opportunities for professional growth.

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

- The leadership of the CEO, the principals, and other members of the administrative team creates a culture and climate of collaboration in a rigorous academic program.
- The CEO and the Board have created a working relationship that provides a specific role for the Board as a policy making board.
- The strategic plan and capital improvement plan are focused on an analysis of need as well a market place driven model of operation.
- The leadership and administrative structure consists of various stakeholder groups that provide input for the leadership of the school
- The leadership opportunities for students and faculty create a culture of collaboration and cooperation.
- The leadership of the CEO and the collaborative nature of the principal and dean of students creates a positive and productive atmosphere.
- The Board of Directors view their role as an advisory, with an emphasis on policy development, relying on the chief executive officer' accountability.

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

- Evaluate the various leadership opportunities and programs for the purpose of identifying strategies that will impact the development of the next cycle of strategic planning.
- Expand opportunities for all staff to continue their professional growth.

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

Standard 3. Teaching and Learning

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

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

The school provides curriculum and instruction based on clear expectations for student learning by providing class syllabi that clearly describe the objectives to be covered during the school year. A bi-weekly calendar of assignments and projects is distributed to every student in every course so that students and parents are aware of the expectations for the school year. Teachers use The Seven Essential Elements to develop the whole student and prepare them to become lifelong learners. The administration works with and through the Curriculum Committee to formulate the Course Description Handbook which includes descriptions of courses, academic expectations and prerequisites. The school offers a varied, challenging curriculum within the guidelines of a college preparatory institution. Besides the core curriculum, art, music, drama, debate, forensics, business law and psychology are examples of the available electives. The Academic Dean has met with Archdiocesan schools regarding such matters as Algebra I curriculum and articulation at the feeder grade schools and Brother Rice's courses.

Students take responsibility for their own learning through the development of their own learning goals. Since the school regards itself as a "college prep" institution, there is evidence in all classes of a problem solving, project based learning environment, established to not only score high on standardized tests, but to also approach learning through inquiry, logic, and an investigative approach to learning. Classroom interventions are employed by each teacher and a program of tutors is available for those students who request help in various subjects or for those who are placed by guidance counselors. There is a before school and an after school study hall program run by teachers which includes how to study training for those placed by the Academic Review Board. ACT and SAT Prep classes are offered during the summer as well as after school during the school year.

The school has demonstrated high student performance based on a review of student achievement scores in both standardized tests as well a review of academic grading. Graduation and college placement are currently 100 per cent. Curricular and instructional choices are based data and research as evidenced in grade reports and the minutes of faculty, departmental, and grade level meetings. Instructional strategies and innovations reflect faculty research and best practice investigations by faculty. Department chairs regularly monitor instruction by visiting classrooms weekly. The Dean of Students evaluates teachers and assigns new teachers to a mentor.

A review of the student handbook and class syllabi clearly demonstrate a high degree of rigor and high expectations that challenges all students to excel. The school has engaged in a time sharing program with an all girls school on an adjoining campus. Recent recruiting efforts have sought to successfully diversify the student body. The current recruiting efforts are directed at over 50 area parishes throughout the metropolitan area, making a significant change in recruiting strategy. A summer bridge program is in place to assist struggling students in preparation for high school.

Instructional time is maximized and clearly supports student learning, while minimizing interruptions. Few announcements are made during class time to avoid interruption of instruction. Announcements of necessity are made during class passing time of the last few minutes of class. A review of the school

calendar meets all legal expectations that the state has for its public schools. The articulation and alignment of the curricular is easily achieved since the school is only a 9-12 program.

School climate is continuously monitored. The team building that has resulted for the mentoring program known as the Band of Brothers has improved school climate dramatically based on a review of discipline data and student and parent surveys.

Classroom observations indicate that student engagement is at a high level, while instructional delivery allows students to be creative while using higher order thinking skills. Technology features a recent update of equipment in all classrooms. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods. The school uses a project-based approach for all students. The Media center is equipped with state-of-the-art technology and available to individual students and whole classes. The Media Specialist runs orientation classes at the beginning of the school year and is available before and after school. The media center and computer labs were recently updated with the latest computer hardware and software. Computers on wheels are used as well as Smartboard technology.

