

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology
1789 W Coolidge Ave
Coolidge, Arizona, United States 85128-9125**

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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

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About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

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

In 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 NCA CASI Arizona State Office (NCA-CASI-AZ), a division of AdvancED, visited the Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology in Coolidge, Arizona, United States on 11/30/2011 - 12/01/2011.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 2 members of the administrative team, 63 students, 4 parents, and 6 teachers. In addition, support staff members were interviewed. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by the school. Specifically, the team examined the school's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

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

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

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

Commendations

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

Commendation 1

Commendation Statement:

Students are actively engaged in authentic, real-world learning.

Evidence:

Student-centered instruction includes inquiry-based focus with the support of experts in the field through the use of authentic tasks and critical thinking. Teachers identify research-based instructional methods that meet the needs of each students to maximize growth and individual success. Students collaboratively solve criminal science investigations demonstrating mastery of skills taught.

Rationale:

Research shows in-depth learning with integrated technology and authentic applications lead to an increase in self direction, motivation, and authentic engagement in learning.

Commendation 2

Commendation Statement:

A caring, compassionate staff creates a positive culture for student learning.

Evidence:

A positive school culture is created by the staff and is evident through every aspect of campus. Stakeholder interviews demonstrated that a high level of care and concern are given to everyone on campus. Every group interviewed commented on the open door policy of the administrators and how concerns are addressed immediately. A parent noted, "Once I got (my son) into the program, he did not want to disappoint the teacher so he started excelling." One teacher summed up the interview with, "We're a family."

Rationale:

A positive climate for learning is one of the research- based findings in support of helping establish an environment for increased student academic achievement.

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:

Develop SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound) goals in a collaborative manner and include a clearly defined action plan.

Evidence:

Although there is evidence of a recently developed and reviewed strategic plan, there is no evidence of SMART goals or a defined action plan by which to implement and measure the progress of the improvement efforts.

Rationale:

The level of specificity in goal setting is essential to align and prioritize improvement efforts. Clearly defined goals, objectives, and strategies with specific timeframes and delegated responsibilities allow the school to align resources and support for optimum student achievement.

Required Action 2

Required Action:

Formalize an annual professional development plan aligned with the SMART goals.

Evidence:

Although professional development opportunities are provided on a regular basis, there was little evidence of an annual plan based on goals, data, and needs assessments.

Rationale:

Professional development designed specifically to align with the identified school needs, especially when tied to goals, provides the skills and strategies to effectively further the continuous improvement efforts.

Required Action 3

Required Action:

Construct and articulate a long-term marketing plan that supports the future growth goal.

Evidence:

While parents who were interviewed stated that they are pleased with the school, its purpose, and its contribution to the community, they did express concern that the general public in and around town is not fully aware of all the school has to offer. The parents and students who were interviewed during the QAR (Quality Assurance Review) visits are the institute's greatest proponents and have the potential to serve as respected representatives of any future marketing plan established by the school.

Rationale:

Designing a comprehensive marketing and recruiting plan that educates students, parents, and the local community as to the benefits of the curriculum, opportunities, and programs will better ensure growth and sustainability of a school of choice.

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 NCA-CASI-AZ 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 Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology demonstrates that it meets the seven standards for accreditation. The findings of the Quality Assurance Review Team regarding the standards for accreditation are summarized on the following pages.

Standard 1: Vision and Purpose

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

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

The QAR team confirmed by examination of documents and observations there are established written vision and mission statements. "Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology provides career and technology educational opportunities for students to become members of a competitive workforce," was visible in handbooks, documents, brochures, and websites. The vision of the school district, "Education with a purpose," was confirmed in all stakeholder meetings and is printed in various documents, handbooks, and brochures. More importantly, it is evident the vision drives the learning process in the classrooms, daily rituals, and all observable actions. Staff and administration "walk the talk."

Several stakeholder groups confirmed the vision and mission were created in 2001. It was noted in an interview with the leadership team, "The vision statement is not just a motto; we're trying to educate them (the students) to be valuable employees." In February of 2011, the vision, strategic plan, and mission were revisited by 21 stakeholders. One of the new goals from this session is to have an active advisory board.

Data constituting a profile of school and its students and the community are collected and printed in various reports reviewed. However, there is little evidence of a formal profile document.

