

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Rainbow Elementary School**

Rainbow Elementary School
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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 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 Department of Defense (NCA-CASI-DODEA), a division of AdvancED, visited the Rainbow Elementary School in Ansbach, null, Germany on 02/14/2011 - 02/17/2011.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 1 member of the administrative team, 52 students, 24 parents, and 27 teachers. In addition, School Leadership Team, Base Commander and Support Staff 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.

- **Rainbow Elementary School focuses on the needs of each student and has created a culture of caring that is the foundation of a strong educational program.**

Students, parents, and staff indicate that a student-centered culture is present at the school. Parents are appreciative of the individual attention students receive from staff, especially during critical times such as deployments. Parents recognize the benefit of an open-door policy with all staff and report frequent contacts made by staff to update them regarding student progress. Students indicate they could always receive help from teachers when needed. Students like their teachers and are happy and cheerful throughout the school day. Staff members share expertise as they work collegially in school improvement efforts. There is a positive working relationship between school staff and base command. A "family" atmosphere is pervasive at the school with all stakeholders sharing in the learning process.

A school climate represents the beliefs and values of the school staff and is the foundation for all activities within a school. Students thrive in a positive school climate and feel safe to challenge themselves to excel academically and socially. A positive school climate supports student achievement in learning, thinking, and life skills.

- **Staff members effectively utilize technology to promote student learning, to facilitate staff collaboration, and to collect and report student performance data.**

Staff members utilize Blackboard to house all school improvement data and information. Through the use of a shared folder, teachers may access timely student assessment information as well as professional development materials aligned to the school improvement goals. Parents have immediate access to student performance data through the GradeSpeed program. Teachers integrate the use of technology in learning activities, and students have access to technology resources within the classrooms.

Utilization of technology resources enables greater analysis and sharing of student achievement data which is essential to the development of a systematic and systemic school improvement process. Students learn real-world technology application skills which enhance their learning and prepare them for a successful transition to higher grades.

- **Significant human, material, and fiscal resources are available within the school which support a curriculum that enables students to achieve high expectations and the mission and vision of the school.**

The school has a highly qualified and dedicated staff who are committed to the academic and social success of all students. The school provides for special education services, gifted and talented programs, and extra-curricular club activities. Resources within the school and community are effectively utilized to develop a learning community focused on achievement of the school mission and vision. Stakeholders are proud and supportive of the school and are extensively involved in volunteer activities and the school improvement process. The school has formal and informal processes whereby each student is well known to staff members and is supported in all school activities.

Resources and support systems are vital to providing a complete educational program focused on student academic and social success. Stakeholders play an important role as support systems for the total educational program of the school. These systems provide the means to assist students with individual needs and ensure equity of opportunity for all students.

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.

- **Define and implement an on-going process for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of aggregate and disaggregated data for each of the assessments as identified in the school comprehensive assessment system.**

Student achievement data have been collected and compiled by the school improvement team; however, the data have not been consistently analyzed and disaggregated to provide a thorough understanding of individual student or school achievement. Interventions such as nonlinguistic representation have been implemented without alignment to specific student performance results. The data currently collected do not provide a complete picture of student achievement or adequate information from which to identify interventions to impact all students.

Student performance data provide the basis for all school improvement efforts. A comprehensive assessment system provides the school with the information from which to develop measurable performance outcomes, evaluate curriculum and instruction, and implement interventions to meet individual student needs.

- **Define and articulate measurable performance outcomes for student learning to be included in learning objectives for each school improvement goal. Disaggregate assessment data by subgroups and fully analyze student performance data for all grade levels for formative and summative assessments. Include learning objectives and interventions for subgroups which have been identified by data analysis.**

While the school documents and analyzes multiple assessments with which to measure student progress, there is little evidence to indicate a clear alignment between the learning objectives and student performance data. Data are not disaggregated and subgroups have not been identified in learning objectives. Learning objectives are broad and not specific to the needs of all students.

Measurable performance outcomes written after careful analysis of the data will allow the school to determine the success of interventions and instructional methods. This is essential to achieving data-driven school improvement.

- **Align instructional strategies to the school performance outcomes and student learning objectives. Monitor and report student progress through formative and interim assessments. Provide formative feedback to students to enable student empowerment in the learning process.**

Little evidence was found by the team to document that a process is in place to align student performance data to instructional decisions. Feedback to students was inconsistent and not directly related to school improvement goals. Best-practice interventions were implemented, but it is unclear if the interventions align to student learning needs. Teachers reported that some intervention strategies were not addressed in all classes. Professional development activities were not consistent with school improvement goals.

Alignment of assessment, curriculum, and instructional strategies is integral to an effective school improvement process. Instructional strategies should be consistently applied in all classrooms and should address the measurable learning objectives. Students must be engaged and metacognitive as they work to achieve specific learning objectives.

- **Disseminate all student performance data, trend data, and overall school achievement data to students and stakeholders.**

Students and stakeholders stated that they are unclear about some student performance data. They are aware of individual grades and test results; but they are unaware of the overall picture of student performance at the school, trend data across the years, and comparability of data with other district schools.

Effective school improvement includes the involvement of all stakeholders. An understanding of school performance data will enable greater stakeholder involvement in the improvement process and successful completion of the school mission and vision.

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-DODEA 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 Rainbow Elementary School demonstrates that it meets the seven standards for accreditation. The findings of the Quality Assurance Review Team regarding the standards for accreditation are summarized on the following pages.

Standard 1. Vision and Purpose

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

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

Rainbow Elementary School (RES) shares its mission “to provide an exemplary education that inspires and prepares all Department of Defense Educational Activity (DoDEA) students for success in a dynamic, global environment” with all of the schools operated by the DoDEA. The faculty and staff have wholeheartedly embraced this mission and use it to guide the school’s efforts as well as to define a vision statement.

