

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Beech Grove High School**

5330 Hornet Avenue
Beech Grove, Indiana, United States 46107-2399

**Mr. Steven G. Cox, Principal
Mr. Jeffery Studebaker, Chairperson - NCA-CASI-IN Team**

Review Dates: 09/21/2010 - 09/22/2010



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	6
Next Steps	7
Review of AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools	9
Standard 1. Vision and Purpose	9
Standard 2. Governance and Leadership	11
Standard 3. Teaching and Learning	13
Standard 4. Documenting and Using Results	14
Standard 5. Resource and Support Systems	15
Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships	17
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 Indiana State Office (NCA-CASI-IN), a division of AdvancED, visited the Beech Grove High School in Beech Grove, Indiana, United States on 09/21/2010 - 09/22/2010.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 3 members of the administrative team, 31 students, 25 parents, and 52 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.

- **Beech Grove High School has a strong tradition of academic and behavioral performance.**

Beech Grove High School requires 55 credits to graduate and has a very strong student discipline policy. These two practices keeps students focused on a very high level of behavioral and academic performance.

Having very high academic and behavioral standards supports in a very meaningful way other initiatives and programs the school has implemented over the years.

- **The leadership of Beech Grove High School is very strong and committed to student achievement and shared leadership.**

The administration and faculty work together to not only identify weaknesses, but solutions to those

weaknesses. Nearly every teacher interviewed stated that they feel that they are equal partners with the administration when it comes to working on improving student achievement.

Shared leadership is important when a building is attempting to propel student achievement continuously forward and the Beech Grove administration works very well with their teachers in order to achieve this goal.

- **Beech Grove High School has systemic and sustainable school and community partnerships that enhance student learning.**

The school has a number of community businesses that support not only the school but the students as well. One example of this is the school nurse program that is funded and supported by a local hospital and a community grant.

This commendation is important because it shows that the school is an integral part of the Beech Grove community and that it has the complete support of that community.

- **Beech Grove High School has a long tradition of a strong school-wide focus on student performance.**

The school has analyzed student performance data for many years in order to identify strengths and weaknesses. The school has developed several programs such as credit recovery and the freshman transition program to help a variety of students perform at a higher level.

This commendation is important because it not only exemplifies how the school has always functioned, but it shows exactly where the school's primary focus lies.

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.

- **Involve stakeholders in developing school improvement goals that are supported by achievement data and align professional development to them.**

Very few teachers and no students or stakeholders could explain what the school improvement goals were. The school is spending a great deal of time developing common assessments and their professional development has been focused on this as well.

The school improvement goals and professional development should be in alignment.

- **Develop the student assessment system to inform instruction on a more frequent basis across all curricular areas.**

While the school has consistently used data over the years to analyze school-wide needs, and is beginning to use common assessments, the school has not developed widespread formative assessments to inform and

direct daily classroom instruction. The teachers have begun to develop common assessments to assess teaching effectiveness after a course or semester is completed but the teachers have not developed formative assessments that would help determine daily instructional practices, strategies, and student interventions.

The school has begun using common assessments to do data analysis on teaching effectiveness after instruction is completed, which is not as effective as making adjustments on a more frequent basis when instruction can still make an impact on student growth and achievement.

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-IN 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 Beech Grove 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:

Beech Grove High School's vision statement is "Beech Grove High School envisions a future of enthusiastic stakeholders with a unified commitment in building a culture of excellence. We believe all students can attain skills needed to face a competitive workforce, and we work together to empower them to achieve academic success and extra-curricular involvement in a safe, clean environment. We seek to spur success not only in academics, critical thinking, and communication skills, but also in becoming responsible and productive citizens who contribute to society. With strong ethical and moral values we pledge to be respectful of others in our diverse society and to strengthen our commitment to our community."

This vision statement was developed in the Spring of 2010 through small and large group sessions. Input was gathered from all teachers, administrators, several parents and community members, and three students from the Student Community Council. Collaboration took place during the common planning time on Wednesday mornings as well as after-school meetings with other stakeholders. While the school has had a mission statement, this is the first time a vision statement has been created. No evidence has been given for a revision process.