Although there is evidence of a recently developed and reviewed strategic plan, there is no evidence of SMART goals or a defined action plan by which to implement and measure the progress of the improvement efforts. There was little evidence to denote any systematic cycle of review and revision of the vision, mission, and strategic plan.

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

- The school understands the importance of the vision and mission as it relates to student achievement.

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

- Develop SMART goals in a collaborative manner; include a clearly defined action plan.
- Institute a systemic and systematic review plan for the mission, vision, and the strategic plan.
- Design a comprehensive profile that is easily accessed and can be of use in marketing and recruiting as well as to identify trends.

- Create an active advisory board as identified in the strategic plan.

Finding: Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology 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 QAR verified through the review of documents and stakeholder interviews a range of established policies and procedures designed to guide operations. There is a general parent/student handbook. It outlines policies, procedures, and the rights and responsibilities of students. Due to various complexities of the programs, cosmetology and nursing have their own student handbooks. A personnel handbook outlines expectations for all staff and includes legal requirements.

The board uses Arizona School Board Services in alignment of policy recommendations to guide the school and district. These policies support the principal as the leader of the school. The board members, because the school is part of a JTED (Joint Technical Education District), are elected from each of the participating five school districts.

Uniform System of Financial Records (USFR) standards for Arizona school districts are followed as part of the business protocols. Audits, including the June 30, 2010, report from an outside firm, indicate 'unqualified' findings. The school has developed its own QPS (Quality Program System). This system has a template and rubric to document how the various programs and the school meet ADE (Arizona Department of Education) standards. At present, the system includes outside industry people "auditing" some of the programs. The totality of the system allows for the review of student performance within programs.

It was substantiated in stakeholder interviews that students and staff have a voice in the leadership. Since staff members are experts in their industries, their knowledge in designing program content is honored. They are part of a team that designed the new evaluation instrument that is being piloted this school year. The students lead in their participation in Service Learning, which is in its fifth year; they actively lead the clinics, such as the animal dog spa. Some of the programs such as law and fire science embed student leadership through a rank structure.

Responsibility and ownership were documented by the QAR team through interviews with students and staff. As reported by a staff member, "These are all our students." The requirement of the completion of a successful internship during the senior year is an example of responsibility and authentic application of learning. There is pride in each program, from the flag raising ceremony in the morning to the late night preparation of a spa day and fashion show.

The nature of the mission lends itself to the creation of extra-curricular activities that are guided by national, state, and local criteria. The administration ensures student fees affiliated with organizations such as Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) are paid. The students engage in skills clubs

associated with fire, cosmetology, and law, in addition to HOSA. Students participate in an array of competitions and demonstrations, and they have earned awards that are on display.

The advisory board for each program meets regularly as documented by the posted minutes found online. The input elicited from the parents and industry experts is used to assist the instructors and administration in keeping the programs current and relevant. Teacher stakeholders note the importance of this communication and value it. The results of parent satisfaction surveys administered in February 2011 (with 220 respondents) indicate that 96% agree/strongly agree that “CAVIT (Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology) staff meets the occupational goals of my student.” Furthermore, in seeking feedback on the quality of the "clinic services" provided, the satisfaction ranged by program from 93% - 99% strongly approving.

Review of both the former and the new evaluation being piloted provide evidence an evaluation system is in place that is implemented with consistency. It allows for the goals and professional growth reflections of staff.

A positive school culture is created by the staff and is evident through every aspect of campus. Stakeholder interviews demonstrated that a high level of care and concern are given to everyone on campus. Every group interviewed commented on the open door policy of the administrators and how concerns are addressed immediately. A parent noted, “Once I got (my son) into the program, he did not want to disappoint the teacher so he started excelling.” One teacher summed up the interview with, “CAVIT is family, if I had one word to sum it up.”

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

- A positive learning culture is created by the staff and demonstrated by students.
- Outside industry experts are brought in to audit using a rubric to inform decisions about improvement to programs.
- Student participation in curricular and extra-curricular activities is noteworthy.
- Opportunities for student and staff leadership in the operations and mission abound.

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

- Conduct a town hall meeting with all of the advisories together in addition to the single purpose advisory meetings.

