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AN ANALYSIS OF ACCREDITATION PROCESSES,
QUALITY CONTROL CRITERIA, HISTORICAL EVENTS,
AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education
in the Department of Educational Research, Technology, and Leadership
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Major Professor: Barbara A. Murray

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent student performance has been influenced by historical events, legislative mandates, and accreditation processes. This study consists of comparing the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation processes with those of the Association of Christian Schools International. In completing this qualitative study, the following procedures were implemented: Related research was used to provide a background of the role that historical events, legislation, and accreditation processes have on student performance; data were collected to establish time line shifts in an historical perspective.

The data collected included assessment, accountability, high school drop out rates, high school graduation rates, academic readiness for higher education, standardized testing, grade inflation, acceleration of dual enrollment and advanced placement courses, and national SAT and ACT averages. Data were also collected from historical record of accreditation processes, which included standards, teacher certification requirements, committee responsibilities, visiting team responsibilities, and self-study materials.

As a result of content analysis, the researcher decided to focus on three key areas that were integral to the study. The three categories identified in the review of literature were used to analyze the content of these events and processes. The categories were: (a) Student Performance, (b) Historical Events, and (c) SACS and ACSI Accreditation Processes. The following results were obtained from this research. Findings indicated that a criterion-based accreditation process potentially results in more consistent student performance outcomes than an open-ended process.

In Honor of my wife, Jennifer
and my daughters Lauren, Whitney, Emily, & Sophie

All Glory to God, without whom I would not have made it this far.
“Where do *we* go from here?”

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There are many people I wish to thank, for I owe them a debt of gratitude for their constant support and encouragement throughout this process. Dr. Kenneth Murray, Dr. Grant Hayes, and Dr. Rosemarye Taylor have each made a major contribution to my life as my professors and mentors. Their role has been vital to my continued success, and I thank them for their knowledge and suggestions that helped guide this study. I extend my deepest gratitude to my major professor, Dr. Barbara Murray, who served as my dissertation chair and advisor. Her belief in my ideas guided, supported, and inspired me to continue over the hurdles.

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“Whoever thinks that any educational problem is permanently solved, deludes himself and misleads others, for problems of education, like problems of philosophy, are always and must be in the process of solution.” -Charles H. Thurber, *The School Review*, 1898

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CHAPTER 1 THE PROBLEM AND ITS CLARIFYING COMPONENTS

Introduction

Critics of education historically have placed the burden of the nation's failures on its schools. Historical records have documented a plethora of policy implementations that have resulted in a shift of standards leading to an abundance of educational reforms (Yudof, Kirp, & Levin, 1992). The onset and growth of compulsory schooling brought unexpected challenges that have continued to evolve in 21st century schools.

Education in Colonial America was focused on preparing students for college. In 1635 the Boston Latin School was established to prepare students for higher education. The following year Harvard College was founded, giving students in the Massachusetts Bay Colony that opportunity. By the late 1800s, a vocational curriculum was added. The early 1900s brought still another focus, which emphasized a general education (Boroughs, Foster, & Salyer, 1964). The American public high school was trying to incorporate all three of these priorities but was not successful. In 1932, the Progressive Education Association sponsored the largest educational study of its time, called the Eight-Year Study (D. Tanner & L. Tanner, 2007). The purpose of this research was to discover the shortcomings of secondary schools and the disunity of their curricula with respect to societal expectations (D. Tanner & L. Tanner). The study resulted in the publication of the Secondary School Evaluative Criteria in 1940. This intense evaluative instrument detailed a rigorous method of accreditation which was incorporated into the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE). The NSSE revised the Criteria every ten

years. It was not challenged until 1980 when new leaders thought that school evaluations should focus on the processes that led to desired outcomes (Stoops, 2007).

Prior to the 1930s, high school attendance was not the norm. With the onset of the Great Depression, however, high school students were encouraged to stay in school, as jobs were scarce and hard to secure (Yudof, Kirp, & Levin, 1992). A few decades later, the National Defense Education Act of 1958 caused another of the 20th century's monumental shifts, this in response to the Russian's Sputnik mission. Educational critics felt vindicated and warned of a Communist takeover. The finger of blame once again was pointed at supposed deficiencies in the math and science curriculum of America's high schools and their lack of classroom rigor (Bracey, 2003).

The educational history of the United States is replete with legislative policy and educational acts such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the Bilingual Education Act, and copious other leading landmark studies that have impacted the nation's educational systems. Many other national reforms have resulted in numerous movements and ever-changing methods of assessing school performance and accountability. To this end, several major accrediting bodies have grown in strength and popularity and have emerged on the scene with the purpose of establishing the foundational expectations of a quality school system.

The National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) was organized in 1933 as the Cooperative Study of Secondary School Standards. The main objective of the organization was to develop effective instruments to evaluate schools and a systematic

process to assess school effectiveness in order to promote continuous growth and progressive improvement (Fitzpatrick, 2002). Six regional accrediting bodies were affiliated with NSSE. They were the: Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Northwest Association of Schools and of Colleges and Universities, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

The standards of assessment and quality control used by these major accrediting bodies were the focus of this research. They were compared and contrasted to the standards of an international accrediting body known as the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). ACSI is the largest faith-based accrediting body in the world. The standards and policies of these organizations have changed throughout the years as public policy and educational reforms have dictated. The researcher attempted to show to what extent historical events, legislation, and quality control models have guided the implementation of accreditation processes in the nation's educational systems and have impacted student performance.

Theoretical Framework

W. Edwards Deming was considered the father of the modern quality movement. Deming's work dates back to post-World War II when he helped the Japanese rebuild their industry. His culture of Total Quality Management (TQM) once had the misperception likened to a quality control inspector whose job it was to find faulty parts

and equipment (Deming, 1982). Deming's design, however, was associated with a long-term organizational-wide effort to create a culture that facilitated quality goods and services (Gordon, 1996). Deming's framework of Total Quality Management guided this research design. Deming found that most deficiencies in programs were due to system problems rather than personnel inadequacies (Posavac & Carey, 2003). He also claimed that a majority of problems in organizations were due to limitations in procedures or designs (Deming, 1993).

Deming developed a cyclical approach to improve quality management and growth. His design was known as the "Deming Cycle," which involved a process called "Plan-Do-Study-Act" (PDSA). This quality improvement model consisted of four repetitive steps that led to ongoing evaluation and analysis for continuous improvement and learning. The origin can be traced back to Walter Shewhart who developed a similar concept in the 1920s. Deming modified Shewhart's design to his PDSA model.

The accreditation processes that were the focus of this research were methods of quality control management and standards evaluation of best practices. Total Quality Management has been described as including people who want to do good work. Hackman and Wageman claimed that high quality is actually cheaper to produce than low quality (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Deming's work is easily applicable to a research based educational setting that requires the maintenance of continuous improvement. The emphasis of TQM is workforce involvement and participation, which are evident in the self-study portion of the accreditation process. It also requires teaming and collaboration as an essential component of continuous quality improvement. Appropriate accreditation

models have required teaming, collegiality, and collaboration on the part of the school and its staff and faculty as vital parts of the self-study prior to the visit of the Quality Review Team.

A criterion-based accreditation process uses appropriate benchmarks to determine suitable student outcomes. The theoretical framework of TQM, using PDSA, was the basis upon which this analysis, which sought to provide a model of continuous improvement and worker empowerment, was compared.

Purpose of the Study

The SACS and ACSI accrediting bodies were selected because of the processes each required. SACS began with a highly structured and established set of criterion-based standards, which have evolved into a more flexible open-ended review. ACSI was selected for its process, which values a highly structured set of criteria and has continued that structure into the present. The ACSI model most closely resembles the old SACS model of accreditation and quality control. This study was conducted in an attempt to analyze the various shifts in accreditation processes in association with historical events, legislative mandates, and student performance trends. National data concerned with student performance on standardized tests from SACS and ACSI schools were analyzed to determine trends that aligned with the aforementioned historical events, legislative mandates, performance trends, and accreditation processes. The purpose of this study was to trace the historical events, educational trends, and legislative policies that have impacted accreditation processes and student performance. How student achievement has

been influenced as a result of accreditation changes and updates was also investigated. The present study was conducted to examine historical trends, legislative mandates, and quality control measures, such as accreditation processes, and whether they paralleled student performance trends.

Statement of the Problem

To date, research concerned with student outcomes as a result of appropriate accreditation processes, has not been explored. Throughout the process of an evolving educational system, student achievement has been impacted by accreditation demands. Accreditation standards often have been driven by accountability and reform movements, which are dictated and guided by educational law and policy. The criteria by which educational systems have been evaluated has been modified in response to the formulation of new policies and laws. The goal of this research was to reveal the paradigm shifts that have impacted educational legislation and resulted in a pendulum shift in accreditation standards and student performance.

D. Tanner and L. Tanner (1980) found that a succession of shifting demands and priorities, imposed upon the schools during different epochs of social crisis, has resulted in curriculum imbalance and fragmentation. In their research, they further discovered that curricular change largely develops as a result of improvisation and trends and can result in a culture that responds to counter-reforms and shifting priorities (D. Tanner & L. Tanner, 1995). A further goal of the study was to determine if modifications in accreditation standards, due to national guidelines and policy changes, have resulted in

appropriate evaluation criterion systems. The focus of the research was on the comparison of two high school accreditation systems, their similarities and differences, and their respective strengths and weaknesses.

Definition of Terms

Following are definitions of terms used in this study:

Accreditation--An ongoing process of meeting standards, continuous improvement, and quality assurance demonstrated through internal and external review.

Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)--The largest faith-based accrediting organization in the United States focused on assuring quality Christian education by setting standards of excellence, encouraging a continuous process of assessment, and an ongoing institutional development (ACSI School Accreditation Manual, 2002).

Best practices--Actions, processes, or interventions that are based in research or supported by results and are most likely to achieve the desired goal or performance level (Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools, 2007).

Facilitator--Individuals trained to guide schools through the accreditation process.

National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE)--A research based organization that assists in defining the standards for quality school systems (Fitzpatrick, 2002).

Quality School Indicators--The practices, processes, or products required of a school as they relate to meeting accreditation standards (Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools, 2007).

Peer Review Team/Visiting Team--A group of qualified peer educators whose responsibility it is to visit the school in order to measure and identify the institutions strengths, weaknesses, problems and solutions.

Performance Indicators--An index of measures used to gauge the levels of performance or effectiveness for the purpose of monitoring results (Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools, 2007).

School accreditation--A voluntary method of quality assurance that engages the entire school in a process of continuous self-evaluation, reflection, and improvement. This process involves an external review committee, which provides constructive feedback on commendations and recommendations for change, the goal of which is to verify and improve educational quality.

School effectiveness--Research-based practices that impact student performance and the organizational conditions of improving schools (Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools, 2007).

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)--One of six regional accrediting bodies affiliated with the NSSE (Fitzpatrick, 2002).

Standards--The seven established qualitative conditions for excellence required of all SACS accredited schools (Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools, 2007).

Student performance--Knowledge, skills, or attitudes demonstrated by a student (Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools, 2007).

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide this study:

1. To what extent have historical events and trends impacted federal, state, and local legislation related to educational standards?
2. To what extent have legislation mandates and policy movements influenced accreditation processes?
3. To what extent have the trends related to accreditation processes paralleled the trends of student performance?

Methodology

In completing this study, the methodology used included a thorough historical analysis of events and trends and the alignment of educational processes in response to changing societal conditions. Legislation and policy movements and their influence on the educational standards were examined. The research and evaluation included summaries and contrasts of the standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Association of Christian Schools International. This researcher compared the implementation of standards and provided an analysis of current criteria as contrasted with historical record. The data were collected using qualitative research methods. Content analysis was performed on archival data derived from regional and international accreditation standards and process documents. Approval for the study was granted by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Central Florida (Appendix A). Only after approval was received was the study initiated.

Sources of Data

The data for this study were collected from regional and international accrediting agencies. The documentation included materials from the Southern Association of College and Schools (SACS). In 2006, SACS joined forces with the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) under the new accreditation umbrella of AdvancEd. Documentation from AdvancEd was evaluated as part of the study. Available documents were compared against the resources collected from the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). Research documents, such as the National Study of School Evaluation's Indicators of Schools of Quality, guided the work. The researcher formulated a content analysis comparison of criterion-based and open-ended accreditation processes.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was divided into two levels. A six-category framework, identified by the researcher during the review of literature in Chapter 2, was used for initial analysis. The categories were: (a) SACS History and Processes, (b) ACSI History and Processes, (c) Quality Control Models, (d) Significant Historical Events and Legislative Mandates, (e) Student Performance Trends and Issues, and (f) Critics of Education.

In the second phase of analysis; student performance was compared against historical events, legislative policies, and criterion-based and open-ended accreditation

processes. Critical issues were subcategorized and evaluated accordingly to determine the strengths and challenges of each accreditation design.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to an analysis of legislative policy and historical events that may have impacted student performance and the accreditation processes of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Association of Christian Schools International. A comparison of their previous and current models of evaluation served to create a summative evaluation of their ability to foster student achievement and quality control. Student performance outcomes were also researched and evaluated against accreditation processes.

Limitations

Qualitative research is a broad approach to the study of social phenomena and one which is naturalistic, interpretive, and uses multiple methods of inquiry (Denzin, 1994). Overall, qualitative research has typically had a narrower focus than quantitative research. It can, however, reveal details, processes at work, and the important role of individuals (Rossman & Rallis, 2003) relative to the problem being studied.

The focus of this research was primarily an historical analysis. The results of this study were limited by the ability to identify documented accreditation processes dating back to the onset of regional standards implementation. The results were also limited by the researcher's personal experience and hands-on interaction with and interpretation of

accreditation processes. Every attempt was made to reduce any potential influence on the investigation created by expectations of certain outcomes. This was accomplished by establishing criteria to be examined based on a review of the literature.

The ability to access the quality of student outcomes, as aligned with varying accreditation processes, may also have been a limiting factor. High school drop-out rates and changes in the SAT and ACT tests could have affected the outcome of certain summaries and assumptions. Through direct observation and participation in numerous SACS and ACSI accreditation processes, this researcher was able to bring a level of knowledge and expertise to the data analysis process that would reduce the limitations that could have impeded the validity and accuracy of the study.

Assumptions

The specific assumptions of this study were as follows:

1. It was assumed that appropriate accreditation standards provide an appropriate baseline for determining a quality school.
2. It was assumed that accreditation standards and quality control are often out of the control of educators due to governmental mandates and legislative policy.
3. It was assumed that historical events and trends often dictate the educational reforms that are enacted.

Significance of the Study

Accreditation processes have been a fluid work in progress since the inception of accrediting associations. Schools have been held accountable to their stakeholders for their ability to produce positive student outcomes. In an age when accrediting agencies have been pressured by the needs of society and the demands of government, it has been vital that schools are held accountable for the work of real education and not the whims of trends or fads. The present research was thought to be potentially useful to educators who must work with the respective accreditation models, one of which has moved to broad-based and open ended processes; the other to a well-defined and newly strengthened, criterion-based process. This researcher hoped to shed some light on the development of an educational framework that would impact quality control. Investigated in the study were trends in accreditation processes, historical events, and legislative mandates in order to make recommendations to improve quality control processes. The present study examined historical trends, legislative mandates, and quality control measures, such as accreditation processes, and whether they paralleled student performance trends.

Organization of Study

The problem, its design components, and methodology were introduced in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature, related research, and relevant information used in the formation of this study. Chapter 3 presents an analysis of the time line shifts in SACS and ACSI accreditation processes and to what extent historical

events, legislation, and policy have impacted the outcome of student performance.

Chapter 4 offers a summary and discussion of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for educators and future research.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents a review of related literature on the history and accreditation processes of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). The present study was focused on how student-learning outcomes have been influenced by the demands of accreditation processes and the extent to which those processes have been influenced by historical events and trends along with legislative mandates and policies.

This literature review is presented in six sections. Section 1 provides an overview of literature related to the history and processes of SACS. Section 2 focuses on literature related to the history and processes of ACSI. Section 3 presents quality control models and the theoretical framework of Total Quality Management. Section 4 highlights the significant historical events and legislative mandates that have impacted educational policy reform. Section 5 details student performance trends and learning outcomes as determined in national and state reports. Section 6 summarizes the concerns of the critics of education and the need for good quality control methods.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

History and Processes

The University of Michigan began approving certain secondary schools in 1871 through a process of on-site visits. Their efforts determined which schools were producing students who had been adequately prepared for college work. Many other universities soon adopted this practice, such as the University of California in 1884 (Stoops, 2007). Six regional accreditation commissions were developed over the next several decades. The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) was founded in 1895 and accredited schools in Arkansas, Arizona, Colorado, the Department of Defense, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, New Mexico, the Navajo Nation, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Virginia, Wisconsin, West Virginia, and Wyoming. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) was established in Atlanta, Georgia on November 6, 1895. SACS also established a commission on secondary school accreditation in 1912 and accredited schools in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. The Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NASC) was founded and began accrediting schools in 1917 and created a secondary school commission in 1927. NASC accredited schools in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA) was established in 1887 but did not form a commission for secondary schools until 1922. MSA accredited schools in New York,

New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and American schools in Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), although established in 1885, did not begin accrediting private secondary schools until 1927 and accredited schools from Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Public schools were added to NEASC later. California and Hawaii separated from the Northwest Association in 1962 and formed the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and began accrediting secondary schools (Stoops). WASC also accredited schools in Guam, American Samoa, Micronesia, Palau, and the Northern Marianas Islands.

The charter member schools of SACS included the University of North Carolina, whose President, George Winston, was the first president of SACS. Other member schools included, Vanderbilt University, University of the South, University of Mississippi, Washington and Lee University, and Duke University (Policies and Procedures of the Commission on Colleges, 1972). James Kirkland, Chancellor of Vanderbilt University, was the first secretary and treasurer from 1895 to 1908. The purpose of the organization was to organize southern schools and colleges for cooperation and mutual assistance. It was also the organization's intent to elevate the standards of academics, create a uniformity of college entrance requirements, and help develop preparatory schools so that colleges would not need to remediate students that were not ready for their classrooms (Policies and Procedures of the Commission on Colleges, 1972).