The vision statement is printed in the student handbook, is located on the school website and was published in the local newspaper. Upon a tour of the school, there was no evidence of the vision statement being posted for students, staff, or visitors. During interviews, no teacher, staff member, student, parent or other stakeholder could recite the vision statement. Most teachers and support staff could paraphrase the statement with key concepts of holistic approach, academic as well as extracurricular participation, employability skills, and citizenship and character traits. Students were less able to paraphrase the statement and primarily focused on the "culture of excellence", "prepare for the next step of life", and "to be the best person you can be." Other stakeholders such as parents and business leaders exhibited a range of ability to paraphrase the vision statement. One stakeholder stated that the vision was to "educate in a safe environment."

Supporting the vision statement of Beech Grove High School are the Core Values of Shared leadership, Evidence based, Enjoyment, Continuous improvement, Alignment, Social responsibility, and High expectations. These values are posted just inside the main entrance to the school and occasionally in the hallway. There was no evidence of the values being listed in the handbook or in the individual classrooms, teacher workrooms, website, etc. The TAG (teacher assisted guidance) program has been modified to

support the character building component of the vision statement. Through this program, teacher-developed character building lessons will be implemented on a monthly basis during the 2010-2011 school year. Other support for Beech Grove High School's vision statement includes the identification of students for Math Lab, Hornet Enrichment Academy, Credit Recovery and Rescue, and the Renaissance Program. These programs aid in the vision of all students becoming responsible and productive citizens.

Profiles of the school, its students, and the community can be found in the School Improvement Plan (Spring 2009), on the DOE website and through B2S Data Warehouse/SDS/Edline management systems.

While the vision statement is new, teachers felt that the vision statement validated the things they were already doing. The Core Values and Vision Statement are in place to guide lesson planning and the learning process. While teachers meet weekly during common planning time, evidence from the minutes of these planning meetings does not indicate a systematic and focused effort for teachers to collaborate on lesson planning centered on the analysis of data, student achievement or identifying teaching strategies that are research-based and reflective of best practice. Common planning/Professional Learning Community times appear to be centered on the development of Common Assessments, development of Curriculum Maps or the dissemination of information.

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

- Finding a need for a written vision statement, teachers, administrators, students, parents and other stakeholders collaborated over time to develop a vision statement that supports the learning and achievement of all students.
- Beech Grove High School is committed to providing all students with a variety of options to help them become responsible and productive members of society.

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

- Arrange a revision process to include other stakeholders in the school community.
- Establish a systemized method of communicating the vision statement and Core Values to all stakeholders.
- Structure common planning time and Professional Learning Communities to begin to analyze student achievement data and plan lessons that support vision and school improvement goals.

Finding: Beech Grove 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:

The school has leaders who encourage shared leadership and support initiatives recommended by teachers and other school stakeholders. Evidence from interviews indicates that the school's leadership supports the vision of the school and that they are "invested and believe in it." Several respondents in the interviews spoke of the feeling of community that is prevalent at Beech Grove High School. A business leader in the community said, "Our schools are the greatest asset that Beech Grove has."

During interviews with students, parents, teachers, and stakeholders it became evident that the school leaders practice active listening and are approachable by all stakeholders. The administrators are visible throughout the building and have earned the respect of the students, staff, parents, and community members. One teacher commented that administration is "very open to listening to ideas and making a change if needed." Despite the support for new ideas, there seemed to be opposing viewpoints relative to the degree of administrative oversight for new initiatives. It was expressed that teachers are left to follow through on implementation without enough administrative guidance. Other teachers felt that when administration allows teachers to oversee initiatives, there is truly an opportunity for shared leadership. Some interviews suggested that too many initiatives have taken place over the past few years. Some teachers felt that there are too many things being added to the tasks teachers must accomplish without anything being removed from the list.

Through information gained from stakeholder interviews and review of artifacts, it is evident that the policies and procedures provide for an orderly and safe operation of the school. In addition to policies that direct the operations of the school, interviews provided evidence that the administration does an "excellent job" of following through with procedures and providing accountability for students as well as staff. Almost all stakeholders affirmed feeling safe at Beech Grove High School and feel that the administration does a "good job" of handling situations when they arise.

The administration provides direction and allocates resources for the implementation of curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. When financial resources are not available, grant opportunities are pursued to allow for implementation of initiatives. Teachers are encouraged to take an active role in this process.