Teachers affirm the annual review of the school vision statement "Growth: demonstrate the ability to think creatively and to solve problems, Opportunity: expand personal, social, and intellectual achievement, Learning: exhibit ability to adapt to future changes and challenges, Development: create a desire for continued study as a life-long learner (GOLD)." Supporting evidence confirms that a process is in place to review the validity of the school’s vision statement. This process includes the examination and discussion of assessment data by school staff as well as members of the community. Furthermore, the mission and vision statements are communicated through the parent/student handbook, school and classroom newsletters, as well as the school website. Parents acknowledge knowing the school’s mission and vision statement. However, some parents state that they do not understand the connections between the vision statement, classroom instruction, and student learning.

It is evident that the students and staff are committed to the mission and vision statements of the school. The mission and vision statements are prominently posted throughout the facility and are on almost all official documents circulating within the school. Some teachers stated that everything they did “was directly linked to the mission and vision statements.”

The administrators and staff provide students the opportunity to connect with the school’s vision statement through the development of a mnemonic device (cadence), which is customary within its military community. When students were interviewed, most of the older students in grades 4--6 could recite the motto by memory and could make personal connections to it; however, younger children struggled reciting and making connections to the school’s vision.

The school developed its profile in 2006 and updated it in 2010--2011 to reflect new information pertaining to student performance and school demographics. Data gleaned from the 2005 Terra Nova (TN) language arts subtest suggested a student weakness in the area of writing resulting in the staff decision to maintain a writing improvement goal, which had been in place for several years. The staff determined by means of research that 6+1 Writing Traits would be the best intervention to improve student

writing. The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) team observed copious examples of teachers and students using 6+1 Writing Trait rubric in instruction as well as assessment.

Upon the conclusion of the 2005 accreditation process, it was determined that the school needed to adopt an additional school goal. In examining Terra Nova data, the staff determined that math communication was an area which needed to be improved. At that time, problem solving was determined to be the intervention which would address the area of concern. Further examination by the staff and community during the 2009 school year (SY) determined that the problem solving intervention had not positively impacted student learning. Therefore, it was determined that math communication would best be served through nonlinguistic representation strategies such as graphic organizers, physical models, mental pictures, pictographs, and kinesthetic activity. The team reviewed many artifacts which demonstrated the use of this intervention.

The QAR team witnessed evidence of most teachers using both goal interventions in their respective classrooms. Additionally, the team observed during visits to each classroom that the mission, vision, and school goals guided classroom instruction.

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

- The mission and vision statements are prominently displayed throughout the school and in every classroom.
- Teachers are committed to the mission and the use of the vision statement to guide instruction.
- The vision statement is consistent with the military culture which the school serves.

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

- Revisit the vision statement each year to ensure that it represents the current focus of all stakeholder groups and that the vision is supported by school decisions articulated in the School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- Ensure that a variety of community members have continuous input into the creation, application, and revision of the vision statement when appropriate.

Finding: Rainbow Elementary 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:

As evidenced by operation manuals, published policies, and interviews with staff, students, and stakeholders, the school has established policies and procedures for the effective operation of the school. Administration, staff, and stakeholders share responsibility in promoting the school's vision and SIP.

The focus of the school leadership and governance team revolves around student learning, meeting the expectations of stakeholders, developing a safe and secure environment consistent with the needs of a military community, and continuous school improvement. Through interviews, the QAR team found that all participants interviewed described the school's leadership team as being caring, consistent, and supportive. The members of the school improvement team direct school improvement initiatives including the development of the SIP and supporting documentation. The school administrator is highly visible throughout the building. The school administrator fosters the development of teacher leaders, who are empowered to work collegially with all staff to develop and implement school improvement initiatives. Some teachers and parents commented that a more direct leadership role should be considered by the school administrator.

Professional development meetings are held weekly to focus on school improvement activities. Full staff and school improvement leadership team members review student data and report achievement results. Some staff members receive extra-duty salaries for school improvement responsibilities as per the approved extra-duty salary schedule. Minutes and agendas for most of these meetings are published and professional development calendars are created for some committees. Staff members recognize that professional development activities are somewhat limited and, therefore, work collegially to share knowledge and skills with staff members. Staff members actively search for online courses to align with school goals. The district office provides assistance in professional development activities aligned to the professional development plan. While weekly meetings focus on the school improvement goals of writing and problem solving, there is inconsistent evidence that the school leadership team has implemented the next step recommendations detailed in the 2006 AdvancED QAR report.

Stakeholders are encouraged to participate in the school improvement process. School leadership encourages students to be active through the Student Council and School Site Council. Parents provide important input to school improvement decisions through the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) and School Site Council. Parents support school activities and are highly visible at the school, assisting in school projects and activities. Extra-curricular activities such as the yearly barbeque are organized in a collaborative manner with school personnel, base command, and parents. Yearly customer satisfaction surveys are administered for students and parents. Parents indicated that they would like to have a greater role in reviewing the school vision and in understanding student performance data.

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

- Staff members accept the responsibility to guide the process of continuous improvement. Given the changes in staff and leadership and the high deployment rate of parents, the focus on student achievement has been maintained over time. The RES community is committed to the children and

their academic and social success.

- The strong culture of caring and collaboration developed by the school staff fosters a safety and security among the entire student body.

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

- Include a comprehensive professional development calendar, which aligns all activities with the vision and purpose of the school.
- Develop and implement processes to provide more effective planning for all committees and greater feedback to staff and stakeholders regarding school improvement efforts.
- Ensure the completion of required actions provided in the QAR report.