The period of 1893 through the end of World War I was an extraordinary time in American educational history. Many of the basic ideas of education, which have continued to the time of the present study, took root at this crucial period of time (Miller, 1998). The National Education Association published a report on curriculum reform under the direction of then Harvard President, Charles Eliot. Eliot led the group that would later form the “Committee of Ten” who eventually debated the issue of uniform entrance requirements (Miller).

After the Civil War, when the U.S. became more industrialized, there arose the need for more education. In order to pay for public education in the 1870s, it was decided that public taxes would support secondary education. Crossen (2003) explained it as a timeline of progression to a higher level of compulsory education and how higher education has evolved into not just an option but a necessity (Crossen). A growing population and compulsory attendance laws saw American public schools grow from 7 million in 1870 to 18 million by 1910. The number of public high schools grew from 500 to more than 10,000 (Miller, 1998). Teaching began to be seen as a profession for the first time. Trained, degreed teachers, with graduate qualifications, began to replace the schools’ clergy and tutors. These educators began to see the need to bring higher standards and greater order to their profession (Miller). Few areas of life in the South needed organizing more than the educational system. Many believed that the improvement of education was key to all other economic, social, and cultural progress. The struggle faced by the early founders of SACS was in how they could bring order and build relationships between the colleges and high schools of the region.

The earliest form of school accreditation began in 1870 when the University of Michigan certified the best public schools in order to identify college-ready students. Up to this point, most college preparatory work was completed in the private sector (Miller, 1998). When the public schools began to take on this role, they created a decline in private schooling (Miller). The public schools, however, were not prepared to assume responsibility for this level of training, and many students failed to qualify for college admissions. Thus, one of the primary goals of SACS and its founders, to instill cooperation and mutual assistance in order to achieve mutual progress, continued to be a high priority.

The idea of preparatory schools within the colleges was consuming much of the universities' time and budgets. It was at this point that Vanderbilt University decided to abolish its preparatory department and focus on training students that were ready for college-level work. By doing so, school officials were able to build an association of schools whose standards could be trusted to prepare students who would not have to enroll in remedial courses (Miller, 1998). In many cases, the South's extreme poverty only made matters worse. Most SACS members realized that the deficiencies were much greater than academic preparation, as students were burdened with greater economic, social, and cultural problems as well.

The period between 1895 and 1920 became known as the "Age of Standards" as described in five SACS bylaws of fundamental principals (Miller, 1998):

1. No college offering preparatory instruction in any subject, as part of its college organization, would be eligible for membership.

2. No college could hold membership that did not require written entrance exams, publish the exams and submit copies of them to the SACS secretary.
3. The exams were to be used to set minimum requirements for admission to college, using the same standard for each college that held membership in SACS.
4. No college that admitted students under the age of 15 was granted membership.
5. Preparatory schools conferring degrees were not eligible for membership.

Guy Snavely, historian of the Association, saw the slow growth of the early years as the result of rigid membership policies. The bylaws made it impossible for other colleges to join other than the original six. Few institutions were capable of meeting the requirements and others did not want to accept the regulations stipulated. This limited the membership, but limited membership did not prove to be long-lived. Increased growth brought conflict of goals and practices with changes in form and function.

In 1906, the Carnegie Foundation introduced the “wave of the future.” The Foundation published a report suggesting ways to standardize high school achievement and called it the “unit of credit” (Miller, 1998). Each credit was to consist of 120 hours of instruction. The Foundation further recommended that 14 credits should be attained by each student seeking to enter college (Miller). Up to this point, anything from 90 to 200 hours of instruction was the norm, and many schools only required 10 units for college admission. The adoption of the Carnegie Unit in 1910 was a leap forward in the process of the Association’s standardization of schools. Each state was requested to publish a list

of schools that met these minimum standards. The “Southern List of Accredited Schools” was then compiled from this list. SACS was beginning the process of transforming itself into an accrediting agency. In 1912 the Southern Association saw the need to develop a commission that would oversee the region’s secondary schools. The creation of the Commission on Secondary Schools was approved at the annual meeting in Nashville. Five years later, in 1917, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education was formed to address the needs of colleges and universities and in the interest of admissions standards, faculty improvement, and subjects offered (Hunter, 1995).

World War I and the influenza epidemic kept the Association from meeting in 1917 and 1918. In December of 1919 association members met and produced the first set of standards for colleges. In the next year, a list of approved member colleges was established. A second list of non-member colleges that did not meet the Association’s standards, but came close to meeting minimum requirements, was also determined. The second list was created due to the vast expansion of secondary schools and the growing need for qualified high school teachers. The second-rate institutions, that did not meet accreditation standards, trained a vast majority of secondary teachers.

By the 1920s, membership in SACS became a valuable educational and social asset in the higher education community. The rigid goals, however, made it nearly impossible for most institutions to gain membership. Thus, at least for the early years, the membership of SACS was largely based on truly exceptional, prestigious universities that held to the highest standards and expectations. Throughout the 20th century, SACS grew to a place of tremendous influence and prominence in American education in its

relationship to the needs of society, historical events, and governmental legislation. Through two World Wars, the Great Depression, and the stock market crash of 1929, education was increasingly pressured to provide marketable skills for economic survival (Miller, 1998). Members found the restricted scope of the Association's criteria too narrow, too limited, and too confining. The Association was not responding quickly enough to rapid social change. Many believed that the Association's standards had to expand to include a broader, more inclusive approach to acceptable educational goals and outcomes. The South was the poorest area of the nation at this point in history, yet the standards of SACS were more rigorous than those of any other regional accrediting agency. Some wondered if separate standards could be created for different kinds of schools. Kirkland, Chancellor of Vanderbilt University, argued that different standards meant lower standards. Denominational schools in particular, claimed that SACS membership weakened their institutional integrity. Kirkland was quick to remind the membership that participation was voluntary and that anyone could leave at any time if they considered membership contrary to their interests.

In 1932, the Progressive Education Association sponsored the Eight-Year Study (D. Tanner & L. Tanner, 2007). The secondary school commissions of the regional associations set out to establish standards for secondary school accreditation. The purpose of this research was to discover the shortcomings of secondary schools and the disunity of their curricula with respect to societal expectations (Tanner & Tanner). The study culminated in 1940 and resulted in the publication of the *Secondary School Evaluative Criteria*, in which hundreds of the parts of a secondary school were organized and listed.

It was a widely respected collection due to its intense rigor. This very detailed evaluative instrument detailed a rigorous method of accreditation which was incorporated into the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE). The NSSE revised the “Criteria,” as it came to be known, every 10 years. Accreditation had undergone an intensive re-examination and revision. Along with the *Evaluative Criteria for Secondary Schools*, first published in 1940, a new publication guided the expectations for elementary schools. It was called the *Elementary Evaluative Criteria*, and was first published in 1949. Both of these documents were the work of the National Study of School Evaluation and helped to solidify the expectations of quality schools and to firm up the accreditation process. The NSSE *Evaluative Criteria* publications were not intended to set standards but profiled the characteristics of quality schools (NSSE, 1987). They offered a systematic process to assess the effectiveness of a school and encouraged continuous growth.

There was much opposition to elementary accreditation, and it was not until 1958 at the annual meeting in Louisville, Kentucky that the Association authorized the accreditation of elementary schools (Miller, 1998). Many schools found that the process was so difficult and time consuming that they did not try to accomplish it. For those that took on this daunting task, the rewards, prestige, and credibility were immeasurable.

In 1949, the president of Talladega College, Dr. Adam Beittel, presented a speech entitled “Knocking at Your Door” at the annual meeting of SACS. He was, in effect, requesting admission for historically black colleges. The 1954 Supreme Court Civil Rights decision assisted this process in moving along at a faster pace (Hunter, 1995). Black educators wanted one standard and a unified association. They admitted, however,

that this move would be difficult for some of their weaker institutions whose walls of segregation had kept their uninspired and unmotivated academic structure well hidden (Miller, 1998). Historically black colleges were faced with two major problems, the lack of quality teachers and sufficient finances, both of which would continue to plague their condition. In 1957, the Association admitted its first black colleges and in 1961 abolished its separate approved list for black colleges (Miller). Black educators continued to push the Association for further inclusion and greater involvement. In a 1961 speech before the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, William McEniry, Dean of Stetson University, thanked those in attendance for one of the most valuable educational experiences of his life. He was referring to the interracial cooperation and integration of all southern educators and the support for one of the SACS founding assumptions--that contact between educators would lead to greater understanding of each other's situation. He recognized that white Southerners might also find this situation a beneficial educational experience (Miller).

During the decade of the 1960s, the government began to play an increasingly larger role in the educational process. One example of this happened when the North Carolina legislature passed a bill in 1963 which regulated visiting speakers at state supported colleges (Miller, 1998). This law was known as the Speaker Ban Law and was aimed at prohibiting speakers who promoted the cause of the Communist party. SACS was drawn in to this controversy. The association found itself "caught" between colleges that expected their support and the government who determined their status as an accrediting body and who awarded financial aid to North Carolina's regionally accredited

schools. A compromise was finally reached but only after the threat of lost accreditation. SACS was concerned with the government's influence over free speech and the college's freedom from unacceptable political influence over internal affairs. From this time forward, the power and influence of SACS continued to grow to new levels and assumed a role that was void of the government's input and control.

The second half of the 20th century saw the evolution of accreditation and the federal government's expanded role in shaping education. The Association's focus on philosophy and pedagogy, that had dominated the first half of the century, was still left unanswered. Many of the same issues and concerns lingered and had been left unsolved. Supporters and critics of accreditation hindered its growth and delayed its eventual rise to prominence. Critics complained that accreditation standards were too focused on quantitative measures such as number of books in the library, salaries paid, and endowments raised. Society was increasingly concerned with individualism and creativity and many institutions wanted the freedom to nurture their own uniqueness. They felt that regulation by means of strict quantitative standards was stifling to their growth.

The accreditation process of the 1950s and 1960s led many institutions to think of it as a project of finality rather than a starting point. Once a school received accreditation status, it was required to file an annual report. Ongoing inspection visits did not take place. Schools were only visited if violations or failures were evident. This process led some institutions to slack off and slip in to mediocrity and conformity. There was little incentive for improvement or change. A more qualitative approach was eventually introduced and gained momentum, in large part, due to the proliferation of numerous new

accrediting bodies. This action prompted the formation of a new Committee on Standards and Policies. The committee proved to be the driving force behind the massive revision of policies and standards that was instituted in 1976 (Miller, 1998).

The Association's most significant growth came in the creation of the Elementary Commission in 1965. Up to this point, 72% of children in the South were attending elementary schools that SACS did not accredit or invite to become members. In addition, the majority of educators were teaching in these schools and had no voice in the educational process of setting standards and policy formulation or implementation. Many were beginning to recognize that the quality of early childhood education laid the groundwork for student development. Key areas of educational values, curriculum design, and instructional practices were recognized as crucial to education's social role. Henry Otto of the University of Texas reported in his speech, "The Elementary School of Tomorrow," that teaching tolerance, understanding, and appreciation was the solution to educational quality (Miller, 1998). Results of his research indicated that a quality early education was the answer to personal and political health and future progress. Educators were beginning to see the need for articulation through all levels of education. Colleges realized that they could only be as good as the high school students that came to them. High school teachers began to understand that they could only succeed as well as the quality of younger students that came to them.

The 1970s and early 1980s brought a phase of disturbance at all levels of education. Numerous reports at the local, state, regional, and national levels described the ill condition of American education. Each report focused on what the U.S. Department of

Education would eventually call “A Nation at Risk.” The public claimed that schools were not educating students to be successful in societal roles and called for improved standards and quality. Reports advocated increased accountability for student outcomes. Accreditation, with its emphasis on process and detail, was seen as the primary source of many of the nation’s educational problems. It was at this point, in 1979, that a new set of SACS standards, prompted by concerns about educational quality and the need for greater accountability, was introduced (Miller, 1998). The mid-1980s was a pivotal time period that re-introduced a greater emphasis on educational outcomes, student assessment, and institutional effectiveness. This approach focused on a process of continuous improvement and self-evaluation.

The NSSE Criteria was not challenged until 1980 when new leaders, of the post industrial age, thought that school evaluations should focus on the processes that led to desired outcomes rather than on hundreds of parts (Stoops, 2007). Moving from parts to results-oriented processes took accreditation in a totally new direction. It required training thousands of schools in a new method of accountability. Accreditation standards were also changed due to the accreditor’s opinion that progress had been stifled by maintaining the status quo. This policy shift caused schools to be evaluated based on the quality of their school improvement plans. Schools could not continue to simply meet minimum standards but were required to show progress and demonstrate continuous improvement in order to maintain accreditation. The 1987 Evaluation Criteria of Secondary Schools (Appendix B) had included detailed in-depth expectations of curriculum design, staff hiring, student activities, and facility expectations (National

Study of School Evaluation, 1987). The same was true of the middle and elementary school models of the NSSE in 1990, both of which included appropriate guidelines for evaluation (National Study of School Evaluation, 1990). The sixth and last edition of NSSE's Criteria was published in 1990. By 1997 all regional accreditation organizations were using the process-oriented format. A new edition of the NSSE *School Improvement Guide* was published in 1997. The focus of this data-driven and research-based guide was on student performance (Fitzpatrick, 1997). The previous methods of accreditation that had originated with the 1940 Eight-Year Study were no longer in effect.

The 1980s and early 1990s saw the publication of many more confrontational reports urging immense improvements in education. Accreditation continued to be the driving force behind accountability issues. Its changing aims and methods tried to keep pace and remain relevant to education, as education tried to become more relevant to societal needs and expectations. The SACS accreditation process underwent several changes through the 1990s that created minor improvements to refine its approach. Some would claim that these changes were not improvements at all and were nothing more than the cause of its decade-long slide into mediocre levels of quality control (McGhee, 2007). In the early 1990s, regional accrediting agencies placed a stronger emphasis on input and processes than on expected outcomes (Whittlesey, 2005). Throughout the decade, this situation changed quickly and often while regional accreditors began to shift their attention to outcome assessment and defining standards (Santiago, 2001).

Accrediting agencies at the college level were subject to the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) as mandated by the U.S. Department of Education.

CHEA has required that accrediting agencies have standards that address student learning outcomes. According to CHEA's 1998 policy manual, the purpose of an accrediting agency was to have standards that advanced academic quality and to plan for purposeful change and improvement (Whittlesey, 2005). According to CHEA, all six regional accrediting organizations required assessment of student learning. One of CHEA's requirements was that the accrediting agency provides a list of student learning outcomes to be achieved by students. These outcomes were required to address both a knowledge base and demonstration of skill. Palomba and Banta (1999) determined that two types of assessment methods, direct and indirect, should be used in evaluation. Direct methods were those that included pass rates for licensure, certification, and exit exams; research projects, presentations, theses, dissertations, oral defenses, performances, and portfolios (Palomba & Banta). Indirect methods were defined as signs that learning was occurring. Examples of indirect methods included students' self-evaluations, job placement rates, and career satisfaction.

The Southern Association's 1998 Criteria for Accreditation was an updated format and began the shift from Criteria for Accreditation to the Principles of Accreditation (McGhee, 2007). Minimum faculty standards were noted as one of the most significant revisions. Under the previous Criteria standards, faculty were required to have a major in their teaching field. At the community college level, faculty were required to have at least 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching discipline and hold at least a master's degree (McGhee). Wheelan, the head of SACS Commission on Colleges, described the next phase of standards which removed the mandate that faculty

must meet the 18 graduate hours and a master's degree (McGhee). The former credential requirements were now classified as "guidelines" and were no longer mandated. Many institutions continued to require appropriate credentials, but SACS did not. The familiar accreditation format had begun the shift from a criterion-based system to a broad, open-ended process and had diluted and, according to McGhee, degraded the former mandatory minimum faculty standards.

Another shift from principles to process produced yet another updated School Improvement Process Handbook in 1999. The goal was to move beyond input and process evaluation to a process, which focused on producing educated students (Stiltner, 1999). This new set of rules provided a framework for school improvement planning. It provided member schools with substantive action plans for the implementation of improved student performance (Stiltner). The plan focused on a five-year cycle, which included a planning phase, peer review phase, and implementation phase. The framework assisted schools in developing an action plan that focused on student learning and performance and consisted of three essential parts: The process to create action plans, the support to complete the work, and a monitoring process that focused on implementation (Stiltner).

Many of the previous standards had been declassified under the newer 2001 Principles of Accreditation format and were considered non-obligatory guidelines. While still considered as "best practice," they were no longer enforced once the 2001 principles took effect. The *Criteria for Accreditation* represented the philosophy and accreditation standards from the early 1980s through 2001. In December of 2001, SACS adopted a

significantly changed set of accreditation requirements contained in the *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement* (SACS, 2006). This shift from a criterion-based system to a principles-based system also initiated a new peer review process and a new project-based format used to identify new initiatives, which were intended to enhance the quality of education. During the 2005-2006 accreditation cycle, 156 institutions were going through the reaffirmation process. This transition from the *Criteria* to the *Principles* process of accreditation review, created an atmosphere of ambiguity and uncertainty for both schools, peer evaluators, and regional Commissions (SACS, 2006). The process required new definitions of accreditation terminology and a new peer review process. Member institutions encountered major issues such as, developing a new accreditation language, providing evidence-based analysis of compliance, engaging in a multi-tiered peer review process, and developing acceptable quality enhancement plans. Because the process was so new, there was a large learning curve among peer evaluators, institutions, and even Commissioners. Of the 156 schools that were evaluated in 2005-2006 school year, many were cited for non-compliance of standards. A total of 88% of the schools were cited for sub-standard faculty qualifications, 62% were cited for low levels of institutional effectiveness, 61% had poor general education competencies, 58% did not demonstrate approved learning outcomes, 55% were in non-compliance for their available resources, and 50% failed to produce an annual evaluation of their administrator (SACS, 2006). Throughout this process, regional accreditors claimed to have increased an emphasis on student learning outcomes as an indicator of institutional quality (Beno, 2004). The goal of accreditation, according to

Beno, was to evaluate institutional quality by producing student learning which was then evaluated by means of assessment of mission-appropriate learning objectives.

