

**Report of the
Quality Assurance Review Team
for
Hillel Academy**

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North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) are accreditation divisions of AdvancED.

Quality Assurance Review Report

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About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

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

In April 2006, the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), and National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) came together to form one strong unified organization dedicated to education quality. That unified organization, known as AdvancED, creates the world's largest education community, representing 27,000 public and private schools and districts across the United States and in 65 countries worldwide and educating 15 million students.

NCA CASI and SACS CASI serve as accreditation divisions of AdvancED. Through AdvancED, NCA CASI and SACS CASI have defined shared, research-based accreditation standards that cross state, regional, and national boundaries. Accompanying these standards is a unified accreditation process designed to help schools continuously improve.

The Accreditation Process. To earn and maintain accreditation from NCA CASI or SACS CASI, schools must:

- 1) Meet the AdvancED Standards and Policies for Quality Schools.** Schools demonstrate adherence to the AdvancED standards and policies which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for schools to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.
- 2) Engage in continuous improvement.** Schools implement a continuous improvement process that articulates the vision and purpose the school is pursuing (vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school effectiveness, and the school community (profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (plan); and documents and uses the results to inform what happens next (results).
- 3) Demonstrate quality assurance through internal and external review.** Schools engage in a planned process of ongoing internal review and self-assessment. In addition, schools host an external Quality Assurance Review Team once every five years. The team evaluates the school's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards, assesses the efficacy of the school's improvement process and methods for quality assurance, and provides commendations and required actions to help the school improve. The team provides an oral exit report to the school and a written report detailing the team's required actions. The school acts on the team's required actions and submits a progress report following the review.

NCA CASI and SACS CASI accreditation engages the entire school community in a continuous process of self-evaluation and improvement. The overall aim is to help schools be the best they can be on behalf of the students they serve.

Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review

Purpose. The purpose of the Quality Assurance Review is to:

1. Evaluate the school's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards and policies.
2. Assess the efficacy of the school's improvement process and methods for quality assurance.
3. Identify commendations and required actions to improve the school.
4. Make an accreditation recommendation for review by the national AdvancED Accreditation Commission.

A key aim of the Quality Assurance Review is to verify that the school is operating with institutional integrity - that it is fulfilling its vision and mission for its students.

School Preparation. To prepare for the Quality Assurance Review, the school community engages in an in-depth self assessment of each of the seven AdvancED standards. The school identifies and describes the evidence that demonstrates that it is meeting each standard. Through this internal review, the school examines how its systems and processes contribute to student performance and school effectiveness.

Summary of Team Activities. The Quality Assurance Review Team is led by an AdvancED certified team chair and comprised of professionals from outside the school. The team reviews the findings of the school's internal self-assessment, conducts interviews with representative groups of stakeholders, reviews student performance data and other documentation provided by the school, and observes practices and daily operations. The team engages in professional deliberations to reach consensus on the school's adherence to the standards for accreditation. The team provides an oral exit report and prepares a written Quality Assurance Review Team Report designed to help the school improve.

The Quality Assurance Review Team Report. Following the visit, the review team completes the Quality Assurance Review report. After review by a nationally-trained reader, the report is submitted to the school. The report contains commendations and required actions for improvement.

Using the Report - Responding to the Required Actions. The school uses the report to guide its improvement efforts. The school is held accountable for addressing the required actions identified in the report. The NCA CASI/SACS CASI State Office is available to assist schools in addressing the required actions. At prescribed intervals, the school must submit a progress report detailing the actions and progress the school has made on the team's required actions. The report is reviewed at the state and national level to ensure the school is addressing the required actions.

Accreditation Recommendation. The Quality Assurance Review Team uses the findings from the onsite visit to make an accreditation recommendation that is reviewed by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission. Accreditation is granted by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission and communicated to the school following action from the commission.

