

# Report of the Quality Assurance Review Team for Islamic School of Irving

Shahnaz Chowdhury, Principal

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Review Dates: 05/08/2008 - 05/09/2008



*AdvancED is the unified organization of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), and National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE).*

# 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 2006, NCA CASI, SACS CASI, and the research and development arm of the accrediting associations, the National Study of School Evaluation, unified to form AdvancED. Dedicated to advancing excellence in education, AdvancED provides accreditation, research, and professional services to 23,000 schools in 65 countries, serving 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 for Quality Schools.** Schools demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards 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 recommendations to help the school improve. The team provides an oral exit report to the school and a written report detailing the team's recommendations. The school acts on the team's recommendations and submits a progress report two years 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.
2. Assess the efficacy of the school's improvement process and methods for quality assurance.
3. Identify commendations and recommendations 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 recommendations for improvement.

**Using the Report - Acting on the Recommendations.** The school uses the report to guide its improvement efforts. The school is held accountable for addressing the recommendations identified in the report. The NCA CASI/SACS CASI State Office is available to assist schools in addressing the recommendations. Two years following the Quality Assurance Review team visit, the school must submit a progress report detailing the actions and progress the school has made on the team's recommendations. The report is reviewed at the state and national level to ensure the school is addressing the recommendations.

**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.

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## Summary of Findings

A Quality Assurance Review Team representing the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), a division of AdvancED, visited the Islamic School of Irving in Irving, Texas on 05/08/2008 - 05/09/2008.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed the Principal, 3 members of the administrative team, 9 students, 6 parents, and 4 teachers. In addition, team members of the school trustees 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:

- Vision and Purpose
- Governance and Leadership
- Teaching and Learning
- Documenting and Using Results
- Resource and Support Systems
- Stakeholder Communications and Relationships
- 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 recommendations.

### 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.

- **As a result of planning, the school has made commendable progress in the last two years. An incremental plan, strong committees of knowledgeable parents and board members, and a strategic planning process that included students allowed for the assessment and adoption of curriculum components and learning strategies that complement elements already in place and are consistent with the school's mission and vision.**

An initial PowerPoint presentation demonstrating the step-by-step process of growth and improvement; interviews with stakeholders and decision-makers; and a discussion with a board member about the process the school uses to seek out and evaluate program elements prior to deciding to adopt them the team not only to a level of comfort about the existing program, but also

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to a high degree of confidence about future progress.

A strong commitment to continuous improvement inspires stakeholders and ensures the support and dedication that make excellence a reality.

- **The school's mission, process, and goals are not only evident throughout the school, but understood and explainable by all stakeholders, including the students.**

Interviews with parents, teachers, board members, and students revealed a solid, working understanding of what the school is trying to accomplish and how it wants to get there. Students can discuss not only religion and character issues, but also academic ones as well. A fifth grader being able to talk about Bloom's Taxonomy with understanding and enthusiasm was a unique and rewarding. The team found the school to be a true learning community.

Stakeholder investment in the mission and goals of the school is a critical component in establishing a productive learning community.

## Recommendations

In addition to the commendations, the Quality Assurance Review team identified the following recommendations for improvement. The team focused its recommendations 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 making progress on each of the recommendations noted in this section. Two years following this review, the school will be asked to submit a progress report on these recommendations.

- **Remain attentive to increasing students' scores on standardized tests, especially the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.**

The team saw evidence of the school's focus on goal 1 of its action plan. While student test scores have risen steadily in recent years, recognizing the strength of the student population, the school should focus on increasing them even more.

Success on student achievement measures is one indicator of student success in a high quality academic program.

- **Hire a permanent principal as soon as possible.**

The school currently has an acting principal.

Whereas the superintendent plays a vital role in the operation of the school, he is based in Houston.

An essential component of school success is a permanent coordinator of educational operations based onsite. It is virtually impossible to develop the necessary division of responsibility--principal for education, board for policy, fundraising, etc.--until the permanent principal has been identified.

