

Report of the Quality Assurance Review Team for Elliott Elementary School

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

Quality Assurance Review Report

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About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

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

In 2006, NCA CASI, SACS CASI, and the research and development arm of the accrediting associations, the National Study of School Evaluation, unified to form AdvancED. Dedicated to advancing excellence in education, AdvancED provides accreditation, research, and professional services to 23,000 schools in 65 countries, serving 15 million students.

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

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

1) Meet the AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools. Schools demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for schools to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.

2) Engage in continuous improvement. Schools implement a continuous improvement process that articulates the vision and purpose the school is pursuing (vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school effectiveness, and the school community (profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (plan); and documents and uses the results to inform what happens next (results).

3) Demonstrate quality assurance through internal and external review. Schools engage in a planned process of ongoing internal review and self-assessment. In addition, schools host an external quality assurance review team once every five years. The team evaluates the school's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards, assesses the efficacy of the school's improvement process and methods for quality assurance, and provides commendations and recommendations to help the school improve. The team provides an oral exit report to the school and a written report detailing the team's recommendations. The school acts on the team's recommendations and submits a progress report two years following the review.

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

Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review

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

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

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

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

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

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

Using the Report - Acting on the Recommendations. The school uses the report to guide its improvement efforts. The school is held accountable for addressing the recommendations identified in the report. The NCA CASI/SACS CASI State Office is available to assist schools in addressing the recommendations. Two years following the Quality Assurance Review team visit, the school must submit a progress report detailing the actions and progress the school has made on the team's recommendations. The report is reviewed at the state and national level to ensure the school is addressing the recommendations.

Accreditation Recommendation. The Quality Assurance Review team uses the findings from the onsite visit to make an accreditation recommendation that is reviewed at the state level and by the national AdvancED Accreditation Commission. Accreditation is granted by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission and communicated to the school following action from the commission.

Summary of Findings

A Quality Assurance Review Team representing the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), a division of AdvancED, visited the Elliott Elementary School in Beaufort, South Carolina on 02/07/2008 - 02/08/2008.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed the Principal, 1 member of the administrative team, 21 students, 10 parents, and 22 teachers. In addition, team members of 10 support personnel, 1 Superintendent and 1 base commander were interviewed. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by the school. Specifically, the team examined the school's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

- Vision and Purpose
- Governance and Leadership
- Teaching and Learning
- Documenting and Using Results
- Resource and Support Systems
- Stakeholder Communications and Relationships
- Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

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

Commendations

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

- **A positive, collaborative culture has become the focus of the school.**
 - Collaboration of the staff resulted in the development of the school vision and mission statements.
 - The school is fulfilling the mission and vision with a staff who has learned the strengths of each other and how to work together collaboratively.
 - The teachers see themselves as learners in this community.
 - The school fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning by developing a welcoming and open atmosphere.

- Open dialogue and a collaborative environment promote collegial relationships and an avenue to respond to needs and promote growth among the constituencies.

The learning environment is enhanced by teacher support of efforts to implement best practices they believe will help students learn

- **The collaborative development of mission and vision creates a powerful learning environment for all stakeholders.**

- Staff members have embedded the vision and mission statements in the school program with clever associations made available to the students.
- The school improvement goals are clearly embedded in classroom rules and practices.
- The school's leadership actively reinforces the school's vision, mission, and values during meetings, at school gatherings, and through daily interactions with students and staff.
- The school has accepted the transition to a new accreditation process, AdvancED, by leaving behind the notion of something they "had to do," to the comfort level of "what we do."
- Stakeholders are encouraged to be involved with all that goes on at school with ongoing invitations to express their hopes and expectations of how the students "learn, achieve, and grow."
- The school staff, students, and community are proud of the values, learning, and activities at school.

There are multiple opportunities for both staff and students to "learn, achieve, and grow" at the school. Teaching and learning goals are aligned with the vision and mission and are clearly understood and demonstrated throughout the school. A culture of fulfilling the mission and vision is developing in the school. The staff has learned of each other's strengths and how to work together collaboratively. Collaboration between staff in the form of study groups support the learning focus and a pursuit to assure quality learning experiences are clearly evident in this school.

Recommendations

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

- **Develop assessments and observation protocols, design rubrics, and select anchor papers to provide models that are meaningful and useful to instructional decision-makers.**

DoDEA has no system-wide external assessments for grades pre-kindergarten through two. Therefore, the school must rely on local measures to assess student performance. Members of the staff are aware of the difficulties in reliability, validity, and biases exacerbated by teacher-generated and teacher-scored assessments and are moving toward the generation of school-wide, local assessments.

The locally-developed rubrics for retelling stories could provide the basis for a very valuable source of information on student growth, and the inclusion of protocols and common prompts would adapt this process to provide data useful for school improvement.