Summary of Findings

A Quality Assurance Review Team representing the SACS CASI International (SACS-CASI-INTL), a division of AdvancED, visited the Hillel Academy in Kingston, null, Jamaica on 04/10/2011 - 04/14/2011.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 6 members of the administrative team, 70 students, 18 parents, and 18 teachers. In addition, support staff and Board Members were interviewed. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by the school. Specifically, the team examined the school's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

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

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

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

Commendations

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

- **The dynamic leadership and strategic vision of the Hillel Academy Board has driven the ongoing success and prosperity of the school.**

Interviews with stakeholders, as well as a review of board minutes and the Standards Assessment Report provided ample evidence for this assessment.

Board vision and leadership is essential to providing the human and financial resources necessary to achieve personal, professional, and academic excellence.

- **The commitment and dedication of the Board, administration, teachers, staff, students, and parents to the “Hillel Spirit” creates a culture of mutual support and high expectations.**

Observations, interviews, and interactions with stakeholders provided clear and overwhelming evidence of

this unique cultural dynamic.

A school culture that is endowed with a sense of pride and is supported by the community provides optimal conditions to ensure short and long term success.

- **The commitment of the board and administrative leadership to embrace the rigor of multiple international curricula, programs, standards, and assessments such as International Baccalaureate (IB), International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), and Educational Records Bureau (ERB) has resulted in significant improvement in the overall school program particularly at the high school level.**

Interviews with Board members, faculty, administration, and parents as well as review of student achievement data and stakeholder perception data provided conclusive evidence of this achievement.

A school community with the focus and commitment to a shared vision and the willingness to provide the resources to realize the vision provides the best opportunity to achieve excellence.

- **The high quality of leadership exhibited by the school director, administration, Senior Management Team (SMT), teachers, students and parents provide an atmosphere of collegiality and high expectations within the school.**

Interviews and observations clearly demonstrate the pervasiveness of this quality throughout the school.

Leadership demonstrated at all levels of school operations provides conditions to achieve excellence and realize the schools potential.

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.

- **Create internal systems and assessment strategies aligned with the principles, expectations, and requirements of the AdvancED Schools of Excellence (ASE) program.**

Interviews with administrators, board members, and parents, as well as their belief in the potential of Hillel Academy to achieve exemplary status, provide evidence to move in this strategic direction.

A move to achieve exemplary recognition would mobilize members of the school community around a single set of shared expectations that would enhance the level of student achievement, strengthen the quality of personal and professional relationships, and raise the quality of the school program.

- **Research, review, and select an alternative personnel appraisal system to provide alignment and consistency to performance evaluation for all levels of school operations (Board, administration, faculty and staff).**

Review of strategic planning priorities and interviews with board and administrative personnel indicated the need to develop strategic vision.

The development of a school wide performance appraisal system would provide a consistent evaluation system based on shared values and expectations for the school.

- **Develop systems and strategies to bring about greater alignment, unity, and cohesion to the High School and Prep School programs.**

Interviews with administrators, board members, and teachers, as well as a review of student achievement and stakeholder perception data, indicated the need to move toward a unified vision for the overall school program.

The achievement of greater alignment and coherence between the High School and Prep School programs would enhance rigor, provide a vehicle to share best practices, improve efficiency, eliminate duplication, and increase matriculation of students from Prep School to High School.

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 SACS-CASI-INTL 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 Hillel Academy demonstrates that it meets the seven standards for accreditation. The findings of the Quality Assurance Review Team regarding the standards for accreditation are summarized on the following pages.

Standard 1. Vision and Purpose

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

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

The Hillel Academy school community, with direction from the Board of Directors, has created an educational environment in which Jamaican teachers successfully prepare students for the highest international exams. The impact of employing a local teaching staff is significant and the support they receive from the Board of Directors is evidence of the important role they play in the success of Hillel Academy. The school's commitment to professional development and training are consistent with the school's mission to deliver a "well-rounded curriculum, taught by a dynamic, highly-trained staff." Additionally, the school's emphasis on faculty professional development promotes a culture of life-long learning which is consistent with the goals of Hillel Academy.