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

- The administration and the Curriculum Committee formulate the Course Description Handbook which includes descriptions of courses, academic expectations, and prerequisites.
- Teachers explain the specific expectations to students at the beginning of the course and to parents at the Meet the Faculty Night, which takes place the second week of school.
- In addition to classroom activities, higher order thinking skills are encouraged through participation in Student Government, the Model United Nations Program, Robotics Team, Amnesty International, and debate and forensics.
- The school subscribes to the Michigan Merit Curriculum.
- The use of Infinite Campus and various software improves learning through the use of computer technology and parental support.
- The school offers a varied, challenging curriculum within the guidelines of a College Preparatory institution.
- Classroom instructional time is protected and honored.
- The Admissions Department communicates with incoming students and their schools to determine their needs. A summer bridge program assists struggling students in preparation for high school.
- The principal attends Vicariate Principal Meetings quarterly at which articulation and alignment of curriculum takes place.
- Curriculum is aligned with the feeder grade schools and Brother Rice's courses.
- Christian principles clearly impact student learning and behavior.
- Various programs, tutors, and classroom interventions are available for those students who request help or who are placed by guidance counselors.
- Department chairs and the Dean of Students monitor and evaluate teachers.
- There is a student representative on the Principal's Council who helps to ensure that student input is given regarding classrooms conducive to learning and articulation of student concerns.
- The media center is well equipped and serves to assist all students.
- Senior students are encouraged to donate textbooks so that incoming freshmen who have financial struggles can have textbooks given to them.
- Teachers have state-of-the-art Smartboards and computers in classrooms and are trained by way of professional development to use the technology.

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

- Develop pacing charts based on standards and benchmarks for each subject area and maintain

available copies.

- In-service all teachers on updated classroom strategies, best practices, and initiatives that work to improve student achievement and engage students in the learning process.

Finding: Brother Rice High School has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" 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:

Brother Rice uses various methods to monitor and document student performance. A school management software program is used to track student grades, discipline, attendance, and course completion. Individuals in the Guidance and Discipline Departments, as well as teachers, monitor and maintain the data, and students and parents may access this information online at any time using a password-secure account. All stakeholders gave positive anecdotal evidence as to the value of this tool as it relates to student success.

Teachers assess students regularly in the form of tests, quizzes, essays, and projects. Student performance is measured by the grade earned in the class. Evidence is vague as to what the student expectations or learning objectives are and if they are aligned by subject.

The school administers multiple assessments throughout the school year including: EXPLORE, PLAN, PSAT, ACT, Advanced Placement (AP) testing, and a school-created English diagnostic test administered at the beginning and end of each school year. These results are shared with all relevant stakeholders and the data is maintained by the Guidance Department. Documented evidence was provided for ACT scores, in- and out-of-state college acceptance data, and graduation rates. Though this data is abundant and readily available, it is unclear how it is used to guide instruction. Teachers have not been instructed in the use of data to improve instruction and make curricular changes.

Brother Rice is a high-performing school and usually exceeds county, state, and national averages on standardized tests. Average school ACT and SAT scores were provided. Trend data demonstrated an overall improvement in both sets of scores over five years. Other standardized test data was not provided.

Evidence was provided during interviews with teachers and administration that there is a constant dialogue among staff members regarding teaching methods, lesson planning, and student progress. There is no evidence of a comprehensive program which measures teacher effectiveness, student performance, or program effectiveness that allows staff to determine if what they are doing is working.

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

- The school maintains an online school management system to provides students and parents with up-to-date data regarding student performance.
- The school communicates results of student performance and school effectiveness to all

stakeholders via the school's website, school profile, quarterly parent-teacher conferences, daily announcements, and a quarterly magazine.

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

- Identify specific content-area learning objectives and align assessments (formative and summative) with objectives.
- Create some common formative and summative assessments as a team of subject-area teachers
- Use student assessment data to guide instructional decisions regarding curriculum.