- **Maintain the focus of the mission and vision while seeking professional growth activities in areas such as Professional Learning Communities(PLC), Developing Mathematic Ideas (DMI), training and support systems, peer observations, and Rubicon Atlas curriculum guide.**

The team found the strategies that focused on the literacy goal were specific in how they will be implemented and integrated into the culture of this school. At the same time, the team did not observe how the mathematical problem solving goal activities were specific in how they were implemented and integrated into the culture of the school. The problem solving activities need to support the standards that sustain the learning goal.

Professional development activities in areas that support the goals will promote the effectiveness of the school improvement plan. Professional Learning Communities will further promote staff growth.

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

Next Steps

The school should:

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

Resources

AdvancED offers a range of resources to support your school as it acts on the findings in this report. The AdvancED Resource Network, available at www.advanc-ed.org/resourcenetwork, provides an online network of peer-to-peer practices, best practices, and resources and tools designed to help schools with their improvement efforts. Available any where, any time, the network can be queried for information on a variety of school improvement subjects. The AdvancED Research and Development division provides research, handbooks, and tools to assist schools with continuous improvement. In addition, your state office provides hands-on professional development and ongoing technical

assistance. Contact your state office for more information on the range of resources available to you.

Celebrating Accreditation

Following the visit, the Quality Assurance Review team submits an accreditation recommendation to AdvancED for state review and for action at the national level by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, which confers accreditation and communicates it to the school. Upon receiving its accreditation, the school should celebrate its achievement with the school community. The NCA CASI logo is available through the NCA CASI website for schools to post on their website and in school communications. Flags, door decals, diploma seals, and more can be ordered from the website to help you share your accomplishment with your community.

Summary

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

Standards for Accreditation

The primary requirement for accreditation is that the Elliott Elementary School demonstrates that it meets the seven standards for accreditation. The findings of the Quality Assurance Review Team regarding the standards for accreditation are summarized on the following pages.

Standard 1. Vision and Purpose

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

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

The school's vision provides focus and direction for all stakeholders throughout the school community. It was developed first through a series of staff meetings in a collaborative process. The mission statement evolved from the vision statement to enable the staff, students, and stakeholders to realize the ambitions of the vision. School stakeholders were involved in the development of the vision, mission, and values by being offered several statements from which to choose. Interviews with staff members, students, and parents revealed a strong knowledge of and commitment to the school's vision, mission, and values. A variety of displays throughout the building reinforce the values of the school.

The school is developing a culture of fulfilling the mission and vision statements with a staff that has learned of each other's strengths and how to work together collaboratively. The school staff, students, and community are proud of the values, learning, and activities at school. Stakeholder survey results were reviewed. The team found that the profile data provide the school with useful information regarding student performance, school effectiveness, and stakeholder perceptions. The school's goals focus on reading comprehension and math problem solving.

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

- Staff members have embedded the vision and mission statements in the school program with clever associations made available to the students.
- The school improvement goals are clearly embedded in classroom rules and practices.
- The school's leadership actively reinforces the vision, mission, and values during meetings, at school gatherings, and through daily interactions with students and staff.

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

- Develop and implement a systematic process to review and analyze the school's profile data for trends and issues that can inform the school's improvement efforts.
- Maintain the focus of the mission and vision by having the leadership move forward as they guide the teaching and learning process. Continue to share and demonstrate the focus of

the mission and vision while adding dimensions of how the mission and vision are recognized each year.

Finding: Elliott Elementary 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 demonstrates shared leadership and has begun a culture of fulfilling the school's vision and school improvement efforts. This leadership collaboration fosters a learning community that promotes academic achievement and recognizes growth in staff and students. Stakeholders, including base leaders, parents, and school volunteers are invited and encouraged to participate in school improvement goals. Positive reinforcement is provided those that share expectations, hopes, and concerns.

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

- The school has accepted the transition to a new accreditation process, AdvancED, by leaving behind the notion of something they "had to do," to the comfort level of "what we do."
- Stakeholders are encouraged to be involved with all that goes on at school with ongoing invitations to express their hopes and expectations of how the students "learn, achieve, and grow."

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

- Utilize the tools provided by AdvancED to continue growth in the school's mission, vision, and school improvement efforts.

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

Standard 3. Teaching and Learning

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

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

The teaching practices and learning opportunities observed by the team align with the vision and mission statement that has been developed and integrated into the school community. The vision and mission guide learning to facilitate achievement for all students in this school. The team observed students actively engaged with retelling of stories and sequencing strategies using activities such as acting out a story sequence, using graphic organizers as a pre writing activity, and integrating retelling into the writing process by writing a friendly letter telling a friend about what had happened in a reading story. The team noted the focus on literacy, retelling, sequencing, and story elements throughout the school at all grade levels.

