

Standard 1 Beliefs and Mission

A quality system develops and communicates a vision, beliefs and mission that provide a focus for the quality of the work of the students and the quality of the work of the system and schools.

Quality System Indicators

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 1.1 Establishes a vision for education in the community through the leadership of the governing board of the system and in cooperation with its stakeholders;
- 1.2 Identifies system-wide goals to advance the vision;
- 1.3 Establishes an accountability system to document and monitor achievement of its goals;
- 1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile that describes the system, students, and community;
- 1.5 Ensure that the system's vision, mission, and beliefs guide the instruction and curriculum throughout the system and reflect research and best practices concerning teaching and learning; and
- 1.6 Reviews its vision, mission, and beliefs annually and revises them when appropriate.

Standard 2 Governance and Leadership

A quality system provides for and promotes stability in the leadership, governance and organizational structure which include a focus in developing and maintaining a vision; an emphasis on improving student learning; and support for innovative efforts that produce desired results.

Quality System Indicators

Governance

In fulfillment of the standard, the system under a governing board that:

- 2.1 Adopts written policies and procedures that promote the effective operation of the system that include clearly defined lines of authority, relationships, and accountability which support the mission, beliefs and goals of the system;
- 2.2 Permits the administrative team of the system to implement policies and procedures without interference;
- 2.3 Establishes policies and procedures that recognize and preserve the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the head of the system and the schools; and
- 2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board.

Leadership

In fulfillment of this standard, the leadership of the system:

- 2.5 Maintains access to legal counsel who can advise or obtain necessary information about the legal requirements and obligations that exist in the state, federal, or other jurisdictions in which it operates;
- 2.6 Maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations from protracted proceedings and claims for damage;
- 2.7 Creates and strengthens collaborative networks of community stakeholders to support student learning; and
- 2.8 Allocates and aligns the human, instructional, financial, and physical resources in support of the vision, mission, beliefs, and expectations for student learning.

Standard 3 Curriculum

A quality system offers a research-based curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning that is subject to review and revision at regular intervals.

Quality System Indicators

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 3.1 Develops curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning;
- 3.2 Provides a curriculum that includes a set of essential knowledge and skills in each content area;
- 3.3 Aligns curriculum with clearly defined expectations for student learning across subject areas and grade levels;
- 3.4 Ensures that the curriculum reflects a commitment to equity, an appreciation of diversity, recognition of different ways of learning, and challenges each student to excel;
- 3.5 Develops written curriculum guides and support materials that serve as a basis for implementing the curriculum;
- 3.6 Promotes in the curriculum the active involvement of students in the learning process, including opportunities to explore application of higher order thinking skills and to investigate new approaches in applying their learning;
- 3.7 Gathers, analyzes, and uses data and research in making curriculum choices; and
- 3.8 Provides a balance of educational experiences through the curriculum that is based on knowledge of human growth and development, and relies on sound learning principles.

Standard 4 Instructional Design

A quality system develops and employs instructional strategies and activities in support of student achievement of the expectations for learning defined by the curriculum.

Quality System Indicators

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 4.1 Analyzes and uses the results of assessments of student learning to improve instructional design and effectiveness;
- 4.2 Designs and employs instructional strategies and activities that are research-based and reflective of best practice;
- 4.3 Aligns the Instructional design, including strategies and action plans, with the system's mission and expectations for student learning;
- 4.4 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning;
- 4.5 Implements an instructional design that provides all students with instruction that stimulates and enhances intellectual and creative development of higher order thinking skills and requires students to apply their learning; and
- 4.6 Provides a comprehensive program of information and media services that are aligned with its beliefs, mission and goals.

Standard 5 Assessment, Measurement, and Effectiveness Results

A quality system uses effective and continuous performance management systems for assessing, aligning, and improving student learning and operation performance, including organizational and instructional effectiveness, at all levels and areas of the system.

Quality System Indicators

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 5.1 Establishes key indicators and performance expectations for student learning;
- 5.2 Develops and implements a comprehensive system for assessing student progress based on clearly defined student results for learning;
- 5.3 Establishes and provides a comprehensive assessment system that includes current data that includes a profile of student performance, community characteristics, system characteristics, and stakeholder perceptions of the system (staff and stakeholder);
- 5.4 Employs an assessment system that provides data for making informed decisions for continuous improvement;
- 5.5 Conducts a periodic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness as a basis for improving the system and schools; and
- 5.6 Communicates assessment results to all stakeholders.

Standard 6 Resources

A quality system has qualified staff that is supported by the financial and physical resources necessary to fulfill the vision, mission and goals of the system.