In addition to athletics, the school supports clubs, opportunities for participation in academic competitions, marching band, choir, and other extracurricular and co-curricular activities. Students expressed that there are plenty of opportunities to get involved in the school if there is a desire. Students and parents also affirmed the opportunities to take on leadership roles in the school through activities such as tutoring programs.

During interviews with administrators and teachers, a desire was expressed that the school increase their focus on innovative instructional practices. Many teachers discussed exemplary practices and the team observed some use of best practices during classroom visits. However, the team noted that while practices observed are good, the leadership could work to increase teacher use of best practices more systematically.

Many of the classroom observations provided evidence of teacher-centered classrooms in which traditional teaching is still the norm. Several teachers were seen seated behind desks or at computers rather than actively engaging students and students who were sleeping were not encouraged to become engaged in the lessons.

Review of documents, interviews with stakeholders, and review of the Indiana Department Education web-site provides sufficient evidence that Beech Grove High School is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

The administration supports the ideas of a professional learning community as evidenced in PLC, a delayed start Wednesday mornings for staff collaboration. In addition to PLC, administration has supported an idea “parking lot” for staff, TAG (teacher assisted guidance), Renaissance Committee, and a built in resource time for students. All of these initiatives provide for opportunities for teachers to work with teachers and students to enhance learning.

Teachers affirmed that administrators take an active role in holding teachers accountable for their work. Informal classroom visits as well as formal evaluations are conducted on a regular basis. The team noted that there needs to be greater accountability for implementation of the school improvement goal. While the goals were noted in the School Improvement Plan, no one who was interviewed could identify the school goals or provide the team with information on how the leadership provides opportunities for professional development related to the school goal. It was evident that despite the leadership provided by the administrative team, there does need to be better communication of the school’s mission, vision, and goals to stakeholders.

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

- The school’s leadership is actively living the school’s vision in that it is evident that they care about students, their success during and after high school, and the safety of students while at Beech Grove High School. They are frequently visible throughout the school and take an active role creating a feeling of community at Beech Grove High School.
- The leadership takes part in active listening and is available for all stakeholders.
- The leadership provides opportunities for collaboration among teachers and stakeholders.

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

- Commit to providing professional development related the school’s improvement goals.
- Analyze and share school data relative to student improvement efforts.
- Provide opportunities for staff to share their expertise and information learned through professional development.

Finding: Beech Grove 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:

The school expectations for learning were clear with every stakeholder the team interviewed. There are high expectations for all students. One student commented that the expectations are high because “that is the way we do things here, you are expected to do your best all the time.” It is evident that the tradition in the community provides clear expectations for the learning process. A business leader in the community stated, the “educators in this building have a tremendous passion for teaching the kids.” The administrative team is very protective of the instructional time and works diligently to ensure that teachers can teach during each and every class period without distractions. The school provides Advanced Placement courses to push the upper level students and has recently implemented programs such as the PLATO lab, Winter School, and the Hornet Enrichment Academy to address the needs of different types of learners. Numerous students, teachers, and parents discussed the after school tutoring opportunities for students that are struggling. The stakeholders feel that even with a changing student population (size and diversity) the school climate and expectations have been maintained at a level that promotes an atmosphere conducive to learning.

The school implements a mapped curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for most students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The school demonstrates some evidence of alignment between this curriculum and instructional practices, but implementation is not systematic across the school. The school is growing in this area by developing common assessments that will be used to gather and use classroom data to improve instructional practices. Currently the assessment practices appear to be summative. There was very little discussion of any type of formative assessment used by the teachers or students to evaluate performance or instructional strategies.

A few teachers generate motivation for learning by incorporating cooperative learning groups and differentiated instruction. In the interviews, teachers discussed modifying instruction to meet student needs and preferred learning styles, but during the classroom visits the team did not observe differentiated instruction. During the classroom visits the team noted that most of the instruction appears teacher centered and directed. Many students did not appear to be actively engaged in the lessons in many classrooms or using higher level thinking skills. One student commented that only about “half the teachers use methods that help them learn in different ways.”

Technology issues were a major concern amongst the students and staff. There was a great amount of frustration to the inconsistency in the technology. Numerous statements were made about the length of time to log in, the computers shutting down in the middle of a presentation, and the inability to complete simple tasks in software programs. Many teachers stated they are reluctant to plan their lessons around technology because of these inconsistencies.

