

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Prince George High School
7801 Laurel Spring Road
Prince George, Virginia, United States 23875-3328**

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Review Dates: 03/19/2012 - 03/21/2012



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 9

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 12

 Standard 4: Documenting and Using Results 13

 Standard 5: Resource and Support Systems 14

 Standard 6: Stakeholder Communications and Relationships 15

 Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement 16

Conclusion 18

Appendix 19

 Quality Assurance Review Team Members 19

 AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools 19

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 by the 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 SACS CASI Virginia State Office (SACS-CASI-VA), a division of AdvancED, visited the Prince George High School in Prince George, Virginia, United States on 03/19/2012 - 03/21/2012.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 17 members of the administrative team, 23 students, 8 parents, and 10 teachers. 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.

Commendation 1

Commendation Statement:

The school is commended for its outstanding faculty commitment and level of support provided to Prince George High School students.

Evidence:

Teachers and staff repeatedly expressed that the students are their number one focus and student achievement their highest priority. Students expressed they knew the teachers were committed to them and those interviewed reported never having been turned away when they needed help.

Rationale:

Teaching and learning is the primary focus of this school and commitment to these ideals is essential and evident throughout the building.

Commendation 2

Commendation Statement:

The school has demonstrated its commitment to preparing students for college options by offering many dual enrollment courses and college credit opportunities.

Evidence:

Numerous courses that have been established and are taught regularly provide dual enrollment options at three local colleges. Students expressed strong interest in the college credit course options and exhibited an understanding of the advantage such courses presented to them.

Rationale:

High school students must be prepared for life beyond graduation. The school has identified many course options for students that will equip them for freshman status in college. The school's commitment extends to families and parents who are made aware of the available courses and their impact on credits and finances for college.

Commendation 3

Commendation Statement:

A strong connection exists among agencies such as the courts, police, community leaders, and Fort Lee that establishes and promotes opportunities for students to succeed through multi-agency interventions.

Evidence:

Representatives of community agencies such as courts and police communicated an understanding of their responsibility to support students' success in school. A team approach, along with other community organizations, has helped to emphasize the importance of avoiding trouble, staying in school and accomplishing academic goals.

Rationale:

Community agencies and their leaders can all play a part in helping students achieve when they are welcomed into the school. Organizations such as police, courts, and Fort Lee can intervene to support students when issues arise that divert their attention from academic success.

Commendation 4

Commendation Statement:

The school's initial effort to structure common planning times for same subject teachers is commendable and has resulted in increased examination of data, use of formative data, and opportunity for essential conversation to increase student achievement.

Evidence:

The school has provided biology teachers with a common planning period this year. The opportunity to plan

together has engendered conversation about data and its uses to support increased student achievement. Best practices for instruction and common assessment tools have been developed.

Rationale:

When same subject teachers have a common planning time, the positive impact on student achievement can be enormous. Biology teachers have utilized their common planning time to focus on their collective support of students through enhanced use of data and improved instruction. Their use of the common planning time is a model for others.

Commendation 5

Commendation Statement:

The school is commended for its preparation to receive and support military families transferred into the area. The Student 2 Student program is a significant endeavor to provide immediate support for students of military parents.

Evidence:

The presence of Fort Lee Army base and the number of students to transfer in and out of the school has required the school to plan carefully for minimal impact on the school experience of students in military families. The school has developed services to ease the difficulties of moving into a new community, making friends, and maintaining passing grades. Student and adult efforts on behalf of students of military families are routinely assessed to ensure welcoming and encouraging practices.

Rationale:

The presence of a large military base such as Fort Lee has resulted in many students moving in and out of the school division. Prince George High School has embraced the cultural and geographical diversity that its proximity to Fort Lee has presented. A strong program for settling students into the routine of school exists and has provided needed support to students and families.

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.

Required Action 1

Required Action:

Expand the concept of a common planning time as provided to biology teachers to other subject areas and departments as the schedule design may permit.

Evidence:

All same subject teachers have the potential for strong interaction and collaborative opportunities when they have time to work together. A common planning time will afford same subject teachers enhanced, focused time to develop lesson plans and instructional strategies that positively impact student achievement.

Rationale:

A common planning time concept was implemented for biology teachers and resulted in increased teacher interaction that facilitated greater use of data and discussions of best practice instructional strategies. All teachers can benefit from such an opportunity.

Required Action 2

Required Action:

Utilize the Professional Learning Community (PLC) concept in more defined ways to promote high participation and increased application of PLC goals.

Evidence:

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have been established in the school, but teacher commitment and involvement must increase and become the norm to realize maximum results and impact on student achievement.

Rationale:

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) provide opportunities to jointly share experiences, voice opinions, and focus on learning. The value of a focused conversation among colleagues should be an opportunity for growth for everyone.

Required Action 3

Required Action:

Coordinate an initiative to enhance vertical alignment across grade levels and between school buildings.

Evidence:

Vertical alignment represents the best opportunity for student growth across grade levels and between school buildings. The coordination of academic focus within and between buildings can have a dynamic impact on student learning at transition years.

Rationale:

The instructional emphasis and academic strategies that can maximize the learning experience for students must be coordinated across grade levels and between buildings (junior high and high school). The high school can lead the way in coordinating the alignment of instructional opportunities for students.

Required Action 4

Required Action:

Strengthen the academic options for regular education program students and incorporate the level of rigor that denotes value and high expectations for honors and AP level of instruction.

Evidence:

Options for advanced learners included many dual enrollment, honors and AP courses. Students expressed the idea that regular education options were fewer in number, emphasized less, and not as rigorous as advanced courses.

Rationale:

Regular education courses can provide students with a variety of options and build in a level of rigor that provides a challenge and opportunity for 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 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.

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 SACS-CASI-VA accreditation seals are available at www.advanced.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 Prince George 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:

Prince George High School (PGHS), along with Prince George County Public Schools, shares a vision and purpose of student achievement. As the single high school in the county, PGHS enjoys wide support from a number of stakeholders. They recognize that PGHS has a caring, committed staff that communicates the vision and works towards it. They also recognize that PGHS has a responsibility to the community to maintain the level of excellence it has enjoyed as it continues the mission. The vision and purpose are communicated through the school profile and the vision statement is posted throughout the building as a visible reminder. Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses are available in all core subject areas. Teachers shared that first year college students come back and talk to students about how the classes prepared them for college. The improved student achievement that has resulted is also due to the formalization of Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) which has driven the revision of the school's vision and purpose. PGHS has identified measurable goals of expanding the PLCs and increasing parental communication and involvement to further impact student achievement.

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

- Student achievement as measured by the number of AP students, dual enrolled students, and advanced student (independent studies) courses has increased.
- The school has a strong emphasis on AP and dual enrollment courses with more than 12 subject areas for dual enrollment and 11 AP offerings for students
- There is a shared commitment to student achievement between a caring and committed staff and a student body accountable to learn.

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

- Increase student achievement for the regular level student with measureable supports.

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

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

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

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

Prince George High School has a dynamic array of course offerings at the Advanced Placement (AP), Middle Years Programme (MYP), and Independent Study levels. Students are able to take courses in areas such as chemistry, calculus, English literature, French, and European history as examples. In addition, many dual enrollment classes are offered among three local or nearby colleges. Parents and students expressed appreciation for the level of rigor and college credit available through the dual enrollment courses. Conversations with students reflected a desire for increased academic focus and more variety in the course offerings available to regular education students.

A school culture acknowledging the level of rigor incorporated into instruction exists and was noted by students, teachers and parents during interviews. The administration has cultivated an emphasis on rigor that seems to be understood, accepted and valued by all. This is just one reflection of the leadership prerogatives of the administration that underscores the intention to ensure compliance with all regulations.

The administrative staff has launched two instructional support initiatives that direct teachers to tackle instructional issues as colleagues and to collectively promote a more rigorous learning environment. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have been established as an important opportunity shared by teachers that can impact student achievement. A government teacher shared that the process guided departmental discussions and helped to unify instructional energy for renewed course focus. Common planning periods have been made available for biology teachers at present. The teachers utilize the plan time to work together to develop lesson plans, lab activities, and common assessments. One biology teacher discussed ways in which she and her colleagues used the shared plan time to discuss and develop formative assessments that proved to be a support for students in preparing for summative assessments and end-of-course tests. The administration plans to build common planning times for other departments into next year's schedule.

Parents and students have been provided access to the Star Portal which provides access to student grades and attendance information division-wide. During student and parent interviews, it was expressed that both parents and students review the available information in an effort to remain aware of the student's status in each class.

The administrative team ensures policies and procedures are in place for the effective operation of the school. From curricular and extracurricular programs for students to opportunities for growth of teachers, numerous activities exist to extend educational endeavors for everyone. The school has a strong stakeholder organization consisting of community leaders, family members, and former students who are included in numerous activities and organizations of the school.

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

- Course selection options for students are numerous and varied with an emphasis on dual enrollment, AP, and honors.
- Rigor has been established as a valuable component of instruction. Teachers deliver the rigor and

- students expect it.
- Stakeholders are acknowledged by the administration and included in numerous activities and organizations of the school.

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

- Increase the academic focus and variety of course offerings available to regular education students.
- Incorporate the teacher common planning time feature into as many core subject areas as possible when building the school schedule for next year.

Finding: Prince George High 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:

Prince George High School's use of data and focus on teaching and learning have placed "rigor" at the center of the academic target. In interviews with teachers and students, rigor was mentioned over and over as the basis of instruction and the expected learning norm. Strong media services are provided for all students and access to technology is available for teachers and students. It was also noted that remediation and tutorial supports are in place when students struggle with a lesson or subject. One senior student shared, "I have never been turned away when I have asked a teacher for help." The statement speaks to the commitment that the team observed between teachers and students. The formalization of the role of the Professional Learning Communities will strengthen opportunities for formative assessment and use of data for instruction or remediation.

Students noted that the transition from junior high school to the high school was "eye-opening" in terms of the expectations held of them. They felt that the rigorous expectations were important, but expressed a desire for that caliber of instruction to have begun earlier in the junior high years. During other interviews groups discussed the need for increased focus on "vertical alignment" as a means to provide a stronger and more rigorous instructional focus at each grade level.

Teachers included the commitment of all who work at PGHS as a strength of the school. While economic issues were cited and cannot be ignored, the goal of the faculty to provide enriching experiences and learning opportunities to prepare students for life beyond high school is shared by all. Faculty members spoke of their efforts as "teamwork" and expressed appreciation for the contribution of each colleague.

Prince George County is the home to Fort Lee, a United States Army installation. Prince George County Public Schools and Prince George High School have plans in place that help welcome children of military families and quickly involve them in community and school programs. The high school has organized a "Student 2 Student" program that provides immediate support and mentoring connections for new students. The high school is proud of the diversity and worldwide connection that Fort Lee students have

added to the culture of the Prince George High School.

Teachers noted that the "kids keep us here" and the community wants the children to be successful. They spoke favorably of the administration's "open door policy" and expressed gratitude for the administration's strong support of staff in handling discipline referrals and in the delegation of tasks.

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

- The school has an academic climate that places "rigor" at the center of each learning goal.
- Teacher commitment to students' success exists throughout the school and is appreciated by students.
- The school's commitment to military families and the determination to support students as they resettle in Prince George County is exemplary.

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

- Formalize the role of PLCs to further promote the inclusion of formative assessment data used to drive instruction.

Finding: Prince George High 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:

Prince George County Schools and PGHS use the comprehensive Standards of Learning assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction and determine interventions. The student record system is secure and accurate in accordance with Virginia state regulations and federal regulations. Additionally, the data provided by the Advanced Placement, SAT, and industry certification exams are meaningful and useful in understanding student achievement and the results of instructional improvement initiatives that move student achievement beyond the SOL. Comparison and trend data of student performance from comparable schools is often used to assess the school's effectiveness. Stakeholders understand that PGHS enjoys some of the highest student performance in the area as measured by these assessments. The formalization of PLCs has led to the use of formative assessment data to drive instruction.

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

- Formalization of PLCs has led to the inclusion of formative assessment data used to drive instruction.

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

- Expand the PLCs and initiate the formal and systematic use of formative assessment data to drive

instruction.

- Conduct a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness of the Extra Time, Extra Help (ETEH) improvement effort.

Finding: Prince George 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:

Prince George County Public Schools personnel policies and recruiting and hiring procedures ensure certification, licensure, evaluation, training, and mentoring for all faculty members. One hundred percent of Prince George High School's teachers are highly qualified. In an effort to increase student achievement the school has begun to shift resources in an effort to provide collaborative planning to its core content teachers. Current budget and teacher placement limitations have contributed to larger student-to-teacher ratios in some core classes. However, the faculty maintains their commitment to providing high quality education to all PGHS students. One no-cost consideration being considered is the effective use of common planning times for teachers of same subjects. The school has begun use of common planning time with biology teachers and hopes to expand the program in the coming year. The school needs to develop a comprehensive on-going professional development plan driven by research based strategies that is relevant, timely, job-embedded, and focused on specific school needs as determined by data analysis.

The school's administration monitors all financial transactions and undergoes an annual audited accounting system.

Students had great praise for the guidance department and spoke with passion about the support they receive from each counselor. The guidance office communicated a commitment to students and their pursuit of college graduation goals. Programs supporting students with special needs are in place. The school has planned well for the influx of military personnel into the county and the transition requirements of military students. As the school continues to find strategies to improve a plan is needed for the students not in AP or Honors classes to achieve the necessary skills and exposure that will afford them college opportunities and the necessary skills to become productive citizens.

The building and site are secure and well maintained to provide a safe, clean learning environment. The crisis management plan is current and familiar to everyone. A full-time school resource officer, nurse, and security team monitor security, student movement, and building access. Faculty and staff take great pride in supporting administration and school resource officer in helping to maintain a safe and orderly environment by monitoring duty stations.

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

- Numerous AP and Dual Credit opportunities for students to earn college credit while still in high school.