Quality System Indicators

Financial Resources

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 6.1 Maintains financial accounts in accordance with accepted accounting procedures and are audited annually; (Note: The report of the annual audit is on-site and available to evaluators.)
- 6.2 Secures income from all regular sources that is sufficient to support all regular expenditures and to assure the continuity and stability of services;
- 6.3 Manages debt service or lines of credit in such ways as to assure that fiscal responsibility remains under the control of system authority;
- 6.4 Maintains and monitors a balance sheet that describes the overall financial operations and financial condition of the system; and
- 6.5 Develops and implements an annual budget that provides the resources to support the beliefs, mission, and educational programs of each school.

Human Resources

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 6.6 Employs an administrative head of the system that has earned a graduate degree from a regionally accredited or federal or state sanctioned institution with 18 hours in administration and/or supervision as a part of, or in addition to, the degree, or meets the legal qualifications of the state in which employed;
- 6.7 Employs system level administrative and supervisory staff members having responsibilities for instructional services that have earned a graduate degree from a regionally accredited or federal or state sanctioned institution with 18 hours in administration and/or supervision as a part of, or in addition to, the degree, or meets the legal qualifications of the state in which employed;
- 6.8 Develops and maintains a remuneration plan for all employees;
- 6.9 Maintains staffing that is sufficient to meet the vision, mission and goals of the system; and
- 6.10 Implements a system of employee evaluation and assessment that includes confidentiality for each staff evaluation or assessment.

Standard 7 Student Services

A quality system identifies and has a network of services that support the development and well-being, including the health and safety, of each student.

Quality System Indicators

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 7.1 Designs and provides student support services that meets the needs of students, are continually reviewed, and are aligned with the vision, beliefs, mission, and expectations for student learning;
- 7.2 Provides student services coordinated with the school, home, and community;
- 7.3 Develops and requires written emergency and security plan(s) that ensure the safety and care of students and stakeholders in the system;
- 7.4 Maintains secure, accurate and complete student records system in accordance with state and federal law and regulations;
- 7.5 Provides student services, as appropriate, in the areas of health, counseling, nutrition, safety, co-curricular, and transportation;
- 7.6 Promotes the development of student decision-making skill, ethical and lawful conduct, and responsible citizenship; and
- 7.7 Employs a process for developing and implementing written guidelines for student conduct and attendance that is communicated to students, parents, and staff.

Standard 8 Staff and Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

A quality system develops and supports organizational patterns or structures that promote effective communications and relationships between and among the schools, stakeholders and system.

Quality System Indicators

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 8.1 Provides members of the staff with the information they need concerning students, parents, school operations, and employment status;
- 8.2 Demonstrates staff morale where staff reflects a positive attitude toward the system, schools, and stakeholders;
- 8.3 Ensures that communications among and between system staff, stakeholders and schools are clear and effective;
- 8.4 Maintains constructive and mutually supportive relationships among and between all levels of the system;
- 8.5 Provides evidence of communications with other appropriate agencies such as public or mental health, physicians, and other related professionals;
- 8.6 Ensures that records and other correspondence defining students' accomplishments are accurate and consistent with professional standards;
- 8.7 Involves staff in the process of designing of professional development programs;

- 8.8 Provides professional development for staff that support the overall goals and action plans for the system, including building knowledge, skills, and potential for a high level of performance; and
- 8.9 Ensures that no form of bias or prejudice is practiced or sanctioned.

Standard 9 Physical Facilities

A quality system has the necessary resources to provide the facilities, sites and equipment for the educational programs and services to be fully implemented throughout the system and individual schools.

Quality System Indicators

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 9.1 Maintains compliance with applicable local, state, and federal law, standards, and regulations;
- 9.2 Ensures that the system sites, facilities, and equipment are maintained to provide an environment that is healthy and safe for all occupants; and
- 9.3 Has a process in place that includes plans and implementation for maintaining and improving the system sites, facilities, and equipment.

Standard 10 Continuous Process of Educational Improvement

A quality system establishes, implements and monitors a continuous process of educational improvement clearly focused on student performance.

Quality System Indicators

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 10.1 Develops and implements a strategic plan, aligned with the vision, mission and beliefs of the system, to guide improvement efforts throughout the system;
- 10.2 Engages stakeholders in the development and implementation of plans and processes for continuous improvement;
- 10.3 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that:
 - articulates the direction and purpose the system and its schools are pursuing for the future (vision);
 - provides a rich description of the current conditions with a focus on student learning (profile);
 - identifies what actions system personnel will take to improve student learning (plan); and
 - documents what has been accomplished and uses the results to inform what happens next (results).
- 10.4 Ensures that each school is engaged in a planning process with improvement goals that complement the system vision and goals;
- 10.5 Monitors compliance with accreditation standards by each school in the system;

- 10.6 Maintains continuity and collaborative planning among the elementary, middle and secondary levels in improvement efforts;
- 10.7 Provides professional development for system and school personnel to help them implement improvement goals and strategies;
- 10.8 Monitors and makes progress in meeting goals and standards for student performance that take into account those required by state and federal agencies; and
- 10.9 Communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders.