



### **Northville Public Schools receives praise, recommendations from National Accreditation Team**

A Quality Assurance Review Team for the prestigious North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) is recommending Northville Public Schools receive district accreditation. This means the district is recognized across the nation as a quality school system.

From December 6-9, the school district hosted the eight member Quality Assurance Review Team from the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, the national organization that confers the NCA CASI accreditation seal. Over three days, the team of trained professionals from across the state and nation:

- Reviewed district documents and performance data.
- Interviewed more than 270 district, school, and community stakeholders including district and school administrators, Board of Education members, teachers, students, school parents, and business and community leaders.
- Conducted site visits to seven of the district's school buildings.
- Observed district and school practices including attending one of two daylong District School Improvement Team meetings.

Before departing, the review team shared an overview of its findings — including commendations and recommendations — with district leaders and school board members and announced that it will be recommending Northville Public Schools for NCA CASI district accreditation. The recommendation was subsequently reviewed and acted upon by the national AdvancED Accreditation Commission when it met in January, 2010. The district's accreditation is for a five-year term with regular monitoring of progress and reporting occurring during the term.

In 2007, Northville's six elementary schools, two middle schools and two special education center programs joined Northville High School in earning individual school NCA CASI accreditation.

"District accreditation supports Northville's ongoing, overarching goal for student learning and provides a nationally-recognized mark of quality for our district and all the schools within our district," said Northville Superintendent Dr. Leonard R. Rezmierski. "Our students and families are the ultimate beneficiaries of this rigorous process. When an entire school community is aligned and focused on a shared vision for learning, students thrive.

“The enthusiasm with which our teachers and staff have embraced the accreditation process as an opportunity to learn and grow as educators is a demonstration of their unwavering commitment to ensuring that every student succeeds.”

In its exit report, the Quality Assurance Review Team commended Northville Public Schools for its extraordinary culture of respect and pride among its stakeholders, its strong shared leadership, and its systematic and systemic approach to continuous improvement through the District School Improvement process.

“From the superintendent and his central office staff to the school principals and their staffs, there is stakeholder support for the work they do and their commitment to student achievement and overall excellence,” the team commented in its exit report. “Not only are parents and community members proud of their schools, but they value and appreciate the well-rounded education students are receiving. Pride and support is evident through the authentic involvement of stakeholders in a variety of activities.”

In addition, the team’s report included two areas for improvement. The first recommends the district strengthen the alignment between its vision and its Graduate Profile/Adult Roles expectations by clearly defining measurements or assessments to determine if students are meeting these high expectations. In 1994, the Northville Board of Education adopted five areas of core knowledge and skills it believes all Northville graduates must master before they graduate. These Graduate Profiles/Adults Roles, which in essence characterize what society expects of contributing adults and future leaders, include being an analytical thinker, effective communicator, quality contributor, continuous learner, and world-class citizen.

The team’s second recommendation encourages the district to expand its current system for assessing student learning by incorporating greater use of formative assessments. These are assessments *for* learning and are used during teaching units, rather than at the end of a unit or course. This type of evaluation helps students and teachers get immediate feedback on learning so that adjustments can be made prior to the end of the unit of study.

District officials will be developing plans to respond to and address these recommendations. In two years, the district must report to AdvancED its progress in addressing the team’s recommendations.

In its report, the team also acknowledged the challenges faced by Northville Public Schools in maintaining its extraordinary level of excellence given the impact Michigan’s dire economy is having on school funding levels.

The purpose of the district accreditation process is to more closely align student performance across Northville’s elementary, middle, high school and special education programs. Through the process the district’s various stakeholders collaborate in reviewing the quality of the district’s systems, the success of each individual school, and their collective contribution to student learning.

In preparation for the on-site visit, a team of Northville educators and administrators from across the district spent several months completing a Standard Assessment Report, designed to serve as a valuable self-assessment and as a tool for the school system to prepare for the Quality Assurance Review. The report and site visit document performance on a set of standards, which serve as the foundation for the accreditation process. In order to maintain accreditation, school districts must meet these standards, engage in a process of continuous improvement, and demonstrate quality assurance through internal and external review.

“Northville Public Schools is a great school district,” said Board of Education President Ken Roth. “We believe strongly that the NCA district accreditation process will help make us even better. Students win when the entire district commits to examining all of its processes and systems to determine how we can improve to benefit the students we serve.”

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*AdvancED is the parent organization for 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 the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE). NCA CASI and SACS CASI are accreditation divisions of AdvancED. Dedicated to advancing excellence in education worldwide, AdvancED provides accreditation, research and professional services to 23,000 public and private schools and 4,500 school districts in 30 states and 65 countries. For more information about the district accreditation process, visit [www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org).*