Principals have a profound effect on the culture and operation of a 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 recommendations made by the team. Include methods for monitoring progress toward the recommendations.
4. Use the report to guide and strengthen the school's efforts to improve student performance and school effectiveness.
5. Two years following the Quality Assurance Review, submit the Accreditation Progress Report detailing progress made toward addressing the team's recommendations. The report will be reviewed at the state and national level to ensure that significant progress is being made toward the recommendations. 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](http://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 logo is available through the SACS CASI website for schools to post on their website and in school communications. Flags, door decals, diploma seals, and more 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 recommendations 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.

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# Standards for Accreditation

The primary requirement for accreditation is that the Islamic School of Irving 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 vision, mission, and goals provide direction and a focus for all stakeholders throughout the school community. Parents, staff, and students were all involved in the development of the vision, mission, and goals through a series of organized community meetings. The school board was heavily involved in supporting, guiding, and facilitating the process over the past several years. Interviews with staff members, students, and parents revealed a very strong knowledge and commitment to the school's vision, mission, and goals. The school prepares PowerPoint presentations to share with parents and other stakeholders. Posters and flyers that reinforced the main focus of the school were on display throughout the classrooms and public spaces.

The school began in 1996 as a single classroom and has now grown to a facility housing over 250 students. The team reviewed the profile data which was sent prior to the visit and is available in their campus planning document. Stakeholder survey results from students, parents, and staff also were reviewed. The team found that the profile data provides the school with useful information regarding comparable local schools and the state averages in the area of school performance, school effectiveness, and stakeholder perceptions. The school has set a priority to increase its math scores and curriculum to better reflect the higher achieving students' academic potential. While the school administers the TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills), it does not teach to it and also uses the Iowa Test of Basic Skills as a balance when assessing student performance.

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

The teachers and students can demonstrate through their lesson plans how they integrate the school goals into their classroom activities. The goals are clearly embedded in their daily lessons and the students can explain and recite the goals and apply them to many situations and content areas.

The school's leadership actively reinforces the school's vision, mission, and goals during staff meetings, school, and community gatherings, and through daily interaction with students, staff, and the community at large.

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

Continue development and implementation of a systemic process for reviewing and analyzing

the school's profile data for trends and issues that can inform the school's improvement efforts and guide appropriate instruction in those areas where there are deficiencies.

Continue to link the school's goals for improvement to the profile data so there is consistency, a clear focus, and direction for increased student performance.

Establish a strong mentoring program for new teachers in order for all new staff to have a clear understanding of the school's vision, mission, and goals. Providing mentors will support any new staff from the very beginning so that the priorities are clear and direct. This will also provide for security and a "go to" person for new teachers unsure of policies and procedures.

**Finding:** Islamic School of Irving 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:**

The school is under the thoughtful guidance of a strong team of knowledgeable individuals. The process is led by a Houston-based "superintendent" with an acting principal onsite. A supportive school board focuses on technology, facility needs, and fundraising, among other concerns. Responsibility for various aspects of the program is shared among team leaders and lead teachers. Policies are clear and comprehensive.

Interviews with a variety of stakeholders indicate that they are pleased with the level of communication and interaction and truly feel a part of a learning community.

Interview data and examination of the materials provided showed that both the student assessment process and the staff evaluation system are providing the data needed to improve performance.

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

Transparency is standard operating procedure at the school. As information is gathered, it is incorporated into a PowerPoint presentation and shared with stakeholders.

School leaders have established positive and active working relationships with neighboring school districts, as well as a dual enrollment program with Northlake College.

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

Once a permanent principal is in place, the board and the principal should meet to clarify the distribution of responsibility and authority and put the results in writing.

**Finding:** Islamic School of Irving has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" and

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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 in Pre-K through Grade 10 that is based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning and that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The school demonstrates evidence of alignment between the curriculum and instructional practices with systemic implementation across the grades. The school utilizes the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as its core knowledge curriculum standards. The curriculum is a dynamic process that the school's leaders evaluate to assure appropriate learning.

Teachers give students regular feedback through formative and summative evaluation to improve their performance. The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), a criterion-referenced examination aligned to the TEKS, is given annually to all students. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), a norm-referenced examination, also is given annually to each child. Qualitative information is gathered through student-developed portfolios. By combining the two quantifiable examinations and the qualitative portfolio information, the school staff is able to focus on each student's educational needs.

Teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process. Using Bloom's Taxonomy to solicit higher order thinking, flexible grouping, and differentiated instructional practices, students' learning strengths and weaknesses are addressed. Instructional activities are constructed to engage students and prepare them for their learning.

Teachers provide frequent opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. The school provides students with in-classroom and out-of-classroom assignments that emphasize real world connections. These experiences are carefully planned to assure alignment to the curriculum and school-wide goals.

Each year, teachers, support staff, and administration are required to compete in-service learning and the school offers them several options. Training options are aligned to meet the school-wide goals and the needs of faculty based on student learning data. Parents are provided with learning opportunities to help them support their children's learning when appropriate. It is evident that the school is a learning community.

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

By using Bloom's taxonomy, teachers and students are familiar with higher order thinking skills (HOTS). Students and teachers are able to articulate the process of HOTS and its importance in learning at a complex level.

Teachers and staff gather, analyze, and use data and research in making instructional choices to provide targeted learning improvement and adjustments for all students. The school's

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investment in appropriate quantifiable and qualitative assessment measures in a supportive and stimulating learning community maximizes the students' potential for success.

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

Consider using the revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives to ensure a better alignment for higher order thinking skills. **A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing**, by Lorin W. Anderson and David R. Krathwohl, et al. emphasizes creativity as the highest level of thinking.

Continue to develop and implement a systemic integrated technology learning system that will ensure the same level of knowledge and skills as the standardized curriculum. Technology as a tool for learning should include content, process and product development.

Consider requiring all ISI graduates to take at least one on-line course. On-line learning features will provide students flexibility in course access, an introduction to on-line learning as a virtual classroom available for life long learning, and the school could gain access to courses that are hard to provide due to teacher availability or enough student interest to warrant a class section.

Revisit the gifted and talented program's criteria for qualification for services. The current standard and the high percentage of students participating in the program resemble the standards most schools consider as honors program. The criteria and appropriate services for gifted and talented students should be based on current research and a clear set of goals established for the program. A solution might be to call it an "honors" program.

**Finding:** Islamic School of Irving 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 has established both informal and formal performance measures for student learning that yield information that is reliable and valid. Using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, along with benchmark information, the staff develops and implements assessments and then disaggregates the data. The staff targets students that need skill intervention and provides small group instruction, tutoring, or peer support to increase students' skills. Constantly reviewing the data aids the staff in making decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and the learning processes. Students are very aware of their performance on all assessments. The staff and parents also share and participate in the information constantly looking for solutions. Comparison and trend data of student performance from comparable schools in the area are used to evaluate the school's effectiveness. The school has demonstrated verifiable growth in student performance over the last 6 years. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to the

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school board, school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and the results of school improvement efforts.

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

Teachers enhance understanding by looking at the data from previous assessments and targeting specific skill areas for each student.

The school's leadership provides direction for using the data from all assessments to help support instruction while keeping the data in perspective. The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) is not the main focus, but rather a tool to help with measuring student knowledge and growth.

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

Target 4th grade math, 7th grade math, 5th grade writing and 5th grade science for improvement throughout the entire school year.

Use a systematic system of disaggregating student performance data that may be transferred to a classroom setting for both formative and informative measures. By having teachers proficient in looking at data, the information can be embedded into daily lesson planning and connections for students can be emphasized for long-term memory and application.

Use student performance data to also support academic rewards, fun activities, and engagement by the students to promote good study skills and understanding of learning strategies. By having an event or project to look forward to, the school community is strengthened and stakeholders are focused on a unified vision of the school.

**Finding:** Islamic School of Irving has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" 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:**

The teaching staff appears to be strong and capable. There are a few staff with degrees not directly related to their current teaching assignment, but an action plan has been designed to correct any deficiencies. All teachers have four-year degrees, or other appropriate credentials, and are either certified or pursuing certification.