The vision and goals of the school are shared with stakeholders digitally and in publications. The participation of Parent Teacher Association (PTA) leadership and the Senior Management Team in the Board of Director meetings promotes understanding and support from the school's varied stakeholders. The team found a collaborative, consensus-based decision making structure to be the norm for leadership bodies.

The school's mission statement was re-evaluated prior to the AdvancED accreditation visit. A survey was used to determine stakeholder familiarity and endorsement of the mission statement. Leadership bodies, including the student council, PTA, faculty, and ultimately the Board evaluated the mission statement for accuracy, and made changes highlighting ownership of the school's mission.

The school maintains information about students, student achievement data, and the school community. Student achievement data is analyzed in varying ways and shared with faculty, Senior Management Team, and the Board. Decisions effecting curriculum, staffing, strategic planning, and budgeting which are created and revised based on this achievement data. However, the need to use technology to digitalize and improve access and reporting of student and community data was articulated in the written reports, group interviews, and the School Improvement Plan.

The Board's understanding of the educational process and their support of faculty professional development is a strong indicator that the school's shared vision guides and supports teaching and learning at Hillel Academy.

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

- The Board works in close collaboration with Senior Management Team and the PTA.
- The introduction of the IB and IGCSE program was a development consistent with the school's stated mission.
- The Board has a comprehensive understanding of the educational program and uses data to drive instructional and institutional decisions, as well as long term financial and facility planning.

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

- Implement a system of comprehensive surveys distributed to stakeholders on an annual basis in order to further enhance stakeholder input into the strategic planning of the school.
- Implementation a school data management system as tool to increase access and flow of information to necessary stakeholders.

Finding: Hillel Academy has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" 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:

Hillel Academy is governed by a Board of Governors appointed by the founders and responsible agents of the United Congregation of Israelites in Jamaica. In keeping with the terms of the founding Trust Deed, the Board submits a formal report to the Trustees of the United Congregation of Israelites annually. The Board meets approximately nine times per year to establish policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the school. Board meetings are attended by all appointed Directors and the Senior Management Team (SMT) composed of the School Director, the Principal of the Prep School and High School, and the Business Manager. Honorary Board members who are among the School founders or long-standing supporters of Hillel Academy are also invited to attend meetings. Recently a representative nominated by the Ambassador of the United States of America was invited to join the Board as a full member. Board meetings always take place in the presence of the Director and invited members. The Board retains legal council and ensures compliance with applicable local and federal laws, standards, and regulations. The Board of Directors is an informed board but recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the administrative head of the school to oversee the curricular and extracurricular activities sponsored by the school.

Hillel Academy employs a system that provides for analysis and review of student performance and school effectiveness. The Board utilizes a consent agenda to enhance board focus and efficiency and operates from an Annual Board Planning Calendar. The Board of Governors utilizes data to guide decision making and strategic planning for the school. Performance data from IGCSE, ERB and IB assessments is utilized to track student performance. The Senior Management Team analyzes the results of internal and external assessments and generates reports for the Board to keep them informed of student performance and school effectiveness. The use of an electronic data management system would enhance both the analysis and

communication of data.

To foster a learning community Hillel Academy provides a wide variety of professional development for instructional and administrative staff. High School staff members are provided consistent external training through IB and IGCSE offerings. There are also opportunities for Department Heads, Principals, and support staff to participate in professional development to enhance their professional skills.

Community members are provided opportunities to participate in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership in the school. The Senior Management Team along with the PTA President are present for meetings of the Board of Governors providing them significant opportunities to contribute to the decision making process. An annual "Board Forum" is hosted by Board members in May to share a wide range of financial and operational data with the school community. The Board also takes this opportunity to share the board's achievements against goals established for the current year as well as communicate the goals established by the Board for the upcoming school year. Class representatives from the Parent Teacher Association meet frequently with administrators and staff and disseminate information to parents and invite feedback and sharing on a wide range of topics related to the school. Surveys are also conducted for parents, teachers, and students to gather additional feedback to respond to community and stakeholder expectations.