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

Standard 3. Teaching and Learning

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

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

The school implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Classroom observations indicated that DoDEA standards, the DoDEA mission, the school vision, and goals are posted in every classroom and throughout the hallways. Teachers report and artifacts support school-wide collaboration on rubric development and student projects. This vertical and horizontal articulation addresses student expectations on local assessments. During interviews, students discussed their knowledge and understanding of school improvement goals and intervention strategies. Students were not able to show understanding of curriculum expectations. Student work samples displayed throughout the hallways and classrooms provide evidence of the staff's commitment to the school improvement process and DoDEA standards.

Classroom observations and stakeholder interviews reflect the significance and influence of a positive and secure learning environment for the students and their families. The high level of commitment and dedication by the staff is integral in fostering this commendable environment. Staff members often volunteer personal time and funds to ensure that all students feel welcome and enjoy a stable learning environment when many are impacted by family member deployments and mission demands.

School improvement goals drive the process in all classrooms. Each classroom teacher collects a data binder recording all assessments given and student performance. Completed rubrics and work samples are placed in the binders, as well as teacher reflection sheets. Some teachers also include notes from student conferences. However, this is not a standard practice among all classroom teachers. Teachers have been given explicit instructions on when to administer assessments and what data need to be collected. There is also evidence available on when the data are to be shared. However, it is not clear as to what the next steps will be once the data have been collected and analyzed.

Teachers report the administration supports the school improvement goals and processes. Staff members state there is frequent informal communication with administration on performance in regards to the goals, but there is little evidence of a specific process whereby the administrator provides individual feedback to staff regarding school improvement goals. A formal mentoring system to explain the school improvement process and goals to new staff would be beneficial.

The school has gathered and analyzed data for grades 3--6 using the results from Terra Nova Edition 3 and various local assessments. Local assessment data have been gathered for kindergarten (K)--6 grades from math local assessments. However, there is a lack of supporting evidence that this has occurred at the pre-school and Sure Start level in both goal areas and in kindergarten for the writing goal. Artifacts support that data are used to identify areas of student need. The school calendar reflects formal staff member collaboration time dedicated to school improvement each Monday of the month. Specific to the writing goal, the Writing Process and Writer's Workshop are utilized to develop students' writing skills as evaluated by a teacher-developed rubric based on the 6 + 1 Writing Traits. However, with respect to the mathematics goal, instructional strategies and interventions based on best practices were not observed. Student products that reflect the use of nonlinguistic representation at all grade levels are displayed throughout the school. An evaluative rubric is used to evaluate student performance on math prompts administered three times a year. However, the use of data and research to make curricular and instructional decisions is not documented in teacher records, nor is it evident that a school-wide process is in place to analyze data at grade level or school-wide performance towards the goals of writing or mathematics.

There is evidence of a system in place to provide teachers with assistance to meet the needs of all students. The school has school support committees and counseling services in place to assist students who are struggling. Special education students are provided with the opportunity to participate in all aspects of school programs and are supported as mandated with co-teaching from specialists or paraprofessionals. There is also a gifted education (GE) teacher available to support gifted students and classroom teachers. Artifacts such as Individualized Education Plans (IEP), meeting minutes, and lesson plans document this process.

The use of technology is evident throughout the school. Every classroom has an electronic whiteboard. Elmo projectors are available for classroom use, and there are two sets of Computers on Wheels (COWS) shared throughout the building. There is evidence of technology collaboration between classroom teachers and the information specialist. Students in the upper grades use Gaggles to communicate with pen pals, students, teachers, and parents down range. A technology needs assessment is conducted, but there is no corroborating evidence of alignment between the assessment and professional development planning to improve best practice technology integration.

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

- A positive and secure learning environment positively impacts student learning and stakeholder involvement in the school.
- Collaboration occurs school wide to develop common rubrics to assess student progress to meet school improvement goals.
- An organized process to collect student performance data has been developed by the school improvement team.
- Examples of student work showcasing the use of interventions are displayed throughout the school.

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

- Utilize staff expertise to support collegial professional development opportunities in best practice instruction aligned to school improvement goals.
- Design a consistent and formalized method to provide individual student feedback to ensure student involvement in the learning process.
- Schedule professional development opportunities to provide staff with greater expertise in the utilization of assessment data to support the school improvement process.
- Administer a technology needs assessment and develop a technology vision statement aligned with the school's vision.

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

Standard 4. Documenting and Using Results

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

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

The school utilizes a comprehensive assessment system which is curriculum based. A battery of summative and formative assessments are administered including Terra Nova Multiple Assessments, 3rd Edition, Accelerated Reader, Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (STAR) Reading, STAR Early Literacy, Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), curriculum-embedded, end-of-unit assessments, and local assessments. Teacher-developed local assessments are administered to collect grade level and student data as well as to indicate overall trends in student growth.