Between 2001 and 2006, the process changed once again from the Principles of Accreditation to the AdvancEd criteria that existed at the time of the present study. The faculty guidelines that had shifted to “best practices” status were then considered nothing more than a voluntary guideline. This 10-year process effectively reduced the former mandates to mere suggestions. SACS has made numerous revisions to its accreditation process, many of which transpired beginning in the late 1990s. During the period between 2001 and 2006, SACS was guided by its most recent set of standards that provided clear outcome-based fulfillment criteria (Public School Standards, 2005). These 10 standards are summarized as follows:

Standard 1, Belief and Mission, provides a focus for improving the performance of the students and the school. This standard is fulfilled by engaging stakeholders in collaborative processes that help define the school's purpose and direction with a focus on improving student learning. The vision, statement of beliefs, and mission are used as a guide to improve the overall operation of the school. Based on current research and best practices, the school reviews its vision, mission and beliefs on a regular basis, revises them, and communicates them to all stakeholders.

Standard 2, Governance and Leadership, promotes the capacity of stakeholders to improve learning by providing appropriate leadership, governance, and organization. This standard is fulfilled when the governing board adopts policies and procedures for the effective operation of the school. The governing board supports the administrative

leadership of the school and permits the administrative team to implement policies and procedures without interference. The leadership of the school must maintain a focus on student learning based on curriculum that is enacted, supported, and assessed. Leadership involves faculty and staff in collaborative decision-making and fosters ongoing professional development. Leadership is also responsible for the schools security and crisis management plan and influences all school activities.

Standard 3, Curriculum, requires that schools offer research-based materials that support best practices and define student-learning outcomes. This standard is fulfilled through a curriculum that is based on clearly defined expectations for student learning. A challenging curriculum ensures essential knowledge and skills and provides alignment with other subjects and grade levels. It challenges students to excel and recognizes their diversity and various learning styles. The staff is involved in curriculum evaluation and assures that appropriate developmental levels are reached. The curriculum should provide for the study of fine arts, physical education, and extra-curricular activities that are mission appropriate and of interest to the students.

Standard 4, Instruction, provides strategies to facilitate learning. Student performance is assessed frequently. This standard is fulfilled through strategies that are aligned with the school's mission and the expected outcomes for student learning. Sufficient time for student learning is allocated and a climate of teaching and learning is sustained. Through a variety of instructional strategies and learning activities, students are taught to acquire higher order thinking skills and how to apply those skills. Instruction accommodates for various learning styles. Schools award credit, at the high

school level, based on a minimum of 130 hours of instruction for each full credit. The school year consists of at least 175 days with a minimum of 25 hours of instruction per week.

Standard 5, Assessment and Evaluation, calls upon the school to evaluate student learning in order to improve curriculum and instruction. This standard is fulfilled by setting performance expectations for student learning. Data are collected to monitor and evaluate learning. These data are used in the decision making process to foster school improvement. Organizational effectiveness is evaluated and communicated to all stakeholders. The school identifies areas of improvement and aligns them with state and local performance requirements to effect change and meet curricular goals.

Standard 6, Resources, provides the criteria to determine sufficient human, financial, physical, and material resources to support the vision, mission, and goals. Human resources described the educational requirements of the administrator as one who has an earned graduate degree from an accredited institution including 18 semester hours in administration or supervision. The school is required to employ sufficient staff to meet the vision, mission, and goals of the school. Numbers of required administrators, guidance professionals, library or media specialists and support staff are based on the total number of students in each school. The specific requirements regarding required staff according to school size are presented in Appendix C.

This standard also requires that staff members hold earned bachelor's degrees from an accredited institution and have completed 12 semester hours of professional education courses. Personnel must also be teaching in their field of study and submit

transcripts that document the completion of 24 semester hours in their college major in order to teach in their assigned field. The school must also employ counselors and media specialists who have earned graduate degrees from an accredited school.

Teachers are required to earn a minimum of six semester hours of credit every five years of employment. There must also be an evaluation system in place which is used to improve teacher performance. Professional personnel must supervise paraprofessionals, and written policies are required for the hiring and assignment of substitute staff. Ongoing professional development should be prioritized and the master schedule should accommodate planning time and other supervisory responsibilities. Class sizes are to be consistent with state and federal guidelines.

In the area of financial resources, the school budget should support the vision, mission, and beliefs of the school and its programs and plans for improvement. A regularly scheduled audit monitors accounting systems. The head administrator is the highest paid employee of the school and controls all funds raised in the name of the school.

The physical resources of the school must be in compliance with all local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations. The campus is maintained with attention to health and safety of the students and staff. A plan for maintaining and improving the campus, facilities, and equipment is defined. This plan also takes into consideration the instructional and extracurricular programs.

Material resources are met through a comprehensive collection of media, books, reference sources, periodicals, in print and electronic formats. A minimum of 10 books

per student is required. The media center is required to provide training to attain maximum benefit and usage. An Internet usage policy must also be effectively communicated to parents and students.

Standard 7, Support Services for Student Learning, provides a comprehensive guidance program and other services that support the well being of students. Offering counseling, appraisal, staff consulting, referrals, post-secondary planning, and career planning fulfills this standard. It ensures that students have access to mentors and counselors and provides services for health, nutrition, safety, and transportation. Support Services also provide services for students with special needs. This standard assures that accurate and complete student records are kept secure.

Standard 8, Stakeholder Communications and Relationships, fosters effective communication and relationships with stakeholders. Creating partnerships to support student learning fulfills this standard. It ensures good communication, solicits parent skills, and monitors a healthy school climate. Communication of expected student learning outcomes and the results of school improvement efforts are also expected.

Standard 9, Citizenship, helps students develop civic, social, and personal responsibility. Fostering an environment that promotes honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, responsibility, citizenship, self-discipline, and respect fulfills the standard. It gives students the opportunity to develop good leadership, independence, and decision-making skills. Written guidelines for conduct are required as well as a monitoring system for student attendance and conduct.

Standard 10, Continuous Process of School Improvement, provides for implementation and monitoring of a process of improvement that is focused on student performance. This standard is fulfilled through a school improvement team. It provides opportunities for stakeholders to contribute to the school improvement plan. The process of improvement includes a description of the school's vision, the current conditions of student learning, what actions are necessary to improve student learning, and documentation of accomplishments and next steps. In addition, this standard provides for professional development of staff, monitors progress in meeting goals, and communicates results to stakeholders.

In April 2006, the Southern Association along with the North Central Association announced a unification of regions (Appendix D). SACS merged with NCA and together they formed the largest regional accreditation in the U.S. known as AdvancEd. Once combined, the two associations represented over 23,000 public and private schools in 30 states serving 15 million students (Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools, 2007). To be accredited, a school must have met high standards and have a clear vision and purpose. A rigorous curriculum taught through research-based methods must have been determined to support its educational programs. The school was also required to maintain a process of continuous improvement and implement a plan based on student performance with clear goals and documented growth. Schools were to be evaluated on a regular basis by a team of professionals. The team was to assist the school by validating compliance with standards and providing feedback and recommendations for future improvement (Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools).

The AdvancEd accreditation format, implemented for the 2007-2008 school year, gave SACS a revitalized process which focused on the school's Quality Enhancement Plan. The process was guided by the following seven accreditation standards that described a quality school (Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools, 2007):

Standard 1, Vision and Purpose, requires that a school establishes and communicates a plan and purpose for improving student performance and school effectiveness. Stakeholder input and support help define the vision and goals.

Standard 2, Governance and Leadership, addresses the policies and procedures of the governing board to ensure effective operation of the school, foster a positive learning community, and control school sponsored curricular and extracurricular activities.

Standard 3, Teaching and Learning, demands that the school provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement.

Standard 4, Documenting and Using Results, establishes the requirements for a comprehensive assessment system that uses results to guide improvement.

Standard 5, Resources and Support Systems, is focused on the school's having qualified staff, sufficient resources, appropriate guidance services to implement its plans, and a crisis management plan.

Standard 6, Stakeholder Communication and Relationships, seeks to ensure that the school provides information to students, parents, and stakeholders to foster effective understanding, support, and commitment.

Standard 7, Commitment to Continuous Improvement, calls for the school to implement and monitor the continuous improvement process and communicate the results.

The seven standards in use by SACS, at the time of the present study, have been presented under the new umbrella of AdvancEd. These new standards varied from the previous evaluative criteria presented in School Improvement Process (2002) and the 2005 Public School Standards, which dictated the required number of counselors, media specialists, and support staff (Public School Standards, 2005). The evaluative criteria and standards have changed from a criterion-based format of detailed analysis to a broad-based, open-ended process of self-evaluation. SACS also decided to remove faculty qualification requirements from their manual (FHEAP, 2007). Glen McGhee, Director of the Florida Higher Education Accountability Project, questioned the minimum faculty qualifications after reading the new report. His research raised the question as to whether SACS had given up and “thrown in the towel.” McGhee claimed that de-emphasis on faculty qualifications was contrary to the congressional mandate. He also found that many teachers, especially those in Florida, were teaching out of field. (FHEAP). This problem was more predominant in dual enrollment courses taught by high school teachers. McGhee also claimed that SACS had failed in its job of assuring the quality in schools that taxpayers expected.

There were three levels of accredited status within AdvancEd that could be conferred upon a school. “Accredited” status means that the school has met the standards and requirements of the process and any recommendations offered by a peer review team

do not deter from the quality of the educational program or violate AdvancEd standards and policies. Schools who have received recommendations must act on them and report their progress within a two-year period. “Accredited Warned” status means that the school failed to meet one or more of the standards or requirements of the process. The resulting recommendations identified serious distractions to the quality of the educational program. This status could also include violations of AdvancEd standards and policies. The school is given one year to make required changes and report its progress. The report is reviewed and a decision is made whether or not to remove the school from “warning” status. If the school remains on “warning” status, another report must be filed in a year. If the recommendations have been corrected at the end of the second year, “warning” status may be removed. If the school has not addressed the recommendations in a sufficient manner at the end of the second year, the accreditation status will change to “Accredited Probationary.” “Accredited Probationary” status means that the school had been “Accredited Warned” for two years and has failed to make progress on recommendations. This status could also mean that the school has deliberately and unnecessarily violated AdvancEd standards and policies, and these violations have degraded their educational program. An “Accredited Probation” status school is given one year to address the recommendations at which time the State Office review team visits the school to determine and recommend an accreditation status. If the team determines that the recommendations have been addressed and corrected, the school’s “Accreditation Probation” status may be removed. If the visit results in a determination that

recommendations have not been addressed, the team will recommend that the school be dropped from accreditation (Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools, 2007).

Association of Christian Schools International

History and Standards

The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) was founded in 1978 upon the merger of the National Christian School Education Association, the Ohio Association of Christian Schools, and the Western Association of Christian Schools (ACSI, 2007). Prior to its formation, several other regional organizations existed that later joined ACSI. These included the Southeast Association of Christian Schools, the Association of Teachers of Christian Schools, the Great Plains Association of Christian Schools, and the Texas Association of Christian Schools. The synergy created by these organizations changed the direction of and validated the modern Christian school movement (ACSI, 2005).

It was not an easy beginning. With a very limited budget, the organizations came together to plan their strategy and elect leadership. This point alone would prove to be a continuing source of agitation and contention in the organization for years to come. The leadership structure had allowed for a President and an Executive Director who served on opposite sides of the country and could not agree on a common master plan or agenda. Their philosophies and approaches differed. The conflict did not subside; and within the first few years, one leader would be forced to leave the organization.

At the time of the present study, the international headquarters for ACSI was located in Colorado Springs, Colorado. ACSI grew to establish 11 regional districts throughout the United States, each being served by some of the organization's top educators and leaders. The Northwest region included Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Northern California and Hawaii, together, formed a single region. Private education was so plentiful in Southern California that it also constituted a single region. The Rocky Mountain region included Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. The Mid-America states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin made up the Mid-America region. The South-Central region included Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas. The region of the Ohio River Valley was Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia. Connecticut, Maine Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont comprised the Northeast region. The Mid-Atlantic region included the District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The Southeast region was Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Finally, Florida, with over 400 schools, was a region of its own.

ASCI also has accredited international schools and maintained regional offices in Canada, Asia, and the Commonwealth of Independent States; including Armenia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine. The European region included the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Scotland, and Slovakia. South Africa had a regional office and Latin America's region included

Mexico, Central America, Dominican Republic, and South America. The number and quality of Christian schools grew dramatically over the 30 years since its inception in the late 1970s. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Christian education was plagued by poor facilities, untrained staff, and a reputation that fell far below standard. ACSI provided the impetus for improved teacher qualifications, rigorous academics, and a solid educational philosophy in Christian education.

At the time of the present study, ACSI served over 5,300 member schools in 100 countries with a total student population of 1.2 million. The organization has existed as an accrediting agency for primary and secondary schools. It has provided teacher certification and assessment tools and has been recognized by the National Council for Private School Accreditation. ACSI has not accredited colleges or universities but has allowed them to be member schools of the organization. The founding of ACSI quickly became the most important historical event of the Christian school movement in the 20th century (ACSI, 2005).

The ACSI process of accreditation has been both thorough and demanding (School Accreditation Manual, 2002). The results of this process have been significant in advancing the effectiveness of schools' educational programs. The accreditation process of ACSI has been more closely aligned to the former criterion-based format of SACS than the present-day broad based process. The accreditation process detailed in the School Accreditation Manual (2002) requires the school to complete an in-depth Self-Study. The school must respond to over 200 questions (Appendix E) addressing the following 10 major standards.

Standard 1, Philosophy and Foundations, articulates the vision, mission, and core values of the school.

Standard 2, School Organization, provides a rationale for admissions standards, school governance, and finances.

Standard 3, School, Home, and Community, describes the constituency served by the school through a Christian-based education, and contains a nondiscriminatory clause.

Standard 4, School Personnel, speaks to the character, training, professional development, supervision, and evaluation of staff.

Standard 5, Instructional Program, defines standards for curriculum, instructional strategies, assessments, policies, and procedures.

Standard 6, Library, Media Resources, and Technology, describes the expectations of library volumes, personnel requirements, facility and budget.

Standard 7, Student Services, addresses student activities, guidance services, and health services.

Standard 8, Support Services, is concerned with standards for food services, and safety and crisis planning.

Standard 9, School Facilities, requires attention to safety regulations, classroom size, recreation and athletic areas, fire, health, and sanitation.

Standard 10, School Improvement Plan, calls for statements of goals for the program, strategies for reaching the goals, assessment and reporting procedures, and promotion of student learning and accomplishment.

Once a school has been granted initial accreditation from ACSI, subsequent reviews may be guided by the Accreditation by School Progress (ASP) format. The standards used are subject to the following reaccreditation qualifications:

1. The philosophy, mission and core values must be clearly understood.
2. The school must have successfully completed the traditional accreditation process at least once and not be on advised, warned, or probationary status.
3. The school must be financially stable.
4. The school must have a pattern of administrative stability.
5. Faculty turnover and use of part-time staff must be minimal.
6. Annual reports, certification reports, and interim reports must be current and complete.
7. The school is committed to sharing its ideas and research with other schools.

The Accreditation by School Progress standards include: (a) A clear understanding of the school's profile, vision, history, and philosophy; (b) determination of appropriate priorities for continued development and improvement; (c) broad involvement of the leadership, staff, and stakeholders; (d) development of a research-based initiatives that address problem/issue resolution; (e) strategic project planning, including necessary resources and time frame for implementation; (f) assessment and analysis of the project and documented implementation; (g) expected student outcomes according to school wide learning goals; (h) a comprehensive report of how standards are being met, the staff's involvement in research, an appropriate plan for assessment of results, and an evaluation of school-wide learning goals.

Accreditation by School Progress is no less demanding or less rigorous than the traditional method. The difference lies in the focus on school improvement according to the self-study. The school's ability to learn and grow from the experience is founded in the level of expertise and attention to detail in the overall process. The purpose of the ASP model is to increase effectiveness, school improvement, and expected student outcomes. The ASP reaccreditation system ensures that accreditation standards are maintained. Its purpose is to develop a school improvement plan with goals based on previous studies and reports. The visiting team and its chairperson investigate the school's response to prior recommendations. The ASP process focuses on one or two major school improvements and requires the development of a model of implementation, evaluation, and assessment. This process involves a systematic method of intensive research, planning, and reporting and is only fully realized through the collaborative efforts of a unified staff. An annual reporting plan is also in place to assist the school in meeting its benchmark goals.

In its formative years, ACSI's viability was questionable at best and was met with many challenges in comparison to more traditional, proven agencies. High school graduates of ACSI schools had difficulty proving that their schools were reputable and that they offered rigorous college preparatory curricula taught by qualified staff. As of this study, the ACSI model of accreditation was accepted as being comparable to the SACS model. Visiting teams conduct dual accreditation visits. SACS has also allowed the ACSI documentation and team report in place of the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) analysis required in the SACS reviews. Accreditation teams conducting a

SACS/ACSI visit to a school once had to submit two separate reports addressing two separate set of criteria. Beginning in 2007, educators serving on review teams were permitted to write one summary, according to ACSI standards, and submit them to both agencies for review. The only document that SACS required in addition to the ACSI detailed summary (Appendix E), was a one-page checklist that reviewed compliance for each of the 10 standards (Appendix F). Under the AdvancEd structure the same policy existed. A one-page checklist was included, which reviewed compliance for each of the 7 standards (Appendix G).

