Oral Exit Report
Quality Assurance Review Team

District Accreditation

Abbeville, South Carolina

- **The capacity of a school system to address three major elements. As such, a school system must:**
  - Meet standards for accreditation;
  - Demonstrate a systemic and continuous process of improvement; and
  - Implement methods that provide for quality assurance.

Role and Responsibilities
Quality Assurance Review

- **Assess the capacity of the system to meet the standards;**

- **Assess the efficacy and impact of the improvement process;**

- **Assess the effectiveness of the system's methods for quality assurance;**

- **Identify strengths of the system deserving of commendation; and**

- **Develop recommendations which are designed to help strengthen the school system.**

Procedures Followed
Quality Assurance Review

- **The Quality Assurance Review Team**
  - Reviewed documentation provided by the school system;
  - Developed points of inquiry for the on-site review;
  - Established, in collaboration with district personnel, a schedule of activities and interactions that would provide for significant stakeholder involvement;
  - Conducted interviews of a representative set of stakeholders throughout the district; and
  - Engaged in professional deliberations as a team to consider the capacity of the school system to meet the requirements for district accreditation.

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Interviews with Stakeholders

- **During the on-site Quality Assurance Review, team members interviewed:**
  - The Superintendent of Schools
  - 7 members of the Board of Education
  - The 7 members of central office staff
  - 29 School-level administrators
  - 59 Teachers, Counselors, Media staff
  - 28 Students
  - 23 Parents
  - 17 Business partners/ Community members
  - 6 Others (SRO, Caf. Mgr.,Secretary, Teacher assistants)
  - 177 **TOTAL**

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Evidential Process

- **In considering the evidence as provided through data, documentation, observation, and dialogue, the Quality Assurance Team**
  - Sought a district perspective;
  - Pursued evidence that could be correlated through multiple sources;
  - Examined the context and capacity of the school system in relation to its vision, mission, and beliefs; and
  - Applied the criteria for accreditation.

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Summary of our Observations

- **Achievements…recent accomplishments achieved by the school district.**

- **Strengths…conditions that exist which benefit the school district.**

- **Commendations…professional commendations by the Quality Assurance Review Team.**

- **Limitations…conditions that exist which are potential barriers.**

- **Challenges…opportunities that the district may seek to address for further improvement.**

- **Recommendations…professional recommendations by the Quality Assurance Review Team.**

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Accomplishments

- **Development of Data Teams**
- **Introducing MAP Testing**
- **Realignment of Resources**
- **Strong Community Support**
- **No Schools in School Improvement**
- **100% Highly Qualified Teachers**
- **SC 5th Best Completion Rate in Adult Education**
- **95.5% Attendance Rate**
- **Pursuing Participation in High Schools That Work**
- **Increase in Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards**

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Commendations

The Quality Assurance Review Team commends Abbeville County School District for:

- **Leadership with a Vision**

- **Initiation of Systemic Change for Improvement**

- **Using MAP Testing to Improve Instruction**

- **Establishing Data Teams to Drive Instruction**

- **A Positive Relationship between Central Office and the Board of Trustees**

- **Maintaining a Focus on Instruction with Reduced Resources**

- **Effective and Timely Communication Between, and Among all Stakeholders**

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Commendations (cont.)

- **5K-Grade 8 Uniform Defined Curriculum**

- **A Commitment to 21st Century Technology**

- **Centralized Purchasing System**

- **Meeting Perkins' Goals for 5 years at Career Center**

- **Alignment of School Calendar with WPEC**

- **Teacher Assistant-to-Teacher Program**

- **Maintenance and Cleanliness of Facilities and Campuses**

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Challenges/Limitations

- **Dealing with Declining Enrollment**
- **Involving all Stakeholders in the School Improvement Process**
- **Safeguarding Necessary Services and Programs Impacted Due to Declining Enrollment and the Loss of Funds**
- **Using Analysis of Assessment Results Effectively**
- **Providing Equitable Course/Program Offerings at all Schools Throughout the District**
- **Closing the Achievement Gap Between Sub-groups**

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Challenges/Limitations (Cont.)

- **Working with a Limited Data History**
- **Expanding Community/School/Business Partnerships in a Small, Rural Community**
- **Attracting and Retaining Diverse and Highly Qualified Personnel Throughout the District**
- **Increasing Parental Involvement at all Levels**

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Recommendations

- **Provide Comprehensive Professional Development in the School Improvement Planning Process**

- **Implement Written Measurable Strategies at the School Level to Monitor Effectiveness of Improvement Plans as They Impact Student Achievement**

- **Expand Defined Curriculum to Include Subject Areas Taught in Grades 9-12**

- **Develop Plans to Address Issues of Declining Enrollment and Equity in Course Offering and Programs**

Next Steps

- **A written report of our findings and observations will be drafted and sent to the Superintendent of Schools within 30 days.**

- **After receipt of the report, the district is expected to**
  - Review and communicate the findings and observations contained in the report;
  - Initiate steps to address the recommendations in the report;
  - Continue to monitor accreditation requirements for the system and its schools;
  - Monitor the execution and impact of strategies for improvement; and
  - Continue to engage methods that provide for quality assurance.

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Final Recommendation

- **The Quality Assurance Review Team recommends, to the SACS CASI Board of Directors that the Abbeville County Schools be awarded district accreditation as a quality school system.**

- **Once approved, the district and all its schools are thereby accredited.**

Final Thoughts

- **On behalf of the Quality Assurance Team, I extend:**

    – Our appreciation for your hospitality, support, and professionalism;

    – Our respect and acknowledgement of the quality of the school district; and

    – Our congratulations for achieving district accreditation as a quality system.

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…helping schools and school systems improve student learning through accreditation