A student assessment plan is developed to address the school improvement goals in writing and mathematics as described in the school profile. The Terra Nova Multiple Assessments, 3rd Edition (revised version in 2008--2009), is administered annually in March to measure growth of students in grades 3--6 in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. In the school profile, median scores and quartiles are reported in language arts, mathematics and percent distribution (quartiles) data. In language arts, until 2009--2010, curriculum-based assessments from Literacy Place were administered to students five times annually. These assessments were graded by teachers for their own students using assessment guidelines that addressed the particular mode of writing that was the subject of the unit being studied. In 2010--2011, the Reading Streets curriculum was adopted, which includes assessments that are administered four times per year. The 6+1 Writing Traits (Culham, 2005) is used as the basis for an analytical rubric to guide evaluation of student writing on each of three teacher-developed writing prompts. Prompts are administered in the fall, mid-year, and spring and are scored by teachers. The teacher-developed scoring rubric, based on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) for each of the writing traits, is utilized through two or three rounds of scoring to ensure inter-scorer reliability. Anchor papers are utilized to support reliable scoring at each of the score points for each of the traits. In mathematics, in addition to the Terra Nova Multiple Assessments median and quartile scores, an end-of-year, curriculum-based test from McMillan-McGraw Hill is administered as a pre-test. This test is given in the fall and again at the end of the school year in grades K-- 5, and the Glencoe-McGraw Hill end-of-year test is administered in grade 6. Local assessments include the administration of a mathematics prompt in grades K--6 three times a year, which is scored using the teacher-developed rubric for nonlinguistic

representation. As described by teachers, two developmentally appropriate rubrics are used to evaluate student performance for grades K--2 and for grades 3--5. Each rubric has a score point range of 0 (lowest) to 4 (highest). Exemplars have not been identified for individual score points for each dimension of the scoring rubric.

Following the North Central Association (NCA) visit in 2006, next steps were identified in the SIP to include the review, triangulation, and disaggregation of the last three years of data to identify specific subgroups within the population upon which to focus interventions and then select goals. An assessment plan was created to measure student growth in writing and mathematics from SY 2006--2007 through SY 2010--2011. However, the recommended next steps regarding data are not documented as having been completed.

The most recent Continuous School Improvement (CSI) Blueprint (SY 2010--2011) for both writing and mathematics includes the DoDEA mission statement, RES vision statement, two Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely (SMART) goals (writing and mathematics), and system-wide common and local assessments selected to measure student achievement in each goal area. Documentation in the school profile and additional data provided by the chairperson of the School Improvement Leadership Team (SILT) reflect assessments and data collection consistent with the blueprint. Intervention and targeted subgroups are identified. However, the identified subgroups are determined based on the score on local assessments or percentile ranking on the Terra Nova 3rd Edition and are not indicated by subgroups related to gender, race/ethnicity, IEP or English as a Second Language (ESL). Tasks/Action Steps and interventions are identified. Specific strategies to elaborate on the implementation of instructional strategies related to the interventions, as well as for specific subgroups, are not fully provided. For example, the intervention identified in the area of writing is "Individual Traits" and in mathematics is "Nonlinguistic Representation." When interviewed, limited information was reported by teachers and the SILT relative to the specific instructional strategies that are utilized to increase student achievement. Evidence collection is specified (e.g., collection of writing samples, writing score sheets for each prompt, writing and math prompt reflection sheets); but these are not systematically reported by teachers when reviewing classroom-level documentation. Next steps include a menu of ideas for adjusting instruction. Supporting research is cited in the blueprint. Planned and sustained professional development to ensure the use of best-practices and current research to systematically implement interventions is not documented.

Three data collection points are described for language arts. The first data point is derived from an analysis of the median scores and percent change distribution scores by quartile as measured by the Terra Nova. However, disaggregated, subgroup data (i.e., gender, race, special education, ESL, students receiving reading or math support, and gifted students) are not reported each year for all subgroups. Disaggregated, subgroup data were reported for all grades by race in language arts from SY 06--07 through SY 09--10 and were reported in a document separate from the school profile. No data is reported for kindergarten in language arts in the school profile. Median scores in language arts compare grade level performance of students in grades 3--6 for SY 06--07 through SY 09--10. With the introduction of the Terra Nova 3rd edition in SY 08--09, comparisons to data collected prior to that time are not valid. The median score dropped significantly in SY 08--09 and 09--10 in grade 3; and after initially dropping in SY 08--09, the score increased in grades 4--6 in SY 09--10. The data indicate students on average performed around the 60th percentile. Percent change in the top and lowest quartile are reported in grades 3--6 comparing SY 08--09 to SY 09--10. All four grades showed gains in the number of students in the fourth quartile. Modest gains were reported in grades 3--4, with more significant gains (8% to 13%) respectively in grade 5 and grade 6. In grade 4 and grade 5, decreases of 7% are identified in the first quartile. However, grade 3 and grade 6 show a slight increase in the percentage of students testing in the first quartile. Additional Terra Nova grade-level percent distributions (1st--4th quartile) data were provided in language arts (not contained or analyzed within the school profile) for SY

2006–2010.

The second data point indicates student performance as measured by the 6+1 Writing Rubric. Teams of teachers score three teacher-developed writing prompts in the fall and spring using age-appropriate, teacher-created analytic scoring rubrics. Anchor papers are provided to teacher scorers that demonstrate exemplars at each score point for each of the six traits of writing. A mid-year prompt is scored informally by the classroom teacher. The writing prompts change mode each year, which include persuasive, creative expository, response to literature, and personal narrative modes. Graphs display data for SY 06--07 through SY 09--10 for grades K-6 that indicate the percentage of students who score “3” or better by trait (ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions) during the spring evaluation of the writing prompts. Significant gains were evident in grade 1 for all traits. Grade 2 data show an overall increase in score points for all traits each year. The percentage of students scoring “3” points for each of the traits varies across the years in grades 3, 5, and 6, with a general decline in each trait in performance in grade 4. Some analysis is provided relative to student performance on individual traits and the assessed mode of writing. It is noted that disaggregated data by subgroups are not reported.