Overview of the Accreditation Process

The process of attaining ACSI accreditation begins by obtaining an application from the regional office. The application is returned along with a letter from the board giving their approval for the school to pursue accreditation. Once the application is received by the regional office, the regional director contacts the school administrator to schedule a Candidate Status visit. The purpose of the visit is to help determine whether the school can meet accreditation standards, formulate a self-study, and bring in the visiting team for an evaluation. This process typically takes up to three years. Once a school is granted candidate status a consultant/facilitator is assigned to work with the school. The consultant visits the school to determine their readiness for the accreditation process and to assist in leading them through the self-study and team visit.

The consultant determines if the school has a clear philosophy of education and looks for evidence that the school is actively striving for excellence. The quantity and

qualifications of the school's staff must be commensurate with the school's needs. The program of studies and curricular design components should align with the school's philosophy and objectives. The consultant also looks for sound organizational procedures including maintenance plans, institutional records, emergency plans, transportation needs, and health and safety regulations according to legal requirements. A review of instructional materials, facilities, technology plan, and financial resources are assessed as well.

The consultant has been trained in the numerous components of accreditation and assists the school by providing guidance during the self-study process. The consultant is also typically assigned to chair the visiting team that performs the onsite evaluation. The consultant reviews the self-study process with the chief administrator, faculty, school board, and others as needed. This review is to assure that the staff understands what is expected. It also helps to establish a time line, steps in the process, and a projected date for the visiting committee. Generally, it is at this point that the consultant would inform the school of any major deficiencies that need to be addressed and corrected prior to the site visit. When the self-study is completed, a team of educators is scheduled to evaluate the school and validate the accuracy of the self-study research.

The visiting team is expected to be familiar with the self-study. Each member is assigned certain responsibilities and contributes to the overall summary. The purpose of the visit is to evaluate standards compliance through a constructive emphasis on improvement. The team meets with several groups of stakeholders; students, parents, teachers, and board members, to interview and learn about the strengths and challenges of

the school. Observing classroom instruction is also a vital component of the visit. At the conclusion of the visit, the team writes a report including commendations and recommendations for each section of the self-study. This information is typically presented prior to the conclusion of the visit during a faculty meeting. There is no discussion, however, about the school accreditation status. The report includes a description of the school's profile, its mission statement, and a review of the major recommendations from the previous accreditation visit. The ACSI standards are reviewed for verification and compliance. New commendations and recommendations are listed for each standard. The report also includes a listing of those stakeholders and community members who have been involved in the interview process. Other items in the report which are addressed include: communication processes, decision-making processes, and the implementation plan. The committee's report is then sent to the regional director for review at the next meeting of the Regional Accreditation Commission. The decision of this commission is sent back to the school in the form of a final report. Most schools that pass the traditional accreditation will move to the Accreditation by School Progress format for subsequent visits.

The school is required to file an annual report with detailed information about the status of its School Improvement Plan. Standard 10 of the self-study required procedures for continued growth. If any recommendations were addressed in the commission's final report, they must also be addressed.

The Self-Study

The entire school faculty and staff are responsible for collecting and developing the individual portions of the self-study. Committees are formed to examine the school's philosophy, mission, and goals. A steering committee manages the timetable to accomplish the study in approximately one year. Subcommittees are assigned to each section of the accreditation manual as well as instructional areas. A list of major strengths and areas for improvement is included. When the report is completed, the committee then reviews it and a consensus is reached for final approval. The self-study includes a detailed list of questions (Appendix E) which are to be answered in written narratives. Each committee is responsible for producing a thorough review that analyzes and evaluates their assigned area of self-study.

Typical self-study committees include the following:

1. The Philosophy and Foundations committee reviews and evaluates the schools philosophy, identifies its strengths and weaknesses, and suggests improvements.
2. The School Organization committee is responsible for admissions, board governance, and finance. It reviews the policies and admissions practices, the quality of the school boards work, and reports on how board members are chosen. This committee also reviews the school budget and describes how it is developed and managed, verifying financial integrity, identifying the sources of funds and the amount needed to operate the school.

3. The School, Home, and Community Committee analyzes the school's impact on the community.
4. A committee for School Personnel builds a study of staff training, experience, and longevity. It evaluates the student/teacher ratio and reviews job descriptions. Verifying faculty and staff certifications is also done by this committee.
5. The Library, Media Resources, and Technology committee determines how the students are served by the media center, evaluates holdings, services, and software, and reviews the status of the school's technology.
6. The Student Services committee is responsible for reporting the status of the schools student activities, guidance, and health services. Their job is to also review the school's compliance with related local, state, and federal codes.
7. Support Services is responsible for reviewing transportation, food, safety, and crisis planning. This committee reports on the management of the food services program, describes school transportation policies, and summarizes the Crisis Management Plan.
8. The School Facilities committee evaluates the school's buildings in comparison to its size and programs and appraises and identifies according to adequacy and need.
9. Elementary teachers are assigned to complete a summary for each major instructional program such as Bible, language, math, reading, science, social studies, spelling art, handwriting, music, physical education, and computer.

10. Middle school and high school teachers are required to complete a report on the instructional program of Bible, foreign language, fine arts, math, science, social studies, computer, and physical education.

Data Supplied to Visiting Team

In addition to answering the self-study questions, each committee must also provide the materials from a list included within each accreditation standard. The data supplied to the visiting team for each of the respective areas include:

1. Philosophy and Foundations--brochures, publications, samples of programs, and in-service experiences.
2. School Organization--copy of the admissions policy, explanation of the admissions process, forms used in the admissions process, an admissions packet, data on the school's financial aid program, job descriptions, policy statement of the working relationship between the board and administrator, board policy handbook, board minutes for the past 12 months, long range planning report, evidence of liability insurance, board officers and duties, an organizational chart of the school, salary and hourly wage schedules, schedule of benefits, delinquent tuition policy, tuition and fee rates, most recent audit report, monthly financial reports, annual budget including line items, summary of indebtedness, copies of insurance coverages, and data on financial aid policies.

3. School, Home, and Community--studies of graduates from last five years, church denominational table, copies of recent surveys, bylaws and budget for parent organization, recent enrollment and withdrawal chart, a copy of the most recent demographic study and a school calendar.
4. School Personnel--staff application forms, evaluation forms, list of professional development for the past three years, list of documents included in personnel files, procedure for personal improvement plan for staff, human resources handbook, faculty handbook, teacher certification report, and the code of ethics statement.
5. The Instructional Program--includes- policies for revising the curriculum, grading policy, parent/student handbook, curriculum guide for each subject, graduation requirements, procedures for textbook selection, sample report card, a copy of each textbook used in the instructional program, copy of the master schedule of classes and times offered, samples of assessment tools, and the text book review cycle.
6. Library, Media Resources, and Technology--organizational chart of library and technology personnel, the technology plan, library budget, purchases and inventory, circulation records, schedule of grade-level instruction and an outline of topics. Library and technology job descriptions, qualifications, and their professional development plan are also supplied.
7. Student Services--annual activities calendar, guidelines for advisors and coaches, statement of objectives for each activity, sample of student

publications, evidence of athletic injury insurance, emergency plan, student government constitution and bylaws, budget for activities, sample of cumulative folder, sample of report card, guidance policies, copies of standardized test summaries, health examinations, immunization policies, blood-borne pathogens procedures, attendance policies, documentation of regulation compliance, incident report form, child abuse reporting procedures, and coaches handbook.

8. Support Services--list of school vehicles, policy for safety inspections and reporting accidents, general transportation policies, evidence of insurance, documentation of compliance with state, local, and federal regulations, and the Crisis Management Plan.
9. The School Facilities data include master site plan, floor plan of each building, most recent fire marshal report, and a traffic flow plan.

Visiting Team Responsibilities and Suggested Schedule

It is the responsibility of the visiting team to review the standards checklist in order to verify that the school is in compliance with all accreditation standards. This process is accomplished through a detailed analysis of available documentation, such as curriculum guides, handbooks, policy manuals, and other items found in the data supplied. Other documentation may also be requested and should be supplied to team members along with a checklist which is supplied to review the standards. The team usually consists of three to five members, and one is selected as the chairperson. Another

member is selected to review the standards and report their findings. Classroom observations and interviews with the administration, faculty, staff, board, and stakeholders are vital to a productive visit. Upon completion of the visit, the team will have written the report and included recommendations and commendations. This report is sent to the regional office and voted on at the next scheduled meeting of the Regional Commission. The Regional Commission is responsible for and has the final authority in determining the accreditation status of a school. A sample schedule of a SACS/ACSI visit typically includes the following timeline:

Day One:

4:00 PM	Check into hotel
6:30 PM	Meet in hotel lobby for dinner with school faculty and staff

Day Two:

7:45 AM	Arrival at school
8:00 AM	Organizational meeting
9:00 AM	Tour of school with administrator
10:00 AM	Meet with school administration
12:00 NOON	Working lunch for team
2:00 PM	Meet with school board
3:00 PM	Work on reports
3:30-5:00 PM	Meeting with project team – Oral presentation of project
5:00 PM	Dinner (off campus)
6:30 PM	Report writing

Day Three:

7:45 AM	Arrive at school
8:00 AM	Organizational meeting
9:00 AM	Meetings with constituents groups: Representatives for parent/teacher organization (9:00) Student leadership groups (9:30) Staff/faculty groups (other than project team) (10:00)
10:30 AM	Meeting of team to finalize report
12:00 NOON	Working lunch/finalize report
1:30 PM	Exit interview with school (administration, leadership, department heads, board, etc.--school choice)
2:00 PM	Departure of visiting team

Quality Control Models

Total Quality Management

W. Edwards Deming was an American management consultant and has been regarded as the father of the Quality Management movement (Gitlow, 2000). His work was very influential in the revival of Japan's economy after their defeat in World War II. Many major businesses in the United States began to use his management theories in the 1980s. He emphasized a management theory that prioritized joy in work (Gitlow). Deming received a doctorate from Yale University in 1928 and worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the next 11 years. During World War II he taught engineers how to increase production of war supplies. Japanese engineers heard of his work and in 1950 invited him to Japan to help them learn new methods of productivity. Deming was a professor at New York University from 1946 to 1993. His work and ideas as a management consultant were widespread (Gitlow).

In 1982, Deming published *Out of the Crisis* in which he identified 14 points for management to help develop efficient organizations. His goal was to be the driving force behind quality management. He suggested the creation of consistency of purpose and continual improvement and claimed that long-term planning had to replace short-term reaction. In his research, he found that companies should not depend on quality inspection but should rather build quality into the end product and process. Kemp (2005) agreed with this concept of quality management and focused his research on quality assurance, quality control, and quality standards. When it came to suppliers, Deming

selected quality over low cost in order to minimize variation and supply. He found that constant improvement reduced variation in all aspects of planning, production, and service (Deming, 1993). On-the-job training was also crucial to his plan. He discovered a more consistent product resulted when workers and management were trained as they learned. Deming found that this reduced the variation in performance. Leadership assisted employees in learning more about their jobs as opposed to simply supervising them to meet required targets and goals. The elimination of fear was accomplished, and two-way communication was encouraged as employees worked in the interest of the organization. Deming had a goal to eliminate internal barriers between departments. He saw internal departments as customers for each other who needed to work together to reach common goals.

Deming (1982) found in his research that processes, not people, make mistakes. He believed that the process, not the people engaged in the process, needed to be improved. The employees were asked to work at a designated proficiency level within assigned processes. If errors were found, they were attributed to the process. The elimination of the expectation of daily numerical goals encouraged higher quality. Workers who had been concerned only with the amount of the product were not interested in individual quality. Deming believed in removing the barriers to worker satisfaction and did not conduct annual appraisals. Finally, Deming's work focused on encouraging self-improvement and lifelong education. He claimed that everyone was responsible for continual improvement in quality and productivity, especially top management.

Figure 1 illustrates Deming's work, which focused on a Plan, Do, Study, and Act (PDSA) model of evaluation (Deming, 1993). The "Plan" focused on getting data to analyze a problem in order to bring resolution. The next step was to "Do" what the plan called for, followed up by a process to "Study" for measured change. The final stage called for the "Action" that was necessary to modify or bring change.

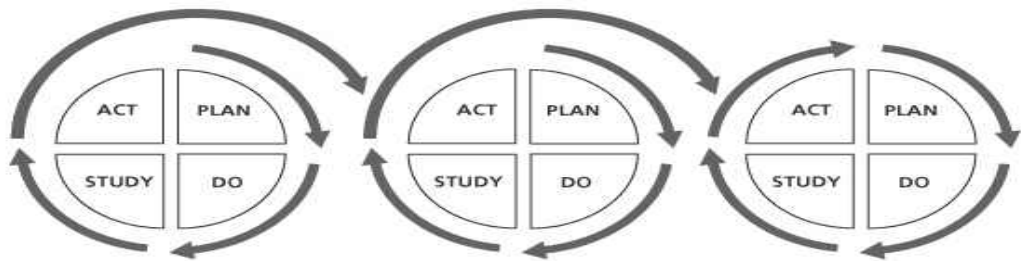


Figure 1. The Deming Cycle. "Plan-Do-Study-Act" (PDSA).

Source. <http://www.nodelaysachiever.nhs.uk/NR/ronlyres/1DFB30AF-8CB8-4B73-A832-BF43CA0516D3/0/142c.gif>

Deming's plan was derived from Shewhart's scientific method of hypothesis which involved experimentation and evaluation. Shewhart's ultimate goal was to improve the quality of manufactured goods. Engineers at Carnegie Mellon University adapted Deming's plan in 1948 and turned it into a five-step process called "The Carnegie Plan."

This model was used in scientific research and called for users to (a) define the problem, (b) plan for its treatment, (c) execute the plan, (d) check how it works, and (e) learn about results.

Peters and Waterman (1982) found similar results in their research. Their study focused on the management and quality control processes of several top companies, including Caterpillar, McDonald's, Maytag, and Hewlett-Packard. They found that Caterpillar was obsessed by service, overachievement, reliability, and quality (Peters & Waterman). McDonald's mantra of quality, service, cleanliness, and value reflected the Total Quality Management (TQM) values; Maytag Corporation promised "trouble-free operation;" and Hewlett-Packard included the quality control team in the development of all company processes. Since the quality control staff would take the blame for any negative outcomes, it seemed important to involve them in the entire ongoing procedure.

The questions that Peters and Waterman (1982) posed related to issues of service and quality and the appropriate balance or emphasis on the two. They used the example of a restaurant salad bar, claiming that customers who were looking for 75-cent salads did not expect avocados, but they did expect the lettuce to be crisp (Peters & Waterman). Their concept of Total Quality Management was that doing things right was the only way. Service, reliability, and quality must all be top priority. Creating a culture of total quality involves customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, worker empowerment, and leadership.

Six Sigma

Six Sigma was a quality management system developed by the Motorola Corporation in 1986. It was designed to eliminate defects and product flaws and increase productivity (Gitlow, 2000). Founded on the previous decades of quality improvement methods, Six Sigma provided continuous effort to reduce variation in process outcomes, which has been crucial to a successful business. Processes are measured, analyzed, improved, and controlled with the goal of achieving sustained quality improvement (Gitlow).

The goal of this process was to produce improved quality on a consistent basis. Six Sigma's primary methodology was inspired by Deming's work to improve business processes. It included a variation on PDCA called DMAIC, which was a methodology that defined the process improvement goals, measured the performance of the current process for future comparison, analyzed the system for verification, improved the process based on analysis, and controlled variances to prevent defects.

Six Sigma was a top-down solution that helped organizations align their strategy to crucial improvement efforts. It mobilized teams to develop and produce high impact projects resulting in accelerated outcomes and the ability to monitor progress toward sustained improvement. This quality control model has been helpful in prioritizing projects and in developing leaders to manage rapid, sustainable improvement (Gitlow, 2000).

Theory Z

William G. Ouchi (1981) espoused 3 approaches to organizational management; market control, bureaucratic control, and clan control. He studied the differences in the management styles of Japanese and American companies. In *Theory Z*, Ouchi (1981) described how American companies adapted to Japanese management models. His theory of management promised to change the way managers and employees viewed their jobs.

Making Schools Work was Ouchi's attempt to focus on the organization and effectiveness of the American public school system (Ouchi, 2003). In reporting on his research, he described an approach to creating successful public schools that produced significant ongoing improvement. Ouchi supervised a study of 223 schools in 6 cities that was sponsored by the National Science Foundation. His work proved that student performance was most often the result of leadership management styles. The 2001-2002 study examined innovative school systems in Edmonton (Canada), Seattle, and Houston, in comparison to three of the largest traditional school systems of New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Ouchi discovered that the most successful school systems were led by principals, not district offices, that had school-based control of budget and hiring systems. In this system, families had the freedom to choose among public schools and schools had to compete for students. Good schools got better and poor schools closed. This system of accountability, used primarily in private education, could be adapted to the public system.

Ouchi (2003) reported on schools that used Seven Keys to Success. The 223 schools were a mix of public and private that served low-income, middle-class, and

wealthy students. The schools' budgets ranged from very minimal to extremely extravagant. Ouchi found that these factors had little to do with successful student outcomes. Success was based on talented principals that were given maximum control and were held accountable for results (Ouchi). Ouchi's Seven Keys to Success included:

Key 1: Every principal is an entrepreneur.

Key 2: Every school controls its own budget.

Key 3: Everyone is accountable for student performance and budgets.

Key 4: Everyone delegates authority to those below.

Key 5: There is a burning focus on student achievement.

Key 6: Every school is a community of learners.

Key 7: Families have real choice among a variety of unique schools.

Baldrige National Quality Program

Public Law 100-107 established the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Improvement Act of 1987. This legislation was the impetus behind the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Program (Baldrige National Quality Program, 2001). The award is named for Malcolm Baldrige, the Secretary of Commerce from 1981-1987, who contributed to the improvement and efficiency of effectiveness in government. Figure 2 illustrates the design of this performance excellence framework.