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

Standard 5. Resource and Support Systems

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

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

Based on interviews and review of artifacts, Brother Rice has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students. The school recruits, employs, and mentors qualified professional staff that are highly qualified and only employs teachers who have a masters degree. The faculty at Brother Rice falls into one of three generational cohorts: 1) fewer than 5 years' experience; 2) 10-15 years' experience; and 3) 25 or more years' experience. New teachers are mentored by the Dean of Faculty and their department chair.

The School Board, under the leadership of the President, has articulated a plan for "succession" that will allow the school to recruit and retain highly qualified candidates to replace the third of the faculty scheduled to retire over the next 5 years. This plan includes incentives for younger faculty to secure their masters' degrees and to assume administrative leadership functions.

The school regularly provides testing for learning differences. On a quarterly basis, students who struggle academically are placed on probation for two weeks and enjoined to make strides in areas where they have demonstrated weaknesses.

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) reviewed the findings of the most recent audit. The school's \$7 million operations budget fully funds administrative, faculty, and student organization expenses. Renovations to the A and C Wings of the school were paid for in cash. Proposed renovations to Science Wing will only proceed after the President secures 80% of the funds needed for phase I (approximately \$960,000) and details a plan for raising the remaining 20%.

The CFO detailed the significant investment in human resources over the last two years in the areas of development and fundraising. In an effort to support the President in his initiative to visit the top 100 donors and contact the top 250 donors concerning the capital campaign, the school has recruited and hired second IT professional. The CFO provides organizational oversight of fiscal authority, as evidenced in

our interviews. Specifically, the CFO has required athletic coaches who offer summer camps, to observe the payroll, and purchasing policies and processes. Additionally, the school has increased the limits for general liability (umbrella portion) to ensure that the school has sufficient coverage for its manifold year round on-campus activities.

A written security and crisis management plan with appropriate training for stakeholders has been enacted. The school has designated a crisis intervention committee and drafted a crisis intervention plan. Staff and students are knowledgeable about emergency procedures and evacuation routes. The staff handbook and the student handbook clearly outline Code Red procedures and fire, tornado, and lockdown drills. The 2009-2010 Parent/Student Handbook artifact also highlights policies on harassment/bullying, weapons, drugs, and dangerous items as well as the suicide crisis plan.

The school provides an orientation on career preparation in the areas of business and entrepreneurship. The school targets areas in presentation skills, intended to bolster student job preparedness. Guidance Department conducts classroom and parent presentations about available resources which are also included in daily parent announcements. The focus on the mission to prepare the body, mind, and spirit of Brother Rice Warriors also testifies to the fact that “spiritual guidance is pervasive.”

The school provides substantial resources (approximately 5% of its operating budget) for financial aid and tuition assistance in support of its Essential Element “Reach out to the poor.”

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

- There is interdepartmental collaboration among athletics, maintenance, counseling, and the alumni relations offices. Some examples provided include building repair, field maintenance, room scheduling, and contact with alumni after graduation.
- The school employs a highly qualified and professional staff.
- Fiscal policies and capital programs are well planned and executed.

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

- Align and expand professional development for staff in order to provide for systematic and sustained professional engagement in targeted areas for continuous improvement and best practices in curriculum and instruction.
- Address the safety and security concerns brought to its attention two years ago by the Bloomfield Township police and noted in recent reviews.

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

Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

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

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

The school collaborates with stakeholders in a number of ways, including a well established website, weekly and quarterly newsletters and magazines, brochures sent by mail, as well as being available at the school. The students are in touch with the community via programs such as the Business Entrepreneurship

Business Entrepreneurship Alliance for Marian & Brother Rice (BEAM &R) business club and service outreach programs are dedicated to aiding lower income and struggling communities. Students are required to complete 60 hours of community service under the Christian Service Points program prior to graduation.

The school has a number of organizations that allow stakeholders to be a part of and communicate internally such as the Mom's Club, Dad's Club, President's Cabinet, stakeholders committee, and Student Council. Stakeholders are able to communicate with the administration and Board through a survey program. Evidence is verbal and there is no trail of data or examples to verify the extensive use of the program that was postulated by the President of the school.

Student expectations are noted in syllabi provided to students by teachers as well as the descriptions of the courses in the student/parent handbook. The school has an achievement profile that currently is distributed through the main office, however is not posted online. The school uses the Infinite Campus internet program that offers daily postings of grades and attendance records to parents and students.