The third data point reports changes in student writing levels as measured by the Literacy Place writing prompts that are administered four times a year in grades 1--6. Teachers grade their own prompts using test publisher assessment guidelines. It is noted that the mode of the writing prompt did not correspond to the teacher-created writing prompts used to obtain the second data point. Three data tables are reported for SY 09--10. Table 1 shows percent change in writing levels for students who initially tested as Novice Writers. Table 2 shows percent change in writing levels for students who initially tested as Apprentice Writers. Table 3 shows the number of students (N=22) in writing levels for students who initially tested as Proficient Writers. Data for grade 6 are not displayed in any of the tables and grade 5 data are not complete in the first table. Data indicate that a high percentage of students in grades 2 and 3 who initially tested as Novice Writers did not change writing level and remained at a Novice Writer level. Grades 1, 4 and 5 showed that approximately 50% of the students increased one level to Apprentice Writers, with small increases in the percentage of students who changed two levels to Proficient Writers. Improvement of 20% of the students who initially tested as Apprentice Writers to Proficient Writers was indicated in Table 2. However, the majority of the students had no change in their writing levels and approximately 7% dropped a level to Novice Writers. Table 3 shows that the majority of the students who initially tested as Proficient Writers maintained this level of writing proficiency, with the exception of grade 2 where there was a significant number of students who dropped a level.

Three additional tables combine data from grades 1--4 (SY 08--09), grades 1-3 (SY 07--08), and grades 1--2 (SY 06--07). Data are incomplete for SY 08--09 in grades 5--6 and assessment records were not maintained for all students. Therefore, a summary of combined grades is reported.

Previous years of data from 2006--2009 reflect similar patterns as reported in SY 09-10 for students who initially tested as Novice Writers. There was a reported modest change in the number of students who initially tested as Apprentice Writers to Proficient Writers. A small number of students initially tested as Proficient Writers (N = 15). The data are reported to be “unreliable” given the small N count. It is noted that disaggregated data by subgroups are not reported for either set of tables.

A different curriculum-based writing assessment will be administered beginning in SY 10--11 taken from Reading Streets unit assessments. Thus, trend data will not be provided. Although the CSI Blueprint indicates that the new writing assessment is given three times a year, no data for the fall or winter administrations during the SY 10--11 are included in the profile.

Three data collection points are also described for mathematics in the school profile. The first data point is

derived from an analysis of the median scores and percent change distribution scores by quartile as measured by the Terra Nova. Again, disaggregated subgroup data are not reported for all school years. Disaggregated, subgroup data are reported for all grades by race only in mathematics from SY 06--07 through SY 09--10 and are provided in a document separate from the school profile. Median scores in mathematics compare grade level performance of students in grades 3--6 for SY 06--07 through SY 09--10. As in language arts, it is noted that with the introduction of the Terra Nova in 2008--2009 school year, comparisons to data collected prior to that time are not valid. The median score dropped each year consecutively in grades 3--5 between SY 06--07 and SY 08--09. Comparisons between SY 08--09 and SY 09--10 show an increase in median scores in grades 3 and 5 and a decrease in grades 4 and 6. It is noted that in SY 09--10, the Terra Nova 3rd Edition was administered. Percent change in the top and lowest quartile are reported in grades 3--6 comparing SY 08--09 to SY 09--10. Significant decreases are reported in the numbers of students scoring in the fourth quartile in grades 3 and 4. Grade 5 shows a gain of 7% and grade 6 showed a modest gain of 1%. In grades 4 and 5, decreases of 4% and 10% respectively were identified in the first quartile. However, grade 3 and grade 6 show a slight increase in the percentage of students testing in the first quartile. Additional Terra Nova grade-level percent distributions (1st--4th quartile) data are provided in mathematics, but not contained or analyzed within the school profile for SY 06--10. Analysis of all performance data from the mathematics subtest of the Terra Nova Multiple Assessments, 3rd Edition, is not provided.

The second data point in mathematics is derived from the McMillan-McGraw Hill end-of-year tests for K-5 and the Glencoe-McGraw Hill end-of-year test for grade 6. These end-of-years tests were administered as pretests in the fall and re-administered in the spring as end-of-year tests in SY 09--10 and SY 08--09. Results are reported for each year for combined grade-levels, inclusive of all assessed students, comparing the percent of students who scored in each quartile on the pre-test and the summative test. Only one example of disaggregated, subgroup data (gender) is reported and was not included in the school profile. In SY 09--10, increases in the third and fourth quartiles are indicated with decreases in the first and second quartiles. The data show a similar, positive trend as well in SY 08--09. Upon request, additional data were provided showing grade-level performance data for K--6 for SY 09--10 and SY 08--09, as well as pre-test data for each grade in the fall of SY 10--11. Evidence of data analysis was not presented.

A local assessment was administered to obtain the third data point. This assessment was introduced in the SY 09--10 following the refinement of the mathematics communication goal to emphasize nonlinguistic representation. Therefore, only one full year of data are reported. Fall data for SY 10--11 are also reported. Mathematics prompts are developed by teachers and rubrics for nonlinguistic representation are developed by teachers. The rationale and research to support the language of the descriptors at each of the 5 score points (zero to five) were not provided. Additionally, the staff report that reliability of scoring is negatively impacted by the vague language in the rubrics and lack of defined terminology. Teachers report that often the prompts do not align to the curriculum. Thus, a student's ability to demonstrate his or her knowledge of the use of nonlinguistic representation to solve problems may be negatively impacted. Further analysis compared the percent of students in grades K--6 who achieved a score point of "3" or "4" in the fall administration as compared to the spring administration. Significant growth was reported in grades 3--5. Grade 1 and grade 2 showed a decrease in the number of student earning a score point of "3" or "4." In four of the reported grades, less than 50% of the students earned a score point of "3" or "4" in the spring. Fall data for SY 10-11 indicate small percentages of student scoring "3" or "4" in the fall in all grades except in grade 1 and grade 2. Discussion of the data reflects concern that the growth may not be seen in certain grades when the assessment is administered in the spring of SY 10--11 due to the differences in how young students and older students learn to do math. However, further discussion as to why this may occur is not provided. Upon request, additional assessment data were provided, which included winter data. Evidence of data analysis was not presented.