Finding: Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology 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 QAR team observed students learning through an inquiry-based model that promotes critical thinking and the use of different strategies to solve problems, mirroring real-world tasks. Students collaboratively solve criminal science investigations demonstrating mastery of skills taught. Research shows this in-depth learning with integrated technology leads to an increase in self-direction and motivation to learn. The instructors are industry experts in their field and optimize their connections with practitioners in the field “industries” to raise the level of rigor within their respective programs. However, there is little evidence of instructional pedagogical background.

Instructors are expected and encouraged to use rigor and relevance to involve students in applying knowledge in real-world settings. While working backwards from national, state, and district standards (where available) to develop the curriculum outline, they set the bar above minimum requirements, demanding students master critical thinking, communication, and 21st century skills needed for future success. Inquiry-based learning is engaging, and at the school, instructional experts place a premium on rigorous, academic development as evidenced by all standardized test scores.

Stakeholders interviewed communicated clear, rigorous, and aligned learning expectations that are posted on the website. The strategic plan is posted in seven of the nine identified programs, and the course outline is posted in all nine program areas. Student-centered instruction includes an inquiry-based focus, with the support of experts in the field through the use of authentic tasks and critical thinking skills. Teachers identify research-based instructional methods that meet the needs of each student to maximize growth and individual success. Teachers promote and use student leadership to provide “scaffold instruction,” flexible grouping, leveled questioning, and small group instruction to ensure students have equal access to the curriculum. Through observation and interviews, it is evident that all students are supported with the necessary resources to help them excel.

Entering the massage clinic, the QAR team observed 12 students, six receiving massages and six students conducting the massages. Students were asked to demonstrate massage techniques and rationalize their thinking process to the instructor. Students use a series of focused questions to ensure the massage will produce the desired outcome. This increased responsibility and self-management elevates motivation, involves students in complex interdisciplinary tasks, and gives them a sense of pride and accomplishment that is seldom experienced in the traditional classroom setting. One student noted, “Each day I learn something new, and I have never been bored in class.”

When asked about the challenging curriculum, students responded, “I retain the information better because I get to apply what is in the textbook, get feedback on what I did, and apply it again.” Another student noted, “The teachers identify what we don’t know, and then they reteach that information.” Students take responsibility to assist their peers in meeting proficiency in a particular skill area as evidenced by the interviews. Tutoring and mentoring programs allow students to work on their personal goals and achieve success both in and out of the classroom.

The staff utilizes the “Teacher Share” folder on a shared network drive to house both summative and formative data. In addition, lesson plans, course outlines and PowerPoints are available. Having all the informational PowerPoints and needed forms available in one place is effective. The leadership is developing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in partnerships with the advisory committees to promote real-world, hands-on application opportunities. This encourages differentiation of professional development while building relationships with the community at large.

Stakeholders indicated that technology is an essential component in preparing students to succeed in a global economy. The leadership promotes technology among the staff, students, and community. For example, there are SMART Boards, mobile laptop carts, and Liquid Crystal Displays (LCD) for each program. Parents provide their email addresses when completing the open application material. Evidence within the course outlines and lesson plans indicates that connections are made through the use of technology.

The QAR team confirmed through stakeholder interviews that an integral part of the school’s success is the development of partnerships with businesses in the community that have donated multiple hours and resources to ensure the authenticity of experiences within each program. Guests to the campus find easy access, authentic learning tasks, bell-to-bell instruction, and a professional climate.

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

- Visionary leadership is the catalyst enabling students to strive for and realize their own personalized career journey through rigorous and relevant inquiry-based instruction promoting teamwork and collaboration with peers, educators, and experts in the real world.
- Math, reading, and science are embedded within the context of a curricular program of study that is rigorous and relevant providing each student with a clear connection between theory and practice.
- Leadership focuses on building relationships with all stakeholders and promotes curricular rigor and relevance through authentic learning opportunities.
- Industry experts “raise the bar” and advocate for students, program, and school success.
- All stakeholders agree they are embarking on a new era in education as they prepare students for a global job market.

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

- Create a professional development plan to address pedagogical, instructional strategies to meet the ongoing needs of the students and staff.
- Monitor to ensure effective instructional practices are implemented with quality, fidelity, intensity, and consistency.

Finding: Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology 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:

The instructional experts continuously strive to improve their knowledge of how children learn and implement best practices in teaching. Instructors provide effective instruction using differentiation, tiered instruction, and appropriate research-based interventions in an effort to close the student achievement gap. To improve their practices, all programs share their benchmarks school-wide so they can receive effective feedback from different perspectives. For example, scores are posted on the marquee and discussed within the classrooms.