Hillel Academy implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel. Professional development opportunities are provided for all employees when specific needs are identified in their evaluations or if they are required to meet the developmental needs of the school.

Teacher and staff appraisals have not been upgraded and are scheduled for review and revision to reflect the latest research on teacher and instructional effectiveness.

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

- The high quality of leadership exhibited by the school director, senior management team, teachers, students and parents provide an atmosphere of collegiality and high expectations within the school.
- The commitment of the board and administrative leadership to embrace the rigor of multiple international curricula, programs, standards, and assessments (IB, IGCSE, ERB, etc) has resulted in significant improvement in the overall school program particularly at the high school level.
- The dynamic leadership and strategic vision of the Hillel Academy Board has driven the ongoing success and prosperity of the school.
- The commitment and dedication of the Board, administration, teachers, staff, students, and parents to the "Hillel Spirit" which creates a culture of mutual support and high expectations.

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

- Create internal systems and assessment strategies aligned with the principles, expectations, and requirements of the AdvancED Schools of Excellence (ASE) program.
- Research, review and select an alternative personnel appraisal systems to provide alignment and consistency to performance evaluation for all levels of school operation.
- Finalize the selection and implementation of a school data management system.

Finding: Hillel Academy has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" 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 has recently developed a curriculum that articulates the expectations for student learning based on their needs and aligned with their internal and external assessments. The curriculum was developed independently in the Prep and High Schools. The curriculum was aligned horizontally between the teachers at the same grade level and some vertical alignment between the two divisions has taken place. The curricular expectations are shared with High School students and parents through the published curriculum option guides and evidenced in both divisions through the curriculum outlines utilized by teachers. Since the last QART visit the High School has made significant changes in its program with the addition of the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs. Hillel Academy is increasingly being recognized as an institution of educational rigor in its High School division. More Prep School students are continuing their education at Hillel Academy High School and admissions from outside the school have increased in this division. To support the implementation of these new programs High School teachers received timely professional development.

Recently student data has been gathered for several of the external assessments utilized in the school: Educational Records Bureau (ERB), Jamaica Ministry of Education Grade Six Assessment Test (GSAT), International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and International Baccalaureate (IB). In some areas the summative data is analyzed and used to institute program changes and scrutinize instructional effectiveness. All constituencies have expressed the need for an online School Data Management System to facilitate the recording and timely communication of student achievement. The Senior Management Team is actively pursuing the purchase of this technology.

Interactive white board technology is utilized to support student learning and the teachers have received training in its use. In addition to the Prep and High School libraries, students use the EBSCO (online subscription service) and Questia databases for research. Other software such as Autograph, Junior Brain Pop, and Brain Pop support student motivation and higher-order thinking skills.

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

- The High School program has significantly improved in rigor through the introduction of the IGCSE and IB programs and assessments.
- Faculty professional development is an expressed priority of the Board to support student learning.
- Faculty provides students with a supportive and positive learning climate; they dedicate extra time and effort to their students.

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

- Create vertical curriculum teams and allocate time for more frequent cross-divisional discussion to continually improve the sequence of the curriculum and enhance rigor.
- Provide professional development to faculty at all levels on the use of data-driven decision making

- to develop and track curricular and student improvement goals.
- Research and implement a school-wide instructional appraisal system to further enhance teaching practices, particularly in differentiated instruction and higher-order thinking skills.

Finding: Hillel Academy 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:

Performance measures for student learning are established and reviewed on a yearly basis. Each grade level has a curriculum and scope and sequence to guide instruction. The curriculum is developed to align with GSAT, ERB, IGCSE, and IB performance standards. GSAT, ERB, IGCSE, IB external data indicates that Hillel students are performing above national and world standards in almost all content areas. In addition, there is evidence of some horizontal and vertical grade level collaboration in the areas of planning, sharing of instructional strategies, marking of exams, and analysis of data.