Teacher-compiled notebooks aligned to the two school improvement goals are found in classrooms and support staff offices. Student work related to 6+1 Writing Traits and nonlinguistic representation of mathematics concepts and the respective scoring rubrics is displayed in all classrooms as documented during classroom observations. Additionally, student work is displayed in the halls as observed during walkthroughs and a tour provided by the student council. During the tour, students talked about the school profile goals and accurately described the displayed work. When interviewed, teachers report that peer-to-peer evaluation of writing is completed using the rubrics. Results of teacher evaluation of the language arts and mathematics prompts as well as related classroom work are reported to stakeholders through GradeSpeed (an online grade book), report cards, and parent/teacher conferences.

Data are presented and analyzed at monthly staff development meetings which occur on Mondays. These meetings, as documented by agendas, offer an opportunity to discuss data and collaborate to share instructional strategies. Additionally, the local language arts and mathematics assessments are scored during these monthly meetings. Less formal discussion around student performance and data occur on a frequent basis as reported by teachers. Although the administration and teaching staff are responsible for data analysis as written in the school profile, formal records of on-going data analysis are not found. Some examples of data analysis are provided. Decisions for receiving mathematics support through MathLab have been determined by the analysis of individual student data by the math support teacher. This information was also provided to the ESL and Learning Impaired (LI) teachers to inform instructional and grouping decisions. Using Data to Differentiate Instruction (UDDI) professional development was provided by the DoDEA district office. Government report cards were not included in the 2006--2011 school profile. Comparison and trend data of student performance from comparable schools to evaluate student achievement are not found.

The documentation and use of student assessment data to drive instructional decisions at the school were not well organized, complete, fully analyzed, or easily accessible.

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

- Multiple assessments are being utilized to measure student achievement of school improvement goals.
- Teachers developed content-specific and grade-appropriate scoring rubrics to informally and formally evaluate student written products.
- Increased opportunities to discuss data have been afforded to faculty through staff meetings.

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

- Disaggregate assessment data by subgroups and fully analyze student performance data for all grade levels for formative and summative assessments. Define and articulate measurable performance outcomes for student learning to be included in learning objectives for each school improvement goal. Include learning objectives and interventions for subgroups which have been identified by data analysis.
- Develop a process to ensure inter-rater reliability in scoring when using teacher-developed nonlinguistic representation scoring rubrics.
- Develop a schedule of specific writing and mathematics prompts that aligns to the teaching sequence of the curriculum at each grade level.

Finding: Rainbow Elementary School has earned the overall assessment level of "Emerging" and has not 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 school has excellent human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables all students to achieve expectations for learning. The educational composition of the 28 faculty members, which is comprised of 43% who hold master degrees and 3% who hold doctorate degrees, reflects that the members are qualified and able to fulfill their assigned roles and responsibilities. Additionally, over half of the current faculty has been teaching for more than twenty (20) years and hold multiple certifications. Recruitment and hiring procedures are consistent with DoDEA Staffing Procedures. There are ten support staff members that sustain the efforts of the faculty members to address special needs students, English Language Learners (ELL), and students who need additional academic instruction to meet individual and school-wide goals. New teachers report that they are welcomed and quickly supported. However, a formal mentoring program to transition new faculty is not in place. Departmentalization in the intermediate grades results in students being taught directly by teachers who are most experienced, knowledgeable, and talented in specific content areas.

As reported by the principal, teachers, and SILT, teachers' talents and individual strengths are promoted to fulfill assigned professional staff responsibilities and to enrich the learning environment. The ability to better utilize individual talents and strengths would be fostered by a systematic approach to provide professional development among the staff and the development and documentation of a professional training schedule. Teachers account that the school administrator is an excellent source for information relating to best practices, literature, and resources. Professional development resources are posted on the DoDEA school Blackboard data site.

In relation to the school-wide goals of writing and mathematics, recent external professional development opportunities have been provided in the academic discipline of writing. Teachers and support staff report that professional development was provided in implementing Writer's Workshop and teaching of the Writing Process during the 2008--2009 school year. Training has been provided on flexible grouping, UDDI, use of software programs, Terra Nova, hands-on modeling, and co-teaching techniques. Electronic distribution of professional articles related to best practices and current research, including documents from the National Teachers Council on Mathematics (NCTM), is consistently occurring as evidenced by email correspondence and Blackboard postings. A number of collaborative projects among staff have been implemented to enhance student learning, and new curriculum has been provided by DoDEA to continue to achieve school improvement goals. The adoption of Reading Street Elements of Literature occurred in the fall of 2010. Direct professional development to inform teacher instructional strategies related to nonlinguistic representation has not occurred.

The school staff has a shared responsibility in promoting student welfare and learning. For example, the school nurse delivers health instructional units, which incorporate activities related to the school-wide academic goals of the 6+1 Writing Traits and nonlinguistic representation. Monthly bulletin boards display student work aligned to the school goals.

All teachers are required to develop a Professional Growth Plan in a three-year cycle. Goals for students and personal professional goals are identified along with an action plan to describe the process that will be

used to meet the specified goals. Necessary resources and a timeline are also defined in each staff member's plan. This plan is shared with the principal in the fall and evaluated in the spring requiring signatures by both the educator and the supervisor. Walkthroughs, based on an observation protocol, are conducted by the principal. It was reported by teachers that the majority of the summative evaluations occur near the end of the school year.