The advisory committee and administration are involved in looking at data, documenting student progress towards the goals of the program strategic plan benchmarks, and providing feedback. This sharing of student data leads to opportunities for articulation, collective responsibility for the achievement of all students, identification of effective instructional strategies, and a high level of accountability. The staff believes in working synergistically to challenge the status quo as evidenced by the QAR team.

Instructors understand the need for frequent progress monitoring and interventions. Effective student progress monitoring systems and instruction plans are implemented as evidenced by the number of students receiving high marks on the state career assessments and by their local, state, and national awards. Instructors understand the importance of balanced assessment and use both formative and summative assessment measures to gather information throughout the year.

Through the use of ongoing quarterly benchmark assessments in their respective programs, teachers and students gauge progress towards meeting and exceeding the state standards. Quarterly benchmarks and finals for each program are posted online; they indicate an upward trend in all areas. For example, within one year the overall student pass rate went from 83% to 92%. The state average passing rate is 81.6%. The assessments provide information about the effectiveness of instruction that helps drive staff development in areas of intervention as well as enrichment.

A student reported, "I need to prepare for a 100 question test next week. If I don't pass I won't receive credit for the class." Student self-assessment, goal setting, and the home-school connection (coupled with the teacher's ability to quickly disseminate the data to make appropriate instructional decisions) lead to improved student achievement. The use of an open-ended inquiry component allows for student-to-student interaction as they work in groups to use multiple classroom and online resources to generate solutions to problems posed. Students become critical consumers of information as they cross-reference and learn that not all sources of information are valid. It was noted throughout the interviews that students take responsibility for peers who have not yet mastered a particular skill. A student noted, "If I need help I can ask a friend or someone else for help."

Due to the diligence in preparing students for the workforce, programs are called upon to "showcase their talents." Each program has "host" students eager to share their accomplishments with others whether it is the plethora of trophies, banners, medals, and/or other artifacts displaying their commitment to excellence. They are committed to excellence and employ strategies that, in other schools, might only be used for

students in Advanced Placement courses.

Parents and community members are welcome as partners as they participate in various aspects of school life. Teachers have been awarded corporate and state grants for their innovative approaches to instruction. Eight high schools representing five districts feed into this school.

The goal of reshaping teaching and learning propels the school to motivate, challenge, and support divergent thinkers. Further breakdown and analysis of the data gathered indicates a need for implementing a plan for all programs to utilize an “industry review.” This analysis of data drives the need for SMART goal training opportunities.

A decision to provide access to the benchmark scores ensuring students master more skills is implemented. A shared data system is established and available for students, parents and staff members. Students use the online “Engrade” data system to identify current level of proficiency compared to the desired outcomes. The “Teacher Share” is accessible for staff members to post both summative and formative assessments.

Annual surveys that determine employee and community satisfaction and needs consistently show the school is united and dedicated to serving its community. Surveys are given to determine courses of action regarding initiatives. For example, a survey was given to parents to gather baseline satisfaction data regarding their specific student’s program.

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

- Responsibility for all students is shared by all adults.
- The community exhibits strong unity to provide an effective learning environment for students.
- Teachers integrate and build course outlines to serve the needs of all students.
- Curriculum-based measurement and frequent progress monitoring tools are used to determine when to provide additional instructional support.
- Professional development opportunities and open communication among staff members allow for the implementation and consistent use of core instruction.
- Collectively, the teachers and administration work toward creating an accountability system that ensures students will thrive when they meet the challenges awaiting them in the global economy of the new century.

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

- Identify an area for student academic achievement improvement, write a SMART goal, implement and progress monitor interventions during a time frame, and determine effectiveness based on student data.
- Provide focused planning opportunities to develop personalized instructional blueprints using classroom data that impact instruction.
- Increase collective efficacy and shared leadership through the use of student data, research-based practices, and purposeful community to accomplish improvement.

Finding: Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology 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:

The leadership team works to provide students with a rigorous and career-oriented education and learning environment. Through interviews, the QAR team confirmed all teachers are experts in their field with required licensure and certifications, which ensures a qualified, professional staff is available to provide instruction. Job descriptions included in the employee handbook clearly state specific job requirements for teaching positions, all of which declare a need for certification and licensure.