- Partnerships with John Tyler, Richard Bland, and Virginia State University provide numerous opportunities for exposing students to higher education.
- Faculty, staff, and students feel secure and that a positive environment conducive to learning exists at PGHS.
- A strong guidance department is supportive of all student concerns.
- The resource and support staffs are well versed in the vision of the school and believe they play an active role in helping to achieve the vision.

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

- Develop a comprehensive on-going professional development plan driven by research based strategies that is relevant, timely, job-embedded, and focused on specific school needs as determined by data analyses.
- Ensure that a plan exists for the students not in AP or Honors classes to achieve the necessary skills and exposure that will afford them college opportunities and the necessary skills to become productive citizens.

Finding: Prince George 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 principal has been very active in implementing ways to communicate, inform, and respond to all stakeholders. Student learning goals are clearly articulated to all stakeholders. The principal has an open door policy and regularly meets with students, teachers, parents, and members of the community to share successes and hear concerns. A school website and newspaper routinely displays upcoming events and highlights student and teacher successes for the community. Parents also have online access to student grades through the Star Portal system.

Students, faculty, and community members feel that the principal provides timely, meaningful feedback to concerns and questions. All teachers have blogs that are used to communicate with parents and community members. The principal sponsors No Parent Left Behind Nights and Morning Coffees to keep parents informed of school issues and hear community concerns. Military families who arrive mid-year can benefit immensely from all communication strategies being used by the school. All alumni, parents, and community members that were interviewed expressed love and support for the school. They want to become more actively involved so that the school's traditions and family atmosphere can continue. A strategic community outreach plan to mobilize key stakeholders and actively involve parents in support of increasing student achievement and fundraising would be beneficial.

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

- The open-door policy of the principal fosters an environment of trust and collaboration between all

stakeholders.

- Very detailed and informative newsletters and newspapers are distributed to stakeholders.
- The community stakeholders are well versed in the vision of the school and see the school leadership and teachers as a strength of the school.
- Positive relationships and connections between staff and students are clearly evident and were remarked on by all stakeholders.

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

- Develop a comprehensive, strategic community outreach plan to mobilize key stakeholders and actively involve parents in support of increasing student achievement and fundraising.
- Utilize existing opportunities for increased orientation of military students that transition into PGHS mid-year to ensure that they are afforded the same opportunities and strategies for success as students who begin the school year at PGHS.

Finding: Prince George High 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:

Prince George High School is focused on its commitment to continuous improvement. From its vision and purpose statements to teacher training, and to academics the school is committed to academic success for all students. Students expressed a desire to see more academic options and higher levels of rigor within courses that are available for regular education students. During the teacher interviews, one person stated, "the kids keep us here." This comment summarized the faculty's determination to support students in their learning experience, and the students confirmed they know the teachers care about their success. Continuous improvement is all about student learning and academic achievement. The school has expressed its goal of increasing the use of Professional Learning Communities as one way to enhance academic planning and success.

From the central administration to the local school level, there is a unified effort to help students succeed. In recent years a joint effort resulted in revised vision and purpose statements that express this goal. Students noted that the school is the most rigorous of those in the surrounding areas. Improvement does not happen without determination to succeed and each student the team met was well aware of school-wide goals for individual success. Students could articulate their personal desire to succeed and proudly stated their intentions to attend college or pursue a career following graduation. An enhanced coordination of instructional emphasis between the high school and junior high school will lead to stronger vertical planning opportunities, academic focus, and student achievement.

Faculty members discussed the importance of a teacher mentor program that is designed to help every teacher new to the school to succeed. PGHS has a teacher training program focused on Effective Teaching

Strategies which all attend over a ten week period of time during their tenure at the school.

As it strives to continuously improve, the school has implemented Professional Learning Communities that have guided the work of departments and associated groups within the school. Each PLC has provided opportunities for teachers to express and share ideas that contribute to growth within each group. In addition, the school has begun to organize common planning times for same-subject teachers. This has proven to be highly beneficial for biology teachers and has strengthened the unity with which they approach instruction. A process for increased and enhanced vertical planning options between the high school and the junior high school should be implemented.

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

- Common planning times for same-subject teachers have proven to be beneficial for sharing best strategies and common assessment initiatives.
- Professional Learning Communities have provided opportunities for faculty engagement and discussion about continuous improvement.
- Vision and purpose statements have been revised and reflect the school's commitment to student achievement.
- A strong commitment to teaching and learning exists. Both teachers and students recognize their shared obligation to each other's success.

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

- Develop a process for increased and enhanced vertical planning options between the high school and the junior high school.
- Increase academic options and applied levels of rigor within courses available for regular education students.

Finding: Prince George 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 SACS-CASI-VA accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Mr. Michael Newman, Chair/Lead Evaluator (Windsor High School)
- Mrs. Kris Gwaltney, Team Member (Powhatan High School)
- Mr. Kevin W. Monroe, Team Member (Booker T. Washington High School)

AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools

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

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.