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

- The school has established clear learning expectations for the school. These expectations are modeled by the staff and fully supported by all stakeholders.
- The school identified a need to creatively use credit recovery programs to address the learning needs

of students who were not being successful in a traditional classroom setting.

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

- Develop a system that will allow the information collected from common assessments to drive the instruction for each class.
- Resolve issues with technology so that teachers can use it to enhance the learning process.
- Focus on best practices to meet the needs of all types of learners.

Finding: Beech Grove 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:

Beech Grove High School has done an admirable job in developing common assessments, in providing updated classroom grade data to students and parents, in creating time in the weekly schedule for teachers and administrators to work with assessments as well as data, and in providing a data warehousing and analysis device with the B2S program.

Beginning in January of 2010, the school created a revised schedule on Wednesdays that allows teachers time to work with each other on various professional development initiatives. One of these is the development of common assessments. Currently, many teachers have developed and use a pre-test/post-test format for these common assessments. Teachers that instruct the same course, US History for example, have created a pre-test that all teachers of that course use. The same test is given at the end of the first grading period as well as at the end of the semester. At the time of the visit, some teachers were using the pre-test to alter what content they will cover. For example, after the pre-test results were known in an advanced math course, the instructor opted to skip some review material from a previous course because it was evident that the students knew the material. In several other instances, however, the teachers are simply giving these assessments and are conducting the analysis after the students have already left the course. In no instance has the QAR Team observed the use of formative assessments where teachers can be informed of immediate student progress or how their daily practices need to be altered to address student needs.

The school has invested and uses two software programs that could be used for a robust data analysis. The Edline program allows students and parents to see their updated grades on a regular basis. This data system allows for communication to and from parents as well as students. This allows teachers to show student growth or the lack thereof throughout the grading period. In addition, the B2S data warehousing program allows teachers to track how their test questions are relating to the standards of the course and how the students are performing on those standards. The Edline program is used by all teachers, but it is unclear how many students and parents access that program and the information it contains. The B2S program appears to be used primarily by math teachers, but training for other teachers will be provided in

the near future.

The school guidance and administration uses Northwest Evaluation Assessment (NWEA) as well as End of Course Assessment data for placement in courses as well as remediation efforts. However, it appears that there is some confusion among the teaching staff how to access reading level data.

There was little evidence that the school uses formal data from other schools, but it was evident that the school communicates with many schools of comparable size about practices and programs dealing with student programming and achievement.

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

- The school has implemented a late start on Wednesdays in order to focus on the development of professional learning communities.
- The school has a tradition of using global data to make decisions on school programming.

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

- Develop the student assessment system to inform instruction on a more frequent basis across all curricular areas.
- Develop school improvement goals that are supported by achievement data and staff professional development.

Finding: Beech Grove 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:

Beech Grove High School employs a sufficient number of staff members. The staff is qualified for their assignments as determined by the Department of Education. New staff members are provided with four days of training prior to the start of the school year. During this training, the vision statement is explained, as is the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). They are also instructed on common school procedures. The final part of the training includes a bus tour of the school district. They also meet regularly during their first year.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have been the main form of professional development since January, 2010. These PLCs are organized primarily by department. The PLCs meet every Wednesday morning for approximately 30 minutes. Students have late arrival on these days. During the PLCs, teachers have developed the school's vision statement. They are also working on collecting data for CQI and developing common assessments. Teachers are also allowed professional release time to attend conferences, but may have to pay for it themselves. Although there is a Professional Development Plan within the school's Continuous School Improvement and Achievement Plan, there was no evidence that

teachers are aware of it.

Both staff members and students state that they feel very safe at the school. One student indicated that students who threaten others are dealt with immediately and are removed from the school. Neither teachers nor students felt that bullying was a problem. Parents felt that the safe environment was a strength of the school. One parent commented that she and her husband considered moving out of the district several years ago but decided against the move due to the safe environment of Beech Grove High School. Three staff members have earned certification as Indiana Safe School Specialists. Each teacher is provided with a copy of the school's Crisis Management Plan, as well as a Safe School Bag. During the school year, the school participates in regular fire and disaster drills. One time per year, they conduct a mock disaster.