Teachers and support staff interviews were conducted with 33 persons. They report having adequate resources, supplies, materials and furniture to support teaching and learning. Funds are allocated on a per pupil basis from a central fund. The funding model is discussed with the faculty and staff to determine educational priorities. The resource technician is responsible for ordering supplies and coordination of orders with the faculty in the beginning of the school year. Proof of Quarterly Status of Funds Details Report and records of purchased resources are available. The school maintains procedures as prescribed by DoDEA with regard to annual budget and expenditure of funds.

When interviewed, students report that the school is safe; and if a student needs help in any way, someone is always there to provide assistance and guidance. This is consistent with teachers reporting that a major responsibility is ensuring that all students are emotionally supported and that their individual needs are met. As documented, regular school inspections include fire, water, structural, safety and health, and hazard to ensure that the building is operating without risk to students and faculty. Drills are conducted regularly to practice student expectations during emergency situation should they arise. A school-level team monitors the school environment and distributes a Safe Schools Newsletter published by DoDEA. On file at the school is an Antiterrorism & Multi-Hazard Plan.

Consistent with the DoDEA mission, the faculty and staff of RES prepare students for the future by focusing on 21st Century Skills, including thinking creatively, achieving personal goals, and cultivating a love of life-long learning. This is achieved through an array of programs, technical support, activities, and dedicated support services, programs and personnel. This extensive lists includes: Math Olympiad, SureStart, Pre-School Children Development (PSCD), Read 180, MathLab, GradeSpeed, a Student Support Team (SST), Instruction Support Service (ISS), a gifted education teacher, a math coach, an information specialist, a librarian, a music teacher, an art teacher, a nurse, Host Nation Program teacher, an ESL teacher, a teacher of the learning impaired, a speech and language pathologist, four school support specialists, kindergarten paraprofessionals, education aides, Sure Start paraprofessionals, school psychologist, guidance counselor, crisis management, resource manager, supply technician, school clerical, Smartboards, two computer labs, classroom computers, after school activities, including chess and cultural diversity clubs, and school-wide events such as book fairs and readers assemblies. Teachers report that they receive extra-duty pay to implement many diverse programs. As reported by the faculty, changes in DoDEA Directors and school improvement processes have challenged the faculty and staff of Rainbow Elementary to consistently implement curriculum and processes that support the acquisition of the 21st Century Skills by the student population.

A network of appropriate support services is in place at the school. These include the PSCD teacher and aides, SureStart teacher and aides, special education teacher and aides, speech and language pathologist, instructional service support, MathLab, ESL teacher, principal, and the school counselor. Teachers report that the system of support services, which is delivered both inclusively and through direct services, is accessible and support student learning. Instruction and areas of focus are aligned to the school improvement goals. The school counselor is an integral part of transitioning new students to RES and ensuring that the appropriate services are provided based on the student and parent interview and records. The learning impaired teacher's instructional goals align primarily to the IEP goals and objectives, which may support the school improvement goals. A learning impaired aide and learning impaired Student

Instructional Support (SIS) aide are employed to provide direct service in the general education setting.

Several faculty members who provide academic support reported how they address the school-wide goals and individual student learning. The speech and language pathologist logs therapy sessions aligned to IEP. Instruction is provided in student groups no larger than three. Foci of the lessons are tied to the school goals. For example, vocabulary development and articulation are related to the 6 + 1 Writing Traits. Services provided by the ESL teacher also support the school goals. For example, the ESL teacher discusses the three mathematics prompts with ESL students to ensure that they understand the language and expectation of the prompts. The PSCD teacher has student-focused files of resources. Flexible support is provided to parents through multiple forms of contact. Parents are required to contribute sixty (60) working hours a year to support their children in the program. The PSCD teachers provided frequent collaboration with medical doctors, parents, and other teachers regarding the current needs of students.

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

- A Professional Learning Community (PLC), which relies on the aptitudes, talents, and strengths of the teachers, is established and directs learning activities and opportunities for all students.
- The support services are an integral part of teaching and learning across all faculty, staff, and learning environments.
- The necessary supplies and materials are available to ensure that curriculum can be delivered.

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

- Develop and implement a sustained professional development program to be attended by all appropriate staff members, which is aligned to the identified interventions to promote goal-specific, academic achievement.
- Administer a faculty needs survey in order to develop a multiple-year professional development plan to utilize internal and external expertise in support of the SIP.
- Generate a plan for mentoring new teachers who join the school staff.

Finding: Rainbow Elementary School has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" 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:

Rainbow Elementary has a rich relationship within the community of stakeholders. The school enjoys the exclusive support of the 412th Aviation Support Battalion, which serves to supplement both the logistical and academic needs of the school. New parents are given a tour of the facilities during which they are informed of DoDEA standards and school expectations. Furthermore, events outside the school day are co-sponsored by school staff, command, and community stakeholders.

As a result of the relative small community, the school utilizes both formal and informal methods of communication with their stakeholders. Teachers are proud of the fact that they can be, and are

often, contacted by parents during many community events. The Customer Satisfaction Survey results are published and made available to all. Weekly newsletters, classroom reports, and GradeSpeed are used to communicate student progress to parents. Gaggles accounts are set up for students to communicate with peers, teachers, and parents. The counselor plays an essential role in listening and in channeling communication between the school and community. In his position, he serves as a role model within the entire school community.