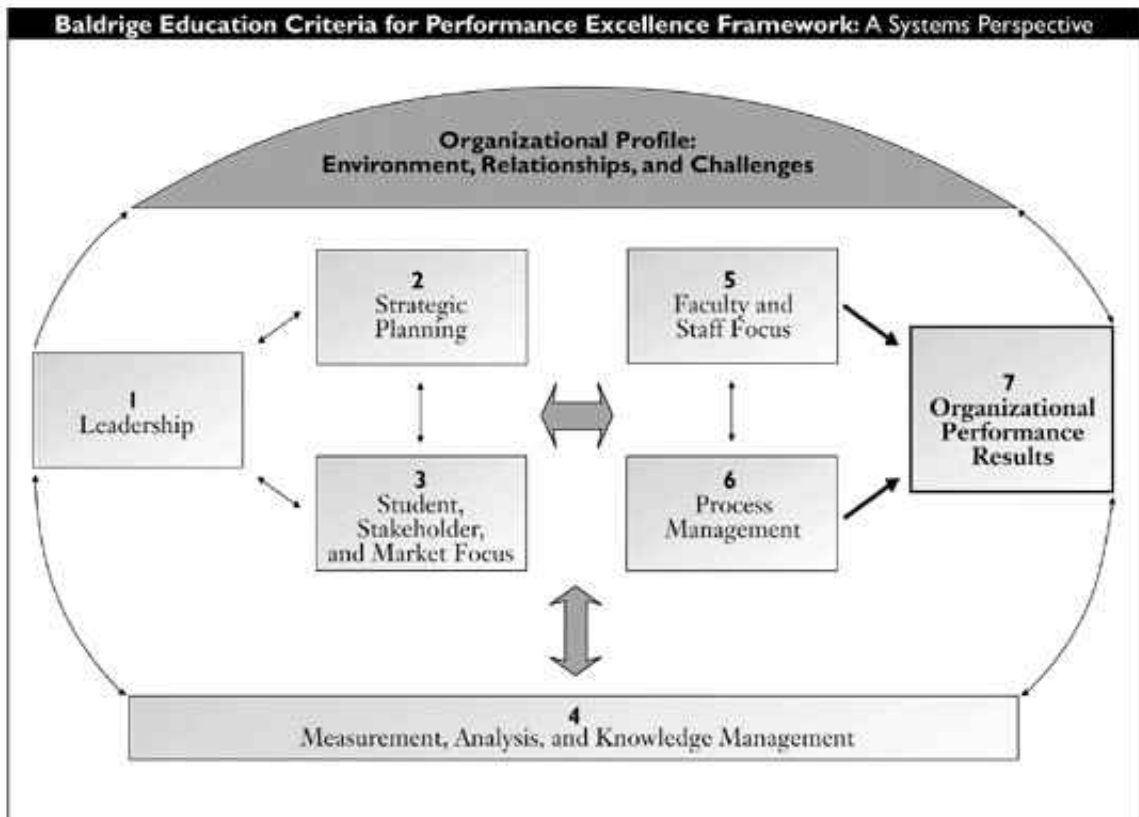


Figure 2. Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence Framework

Source http://3d2know.cosn.org/publications/images/baldrige_diagram.gif

The purpose of the award is described in the details of Public Law 100-107, which, when summarized, states that:

1. The leadership of the United States as related to product and process quality, has been challenged by foreign competition and productivity has improved less than our competitors.
2. American businesses have realized that poor quality costs more and that improved quality and productivity produced lowered costs and increased profitability.

3. Strategic planning for quality improvement programs is essential to a competitive marketplace.
4. Improved management and worker involvement produce improvement in product quality.
5. Quality improvement is applicable to small and large companies, service and manufacturing industries, in both the public sector and private enterprise.
6. Successful quality improvements are management-led and customer-oriented.
7. Quality audits, coupled with national awards, have been successful in recognizing organizations identified as the best.
8. A quality award program of this type in the U.S. would improve quality and productivity through recognition, establishing guidelines and criteria to be used in business, industry, government, and other organizations that evaluate quality improvement. This process would provide information on how winning organizations changed their cultures and achieved prominence.

Since its inception in 1992, the Florida Sterling Council has recognized organizations with proven standards of excellence. The Sterling model, based on the Baldrige criteria, guides organizations to improved operational goals.

The seven categories of the Sterling Criteria were leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, information and analysis, human resource focus, process management, and business results. Figure 3 illustrates the Sterling model which follows a strict criterion-based evaluation that involves on-site visits and a quality assurance review.

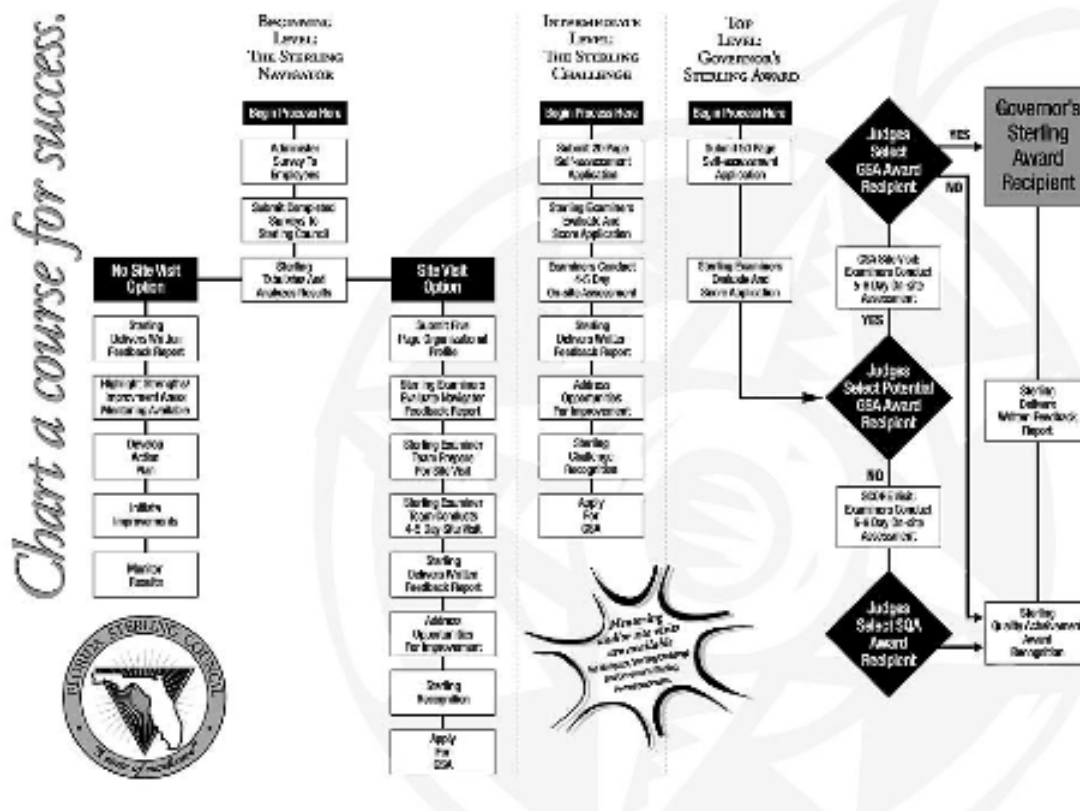


Figure 3. The Sterling Model

Source: Florida Sterling Council, (2008).

Following an application phase, a committee is sent to conduct an on-site, four to five-day visit. The visiting team is charged with (a) interviewing employees, (b) examining additional documentation as compared to the Sterling criteria and (c) preparing an in-depth report highlighting the strengths and opportunities for improvement for each category. Recommendations that will help the organization rise to the next level of performance excellence are also included and used in the strategic plan. Performance improvement has been the goal, and goal accomplishment has been attributed to accelerated efforts that exceed customer expectations (Baldrige National Quality

Program, 2001). All employees have been challenged to be engaged and focused on a common set of identified goals.

Value Analysis

The Value Analysis model of quality control was a problem solving method developed by Lawrence Miles for General Electric in 1947. The approach focused on the improvement of product, facility, and service. His value analysis process contained key elements of function related to cost, value, worth, the implementation of programs, and a team approach to job planning and ownership (Miles, 1989). The four basic steps of the job plan included: (a) gathering information, (b) analyzing alternatives for desired results, (c) evaluating alternatives and the level to which they would meet the standard at a cost savings, and (d) presenting information leading to a prompt decision for an acceptable improvement plan (Miles).

Miles' Value Analysis began with a prepared list of roadblocks to success and a potential plan of action to prevent failure. A team approach included five individuals who were responsible for the project design, overall operations, a cost estimator, the marketing, sales, and purchasing agent, and a catalyst to keep the project moving. The Value Analysis method of quality control was focused on an organized plan that produced good results through the application of a systematic procedure for achieving success (Miles, 1989). The Value Analysis methodology was applicable to a wide range of projects, activities and events since its primary goal was to improve function and results.

The Juran Institute

Joseph M. Juran made numerous contributions to the field of quality management and was the first to incorporate the human side of quality management referred to as Total Quality Management. He advocated for a project approach to quality improvement. As one of two engineers employed in the Inspection Statistical Department of Bell Laboratories, he experienced his first management challenges in 1926. By 1937, Juran was chief of Industrial Engineering at Western Electric and was responsible for visiting other companies to discuss their methods of quality management. After World War II, he worked with New York University and the American Management Association to develop management philosophies. Like Deming, Juran worked with the Japanese following the War and taught them his principles of quality control and management.

Juran's quality management ideas included three main points. The first was Quality Planning; a system used to identify the customer base, determine their needs, develop products that met their needs, and optimize the product to best use. Second was Quality Improvement; the process of developing a system to produce the product and ultimately to optimize the process. The third goal was Quality Control; the ability to prove that the process can produce the product with minimal inspection and make the process a daily operational goal (Juran & Godfrey, 1998). In 1979, Juran founded the Juran Institute which was one of the leading quality management organizations in the world. It has existed as a consultant firm and promoted quality management support to world-wide industry through the Juran Management System which emphasizes operational excellence, rapid improvement, and quality programs.

The Juran Management System (JMS) began at Toyota in the 1950s and focused on planning, controlling, and improving the quality of products and processes. The purpose of the system was to maximize customer satisfaction and minimize dissatisfaction, which was accomplished by producing ideal products and eliminating deficiencies (Juran & Godfrey, 1998). The JMS culture has empowered employees to be proactive in understanding customer needs. It has provided high quality at reduced cost and worked to meet customer needs through an information-driven, problem-solving process. JMS has been focused on providing a path for change and improvement to help achieve the highest standard of quality.

Significant Historical Events and Legislative Mandates

History is replete with a plethora of societal issues that have shaped the landscape of the American educational system. The interconnection between social change and the world of education has been a central theme of SACS for the past century. The first legislative acts that impacted education, occurred in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1647 in the form of the “Old Deluder Satan Act.” This law provided public education in towns of 50 or more families (Boroughs, Foster, & Salyer, 1964). Since that time government has continued its quest to influence educational policy in response to the needs of society.

Not much changed in the next century until Horace Mann promoted the “common school,” which developed into the public school during the first quarter of the 19th century (Mondale & Patton, 2001). Mann’s system provided an education that included

women but not minorities. The Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 provided land for colleges and universities that gave students agricultural experiences. By 1894 the Committee of Ten was created and met to establish national standards to determine what teachers should be teaching (D. Tanner & L. Tanner, 1980). Compulsory schooling, which began in the 1920s, was effective in removing children from factories and providing jobs for adults. This occurred during the period of the Great Depression, which left many jobless, homeless, and looking for answers. It was decided that children needed an education in order for the country to remain competitive.

Up to this point in history, teachers typically did not have college degrees. Many states enacted legislation requiring teacher certification. The implementation of this new legislation raised the teaching profession to a new level. It was about this time that regional accrediting bodies began to oversee state standards, teacher certification, pupil/teacher ratios, and diploma criteria (Miller, 1998).

At the end of World War II, there was a shortage of jobs for the troops when they returned home. Women had gone to work in their absence and were unsure about leaving their jobs to return home. It was 1944 when the government enacted the GI Bill, which provided benefits for veterans to attend college. This was, in effect, the first and largest voucher program. The government designated funds for veterans to allow them to improve their education and increase their marketable skills. This would eventually improve the job market and the economy.

In 1954, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* was the most far reaching Supreme Court decision of its time. This law reversed the prior action of separate but

equal educational opportunities under the Plessy v. Ferguson ruling of 1896. Brown determined that state laws, which established separate public schools for black and white students, denied black children an equal education. The ruling was decided on May 17, 1954 and stated that separate educational facilities were inherently unequal. This desegregation and equalization should be accomplished with all deliberate speed (Yudof, Kirp, & Levin, 1992).

Race relations in the United States were dominated by racial segregation. In Topeka, Brown's third grade daughter Linda walked six blocks from her home to catch a bus that took her to a segregated black school, Monroe Elementary, a mile away. Sumner Elementary, a white school was seven blocks from her home. Topeka had integrated its middle schools in 1941 and its high school had been integrated since the 1800s. Kansas law however, permitted segregated schools at the elementary level. The 1954 decision had overturned the 1899 ruling of Cumming v. Richmond County Board of Education, which had allowed segregation of public schools.

While Brown had its impact on the school system, it did not mandate desegregation of public restaurants and bathrooms, which would come later with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In 1955, Brown II required that the decision of Brown I be enacted with all deliberate speed. Desegregation in the south was a long process that would take until the Nixon presidency in 1970 to realize change and growth (Miller, 1998).

By the mid 1950s, the United States had experienced a generation of crisis. The period of the Great Depression, followed by global conflict and the Cold War, led to the

growing importance of economic strength through scientific and technological progress. The Russians surprised the world, however, in 1957 when they beat the U.S. in the race to space. Their launch of Sputnik propelled a national curriculum to provide for accountability and national control (Rickover, 1960). Rickover claimed that education was the nation's first line of defense and should be strengthened (Rickover). Sputnik provided a turning point in American education. Educators and their classrooms felt the heat of a failed attempt to beat the Russians into space. Massive curriculum reforms were introduced, and education was on "the hot seat." The nation was lagging behind a Communist country, and the public education system was expected to provide a unified curriculum (D. Tanner & L. Tanner, 1980). The *New York Times* published a series of articles concerned with the strength of the Soviet educational system and claimed that their technical and scientific education far surpassed that of the United States. The military might, scientific stature, and educational system of the U.S. was in question. Science, which was viewed a decade earlier and lowly and insignificant, had taken center stage.

This event prompted the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) passed by Congress in 1958. This legislation provided federal funding to public schools and was justified for defense purposes. A new goal of increased scientific output was declared. Federal support for research in education in the sciences encouraged a process change from rote memorization to critical thinking skills. In 1958 the NDEA appropriated \$47.5 million in student loans and gave preference to those studying science, engineering, and foreign languages. Federal support for science-related research tripled through 1964. The

NDEA primarily stimulated the advancement of education in science and math. Other areas of education also benefited from its passage such as technical education, geography, counseling, guidance, libraries, and media centers. The Act however, prohibits federal control of curriculum. The passage of the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958 established the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and further promoted scientific efforts.

Education programs were initiated to increase the need for engineers who would advance technology, math, and scientific knowledge. The concept of “New Math” resulted from the Sputnik crisis and was used in American schools throughout the 1960s. Its purpose was to increase scientific education and improve math skills so that the U.S. could remain competitive with the Soviets. New Math was proven to be an ineffective approach to dealing with the issue. Parents resisted this change in the curriculum and claimed that basic arithmetic was being overlooked for other academic trends.

The 1960s ushered in the Civil Rights Movement, shifting the focus of educational systems to provide a quality education to the black student population (Mondale & Patton, 2001). In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) promoted an equal education for all American children. This legislation was the beginning of what later became known as “No Child Left Behind.”

Throughout the next three decades the United States was besieged with urban riots against the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement. The Watergate and Savings and Loan scandals shook the very foundation of government. The Federal Government introduced Title I of ESEA to provide funding for the poverty stricken, and

the Higher Education Act of 1965 provided federal aid programs for those that could not afford a college education. The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 provided funding for non-English speaking students who received special academic programs (Yudof, Kirp, & Levin, 1992). This Act transformed the way minority children were taught in the U.S. and promoted equal access to curriculum. The 1974 amendments to the Act further defined a bilingual education program and its goals. Bilingual education provided instruction in the student's native language, in order to assist the student through effective progression in education. The goal was to integrate the student into a normal classroom as soon as possible. Several more changes and revisions were made and in 1988 a bilingual student was limited to three years participation in such programs. At this time, other minorities realized that their needs were also going unmet. Title IX of the Civil Rights Restoration Act addressed women's issues, creating equal opportunities for females in education and athletics (Yudof, Kirp, & Levin).

The needs of the disabled population were met with PL 94-142, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which provided an education for students with disabilities. The law stated that these students were entitled to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment (Yudof, Kirp, & Levin, 1992). In Florida, these students have been able to use a voucher program called the McKay Scholarship to attend their choice of public or private schools.

In the 1980s, "A Nation at Risk" documented the need for national standards (USDOE). Goals 2000 had laid the groundwork for the 1990s as the educational system began to be restructured to establish site-based management and better accountability

(Ravitch, 2006). Vouchers and charter schools allowed parents to choose what schools their children would attend. These policies led to the creation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. NCLB stated that students must perform at a proficient level, according to each state's criteria, by the 2013-2014 school year. The law stated that schools would receive consequences for falling behind state standards and would be rewarded if they met or exceeded expectations.

The four pillars of NCLB were based on stronger accountability, more freedom for states, proven methods, and more choice for parents. Stronger accountability for results was intended to help close the achievement gap and ensure that all students achieved academic proficiency (USDOE). Annual report cards were used to inform the community of progress, and schools that did not achieve progress were offered services in tutoring and after-school assistance. If progress was not seen within five years, major changes could be made in the school.