External assessment data has been analyzed and shared with the Board of Directors for the purpose of determining effectiveness of new programs and teacher effectiveness. This summative data is compared against other normed national, suburban, and international standards of performance. Although there is evidence of some horizontal and vertical grade level collaboration in the areas of planning, sharing of instructional strategies, marking exams, and analysis of data, Hillel Academy could benefit from developing a systemic process and protocol for collaborative horizontal and vertical planning and formative data analysis. Hillel Academy has examined their summative data and determined that ongoing professional development focused on differentiation of instruction and varied teaching strategies should continue to be an emphasis of continuous improvement.

Hillel Academy has used formative and psycho-educational data to provide some timely interventions and enrichment opportunities for identified students that impact student achievement. Examples of interventions and enrichments include, but are not limited to, free and appropriate after school help, support centre, and homework clubs.

Hillel Academy maintains a secure and accurate student record system. Although Hillel adheres to this standard, efficiency would be increased through the selection and implementation of a comprehensive school data management system.

In addition to sharing external summative data with the Board of Directors, Hillel Academy communicates student performance and effectiveness to stakeholders through a variety of methods. The school communicates to highlight student academic, sport, service, and intellectual competition success to all its stakeholders through weekly assemblies, weekly newsletters, honor roll, website, classroom displays, PTA meetings, and Board of Director meetings.

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

- Use of external data compares Hillel Academy to national and world standard to the Board of Directors.
- The addition of external assessment sources such as ERB, ICSE, and IB for the purpose of guiding instruction and evaluate teacher effectiveness is highly effective.

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

- Develop a systemic process and protocol for collaborative horizontal and vertical planning and formative data analysis.
- Select and implement student management software to improve the efficiency of grade reporting and formative and summative data analysis.

Finding: Hillel Academy has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 5. Resource and Support Systems

Standard: The school has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students.

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

Hillel Academy continues to recruit, employ, and mentor qualified professional staff capable of fulfilling assigned roles and responsibilities. The school does an excellent job of recruiting local Jamaican and Caribbean educators and recently providing training to deliver quality standards based instruction in the classroom. The staff is assigned appropriately to meet the needs of the mission and vision based on their qualifications, skills, and knowledge. Sufficient resources are budgeted by a collaborative process including faculty, department heads, Senior Management Team, and the Board for a continuous program of professional development of staff as well as to support the school's educational programs and implementation of the school improvement plan.

Financial transactions are monitored and processed through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system. Annual audits are conducted by external auditors and the financial reports are presented to the Board and Trustees. The campus is well maintained providing a safe and orderly environment for all occupants. There are detailed written security and crisis management plans that are well communicated including regularly scheduled fire, earthquake, civil unrest, and hurricane alert drills.

The school provides a wide range of social and academic support for students with special needs through in-house counselors and private consultants from the surrounding community. There is a full-time Guidance Counselor in the Prep School and a fully staffed Enrichment Center. A full-time University Admissions Officer in the High School ensures that each student has access to guidance services including counseling, appraisal, mentoring, staff consulting, referral, and educational and career planning.

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

- The campus is a safe and secure environment protecting the interest of all constituents.
- The attention given to the ongoing development of program driven facility construction and land acquisition improves the overall student experience.

- The grounds are well maintained and aesthetically pleasing.

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

- Conduct a needs assessment to ensure adequate staffing in the area of enrichment in the High School.
- Assess and evaluate the Facilities Master plan to ensure both short and long term benefits maximizing space utilization to meet student needs.

Finding: Hillel Academy has earned the overall assessment level of "Operational" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

Standard: The school fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

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

Hillel Academy utilizes multiple means of effective communication tools ensuring strong relationships among stakeholders. The PTA has established grade level representatives that disseminate information electronically and by “word of mouth” to keep parents and other community members well informed. The school publishes weekly newsletters in the Prep and High School and has collected all email addresses of its constituents to facilitate email distributions lists. There are weekly emails sent to inform parents of upcoming activities, performances, academic progress, and sports.