Problem solving activities in the area of mathematics were observed by the use of math journals and daily problem solving displayed in classrooms. The display of student work throughout the building reflects the educational focus on academic goals to provide a balanced literacy program and incorporate problem solving strategies to communicate mathematical knowledge.

The use of staff development activities such as study groups in literacy and participation in Scholastic Red courses in reading assures that quality research based teaching and learning opportunities are supported in this school. Interviews with parents reveal that reading instruction and learning activities are a high priority. The team found the strategies that focus on the literacy goal were comprehensive. The mathematical problem solving goal activities were less specific in how they will be implemented and integrated into the culture of this school. Standardized assessment tools offered within the DoDEA school system are fairly limited for the early grades. The team also noted that the schedule for mathematical instruction did not assure a consistent and focused duration of academic time for problem solving activities so they may be incorporated and shared in classrooms.

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

- The teaching and learning goals are aligned with the vision and mission and are clearly understood throughout the school. The teachers see themselves as learners in this community.
- Collaboration between teachers in the form of study groups support the learning focus and the pursuit of quality learning experiences in this school.
- The school created and shared a retelling rubric with parents for home use that has been well received by parents and is seen as a useful tool when reading with their children.

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

- Schedule time to support mathematical instruction and learning in the classroom. The problem solving activities need to support the standards that sustain the learning goal.
- Develop assessments for problem solving within the school and align them to the learning. The learning must be aligned to the standard.
- Produce assessment tools for the literacy goal within the building so that the assessment tool provides valid and reliable data and accurately identifies growth and needs of learners.
- Focus on staff development such as DMI and support systems such as peer observations

and the Rubicon Atlas curriculum guide to support development of problem solving instruction and student learning.

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

Standard 4. Documenting and Using Results

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

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

DoDEA has no system-wide external assessments for grades pre-kindergarten through two. Therefore, the school must rely on local measures to assess student performance. Members of the staff are aware of the difficulties in reliability, validity, and biases exacerbated by teacher-generated and teacher-scored assessments and are moving toward the generation of school-wide, local assessments. This process needs to be accelerated so that baseline data can be collected as soon as possible.

Reliance on a single assessment of literacy (the Developmental Reading Assessment) stretches this instrument beyond its appropriate use of informing the teacher of the instructional needs of individual students. Similarly, the Math Inventory test is designed to indicate the relative preparedness of student to use a particular text. It can make few claims to reflect the scope of the DoDEA instructional standards. Both of these tests provide information on student achievement, but additional measures would be helpful.

School improvement decisions are based on student achievement data despite a serious dearth of suitable assessments. Especially noteworthy is the use of TerraNova data from third grade students in the year following their grade two exit year. Going to this extreme speaks highly of the staff's interest in using objective, repeatable assessments with well-defined protocols to garner data on student achievement.

Teacher observations are well-regarded sources of information on student achievement. The locally developed rubrics for retelling stories could provide the basis for a very valuable source of information on student growth.

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

- School improvement decisions are based on student achievement data including use of TerraNova data from third grade students.
- Teacher observations are well-regarded sources of information on student achievement.

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

- Develop assessments yielding timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to teachers and stakeholders in understanding the impact of each implemented innovation on moving students toward the achievement goal.
- Develop testing and observation protocols, design rubrics, and select anchor papers demonstrating mastery of the targeted standards at each grade level.

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

Standard 5. Resource and Support Systems

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

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

New staff are recruited, screened, and hired by the school through the use of a well defined DoDEA process. Due to deployment and mobility, a 43% turnover rate among students is reported. The school is intentional in maintaining a welcoming and supportive climate facilitating a smooth transition into the life of the school. All staff members are well qualified and are active participants in an aggressive professional development program designed to advance system-wide initiatives and enhance the individual's competencies. Budgets are sufficient to supply the school with all the instructional materials needed to implement the DoDEA curriculum. Computers were evident in two dedicated computer labs as well as the placement of three computers in each classroom.

The positive, collaborative culture of the school enhances the learning environment while encouraging the teachers to support one another's efforts to implement best practices they believe will help their students learn. The school is set on a beautiful, well-maintained campus. The facility is only four years old and has been kept in mint condition. Emergency plans and procedures are clearly posted by the door of each classroom. Sufficient numbers of drills are run so that students are familiar with their roles.

Student Support Teams are used to refer, discuss, and determine individual needs of targeted students. These teams include the school guidance counselor and classroom teachers. Careful monitoring of all students allows teachers to intervene before serious problems, either academic or personal, can develop.

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

- The positive, collaborative culture of the school enhances the learning environment and encourages implementation of best practices.
- Teachers monitor student needs carefully and intervene before serious problems develop.

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

- Base decisions to purchase supplemental materials, teacher support materials, professional development opportunities, and student incentives on the extent to which the mission of the school will be advanced.