The school employs seven custodians; one during the day and six at night. In addition, the school is in compliance with the State Board of Accounts and has the appropriate mechanisms in place to monitor and perform all financial transactions.

The school has many extra-curricular activities in which students may be involved. Activities include athletics, as well as clubs and organizations. Some of these organizations provide opportunities for community service. One student said she would like to see more of those opportunities. The school also has an incentive program for students. The Renaissance Program provides students with rewards for academic success, perfect attendance, positive attitude and achievement. These rewards may include a trip to an amusement park, VIP Breakfast and coupons for local businesses.

The school has a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). According to one person interviewed, it has not been very active until recently when a new leader was elected. The PTO hopes to become stronger this year and also increase the diversity within the organization. One of its primary responsibilities is fundraising.

The school has two full time guidance counselors, plus a home school advisor. The home school advisor is responsible for freshmen; one guidance counselor is responsible for sophomores and juniors; and the other is responsible for seniors. Counselors provide personal, career and college counseling. Students state that they feel as if they have someone they can seek out if they have a problem, be it personal or academic. The guidance department is also responsible for several student programs. They have developed and are involved with many programs including the Freshmen Houses; after-school tutoring, which uses both licensed teachers and peer tutors; the Hornet Enrichment Academy; Teacher Assisted Guidance, freshmen mentoring and ACT/SAT preparation classes.

The special education department has three teachers. Special education students are scheduled into general education classes. Most have one block scheduled in the resource room for additional help. The majority of special education students earn diplomas. Many earn Core 40 Diplomas, and recently one earned a Technical Honors Diploma. Several attend the Central Nine Vocational Center. Non-diploma students are involved in a job preparation program. Beech Grove also provides aides for individual students within general education.

Ninth Block is a new program that will soon be implemented at Beech Grove. If a student is expelled, he or she will be given the opportunity to attend Ninth Block. They will be able to earn up to four credits per semester. This program will be housed at Hornet Park Elementary School.

The school relies on grants for the funding of several programs. One of these is a Learning Well grant, which currently pays for the school nurse. It is due to expire at the end of October. Another grant is due to

expire in November. This grant currently funds after-school tutoring, winter school and summer school for credit rescue/recovery.

The school budgets sufficient resources to support its programs. The school has been resourceful in applying for grants and have implemented several new initiatives such as the Hornet Enrichment Academy and the Ninth Block Program. However, many teachers and students expressed a concern over resources for technology. Several teachers said they did not always have in-put on what technology was going to be purchased. Others did not know why some things were needed (e.g. large screen televisions). Overall, there seems to be a lack of awareness of the overall technology plan. Teachers and students were also frustrated about the reliability of the technology that is available. Specific problems include log-in times, students not being allowed to use flash drives, being “kicked off” a program, the guidance department not being able to update their web page because the school no longer has access to the program, and lack of tech support within the building. Some teachers hesitate to use technology because they worry that it won’t work properly.

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

- The Guidance Department is very strong and is responsible for several programs such as Freshmen Houses; after-school tutoring, which uses both licensed teachers and peer tutors; the Hornet Enrichment Academy; Teacher Assisted Guidance, freshmen mentoring, and ACT/SAT preparation classes.
- The school spends a great deal of resources, both time and money, to support educational programming for a variety of students.

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

- Align professional development opportunities with the school's communicated improvement goals.

Finding: Beech Grove 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 team found that the community has a strong bond with the faculty of Beech Grove High School. One community member commented that Beech Grove High School is “the number one asset in our city.” There is an immense sense of ownership that can be felt from all stakeholders as you enter the building and meet with any member of the community and school. It is easy to see that the community and parents feel welcome at Beech Grove High School and feel very comfortable communicating with the administration and teachers. The parents and teachers feel a personal relationship with the faculty as the faculty feels very much part of the community.

Beech Grove School has fostered collaboration from the community and stakeholders by building business alliances, internships, peer mentoring, parent organizations, Freshman Orientation, Back to School Night,

and Parent/Teacher conferences to name a few. The school is also a member of the city's Chamber of Commerce. Teachers commented that they need to continue to work to find ways to increase the involvement of parents as the school population becomes larger and more diverse.