Under NCLB, states and school districts have been given unprecedented flexibility in the use of federal funds to increase teacher pay and improve training and professional development (USDOE). Scientific research has yielded an array of methods and strategies available for implementation to promote student learning and achievement. In schools that have not met state standards for two consecutive years, parents have had the choice to transfer their children to a better performing public school in their district. In addition, students from low-income families have often been eligible for supplemental services. NCLB has also allowed students to transfer from a dangerous school to a safer school environment.

NCLB standards have been cited as making a difference in Florida. Between 2002 and 2005, 4th-grade reading proficiency increased by 16%. Fifth grade math proficiency increased by 9%. The black-white achievement gap in 4th-grade reading scores decreased by 6%. The Hispanic-white achievement gap in 4th-grade reading narrowed by 6% as well (Florida Report Card).

The State of Florida took legislative action one step further by instituting the Council for Education Policy, Research, and Improvement. This Council was originally called the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission and was created in 1980 by executive order (CEPRI, 2001). It provided policy research and analysis for lawmakers and updated Florida's master plan for education every five years. The Council's plan has highlighted the need for quality, goals, programmatic access, remedial education, economic development, international programs, demographic patterns, student demand for programs, needs of subgroups, implementation of technology, and the needs of the job market. The Council's purpose has been to evaluate these needs and recommend strategies to address weaknesses.

Through two world wars, the space race, and civil rights conflicts, SACS has been at the center of Southern educational policy and reform. In their research, R. Caine and G. Caine (1997) claimed that when one element changes in essential ways, so do others. Many issues interact, merge, and become different. Grades, methods of instruction, curriculum, and accreditation processes remain pliable and change to coincide with societal needs and expectations. No Child Left Behind has turned into the "Sputnik" of the 21st century. The American classroom consistently has rated below international

averages and ranked lower than many less prosperous nations. Researchers such as Herrnstein and Murray (1994) have disagreed, saying that the average American student is better prepared academically than ever before. The goal of the present research was to reveal to what extent these historical events and legislative mandates have influenced the accreditation process and impacted student outcomes.

Historical events and legislative mandates have resulted in numerous changes in the educational system of the United States. The interconnection between political conflict and the American educational system has been seen throughout the history of SACS. Accreditors and the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) met in February of 2007 to resolve their differences and come to an agreement on much needed change (Bollag, 2007a). The process known as “negotiated rule-making” was led by senior department official, Vickie Schray. It was the department’s attempt to set minimum levels of student achievement. Many had the opinion that accreditation standards had not kept pace with the fast changing societal needs. The two groups met again in March but were unable, once again, to reach a compromise on the issue of setting standards for student learning (Bollag, 2007b). The proposed rules required regional accreditors to establish expected levels of student performance to be measured by degree-completion rates, job-placement rates, and pass rates on licensing and professional exams (2007b). After three rounds of meetings, culminating in another failed attempt in June, the accreditors and the USDOE were at an impasse (Basken, 2007a). This was of grave concern to regional accreditors and the colleges and universities who were asked to show results to remain eligible for their annual federal aid. Of utmost concern was the wording

that gave the responsibility of deciding the measurement criteria to the accrediting boards instead of the colleges themselves. Whatever the impetus, the ultimate impact of the government's involvement has been seen in accreditation processes. These processes have influenced curriculum requirements, standards assessment, and student learning outcomes. Best practices and quality school indicators have repeatedly been influenced as dictated by the demands of society. Chubb & Moe (1990) claimed that bureaucracy has imposed goals, structures, and requirements that mandate for principals and their teachers the task to be accomplished and often how that task is to be performed. This has removed their ability to exercise their expertise and professional judgment. This researcher attempted to determine the extent to which those who dictate the path of the educational process and its goals influence the accreditation process, its standards, and student outcomes.

Student Performance Trends and Issues

Assessment and Accountability

In March of 1996 the nation's governors met to devise a plan that would measure each state's annual progress in raising student achievement (Olson, 2006). The plan resulted in the first edition of *Quality Counts*, a report that has been published annually since 1997. The most recent report of 2006 found that there were positive ties between standards-based efforts and achievement gains (Olson). It was found, in a 1999 study co-sponsored by the Education Trust and the National Association of System Heads, that

high school tests were geared to a much lower level than were college admissions or placement exams (Olson, 2001). Most math content tested rarely went beyond Algebra I or Geometry. Writing, if required at all, focused on personal essays and opinions rather than analysis of a critical reading passage. While colleges want to see students that have mastered the equivalent of Algebra 2, high schools do not think this is realistic. Many state tests are poor indicators of college readiness. In 2003, “Mixed Messages,” a study by the University of Oregon’s Center for Educational Policy Research, claimed that these tests confused high school students who thought they were prepared for college if they scored well on high school exit exams (Cavanagh, 2003a).

In high school, students take commercially available tests, such as the Stanford 10 or Terra Nova, and/or state-developed tests like the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). The research reviewed 66 state high-school-level assessments from 20 states (Cavanagh, 2003a). Researchers looked at how effectively the tests were aligned with the skills needed to succeed in entry-level college classes. These tests did not count for college admissions and covered a broad range of shallow content including middle school and lower high school curriculum. These exams, while successful in measuring college readiness in reading comprehension and computation, were poor in judging college preparation for writing, critical thinking, English, algebra, reasoning, and geometry (Cavanagh, 2003b). It was also recommended that when state officials revise their high school level tests, they should consult with college personnel to explore ways of linking the tests with the demands of higher education (Cavanagh, 2003b). The consequence for this type of system has resulted in students who, have graduated from

high school with knowledge and skills sufficient to pass high school assessments but totally inadequate as preparation for a college-level education. Floyd Coppedge, the Secretary of Education in Oklahoma, claimed that the biggest obstacle was overcoming people's preconception that most students were not headed to college (Olson, 2001). Coppedge also found that there was a mind-set among many parents that "What was good for me is good enough for my kids today." That faulty mind-set, according to Coppedge, meant that there existed a population of kids that did not need to be well educated (Olson).

"Measuring Up" was the national report card on higher education. Conducted by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, independent organization, this report documented performance trends of the United States as a whole and looked at each of the 50 states. "Measuring Up" consisted of an individual state report card for each of the 50 states. Each state was graded in six performance categories: (a) academic preparation, (b) participation, (c) affordability, (d) completion, (e) benefits, and (f) learning. Preparation defined how adequately the students in each state were prepared for education and training beyond high school. Participation examined the extent to which state residents had sufficient opportunities to enroll in education and training beyond high school. Affordability graded the state on how likely it was for families to be able to financially pay for higher education for their children. Completion determined if students were able to make progress toward finishing their degrees in a timely manner. Benefits explored the advantages of a state's having a highly educated population. Learning delved into what was known about student

opportunities to learn as a result of education and training beyond high school (“Measuring Up,” 2004). It was suggested in the report that high schools were beginning to do a better job of preparing their students for college by encouraging them to take and succeed in a college preparatory curriculum. This encouragement, however, did not necessarily increase college enrollment (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2004).

More high school students were reported to be taking upper-level math and science and are enrolled in Advanced Placement classes. According to the Measuring Up study, North Carolina experienced a 40% increase in high school seniors taking upper-level math. Texas and West Virginia had lesser but significant increases of 21% and 25% respectively. Although these changes have resulted in more students being prepared for college, enrollment has not increased. With increased tuition, cost has become a large factor in students’ not attending or completing their four-year degrees. It was further determined that only 64% of students enrolled in four-year schools had earned a bachelor’s degree within six years.

The 2004 study revealed that Florida did not score well using the seven performance categories. In regard to preparation, in 1994 Florida dropped from 65% of its students graduating from high school within four years to only 55% by 2004. Massachusetts was the top-performing state in the categories of preparation and participation. A total of 17 states, including Florida, declined on every indicator of affordability. California was the most affordable, and Vermont ranked at the top in students that completed their studies on time. Maryland reported receiving the most benefits from having a highly educated population.

For the overwhelming majority of states, learning was a dismal failure. In the 2000 and 2002 editions of “Measuring Up,” every state received an “incomplete” for learning since there were no comparable data to provide comparisons. “Measuring Up” (2004) contained the first report of state grades on learning. Only five states (Illinois, Kentucky, Nevada, Oklahoma, and South Carolina) had developed learning measures through their participation in a national demonstration project conducted by the National Forum on College-Level Learning. This forum was established in 2002 to work with these five states on a project sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts in an attempt to assess learning (“Measuring Up,” 2004). The project focused on assessing literacy levels of graduates and attempted to determine to what extent colleges and universities were educating students to be capable of contributing to the workforce.

Student achievement in the elementary grades has continued to improve. Studies have shown, however, that test scores have continued to decline in middle and high schools in the United States (Viadero, 2001). Based on the results of Cavanagh’s research, only 50% of high school graduates had completed the required academics to gain entrance to a standard, non-selective college. It was found in the Manhattan Institute’s study that only 32% of all students in the United States had graduated with qualifications that gained them college admission (Cavanagh, 2004).

Every state had its form of testing and accountability. Many school districts found loopholes and various other ways around meeting the standards. In research conducted by the University of Texas and Texas A&M, many colleges and universities were reported to have raised their expectations for all incoming students. They have reformed their

curriculum, decided on consequences for failure and rewards for success and improved their overall teaching methods. Professional development played a large role in helping teachers find new ways to motivate and encourage a successful learning environment (Miller, 2001). Just as in the K-12 system, curriculum was aligned so that each grade level prepared students academically, developmentally, and socially for the next.

Dropout and Graduation Rates

In 1900, only 8% of American teen-agers attended high school and of those only 11% went on to college. Education beyond the age of 14 was not compulsory and dropout rates were high (Crossen, 2003). Balfanz and Legters (2004), researchers at Johns Hopkins University, published a report by the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk in which they described the typical U.S. high school as a dropout factory. They defined a dropout high school as one in which fewer than 60% of its students who entered as freshmen made it to their senior year, and claimed that only 10% of high schools met this criterion (Balfanz & Legters). The Manhattan Institute conducted a study in 2003, which addressed the lack of academic readiness among American high school graduates. The report concluded that only 70% of students who attended public high schools graduated with traditional diplomas (Cavanagh, 2004). The Manhattan Institute study also found that only 32% of high school students were qualified to attend college.

The NCLB legislation impacting schools in 2007 imposed serious consequences on schools that reported low math and reading scores but did not pose consequences or

sanctions for low graduation rates. “Telling the Whole Truth (or Not) About High School Graduation” was a 2003 report prepared by the Education Trust (Education Trust, 2003). This analysis reported a national average graduation rate of 70%. Some schools have encouraged students that cannot pass the state-mandated tests to drop out so they do not bring down the school’s scores. Experts in the field, use the United States Department of Common Core of Data to calculate national and state graduation rates. Jay Greene, of the Manhattan Institute, pointed to the different ways that states reported their graduation rates and has found that large discrepancies exist due to varying methods (Greene & Forster, 2003). While some calculated graduation rates have been based on how many ninth graders finished in four years, others have reported only the number of seniors that graduated at the end of the year. Another method of reporting included including those who received a GED while others excluded all students who did not receive a standard diploma (Greene & Forster).

The U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics published a report in January 2006. The document contained a history of dropout rates in the U.S. dating back to 1869. That school year, 1869-70, the U.S. reported 16,000 dropouts. Fifty years later, the 1919-20 school year reported 311,000. In 1969-70, the number rose to 2,889,000. The 2004-05 school year showed a total of 3,089,000 students who dropped out of high school in that year. The Florida Department of Education reported its annual drop out rates in an historical study dating from 1998 to 2007. In a county-by-county comparison, the State decreased its rate from 5.4% in 1998 to 3.3% over a period of nine years (USDOE).

Academic Readiness for Higher Education

“Ticket to Nowhere: The Gap Between Leaving High School and Entering College and High-Performance Jobs,” was a 1999 report prepared by the Education Trust and the National Association of System Heads (Haycock, 1999). This report showed that increased numbers and percentages of high school graduates completed their secondary education experience believing themselves to be prepared for post-secondary institutions. Instead, they have discovered that they were unprepared to meet the challenge of rigorous academics (Haycock). Higher education studies have shown that there is a large disconnect between what students anticipate and what colleges expect. Kirst, a professor of education at Stanford University, researched curriculum misalignment and found that this gap has left many students to pursue a remedial academic track prior to enrolling in general education courses due to unrealistic academic expectations (Blair, 1999). Kirst further found that American education exists in two different worlds; high schools, which are governed by a state board of education, and colleges, which are governed by higher education councils. Even though most high schools require three years of math and four years of English, college admissions offices have found that many students took classes that did not provide comprehensive coverage of the subject matter (Blair).

In 1999, the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission was asked to evaluate education in Florida. In conducting the study, the Commission consulted representatives of the Bureau of Student Financial Assistance, Bright Futures Advisory Committee, Florida Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors, Division of Community Colleges, Board of Regents, school districts, postsecondary institutions, and executive

and legislative branches. The purpose of this evaluation was to discover if students were entering postsecondary education unprepared for rigorous academics due to less challenging curriculum in high school. Florida's Postsecondary Education Planning Commission (PEPC) reviewed policies and researched the indicators in order to identify the origin of these problems. The strengths and weaknesses of these readiness issues were compared to legislative policy, high school standards, and postsecondary criteria. PEPC, along with other significant think tanks, educational trusts and state systems, reviewed the criteria necessary to be successful.

Cavanagh's research focused on the gap between high school and college. He claimed that the link between the two was flawed and needed repair. He further found that many students were not prepared to meet the tougher level of college academics. He blamed the lack of rigorous coursework in high school and the unfamiliarity of students with the demands of college (Cavanagh, 2003b). No matter what approach was taken, it was obvious that something was missing in the link between high school outcomes and the expectations of colleges. Lake, Snell, Perry, & Associates, a Washington political-research firm, conducted a survey of 1,010 Americans age 18 or older in the fall of 2003. The survey concluded that 57% were very concerned with the difficulty of the high school to college transition (Cavanagh). The Carnegie Foundation surveyed 5,000 college faculty in 1989 and found that 68% of them were spending too much time teaching content that should have been mastered in high school (Walsh, 1989). Of the faculty surveyed, 56% believed that high schools should offer a more broad-based liberal education and not so many specialized programs. A total of 67% said there was a vast

lowering of standards and admitted that undergraduate admissions standards should be increased and programs toughened (Walsh).

Many states have begun the process of linking their high school standards with their institutions of higher education. Gill's goal was to make sure that there was a consistency between what the students were being required to do in order to graduate from high school and what was required for college admissions (Olson, 2001). Colleges have found that high school curricula, college admissions tests, and freshman courses at the university level are rarely congruent. Haycock, Executive Director of the Washington-based Education Trust, found in her research of K-16 programs, that the content and rigor of typical high school classes did not compare to college credit courses (Olson). In 2001, nearly 70% of U.S. high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary education. Half of these students were required to take remedial courses. A total of 25% of the freshmen at four-year colleges and 50% at two-year colleges did not continue their educations in their second year. Research conducted by the Education Trust further showed that fewer than half of these students would eventually earn a bachelor's degree.

Standardized Tests in the K-12 System

In 1999 the Education Trust and the National Association of System Heads analyzed a selection of tests used in high schools to prepare students for admissions to post-secondary education (Haycock, 1999). The high school tests that were reviewed were the Stanford 9, the TerraNova, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), the New York State Regents, the Kentucky Commonwealth

Accountability Testing System (CATS), the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and the General Educational Development (GED) test. The rigor, depth, and content of these tests were compared to the SAT I, SAT II (subject area exams), and the ACT college entrance exams. The focus was on academic content of the tests and the purpose was to determine the knowledge and skills necessary to answer the questions. Researchers wanted to discover if the tests sent a clear, consistent message to students and teachers about what students should know and be able to do (Haycock).

In mathematics, test content was most commonly understood in terms of courses student take; like Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, and Trigonometry/pre-calculus. The test also included math topics; number theory, data, probability, and statistics. In English, content usually covered reading and writing, literary techniques, and analysis. Gaps between high school tests and college tests were noticed in the following areas; English, which was once the study of classic literature, now included a generic approach to reading and writing giving the student the ability to critically comprehend the text. Some of the tests asked for knowledge based on traditional literature (Massachusetts MCAS, New York Regents, Kentucky CATS, and SAT II). Other tests assumed no literary skill and only asked the tester to read informational and academic texts (Stanford 9, TerraNova, Texas TAAS, ACT, and SAT I).

The primary challenge of the reading tests were found in terms of the vocabulary, the subject matter, and the questions asked about a passage. The study revealed disconnects between the tests in the level of content, topics that were addressed, and in

the ways the tests approached content (Haycock, 1999). The high school exams tested at a much lower level than the college entrance material. The high school tests focused on non-academic reading passages of general interest while the college exams were primarily academic and literary, similar to college level courses. The New York Regents exam was found to be far superior in comparison to the others, due to the fact that it integrated reading and writing in written open-response questions of a sophisticated nature.

Significant differences between high school and college math tests were evident in three areas. The first area of difference was in topics covered. The high school math test covered a broad range of topics such as data, probability, and statistics, including Algebra 1 and Geometry, but rarely included anything more. The college tests placed a heavy emphasis on Algebra 2 and higher-level skills but were not concerned with data, probability, or statistics at all. Presentation was the second area of difference. A major portion of the math problems on the high school test were presented in verbal form while college tests placed an emphasis on numeric, symbolic and graphic formats. The third area of significant difference pertained to demands on test takers with college tests being more rigorous in regard to timed testing situations requiring rapid recall and efficiency than high school tests.

This Education Trust study of 1999 pointed out that Algebra 2 was markedly missing from many of the high school assessments as well as the college entrance exams. The gap that existed between high school tests and college coursework, in relation to Algebra 2, was addressed with updated SAT and ACT testing formats but was still

lagging in content on the high school side of testing. It was recommended that (a) all high school students complete a rigorous, college-preparatory academic core; (b) K-12 assessments should be aligned to measure skills and knowledge that students need to succeed in college; and (c) institutions of higher education should consider using K-12 assessments for admissions or K-12 should use higher education assessments such as Oregon's Performance-Based Admissions Standards System. Final recommendations were made which suggested that high-performing students be rewarded by enabling them to start college-level work early through Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment.