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

Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

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

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

The school fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning by developing a welcoming and open atmosphere. Parents and community members actively participate in the life of the school by visiting in classrooms, having lunch with students, joining and/or attending PTA meetings, attending school board meetings, representing parents on the school improvement team, and participating in school sponsored student activities.

Classroom and principal newsletters provide stakeholders with information about student learning goals and expectations. Parent/teacher conferences, phone and email correspondence, and the display of authentic student work throughout the school also provide stakeholders with knowledge about what students should know and be able to do to meet curriculum expectations. Teachers provide parents with academic achievement information regularly, and the school reports to parents annually and through the principal's newsletter. Stakeholders have the opportunity to provide input into the work of the school by completing the DoDEA Customer Satisfaction Survey and a school developed parent survey. Parents report being welcomed to classrooms and to visit with the school principal. Open dialogue and a collaborative environment promote collegial relationships and an avenue to respond to needs and promote growth in the school.

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

- A welcoming and open atmosphere exists.
- The staff demonstrates a willingness to meet with parents as needed and to communicate with them via classroom newsletters, email, phone and parent/teacher conferences.
- Multiple opportunities exist for stakeholders to become involved in the life of the school and to provide input to enhance school effectiveness.
- Classrooms that demonstrate standards and expectations for learning have been created.

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

- Enhance the school website to include classroom webpages.
- Add links to Internet sites to support curriculum goals on the school webpage.
- Provide specific information regarding the school improvement plan on the school website.
- Offer the opportunity to email the school's webmaster and school principal from the school

webpage.

- Display examples of student work that support school improvement goals and DoDEA curriculum standards on the school webpage.

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

Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

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

The entire staff engages in a continuous process of school improvement in a collaborative manner. The teachers exhibit exemplary commitment to a shared vision and mission for the school. The vision and mission are clearly visible throughout the school and are attractively displayed on classroom doors. An expectation that all students will "Learn, Achieve, and Grow" permeates the school. Students are able to articulate the school's vision and learning expectations and verbalize a desire to do their best.

Classroom doors display a school-designed message that shows value of instructional time. It begins with "Learning in Progress" and provides suggestions on how to make an appointment with the classroom teacher. The school profile describes student performance in the area of reading and math as determined by local measures. Data from current assessment measures are disaggregated by total school, gender, race, and ethnic groups. Surveys from stakeholders, data from local measures, and alignment with DoDEA initiatives were used in the selection of goals and interventions to improve student achievement.

Stakeholders are represented on the school improvement team, engage in volunteer opportunities in the school, receive newsletters from teachers and the principal, and voice a level of comfort with sharing concerns and ideas for continued school improvement.

Results based staff development is correlated with school goals and interventions. Teachers meet weekly to discuss current research articles and to participate in activities directly related to school goals and interventions. Teachers report participation in Scholastic Red courses to enhance reading instruction and pedagogy. Student academic achievement, individual and school wide, is reported to parents by teachers via school conferences, phone, email, and by administrative sharing of the school improvement plan and data analysis. The staff demonstrates a collaborative commitment to continued school improvement efforts. Genuine enthusiasm and excitement for continuing the growth of the school is evidenced by all stakeholders.

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

- A congenial, collaborative, and supportive working environment exists among teachers.
- The school improvement plan was designed through collaborative involvement.
- A shared commitment and enthusiasm for the vision, mission, and goals of the school is

present.

- Parents and community members are invited to classrooms and to participate in school activities.
- Clearly articulated high expectations exist for student learning.
- Classrooms are organized for learning.
- Authentic student work is displayed in hallways and most classrooms.
- Teachers desire to continue professional growth activities.
- Parents and community members are kept informed about school goals.

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

- Continue research for and acquisition of appropriate assessment measures that will provide data directly aligned to school goals.
- Develop assessment protocols that inform and direct teachers on the administration of assessment measures to ensure reliable results.
- Use assessment results to inform instructional decisions and to form appropriate flexible grouping of students for learning.
- Employ cooperative learning structures as a technique to facilitate student higher level thinking, use of manipulatives, and the ability to articulate mathematical thinking in problem solving activities.
- Utilize classroom computers for instructional opportunities to support school goals through websites and DoDEA Creativity Software.
- Extend and enhance the tenants of a balanced literacy program through professional development opportunities and an increased use of guided reading instruction through the use of leveled texts.
- Develop a leveled book library to promote opportunities for students to increase achievement in reading comprehension.

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

Conclusion

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

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

The Quality Assurance Review Team expresses appreciation to Barbara S. Hazzard, 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 accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Brad Jacobson, Chair
- Joy Mockelmann, Vice Chair
- Hugh Hatcher, Team Member
- Jane Loggins, Team Member
- Melanie Kimsey, 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.