The industry experts are knowledgeable in their content area and provide students with valuable insight to their career field and inform them of real-world expectations of the industry. During interviews with the superintendent, the team was informed that 100% percent of the seven teachers who applied for dual credit certification at Central Arizona Community College were approved, allowing their students the opportunity to earn college credit for classes taken.

The focus group with teachers brought to light that all teachers have an interest in pursuing further individualized professional growth opportunities. For example, this past year, a number of instructors completed college level coursework for advanced degrees. The school provides a number of channels for professional growth, including 10 professional development days integrated into the calendar that provide opportunities for teachers to gain instructional support from colleagues, administration, and educational consultants. Additionally, teachers attend the Association of Career and Technical Education for Arizona conference each year providing them with the chance to network with fellow educators and attend professional development workshops.

The QAR team was able to quantify through stakeholder interviews that the administration is currently planning to add more employee positions to better ensure sufficient staff is available to meet the needs of the increasing student enrollment. For example, a classified support position was recently added to support the increasing school growth and vision statement.

Interviews with teachers and students indicate funding for school resources is student-driven, providing quality products, tools, and equipment aligned with industry standards. On a tour of the campus, the QAR team observed classrooms set up for lectures and instruction along with space for students to apply what they have learned with hands-on application in classroom clinics. All in-house clinics observed appear to be comparable to real-world counterparts. One teacher commented that students work with "five star" products, tools, and equipment that are used in the real-world industry. Funding is monitored by an outside financial accounting firm. This was confirmed as the QAR team reviewed the most recent independent auditor's report for the year ending June 30, 2011.

In touring the campus, the QAR team observed that emergency response plans are posted in classrooms along with maps outlining the emergency exits and fire escape route. Expectations for student behavior are clearly stated in the parent/student handbook. Teachers are required to establish rules and procedures for their individual classrooms to ensure that students can learn in a safe, orderly environment. There is limited evidence of regularly scheduled safety drills to meet the state guidelines.

A variety of guidance services is available to students on campus. Through mock interviews and resume writing, the school's coordinator provides soft-skills training, working one-on-one with students to support employability and work maturity skills beyond high school. Students are expected to develop career plans. Students participate in local chapters of Arizona Health Occupations for Students of America (AzHOSA) and SkillsUSA Arizona, two of the Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) offered at the school. Career development opportunities are available to students through any of the 10 course offerings that provide lessons related to ADE's Career and Technical Education related workplace standards. The student development page on the website provides further resources for guidance services.

The school currently serves 26 students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Procedures for receipt and implementation of the IEPs have been established by the principal, according to the school's coordinator. During the enrollment process, the principal requests the IEP, and files the documents in a locked cabinet in the administration office. Copies of the IEP are provided to the students' instructors. Although the school works with the eight "home" schools to ensure the needs of students, there is a lack of sufficient evidence of regular communication of student behavior and academic progress.

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

- Students are provided with quality products, tools, and equipment comparable to those used in industry, giving them quality learning experiences.
- Staff development opportunities give teachers a chance to analyze assessment data for instructional decision making.
- Assessment data drive the calendar and assist instructors in identifying skills and standards that align with industry standards.
- Instructors take advantage of opportunities for cross-curricular instruction, allowing students to interact and work collaboratively with their peers in other programs

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

- Formalize procedures for lockdowns and fire drills to be sure the crisis management plan is within state statutes.
- Devise communication plans to keep "home" school stakeholders (i.e., teachers, counselors, SPED personnel) informed about individual student progress and behavior.

Finding: Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology 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 QAR team noted numerous occasions in which the stakeholders demonstrate the vision and purpose of the school. In interviews with stakeholders, a recurrent theme expressed by parents, students, and community members emphasized the principal's "open door policy." The school and its staff value the thoughts and opinions of its stakeholders. By the same token, it is evident that stakeholders are comfortable communicating their concerns to administration. One parent noted the teachers and principal are always willing to listen to concerns of parents and take quick action to address issues as they arise. The school solicits feedback from its stakeholders through the use of surveys that were reviewed by the QAR team. Results of these surveys are utilized to gain feedback from stakeholders regarding school performance.