Grade Inflation Issues

Grade inflation has also been found to be an issue. It first became a problem in the days of the Vietnam War. According to Bartlett (2003), teachers felt pressure to give students better grades so students could avoid being drafted into the military. In 1969, only 12.5% of high school graduates finished with an "A" average (Bartlett). In 1996 that number increased to 31.5% but SAT and ACT scores did not rise in proportion. The SAT has fallen from an average of 1059 in 1967 to 1020 in 2002 (Bartlett). The issue became even more heated when the *Boston Globe* reported that half of all grades at Harvard were As in 2000. That statistic was up from one third of the grades being As in 1985.

Teachers of the 21st century became equally concerned about their students' passing with good grades so that scholarships could be retained. They have wanted to avoid, however, the pressure of passing students who would not do the work. Bartlett, a senior fellow with the National Center for Policy Analysis, reported on a 2003 study by

Rojstaczer of Duke University. Rojstaczer found that teachers were concerned with giving good grades so that students would enroll in their classes (Bartlett, 2003). In the 1980s, college students enrolled in approximately 18 credit hours per semester. Since they did not have to worry about maintaining a higher grade point average, they took as many classes as they wanted. Students in the late 1990s became concerned with keeping valuable scholarships and reduced their course loads. Consequently, since the early 1990s, students have increasingly taken a longer time period to complete their four-year postsecondary education (Bartlett).

Acceleration: Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement

Dual Enrollment courses have been one strategy used by students to earn college credit before having graduated from high school. Students have been able to receive college and high school credit for taking a single class (Klein, 2007). This attempt at finishing high school and starting college simultaneously has had its advantages and disadvantages. For motivated students with predetermined career goals, it has provided a tremendous boost at getting completing one's formal schooling in a shorter rather than longer period of time. Though much of dual enrollment programs have been offered at the college campus, some of the content can be taken on the high school campus where teachers may or may not be teaching with acceptable credentials or covering the same material. Policymakers have worried about a lack of rigor, quality and innovation at many high schools (Klein). There has been very little accountability in these classes, and most programs have not collected information on student outcomes (Klein). The inability

to transfer credits has also been viewed as a potential detriment, as many colleges have not accepted credits taken during high school as dual enrollment courses.

Advanced Placement describes courses that are taught in high school at the college level. It is a program of the College Board, the SAT Company. At the end of an Advanced Placement course, students take a nationally standardized test (Klein, 2007). Those students that score high enough on these tests are awarded college credit, according to the policies of the college or university they choose to attend.

Advanced Placement prescribes a rigorous academic structure with national audits that critique course content, standards, curriculum selection, teacher certification, teacher degree and experience. A detailed syllabus is submitted to the national board for review and approval. A school that submits a course framework not approved by the College Board, is not allowed to teach that course with the AP distinction until recommended changes are made.

SAT and ACT Historical Averages

Both the U.S. Department of Education and the College Board have recognized a growing problem regarding student performance and have found that most high school graduates are not prepared to succeed in college (Solomon, 2003). The Bridge Project at Stanford University compiled a list of the top 10 myths students believe about college in its 2003 report “Betraying the College Dream.” Some of the reasons included being able to afford college, thinking they had to be a stellar athlete to get scholarships, some even thought that taking the minimum high school graduation requirements would prepare

them for college-level work. Many students who were surveyed reported that their strategy was to take easy classes in high school so they could get good grades and have a higher grade point average. One large myth was that some thought the senior year did not matter to the college admissions process. Michael Kirst, a Stanford University professor and director of the Bridge Project, reported that the United States system of education is still set up the same way it was in 1903.

Standards for Success, was a 2003 project of the Association of American Universities in partnership with the Pew Charitable Trusts. One of the goals of this project was to identify the knowledge students needed to know, both in knowledge and performance, to succeed in college courses. The other goal was to analyze the alignment between high school assessments to improve the connection between high school tests and university standards. Peter Negroni, Senior Vice President at the College Board, reported that people were beginning to recognize that this was one of the most serious issues confronting America (Solomon, 2003). The Association of American Universities reported that the best college preparation was a curriculum that teaches students how to think analytically, solve problems, form opinions, and conduct research (Solomon).

Nationally, SAT and ACT averages have begun to increase but only after the government intervened and began mandating curricular reform. In the 1980s, state policy makers took action to improve the quality of education. States increased graduation requirements and strengthened core curriculum (Wilson & Rossman, 1993). Their hope was that students would learn more if more was expected of them. These tougher requirements increased educational equity by ensuring the success of low achievers who

were introduced to more demanding content. The post-Sputnik reforms of the early 1960s encouraged significant change in math and science. The 1980s, however, introduced another wave of attempts to reform the educational system with an emphasis on high school curriculum and graduation requirements. Early reforms did not have the effect for which local employers and higher education had hoped. No significant change was observed, and no increase was reported in student preparedness (Wilson & Rossman).

The SAT reported its lowest scores in the late 1970s with gradual increases over the subsequent 30 years. Verbal scores in 2007 had not reached the levels of those in the late 1960s. Math scores improved after a low period in the late 1970s and early 1980s. They have exceeded the math scores of the late 1960s and the 2007 verbal scores. Some have claimed this trend was due to the increased attention to math and science areas that was started in the decade of the 1960s spurred by Sputnik. Since 1992, the average student achievement on the National Assessment of Education Progress has improved in math but has lagged in reading (Olson, 2006). The most recent summary report of the fall 2007 PSAT was released on February 20, 2008. The national averages of the test corroborate the findings of this research with a decreased score on both the Critical Reading and Math portions of the exam.

Critics of Education

From the onset of compulsory schooling, education has been criticized and maligned but seldom praised. It has historically shouldered the blame for most of the national weaknesses and deficiencies. Rarely, however, has education been credited for

its successes. Critics of education and its accrediting agencies have viewed the regional accrediting process as mediocre and substandard (McGhee, 2007).

The importance of accreditation involves the benefit of self-assessment in conjunction with planning for improvement initiatives (Dodd, 2004). Institutional improvement and self-assessment are quality controls methods used to make schools accountable to students, the public, and governmental agencies (Dodd). Achieving institutional effectiveness and accountability is the outcome of three processes; self-assessment, planning, and program review. Inputs to the process include accreditation standards, the schools mission and goals, and data on student learning outcomes (Dodd). The quality control process of accreditation includes institutional self-assessment, review team visit and written report, institutional response, and agency action.

Another quality control emphasis has been the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, which was established in 1988 to recognize excellence in business. It expanded 10 years later to include educational institutions. The criteria for the award have been focused on student learning outcomes and have served to drive organizational improvement according to its mission and goals.

Critics of accreditation have found it to be a process fostered by an inbred, self-perpetuating organization. Preference has often been given to member schools while potential members were grilled and held to the strict letter of the law (Miller, 1998). The process was often seen as an end rather than a means for continued growth. Many critics saw the process and its practices as providing little incentive for schools to improve once they had attained accredited status (Miller). It has been observed that mediocrity and

conformity were often the product and consequences of a system that was not part of the solution but helped create the problem. Critics claimed that the process was far too quantitative and needed a more qualitative approach to its philosophy and practice. Charles Thurber, professor at the University of Chicago, once noted that those who think the problems of education are permanently solved delude themselves and mislead others, for problems of education are always in the process of solution (Miller).

Pfnister, in his research of regional accrediting agencies, found support from several key leaders who also took issue with the accreditation process. He discovered that several leading educators questioned the viability of the process and many claimed that it was relatively unimportant and unnecessary (Pfnister, 1971). Pfnister's article cited Frederic Ness, president of the Association of American Colleges, who asked what institutions got out of accreditation and found the process and attainment status meaningless. Capen, chancellor of the University of Buffalo, agreed with Ness and referred to the regional agencies as the seven devils and criticized attempts at standardizing education (Pfnister). William Selden, of the National Commission on Accrediting, was of the opinion that accreditation played an important role in establishing the criteria of new institutions but became increasingly less important and held little value to mature programs. He considered the accreditation process a nuisance and an unnecessary interruption (Pfnister).

None of the accrediting agencies were started in the attempt to set standards and evaluation criteria. Their goal was to meet to discuss common problems and to create better articulation between high schools and colleges. Accrediting agencies, however,

became vulnerable to shifts in public opinion and moved into the evaluative role. The agencies continue to emphasize that their role was to help schools improve but the public views them as an organization that certifies and assures a certain level of quality assurance (Troutt, 1979).

The Bush administration met with accreditors numerous times during a round of meetings in 2007 under the direction of Education Secretary Margaret Spellings (Basken, 2007a). Spellings claimed that the agencies should make performance outcomes, completion rates, and student learning the core of their assessment (Basken, 2007a). Throughout the deliberations, key leaders rejected the current accreditation process as an inherently biased method of evaluation in which member schools police one another (Basken, 2007a). Jane Wellman of the Institute for Higher Education Policy questioned whether expanding the role of accreditation systems would weaken what it does well (Field, 2006a). Spellings went on to suggest a plan that would align high school standards to college work, streamline the process of applying for federal aid, create a federal database to track academic progress, provide matching funds to colleges that report student learning outcomes, and convene members of accrediting groups in an effort to place more emphasis on learning (Field, 2006b). Critics felt that the USDOE went beyond what was reasonable in demanding that agencies used outcome-based criteria in evaluation (Basken, 2007b).

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to review related literature on the history and accreditation processes of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). The present study was focused on the extent to which student performance outcomes have been influenced by the demands of accreditation processes and how those processes have been influenced by historical events and trends along with legislative mandates and policies. The present study examined historical trends, legislative mandates, and quality control measures, such as accreditation processes, and whether they paralleled student performance trends. This literature review was presented in six sections. Section 1 provided an overview of literature related to the history and processes of SACS. Section 2 focused on literature related to the history and processes of ACSI. Section 3 presented quality control models and the theoretical framework of Total Quality Management. Section 4 highlighted the significant historical events and legislative mandates that have impacted educational policy reform. Section 5 detailed student performance trends and learning outcomes as seen in national and state reports. Section 6 summarized the concerns of the critics of education and the need for good quality control methods.

Chapter 3 contains a presentation of the findings related to the study. Reported are the time line shifts related to the accreditation processes and a description of the extent to which historical events and legislative mandates have impacted these processes and ultimately student performance. It also provides a detailed description of the content

analysis style of qualitative research. Chapter 4 presents a summary and discussion of the findings and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 3 DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to determine to what extent historical events and accreditation processes impacted student performance. It was also intended to contribute to the comparison of best practices in regional accreditation processes. The study had two primary objectives. The first objective was to determine the extent to which student performance was impacted by accreditation processes and historical events. The second objective was to identify the specific differences between criterion-based accreditation processes and open-ended accreditation processes. Three research questions were formulated to provide guidance and focus for the investigation. These questions were:

1. To what extent have historical events and trends impacted federal, state, and local legislation related to educational standards?
2. To what extent have legislation mandates and policy movements influenced accreditation processes?
3. To what extent have the trends related to accreditation processes paralleled the trends of student performance?

The data were collected using qualitative research methods in a two-level process. Initially, in Level 1, content analysis was performed on archival data retrieved from accreditation process documents. Level 1 was completed as part of the review of the literature and permitted the identification and formation of accreditation categories that could be used in subsequent analyses. Further content analysis was performed in Level 2

to identify significant shifts in (a) accreditation processes, (b) quality control models, (c) historical events and legislative mandates, (d) student performance and (e) the reactions of critics of education. The results of the content analysis performed in analyzing the data were the focus of the contents of Chapter 3.

Level 1 consisted of the formation and identification of six accreditation categories, which were identified and selected by the researcher during the review of literature. The preliminary categories were: (a) Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) History and Processes, (b) Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) History and Processes, (c) Quality Control Models, (d) Historical Events and Legislative Mandates, (e) Student Performance Trends and Issues, and (f) Critics of Education.

At the conclusion of the Level 1 analysis, a decision was made to focus on three key areas that were considered to be integral to the study. The revised categories used as a framework for analysis for Level 2 were: (a) student performance, (b) historical events/legislative mandates, and (c) SACS and ACSI accreditation processes. In Level 2, student performance trends from 1970-2005 were analyzed using content analysis. Table 1 displays the categories and sub-categories developed for use in Levels 1 and 2 of the analysis.

Table 1
 Research Categories Used in Content Analysis

Categories	Sub-categories
Student Performance	SAT/ACT Historical Averages Graduation Rates Dropout Rates Dropouts Earning a GED (by age 19) College Enrollment
Historical Events/Legislative Mandates	Legislation Policy Wars Movements
SACS & ACSI Accreditation Processes	History and Processes Standards Continuous Improvement

Note. SACS=Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, ACSI=Association of Christian Schools International.

Significant Shifts in Student Performance

This category represented the assessment of student performance by key indicators including: (a) SAT/ACT historical averages, (b) graduation rates, (c) dropout rates, (d) dropouts earning a GED (by age 19), and (e) college enrollment. These student performance trends are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Student Performance Trends

Criteria	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
SAT Verbal	537	512	502	509	500	504	505	508
SAT Math	512	498	492	500	501	506	514	520
ACT Verbal	18.5	17.7	17.9	18.1	20.5	20.2	20.5	20.4
ACT Math	20.0	17.6	17.4	17.2	19.9	20.2	20.7	20.7
Graduation Rate	78.7%	74.9%	71.5%	74.2%	73.6%	71.8%	71.7%	74.7%
Dropout Rate	15.0%	13.9%	14.1%	12.6%	12.1%	12.0%	10.9%	9.4%
Dropouts Earning GED (by Age 19)	---	33%	37%	32%	36%	38%	45%	
College Enrollment (in millions)	59.8	61	58.3	57.2	60.6	65	68.6	72.2

The SAT assessment had an average verbal score of 537 in 1970. The score dropped 25 points by 1975 and another 10 points to 502 in 1980. By 1985, the score regained 7 points with an average score of 509. 1990 saw a slight decline to 500. From 1990 to 2005 the scores never dipped below 500 and maintained an average of 508 by 2005.

The SAT math scores averaged 512 in 1970. In 1975, the average score declined by 14 points to an average score of 498. 1980 saw a further decline to 492. An average score of 500 was attained by 1985, increasing only 1 point to an average score of 501 in 1990. From 1990 to 2005, steady gains were made that surpassed the 1970 average of 512. The average score in 2000 was 514 with an increase of another 6 points by 2005. As

of this study, the average SAT scores were the lowest since 1999 but college admissions standards were more difficult than ever.

Differences in the 1970 and 2005 SAT scores were largely attributed to the smaller pool of college-bound test-takers in 1970 as opposed to the more recent averages in 2005 which reflect a greater percentage of the student population. Another consideration could be that the point system in the test was re-centered in 1995 to reflect current curriculum and performance trends. This resulted in a 100-point increase in overall SAT averages. Also, the test was updated in 2005 to include Algebra II and a writing section. Vocabulary analogies which had been included previously were eliminated.

ACT verbal scores averaged 18.5 points in 1970. A decline was noticed in the average score of 17.7 in 1975. By 1980 there was a slight increase of .2 points to 17.9 and again by .2 in 1985. A significant increase occurred between 1985 and 1990 for an average score of 20.5. The average scores between 1990 and 2005 fluctuated only slightly from .1 to .3 points, for an average score in 2005 of 20.4.

ACT math scores averaged 20 points in 1970. They fell 2.4 points to 17.6 in 1975 and dropped .2 over the next five years to 17.4, and further yet by 1985 to 17.2. The increases in math scores were comparable to the increases in the ACT verbal scores from 1985 to 1990, with math scores rising to an average of 19.9. The scores increased slightly by .3 points to 20.2 in 1995 and stabilized at 20.7 in 2000 and 2005.

Graduation rates in the U.S. were at a high point of 78.7% in 1970 and an all-time low of 71.5% in 1980. This 1980 time period was consistent with lower SAT and ACT scores. The remaining averages ranged between 71.7% and 74.9% with minor fluctuations.

Dropout Rates were also at an all time high of 15% in 1970. The lowest dropout rate (9.4%) was attained in 2005. The second highest dropout rate of 14.1% was reported for 1980, the same year in which lower test scores and graduation rates were observed. Of the students who were dropouts, 33% earned their GED by age 19 in 1975. These scores were relatively stable, between 32% and 37% during the 1980s and 1990s. The percentage of dropouts who earned their GED in the year 2000 increased to 45%. The difference in graduation and drop out rates left a margin of students that had not finished within four years but still had not dropped out of high school.

In 1970, 59.8 million students enrolled in college. There was a slight increase of 1.2 million by 1975 and a decline to 58.3 million in 1980. College enrollment decreased again to 57.2 million in 1985. There was a steady upward trend in enrollment beginning in 1990 with 60.6 million students enrolled. This figure increased to 72.2 million by 2005.

Significant Shifts in Historical Events/Legislative Mandates

Dating back to 1647, the cultural paradigm was centered on religion. The Old Deluder Satan Act provided the framework for religious education. The focus on religious education was aligned with the needs of those who had immigrated in hopes of

finding religious freedom and freedom from religious persecution. The *New England Primer* and the *Bible* were the textbooks of the day. Student performance was based on their knowledge of the *Bible* and religious doctrines.

Freedom was attained and a democratic government was being established by 1776. There was a public school revival, which resulted from monetary support through taxation. The school year was extended by one month and libraries were developed. Horace Mann established the concept of the Common School, which laid the foundation for public schools. Student performance was assessed through a uniform grading system. The classroom environment was so highly structured that one teacher could teach a large number of students at one time.