The school surveys constituents periodically to gain important insight which helps to inform the leadership team and Board in determining the school’s next steps. There is an annual Board Forum to share assessment data, financial data, and PTA reports relative to the state of the school. Stakeholders also get a chance ask questions of Board members about current issues or topics at this forum. All information presented at the annual Board Forum is posted on the website for the extended school community.

The school’s website serves primarily as an admissions marketing tool informing the public of the school program as well as public notices about upcoming events. The school has investigated school management software solutions to improve efficiency and meaningful use of data.

Evidence of effective communication and collaboration was affirmed through parent, faculty and staff, student, interviews during the QART visit. The school benefits greatly from its relatively small demographic allowing for frequent informal communication.

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

- The school has established positive relationships with embassies, High Commissions, government ministries, volunteer organizations, sports councils, religious authorities, and other educational institutions.
- The school has inspired a sense of “family” into the school community.

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

school:

- Develop an integrated communication and marketing plan to advance the school into the local community.
- Create a plan to focus on developing a more robust alumni association encouraging lifelong school-alumni relationships.
- Provide additional professional development for the Office of Admissions.

Finding: Hillel Academy has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" and has met this standard for accreditation.

Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

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

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

The school follows a systematic school improvement process lead by the Board's annual agenda, regular Senior Management Team meetings, PTA activities, review of annual testing results, and external accreditation and certification visits. Interviews and written documentation indicate that goals and strategies are developed at all levels to meet identified needs. The Board has a process in place to develop implementation strategies and ensure the necessary resources. Of particular note are the school's successful implementation of the IB and IGCSE programs, and the ongoing development of the school's physical plant.

The school has vast stakeholder support, including a highly functioning Board, involved parents and PTA, a capable staff, and engaged students; each showing remarkable levels of leadership and ownership in their school. There is significant shared membership between the various leadership bodies which promotes effective transmission of information and a shared understanding of the school's vision and goals. The PTA and class representation system effectively shares board and school information with families.

Though a survey process has been used in the past to solicit random and anonymous stakeholder opinions, the school should begin to develop more expansive annual survey process to include students, parents, and faculty. A yearly and longitudinal analysis of the survey results would become part of the data stream used by leadership bodies to develop continuous improvement strategies for Hillel Academy.

The school has successfully implemented a faculty professional development plan as part of the adoption of the IGCSE and IB programs. Though ongoing professional development is well funded and is available to all faculty, a more effective teacher appraisal program and thorough vertical analysis of all student achievement data might highlight instructional deficiencies heretofore not identified or addressed.

The school has shown its capacity to maintain ongoing and systematic school improvement. Lead by the Board, and informed by student achievement data, Senior Management Team, and stakeholder feedback, the school has dramatically improved the functioning and reputation of the high school program through the development of international curricula and has made significant improvements to the school's physical

plant. If the school wants to maintain its path towards excellence, it must continue to improve school-wide collaboration, systematic and fully embedded planning for improvement. Improvements must be aligned with the schools mission, coordinated through the use of a master site plan, and driven by effective, school-wide analysis of student achievement data and stakeholder feedback.

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

- The school recognizes the need for ongoing school improvement utilizing achievement data and stakeholder feedback to plan improvements.
- The school's leadership bodies have shared membership promoting communication and collective review of mission and goals.
- The school improvement efforts have been transformational and student learning has improved, especially in the high school.

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

- Develop a systematic annual survey process which solicits anonymous and extensive input from stakeholder groups. The analysis of this survey data will provide essential information necessary for long-term institutional effectiveness.
- Create a professional development plan that includes information from a revised teacher appraisal process and the analysis of student achievement data gathered from students school-wide.

Finding: Hillel Academy 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 SACS-CASI-INTL accreditation with AdvancED.

Appendix

Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Dr. Eddie Krenson, Chair/Lead Evaluator (AdvancED)
- Ms. Susan Jaramillo, Team Member (The Columbus School)
- Mr. Jerry Beckman, Team Member (Randolph School)
- Mr. John Foreman, Team Member (Saint Ann Catholic School)
- Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Team Member (Clarksville Montgomery County School System)

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.