

Opp City School District Oral Exit Report

**Quality Assurance Review Team
District Accreditation**

A Picture of AdvancED



World's Largest Educational Community

- 23,000 public and private schools
- 30 states and Navajo Nation
- Department of Defense Education Activity
- 65 countries
- 15 million students
- 18,000 volunteers
- 3 million plus teachers

A Picture of AdvancED

Dedicated to Advancing Excellence in Education through:

Accreditation

- Standards, continuous improvement, quality assurance
- NCA CASI and SACS CASI are the accreditation divisions of AdvancED

Professional Services

- Professional development, technical assistance, conferences, consulting

Research and Innovation

- Publications, resources, tools, evaluation
- NSSE serves as our research and innovation division of AdvancED



District Accreditation

A national protocol for school systems committed to systemic, systematic, and sustainable improvement

- Builds the capacity of the system and its schools to increase and sustain student learning
- Stimulates and supports improvement and effectiveness throughout the system

District Accreditation

- Ensures all people, processes, departments and operations of the system work in concert
- Strengthens efforts to meet accountability requirements
- Encourages growth beyond compliance to achieve excellence
- Promotes continuous not episodic improvement

Systems Approach

District Accreditation applies a systems approach to improvement. It examines how all elements of the school system work in concert for the benefit of student learning. It looks for examples of systemic, systematic, and sustainable improvement.

- **Systemic improvement** – using and aligning the interdependent functions within and across the district to produce improvement
- **Systematic improvement** – fostering improvement efforts that are regular and predictable at all levels of the district
- **Sustainable improvement** – maintaining improvements over time

Pillars of Accreditation

To earn and maintain District Accreditation, districts must:

2. Meet the **AdvancED Quality Standards**
3. Engage in **Continuous Improvement**
4. Demonstrate **Quality Assurance** through Internal and External Review



Expectations

District

- Meets the *AdvancED* Standards for Quality Systems
- Identifies and guides the implementation of a systemic continuous improvement process
- Monitors its schools through a quality assurance process
- Prepares and hosts a QAR visit every five years

Schools

- Meet the *AdvancED* Standards for Quality Schools
- Implement the district's continuous improvement process
- Participate in the district's quality assurance process

Purpose & Role of the Quality Assurance Review Team

1. Determine the extent to which the district meets the *AdvancED* standards.
2. Assess the efficacy of the district's improvement efforts.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the district's methods for quality assurance.
4. Provide high-quality feedback with clear recommendations and actionable next steps.
5. Make an accreditation recommendation.

Activities of the Quality Assurance Review Team

- *Artifacts/documents review*
- *Interviews*
- *School visits*
- *Observations*
- *Professional deliberations*

Interviews with Stakeholders

- During the on-site Quality Assurance Review, team members interviewed:
 - 9 Administrators
 - 28 Teachers
 - 15 Support Staff
 - 37 Parents, community, and business partners
 - 39 Students
 - 5 Board members

TOTAL of 133 stakeholders

Criteria Used to Arrive at the Team's Findings

- When reviewing evidence to arrive at its findings, the team:
 - Sought a district perspective;
 - Pursued evidence that could be corroborated through multiple sources;
 - Examined the context and capacity of the district in relation to its vision, mission, and beliefs; and
 - Applied the criteria for accreditation.

Structure of Team's Findings

Strengths

- Strong and effective practices, processes, or systems which benefit the school district

Commendations

- Significant accomplishments in meeting and/or exceeding accreditation standards and requirements

Challenges

- Limitations and/or barriers that may be impacting (or have the potential to impact) the district's performance and effectiveness

Recommendations

- Actions that will enhance district effectiveness and improve student learning

Strengths

- Stakeholders have an understanding and commitment to the shared vision of Opp City School District, as revealed during interviews with staff, parents, students, administrators, and instructional staff.
- A strong, visionary leadership team at the district and school levels that share a passion for student success and a common vision.
- Collaboration with Lurleen B. Wallace College enables students to participate in a variety of dual enrollment courses including vocational education.
- Data results are used to provide intervention to students in a timely manner.
- Professional development opportunities are provided to all employees to ensure quality programs and performance throughout the district.
- A keen sense of pride permeates throughout the district, each school and the community.
- Student assessment data is the driving force behind each school's teaching and learning process.

Commendations

The Quality Assurance Review Team commends Opp City School District for:

- The Board of Education employing a visionary Superintendent of Schools who has demonstrated exceptional leadership in developing, implementing, and monitoring the vision and purpose.
- Teamwork and versatility of the leadership staff.
- Integration, utilization, and support of technology in the classroom.
- Developing and maintaining a strong relationship with the city government.
- Funding of a Graduation Coach for the High School.
- Strong and committed Parent-Teacher-Organization
- The district and its schools creating a positive culture for student learning

Challenges

- Increase the involvement of various stakeholder groups in developing the vision
- Identify additional funding sources and build new partnerships
- Use assessment data to challenge and meet the needs of students who meet and/or exceed standards.
- Develop and implement a systemic management plan to coordinate and monitor special education services at the district level
- Increase parental involvement at the high school level
- Implement strategies to increase the graduation rate to at least 90%

Recommendations

- **The Quality Assurance Review Team recommends that Opp City School District :**
- Increase the involvement of various stakeholder groups in systematically reviewing the district's vision and purpose by granting opportunities for a broader range of stakeholders to provide meaningful contributions to defining the vision.
- Develop a plan to increase and maintain a diverse faculty and administration.
- Prioritize resources in an effort to support the trend of increased district and school performance in the areas of technology and facilities.
- Expand the high school curriculum to increase the diversity of learning opportunities for students outside the core curriculum.

Next Steps

- Written report of findings submitted within 30 days
- After receipt of the report, the district is expected to:
 - Review and communicate the findings.
 - Address the recommendations.
 - Monitor accreditation standards on ongoing basis.
 - Monitor strategies for improvement.
 - Submit the Accreditation Progress Report.

Accreditation Recommendation

- The Quality Assurance Review Team recommends to the AdvancED Accreditation Commission that the Opp City School District be awarded District Accreditation as a quality school system.
- Once reviewed and approved by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, the district and all its schools are granted a 5-year term accreditation.

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 your progress toward achieving District Accreditation as a quality system.

*AdvancED District Accreditation
for Quality Systems
www.advanc-ed.org*

*...helping schools
and school systems
improve student
learning*