Providing information about students and their performance as well as school effectiveness in general is present and could be enhanced by teachers in their daily lessons.

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

- Use of the internet tool Infinite Campus allows students and parents quick access to grades and attendance and has been an advantage to student success, as indicated by students.
- Students must participate in community outreach and service in order to graduate school.
- The Band of Brothers program has aided in opening of communication between grade levels, as well as student to staff.
- The BEAM&R program gives students the opportunity to interact with members of the business community and is part of the underlying focus of the school.

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

- Develop a system to ensure access to all stakeholders.
- Advise all stakeholders, through various media, that the surveys are present and highly regarded as invaluable sources of information.
- Evaluate the data gathered from the surveys and reproduce in tables and/or graphs that can then be posted on media outlets for stakeholders to view and interpret
- Post learning objectives in classrooms to clarify the expectations of what students will learn and be able to do.

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

Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

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

The purpose of the school is clearly articulated by all stakeholders: to improve the mind, body, and soul of all students. An updated profile is also complete and available to all stakeholders. Plans for continuous improvement align with the purpose of the school and high expectations for student learning. Interviews mentioned the spiritual and academic growth of their students and the Essential Elements as common threads throughout all they do.

There are 2 academic school improvement goals in place, but the specifics of the interventions and timeline for professional development need further development.. There is a need for clarity in defining the successful completion of the goals and a timeline for monitoring progress towards the goals.

Stakeholders are involved in the process of continuous improvement and take ownership in the school and its academic and extracurricular efforts. Students have high expectations of themselves and their peers, the staff has a solid sense of the importance of their collective purpose, and parents feel there is an open door policy to express concerns regarding any areas they feel are lacking. Staff committee meetings are held once each month for the express purpose of addressing the school improvement goals. Mom's Club, Dad's Club, and a stakeholder's committee are further evidence that various constituencies are periodically involved in the process of continuous improvement.

Professional development for school personnel to help them implement improvement interventions and to achieve improvement goals needs further development. Staff interviews indicate a fair degree of collaboration, and a desire for professional improvement, and a systematic and sustained plan for professional development for all staff .

A review of college placement data and ACT scores indicates that the school is high-achieving. The school communicates academic and school improvement results to stakeholders via the school profile and President's Board report.. The strategic plan has a number of academic and non-academic statements, but progress toward those various goals needs clear documentation. The 3-year strategic plan is available on the website and addresses quite a number of individual areas for improvement. Interviews indicate that stakeholders had a general sense of the mission and direction of the school, but not a solid focus on a certain building-wide goal(s) and monitoring progress toward said goal(s).

The school improvement plan is well-written and concise, but documentation of the effectiveness of continuous improvement efforts is minimal. It is unclear what evaluation was made and what gap analysis was done to arrive at these two particular academic school improvement goals. Interviews indicate collegiality and collaboration, and observations show a staff who cares deeply about the students and the

mission of the school.

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

- Stakeholders are engaged and invested in the processes of continuous improvement.
- The common theme of “body, mind, and soul” emerged from all stakeholders.
- Plans for continuous improvement are aligned with the purpose of the school.
- Mission and profile are updated and highlight outstanding standardized test results.
- Survey use is growing as a vehicle to gather actionable perception data from stakeholders.

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

- Provide a comprehensive professional development plan for continuous improvement goals.
- Improve the monitoring and communicating of results of improvement efforts to stakeholders.
- Use data-based decision making models when choosing continuous improvement goals.
- Evaluate and document the effectiveness and impact of training and interventions.
- Collect and make public various improvement data, in addition to standardized test scores.

Finding: Brother Rice High 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-MI accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Mr. Michael Bugenski, Chair (NCA CASI Michigan Office)
- Ms. Dayna Britton, Team Member (South Lyon High School)
- Mr. Jacob Reebel, Team Member (Old Redford Academy)
- Nathan Spencer, Team Member (Old Redford Academy Preparatory High School)
- Noah Sharrow, Team Member (Clarkston Junior High School)
- Mr. Serge Danielson-Francois, Team Member (Divine Child High School)
- Mrs. Debora Mayes-Love, 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.