The stakeholders have formed a School-Community Council. This council is used as a formal channel to communicate with and listen to all stakeholders. The council is comprised of students, teachers, administration, parents, and community members. Many commented that this was a positive outlet for concerns and a way to use community members to help drive the school focus.

The school expectations were clear with every stakeholder the team interviewed. Beech Grove High School runs deep in rich history of a community-based school. Interviews indicated that this tradition of a "culture of excellence" plays an active role in the expectations and daily decision making processes.

It was evident from the interviews that the primary method the school offers to provide information about student performance to parents is through the Edline system. Numerous reports from students, parents, and teachers indicate that this web site is an excellent tool that is frequently accessed by parents and that Edline allows parents to e-mail teachers immediately with any concern they might have about their student's progress or lack of progress. This also provides the school a channel to listen to and communicate with stakeholders. There are students and families that do not have Internet access at home. Parents commented that some teachers have become too reliant on the Edline system. One parent commented, "If I did not check the grades online I would not know how my child was doing. It would be nice to get a phone call when my child is struggling."

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

- The School-Community Council demonstrates the commitment to provide an outlet for all stakeholders to express concerns and present ideas for change at Beech Grove High School.
- The Ed Line system provides students and parents an avenue to receive information regarding the student's performance in school.
- Staff at Beech Grove High School fosters an environment and displays a commitment to building relationships among students, parents, and community members.

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

- Create new avenues to involve all stakeholders in the school community in relation to the growing student population and an increase in student diversity.
- Utilize other forms of communicating with parents about student achievement and progress data.

Finding: Beech Grove 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:

Beech Grove High School has a long record of school improvement efforts. The school has a history of analyzing student performance data and making programmatic adjustments to the school. One such change came eight years ago when the school implemented the Freshman House structure. More recently, the school adjusted its Wednesday schedule to create professional learning communities for its teachers, created a 5th year senior program, implemented a new freshman transition program, and is on the verge of dramatically changing how instructional practice is done in their building with the addition of a robust data analysis program that will enable all teachers to analyze their effectiveness in teaching particular state standards.

The school has always had a mission statement as well as maintained the school's profile information, school improvement plan, and school improvement goals. These items have been routinely maintained over the years and have led to the creation of the school's new vision statement and several new school improvement initiatives over the past several months. Another impetus for several of these changes was the change in leadership within the past few years. The new superintendent, assistant superintendent, and principal have all created a sense of urgency that has spurred many of the changes in the building. Programs such as the TAG program have been used periodically over the years and have been adjusted as needed. The school has been and continues to be responsive to the emerging trends their achievement data shows. In addition, the school has a strong tradition of working with community members and organizations to help with their mission. An example of this is the partnership the school has with a local hospital and a community grant organization. This partnership supports and pays for the school nurse in not only the high school, but in all of the corporation's buildings as well.

While the school has school improvement goals, it appears that they are currently not being worked on during professional development. Indeed, very few individuals interviewed could actually discuss what the school improvement goals are and how professional development relates to them. The professional development opportunities are primarily focused on the development of common assessments and not on either of the improvement goals.

While it appears that the school has a history of responding to overall student achievement data such as Graduation Qualification Exam (GQE) scores, graduation rates, and other standardized tests, the school has not developed a systematic method to analyze daily instructional methods. Plans for the common assessment use and the B2S program include moving to a more frequent assessment and analysis. The school does have an effective means of communicating student achievement records to parents via the Edline program.

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

- The school has a long history of analyzing student achievement data in order to identify weaknesses. The school has done a good job of responding to those weaknesses with a variety of programs.
- The school has recently adjusted their weekly schedule in order to provide teachers professional

development time.

- The school has recently begun implementing common assessments in nearly every curricular area.

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

- Develop common assessments to drive overall course and curricular improvements.
- Develop formative assessments that teachers use to determine appropriate daily instructional practices as well as needed student interventions.

Finding: Beech Grove 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-IN accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Mr. Jeffery Studebaker, Chair (Jefferson High School)
- Brian Knight, Vice Chair (Perry Meridian High School)
- Mrs. Tiffany Albertson, Team Member (Bishop Luers High School)
- Ms. Sharon Mang, Team Member (Greensburg Community High School)
- Ms. Suzanne Weber, Team Member (Union City Community 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.