Professional development is required each year and the school facilitates the process by scheduling some classes onsite. The superintendent has negotiated professional development opportunities from The University of Houston, Victoria that enable the faculty to learn while continuing to teach full time.

While tuition is kept quite low to ensure availability to less privileged families, supplemental

funding from the community enables the school to pay reasonable salaries. While some parents need the lower tuition to gain access to the school for their children, others could pay the tuition they would encounter at secular private schools.

The school's security and crisis management plan has taken from the local public school district and is very comprehensive.

Realizing that a high school makes it imperative, the school has access to a counselor and is actively seeking a full-time counselor to office on the premises.

As the school is housed in a mosque, many people come and go throughout the day, and the main stairway is open.

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

The University of Houston program has prompted teachers to enhance their professional portfolio to the benefit of the students.

The school has taken important steps to sign in visitors and to issue them large visitor's passes that can be seen from a distance.

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

Alert each staff member to look for visitor's passes and escort individuals without them to the office to register.

Consider establishing an endowment to which more affluent parents could contribute. Such endowments are usually used to supplement teacher salaries and make them more competitive with those in public and other private schools.

Consider a formal mentoring program wherein each teacher new to the school is assigned a mentor for at least the two probationary years. For those new to teaching, the mentor could help with classroom and other professional needs. All mentors could help newcomers understand and adjust to the school's culture.

**Finding:** Islamic School of Irving 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:**

The school demonstrates a strong commitment to community-building and effective communication with and among its stakeholders. The relationships among the administration, parents, students, and staff are characterized by the core values and beliefs of the school. The team observed many of the school's values and beliefs in action throughout the visit;

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including respect, integrity, and high expectations. Interviews with parents, teachers, and students reveal that they are encouraged to be a part of the decision-making process and long-range planning on behalf of school improvement. During interviews, stakeholders shared that they feel welcome in the school and that their views, knowledge, and skills are considered valuable and important.

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

Students are encouraged to offer meaningful contributions and to serve one another in a spirit of collaboration and team building. Twenty-three students were participants in the annual strategic planning meeting this year. Students interviewed articulated the purpose of the planning meeting quite well and explained in their own words some long-range goals that were set forth as a result of their input.

The school strives to be a part of the larger community, with a desire to share the mission and beliefs of their school. Invitations are extended to community members to encourage them to visit the school and attend information forums. Students recognize a sense of community responsibility and participate in several community service projects throughout the year, such as community beautification, cancer walks, and local food drives.

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

Include the younger students (including pre-kindergarten) in school surveys. Students could be surveyed about favorite and least favorite subjects or activities. Their insight may be valuable in shaping the instructional program for student learning.

**Finding:** Islamic School of Irving 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 community is both supportive and committed to the continuous process of school improvement. Interviews with stakeholders revealed they actively attend meetings to develop long-range plans and organizational processes for communicating, implementing, and evaluating the school improvement plan. Interviews also reflected that the school has a very clear understanding of its strengths and needs for improvement. The strategic plan is outlined with improvement goals that are achievable, measurable, and directly tied to the school's mission and beliefs. Survey results, committee meetings, and periodic educational consulting reviews indicate that the school actively reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of the plan.

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

Representatives of each stakeholder group are an integral part of the process of school improvement at the school.

Improving student learning is fundamental to the culture of the school. There is on-going dialog with and among stakeholders focusing on improving student learning.

The core values and beliefs of the school are considered first and foremost in all decisions related to school improvement.

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

Update the school web page to maximize communication with stakeholders.

**Finding:** Islamic School of Irving has earned the overall assessment level of "Highly Functional" and has met this standard for accreditation.

## Conclusion

The commendations and recommendations 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 recommendations 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 several recommendations for improvement that the school will need to address. Two years following this review, the school will be required to submit a progress report summarizing its progress toward addressing the team's recommendations.

The Quality Assurance Review Team expresses appreciation to Shahnaz Chowdhury, 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 accreditation with AdvancED.

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# Appendix

## Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Ian Rule, Chair
- Adrienne Mitchell, Team Member
- Marty Walter, Team Member
- Suzy Hagar, Team Member

## 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](http://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.