The school staff regularly recruits the aid of all stakeholders to enhance the work of the school. The PTSA is very active and supports the school in a variety of ways. PTSA and community members regularly volunteer to read to students and organize school and community activities. The school also benefits from the Commander's Council of Readers, which promotes the importance of reading. The school strives to acknowledge and celebrate the sacrifices made by its stakeholders which foster a strong bond within the community. Evidence supports the availability of the school advisory council information. However, parents state that this information is not widely disseminated which limits their opportunity to provide input to the council.

Parents stated that they are well aware of their children's individual student learning goals. Progress reports, report cards, and parent teacher conferences are in place to convey student progress. However, it was reported that the flow and amount of information provided are based on individual teachers and some faculty members are stronger in this area than others.

Stakeholders commend the teachers for providing frequent communication. Parents state that GradeSpeed is a vital tool, which allows them to monitor their child's progress from across the globe as well as from home. Information regarding student performance is delivered through a number of media such as Thursday folders, weekly progress reports, Terra Nova reports, Accelerated Reader reports, and quarterly report cards.

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

- Base Command participates in school activities to ensure support for the mission and vision of the school.
- The Commander's Council of Readers encourages student progress toward reading goals.
- Military Units are assigned to sponsor the school in both academic and logistic ways.
- The PTSA is highly involved in the achievement of the mission and vision of the school.

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

- Ensure representation from community stakeholder groups on all school committees and inclusion in the review of the school vision.
- Ensure consistent, frequent communication to stakeholders regarding school-wide events and student progress.

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

Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

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

The school implements a continuous school improvement process that is integral to the teaching and learning processes of the school. All staff members participate on school committees; these committees are assigned a specific task aligned to the overall SIP. Standing committees include the SILT, AdvancED Standard Committees, School Improvement Goal Committees, School Advisory Council, and grade level committees. Additional committees are created as needed to address new issues or problems in the school. School committees meet on Monday of each week to share peer-to-peer best practices, report SILT committee recommendations, review progress on AdvancED standard areas, and provide general staff information. While all staff members serve on committees, leadership is not shared equally among all staff.

Some committees establish an action plan for the year's work indicating the work to be accomplished and persons responsible. An action plan detailing the activities, responsibilities, and expected outcomes of all committees has not been developed. The building administrator participates in and monitors school improvement committee progress; however, consistent documentation and reporting of committee progress are not evident. The administrator identifies the collective knowledge of the staff as paramount in the success of the school as measured by student assessments. Parent representatives volunteer to serve on each of the standard and school goal committees. Staff report that school improvement efforts received impetus from their increasing understanding about the AdvancED process. Currently the well-established school improvement process is a part of the school culture and is moving from being a systematic process to a systemic process within the school. Teachers are encouraged by the building administrator to provide input into school improvement decisions and to accept leadership positions on all committees.

Each standing committee focuses on the use of data to drive school improvement efforts. Data are compiled by the SILT and reported to all community stakeholders. A comprehensive data assessment system including nationally normed, curricular, and classroom assessments is in place. Data are outlined in the school profile and are the basis for the development of the SIP. The plan is reviewed and adjusted each year to reflect current grade-level student achievement data. The school writing and math goals have been adopted for many years; the math goal was adjusted to add nonlinguistic representation in 2008. It is not evident if data have been disaggregated to measure if interventions are positively impacting subgroup performance and specific skill deficits. Additionally, it is not evident if the intervention objective, the assessment instrument, and the assessment data are aligned. Ensuring that teacher implementation of school improvement interventions and collection of classroom data notebooks is the responsibility of the administrator.

Next steps have been identified by each committee to ensure the on-going progress initiated during this year's school improvement meetings. As stated during interviews, the next steps enable staff to "cultivate what we do well and focus on what we can do better." Professional development occurs throughout the school. Professional development opportunities are provided by district staff, building administrator, staff member, and online course work. Teachers communicate information related to best practices through staff meetings, e-mails, and grade-level communications. Team teaching occurs in grades 5--6, and frequent transition meetings are held between lower elementary teachers to help support student transition.

The staff works collegially to support each other and promote school effectiveness. They are knowledgeable and open to sharing information related to current trends in teaching and learning. An informal teacher mentoring program exists to promote a smooth transition to the school.

The efforts of the school improvement committees are well documented and shared with all stakeholders. Information is shared via Blackboard, e-mail, newsletters, social networking, intranet, webpage, DoDEA website, and teacher websites. The use of the Blackboard (DoDEA website provided to each school) in warehousing all school improvement data and documentation is an important tool for documenting the school improvement process.

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

- The use of the Blackboard, an electronic data sharing platform to house all school improvement data and documents, is exemplary. This electronic collection of artifacts, updated by SILT, provides a means for all staff to monitor the progress of school improvement goals. Additionally, the continuity of school improvement efforts is supported by having data available from year to year.
- The staff demonstrates significant growth in its understanding of the importance of continuous school improvement. Staff identified next steps specific to each standard to lead next year's school improvement efforts. Staff members look forward to the 2011 QAR report as further direction for organizing school efforts.

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

- Develop and implement a master staff development and SIP detailing planned actions, persons responsible, resources needed, timeline for actions, and evaluation method of the action. Include an administrative review of summative committee activities. Update annually all school improvement information on the Blackboard data site.
- Disaggregate all student achievement data in order to pinpoint the individual needs of students. Ensure alignment of the intervention, the assessment instrument, and the reporting of the student assessment data.

Finding: Rainbow Elementary 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-DODEA accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Mrs. Maureen Ryff, CHAIR (Wheatland High School)
- Charlene Turner, VICE_CHAIR
- Mr. Henry LeFebre, MEMBER (Alconbury Middle/High School)
- Mrs. Kelli Heath, MEMBER (Aviano Elementary School)
- Dr. Mario Vanheuckelom, MEMBER (SHAPE Elementary 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.