The use of advisory committees provides balance and guides programs by including community members who are working in the various industries, increasing accountability of the programs while gaining valuable insight from experts in the field. Partnerships built through advisory committees support industry expectations to prepare students for their transition to the world of work.

Parents are welcomed on campus. They are invited by program instructors to be guest speakers in classrooms and to share their insights and knowledge of relevant career industries. Parents are encouraged to visit and utilize the services available in the on-site clinics. One teacher commented she is able to meet many of her students' parents, simply by inviting them to stop into the Hair and Nail Clinic to see the students at work. Parents often utilize services offered in the in-house clinics while getting the chance to see what their students are learning in their classes.

Parents are invited to attend annual "parent nights" and are included on electronic mailing lists for regular communication from the superintendent. While parents who were interviewed stated that they are pleased with the school, its purpose, and its contribution to the community, they did express concern that the general public in and around town are not fully aware of all the school has to offer. The parents and students who were interviewed during the QAR visits are the institute's greatest proponents and have the potential to serve as respected representatives of any future marketing plan established by the school.

The enrollment process at the school involves a thorough screening process that outlines the expectations for students. These expectations are clearly stated in the parent/student handbooks and set high standards for the academic progress and classroom behavior of all students. The institute lists eight performance goals on its web page, which outlines school-wide ambitions for continuous improvement.

Student achievement is celebrated on campus, in the media, and at regular board meetings. Students of the month are selected and presented awards at board meetings. The website offers information to the community through archives of newsletters, newspaper articles about the school, and board meeting dates, agendas, and minutes. It also boasts a number of student accomplishments along with performance results by program on the 2011 State Technical Skills Assessment. The school utilizes the electronic marquee to honor student achievement. The day of the QAR team visit, the marquee read, "Congratulations to Med Assistant II Class - 93% average on 2nd quarter benchmarks." Additionally, the school has established a

working relationship with a local daily newspaper, The Casa Grande Dispatcher, that allows them to communicate news quickly and effectively to community.

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

- Community relations through service learning and in-house clinics help gain "regular clientele" and promote parental involvement.
- The staff has built rapport with its stakeholders, gaining the support of parents, industry leaders, and members of the community.
- The school proudly celebrates student successes with recognition on campus, on the website, and in local newspapers.

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

- Organize a formal team of parents and students to help better educate the community of the school's vision and to assist in recruiting and marketing efforts.

Finding: Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

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

The creation of a strategic plan within the past two years with representational input of most of the stakeholder groups is evident. Through interviews and review of documents, it is clear there was a February 2011 stakeholder meeting to review the strategic plan and "to gather input concerning employability needs," to support the mission. The administrative stakeholders further noted, "Each spring the governing board, advisory committees, and cabinet work with the superintendent to develop a plan for the following year." There is evidence of this; however, there was little evidence of an action plan with SMART goals.

Review of documents and interviews with stakeholders indicate a process is in place to evaluate and determine the notion of continuous improvement. Student surveys, for example, have been administered over multiple years. Ninety-two percent of the students last year indicated they "had opportunities to explore my career." This is a key mission of the school and affirms the impact of the school and the programs. The QAR team affirmed the major components of the strategic plan align with the vision and mission. The first goal noted on the District Annual Plan for the 2011- 2012 school year document states, "Establish a working environment conducive to innovate career and technology education delivery systems and continuous quality improvement." There is a purposeful intent to embrace continuous improvement.

Successes are communicated to stakeholders using various media and celebratory means. There is little evidence of reporting the results of improvement efforts in a systematic manner to a broad scope of the

community. Although professional development opportunities are provided on a regular basis, there was little evidence of an annual plan based on goals, data, and needs assessments.

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

- The school and district have the foundation of a continuous improvement process in place.
- Established survey and advisory committees systematically collect input regarding improvement efforts.

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

- Develop a specific, aligned professional development plan that supports the SMART goals.
- Report improvement efforts and celebrations in a systematic manner to maximize awareness of the successes.
- Generate a parent stakeholder "quarterly" to expand the efforts of gathering input for the purposes of improvement and of creating awareness.

Finding: Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology 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-AZ accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Dr. Connie Harris, Chair/Lead Evaluator (Arizona State University)
- Ms. Delia Ann V. Flores, Team Member (Apache Junction High School)
- Mrs. Cherryl Paul, Team Member (Deer Valley Unified Dist No 97)

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.