In the time period between 1877 and 1928, a workforce paradigm existed. The Committee of Ten met to establish national curriculum standards, compulsory schooling, and teacher certification requirements. As students moved from farms to factories, the importance of education was at the forefront of societal concerns. Progress was made in providing for individualized differences, meaning over memorization, and the correlation of subjects. With many new subjects added to the curriculum, student performance had to be measured according to a more standardized format. Oral quizzes and spelling bees gave way to subject area achievement tests. Students were required to exhibit content mastery by reproduction of material learned.

The Great Depression and World War II impacted the years between 1929 and 1945. From the stock market crash to economic rebuilding and from war to recovery this was a time of great momentum and metamorphosis of public education. The GI Bill

provided funding for people returning from war. Schools of education at most universities provided training for teachers and principals. This increased training, along with enhanced certification requirements, prompted higher salaries. Teachers were included in curriculum development in this era of child-centered education. A unified curriculum was established for elementary schools. Student participation and student engagement were emphasized and encouraged through personal and community awareness.

The dynamic movement of historical trends between 1946 and 1957 resulted in a rapid population increase, overcrowded classrooms, and a shortage of teachers. After World War II, there was a precarious sense of peace as the United States entered into the Cold War. The advancement of the space program in Russia provided the impetus that motivated technological advances in science and math. Racial equality and special education issues emerged as educational concerns during this period. *Brown v. Board of Education* started the movement toward racial equality. Global education became a curriculum focus with the addition of foreign language and world cultural geography. Single textbooks were replaced with an expanded variety of resources.

The decade of 1958-1968 motivated the U.S. toward a national curriculum with increased accountability. The growth and advancement of the U.S. space program provided the impetus for new programs in science and math. These programs were funded through the National Defense Education Act. Gifted students were recognized, encouraged, and grouped accordingly. The Civil Rights movement drove increased desegregation initiatives in schools. Soldiers returning from the Vietnam War once again

utilized the GI Bill to seek higher education. Resources for needy students were supplied through Title I funding.

Legislative policies between 1969 and 1978 were driven by the social inequities of special interest groups. This period was defined by self-actualization as opposed to curricular content. Schools of the late 1970s offered basics for all, compassion for most, and excellence for a select few. Title IX provided for women in school sports, and PL 94-142 provided equality for students with disabilities. Student performance was at its lowest level at the end of this time period. In the 1980s, “A Nation at Risk” though initially directed toward American high schools, provided a wake-up call for all of public education. The reduction of funds caused the narrowing of programs and curriculum. Curricular directions, which had become more experimental, returned to more traditional models. Student performance was measured more frequently in order to assess curriculum mastery and skill.

The 1990s saw a period of uniformity and national standards. Curricular goals and textbook adoption were included in Goals 2000. The late 1990s saw an increase in test scores and a decrease in the high school dropout rate. College enrollment was on the rise. Between 2000 and 2007, all major decisions related to public education centered around the accountability movement. The No Child Left Behind legislation served as the driving force behind the accountability process. This legislation dictated the criteria for highly qualified teachers and high-stakes testing. The voucher system and charter school options became prominent controversial issues. Student performance and advancement were primarily focused on standardized test scores.

Table 3 presents the connectivity of the primary categories and the symbiotic relationship between them. It was built upon the historical perspective suggested in Ragan and Shepherd's elementary curriculum research (Ragan & Shepherd, 1982).

Table 3
 Matrix Analysis of Historical Events, Quality Control Processes, and Student Performance

Time Period	Cultural Paradigm	Historical Events/ Legislative Policy	Processes		Student Performance
			SACS	ACSI	
1647-1775	Religion	Dependence to independence; Old Deluder Satan Act; schools established through taxation.	Not yet established.	Not yet established.	Based on religious education; New England Primer; private tutors; extreme disciplinary practices of Colonial schools.
1776-1876	Democratic Government	Independence to nationalism; Common School/Mann; public school revival; public high schools replaced private academies; libraries developed; one month added to school year; increased appropriations.	Not yet established.	Not yet established.	Student-ability grading system; Mechanical/monitorial system.
1877-1928	Workforce Economy	Agriculture to industry; Committee of Ten; national standards, compulsory schooling; teacher certification required passing a simple pedagogy test/with no high school education; progress made in providing for student differences; rapid growth of high schools as “factory” with regimented system; meaning over memorization; correlated subjects.	SACS established; evaluation, cooperation, mutual assistance.	Not yet established.	Many new subjects added to curriculum; Beginning of period: progress evaluated by oral quizzes, written examinations, matches, spelling bees. End of period: progress evaluated by standardized achievement tests in subject areas; repetition as means of learning; measured by reproduction of material learned.

Time Period	Cultural Paradigm	Historical Events/ Legislative Policy	Processes		Student Performance
			SACS	ACSI	
1929-1945	Economic Rebuilding	Great Depression; Progressive Education Act/Eight Year Study; World War II; stock market crash/economic depression; business failures; unemployment; state-wide educational policies; GI Bill; improved teacher education; schools of education established by most universities; new developments in science and technology; specialized training for elementary teachers and principals; salary schedules; higher certification requirements; teachers helped determine purpose, content and scope of curriculum; curriculum guides developed; child-centered school.	Criterion-based rigorous standards; exclusivity; Secondary School Evaluative Criteria/detailed rigorous accreditation processes and criteria; Criteria incorporated into NSSE, Elementary Evaluative Criteria; first guide for elementary schools.	Not yet established.	Elementary schools based on unified curriculum; teachers taught students to identify goals, make plans, and evaluate progress; schools centered on community engagement; students taught relative to community needs; rigid promotion policies; grade standards; greater emphasis on student participation.
1946-1957	Dynamic Movement	Peace to Sputnik; Brown v. Board; Civil Rights; Cold War; rapid population increase; overcrowded classrooms; shortage of teachers; special education services; prosperity, growth and technological advances.	Inclusion and integration; lack of quality teachers in black colleges; insufficient funds; first black colleges admitted to SACS in 1957.	Not yet established.	Learning a second language; global education; single textbook replaced by great variety of resources.

Time Period	Cultural Paradigm	Historical Events/ Legislative Policy	Processes SACS	ACSI	Student Performance
1958-1968	Motivated Survival	Assertion to Apollo; national curriculum; accountability; desegregation; NDEA; Vietnam War; Civil Rights; ESEA; Title I; Higher Education Act.	Powerful influence; elementary commission; abolished separate list of approved black colleges in 1961; accreditation process viewed as project of finality (not continual improvement); no ongoing site visits; little incentive for change; quality early education was imperative.	Not yet established.	New programs in science and math for elementary; ability grouping; special classes for “gifted.”
1969-1978	Unequal Social Need	Exploration to inflation; Title IX, PL 94-142; constitutional rights of individuals; poor accountability systems; curriculum shift from better content to better self-actualizing individuals; schools in late 1970s offered basics for all, compassion for most, and excellence for a few.	Committee on Standards and Policies provided impetus for massive revisions of policies and standards instituted in 1976.	ACSI established to validate the Christian school movement; limited budgets; poor facilities; leadership conflicts; substandard academics.	Based on kits, simulations, competency, individualized materials. In 1970: SAT average 1049; graduation rate 78.7%; dropout rate 15%; college enrollment 59.8%. In 1975: SAT average 1010; graduation rate 74.9%; dropout rate 13.9%; college enrollment 61%.

Time Period	Cultural Paradigm	Historical Events/ Legislative Policy	Processes		Student Performance
			SACS	ACSI	
1979-1989	Consistency	Inflation to conservatism; “A Nation at Risk”; increased unemployment; less management by government; reduction of funds; narrowing of programs; curriculum censorship.	Student outcomes; new standards assessment; effectiveness; beginning of continuous improvement, self-evaluation; new evaluation criteria in 1987 for high schools and colleges	Questionable, less rigorous, undefined standards; regional districts established.	Shift from experimental to familiar/traditional curriculum models; frequent assessment of instruction. In 1980: SAT average 992; graduation rate 71.5%; dropout rate 14.1%; college enrollment 58.3% In 1985: SAT average 1009; graduation rate 74.2%; dropout rate 12.6% college enrollment 57.2%
1990-1999	Uniformity	National Standards; Goals 2000; established a unified national curriculum; established site based management; vouchers and charter schools established.	Accountability and relevancy, evaluation established for elementary schools; NSSE Criteria (6th and final edition) published; process-oriented format for all regions; less emphasis on outcome-based results; colleges required to have student learning standards; updated school improvement handbook.	Teacher qualifications and certification; rigorous academics; accountability through standardized assessment tools; provided a solid educational philosophy for Christian education.	Shift from regulation to results; In 1990: SAT average 1001; graduation rate 73.6%; dropout rate 12.1%; college enrollment 60.6%. In 1995: SAT average 1010; graduation rate 71.8%; dropout rate 12%; college enrollment 65%.

Time Period	Cultural Paradigm	Historical Events/ Legislative Policy	Processes SACS	ACSI	Student Performance
2000-present	Accountability	NCLB, highly qualified teachers; high stakes testing, vouchers; charter schools.	Continuous improvement; self-evaluation; open-ended processes; 10 standards until 2006; SACS joins forces with North Central region to create AdvancEd; standards reduced to 7; shift to quality enhancement plan	Criterion-based; continuous improvement, rigorous standards; ASP model allowed for challenging growth projects, charting progress and implementing necessary change; growth to 5300 schools in 100+ countries, does not accredit colleges but allows membership; follows 10 major standards and includes an in-depth self-study.	In 2000: SAT average 1019; graduation rate 71.7%; dropout rate 10.9%; college enrollment 68.6%. In 2005: SAT average 1028; graduation rate 74.7%; dropout rate 9.4%; college enrollment 72.2%

Significant Shifts in the SACS Accreditation Process

When SACS was founded in 1895 it was designed as a consortium of educators that met to discuss educational issues and provide support and encouragement to like-minded schools. The purpose of the organization was to organize southern schools and colleges for cooperation and mutual assistance. It was also the organization's intent to elevate the standards of academics, create a uniformity of college entrance requirements,

and help develop preparatory schools so that colleges would not need to remediate students that were not ready for their classrooms.

With help from the NSSE, the SACS process remained stable and continued to be grounded in a detailed criterion-based format. In 1932, The Progressive Education Association had sponsored the largest educational study of its time called the Eight-Year Study. Revealed in the results of this research were the shortcomings of secondary schools and the disunity of their curricula with respect to societal expectations. The study resulted in the publication of the Secondary School Evaluative Criteria in 1940. This intense evaluative instrument detailed a rigorous method of accreditation, which was incorporated into the NSSE. The NSSE revised the Criteria every 10 years. It was not challenged until 1980 when new leaders thought that school evaluations should focus on the processes that led to desired outcomes.

From 1946-1957, the Civil Rights movement had an impact on inclusion and integration in black colleges. Due to a lack of sufficient funds and quality teachers, black colleges had not been given the opportunity to become accredited. When SACS admitted its first black colleges in 1957, the previous separate approved list for black schools was eliminated. SACS had become a powerful influence. The Elementary Commission was established, recognizing the importance of and laying the foundation for, early education. During this time, many schools viewed the accreditation process as a project of finality. Institutions began to slide into a mediocre state of stagnant education. This prompted the formation of the Committee on Standards and Policies to review and update accreditation standards.

The 1980s brought new standards for use in evaluating student outcome assessments. The shift was from outcome-based to process-based evaluation. Schools were evaluated based on the quality of their school improvement plans. There was a change in the status quo with a shift in evaluation formats. Institutions had to show change and improvement in order to retain their accreditation status. The decade of the 1990s saw yet another shift. The emphasis moved beyond process evaluation which had focused on producing educated students to a process approach focused on student learning. Burke and Minassians (2002) found that this period was depicted as a shift from regulation and accounting for expenditures to student learning outcomes and accounting for results. From 2000–2007, SACS implemented another shift to incorporate the schools of the North Central Association under the umbrella of AdvancEd. The number of standards describing a quality school were reduced from 10 to 7. In the new model, there was no self-study. Only online reporting was required, but a site visit was still necessary. Many previous standards were reduced to mere suggestions and were no longer required.

Significant Shifts in the ACSI Accreditation Process

Since its inception in 1978, ACSI has maintained a strict criterion-based process of accreditation. Throughout the first two decades, the primary goal was to create a basis upon which private education could be seen as valid. Many private religious schools had started as alternatives to public education with little attention given to quality, teacher certification, standards, or course descriptions. The academic requirements were eventually substantiated through increased recognition and acceptance from other viable

accrediting agencies. SACS and other regional accrediting agencies eventually accepted the ACSI standards and process as equivalent to their own. During dual accreditation visits by SACS and ACSI teams, one final ACSI report with a one-page SACS summary was all that was required. This final report was all that was submitted to the regional office. This shift of the regional accrediting bodies, which now accepted ACSI as being on par with their own standards, was one of the most significant validations of the ACSI accreditation process. This cooperative movement gave national recognition to the private sector as none other in its brief history.

The single most significant shift within the ACSI criterion-based process came in 2005 with the addition of the Accreditation by School Progress format of accreditation. This process introduced a new method of school accreditation. Schools that had already met the strict standards and passed the criterion-based accreditation process, were permitted to select a school improvement project as their focus and reported on their findings. A site visit was still required, along with a thorough self-study, which detailed the projected goals and expected outcomes. This process was repeated every five years when a new school improvement project was selected, implemented, and the results once again reported before choosing a new project for the next accreditation cycle.

Summary

A content analysis of the three primary categories was presented in this chapter. The student performance category, displayed in tabular form, was focused on SAT/ACT averages, high school graduation and dropout rates, dropouts earning a GED, and college

enrollment. Legislation, policy, wars, and movements were described in the historical events and legislative mandates section. Finally, the last section reported on the history and processes, standards, and continuous improvement concerns of both the SACS and ACSI accreditation processes. The results of data analyses in the form of trends, percentages, averages, and significant shifts were displayed and discussed. The connectivity of the primary categories and the symbiotic relationship between them was also illustrated in tabular form and discussed. The present study examined historical trends, legislative mandates, and quality control measures such as accreditation processes and whether they paralleled student performance trends.

A summary and discussion of these findings are presented in Chapter 4. Conclusions drawn from this research are presented along with implications and recommendations for practice and future research.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study was concerned with and developed to determine the impact that appropriate accreditation processes have on student performance. Accreditation standards are often driven by accountability and reform movements that are dictated by educational law and policy. The goal of this research was to expose the historical paradigm shifts that have impacted educational legislation, resulting in changes to accreditation standards and student performance outcomes. The results of this study may be valuable to researchers interested in the modification of accreditation standards due to national guidelines and policy changes. The results that such modifications have had on student performance were the focus of this research.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to trace the historical events, educational trends, and legislative policies that have impacted accreditation processes and student performance. How student achievement has been influenced as a result of accreditation changes and updates was also investigated. The present study was conducted to examine historical trends, legislative mandates, and quality control measures, such as accreditation processes, and whether they paralleled student performance trends.

Methodology and Data Collection

The data used in this study consisted of an analysis of the SACS and ACSI accreditation standards and processes. Quality control models, historical events, legislative mandates, student performance trends, and the views of educational critics were also included. The extent to which each have impacted student performance and expected outcomes was the focus of this research.

Analysis of the Data

The researcher completed a content analysis using a two-level process of categorical review, integrating archival data derived from accreditation process documents. Level 1 consisted of the formation and identification of six accreditation categories which were identified and selected by the researcher. At the conclusion of the Level 1 analysis, the researcher focused on three key areas that were considered to be integral to the study. The revised categories used as a framework for analysis for Level 2 were: (a) student performance, (b) historical events, and (c) SACS and ACSI accreditation processes. In Level 2, student performance trends from 1970-2005 were analyzed using content analysis. Additional analytical comparisons were presented which displayed the connectivity of the primary categories and the symbiotic relationship between them.

Summary and Discussion of the Findings

Following is the summary and discussion of the findings of the study. Three research questions guided the study and are used in focusing this summary report of findings.

Research Question 1

To what extent have historical events and trends impacted federal, state, and local legislation related to educational standards?

The results of the content analysis performed in the present study strongly supported student performance as originally based solely on the rote repetition of Biblical knowledge. The Old Deluder Satan Act of 1647 was the first legislation that established public schools. Since that time, government has continued its quest to influence educational policy in response to the needs of society. Public education was eventually established through the mandated monetary support of taxation. Student performance during this era was assessed through a uniform system of grading and was monitored by the local citizenry and school boards. During the late 1800s, attention was directed towards the need for national curriculum standards and teacher certification requirements. This was supported by the development of new content areas and increased student performance measurements through the use of standardized tests. The Morrill Act of 1862 provided land for post-secondary education in order to benefit the schools whose curriculum included studies in agriculture and mechanical arts. During this same time frame, from 1855 to 1928, new content such as geography, Latin, Greek, astronomy, and later vocational education were included. It was not until the 1920s, however, that

legislation finally mandated compulsory education. In 1932, the Progressive Education Association sponsored the Eight-Year Study, and the secondary school commissions of the regional associations began to establish standards for secondary school accreditation (D. Tanner & L. Tanner, 2007). The purpose of the Eight-Year Study was to discover the shortcomings of secondary schools and the disunity of their curricula with respect to societal expectations. A new era of child-centered education (1929-1945), which paralleled the Eight-Year Study, saw the development of legislation which led to a unified curriculum and standards for the nation's elementary schools.

The advancement of the space program in the Soviet Union in the 1950s and 1960s provided the impetus toward further legislation for technological advances in science and math education. The National Defense Education Act provided federal dollars towards math and science content. In addition, the passage of the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958 established the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and further promoted scientific efforts. In *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954), the Supreme Court stated that public schools must be desegregated. *Brown II*, in the following year, required that this desegregation be accomplished with deliberated speed. This was the beginning of what would become the next civil rights movement. The 1960 Civil Rights Movement drove increased legislation toward desegregation in schools which resulted in numerous legislative policies that were driven by social inequities. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act and its Title I promoted equal educational opportunities for minority students and students living below the poverty level. The Higher Education Act of 1965, PL 89-329, was intended to strengthen educational

resources and to provide financial assistance for students in higher education. The Act of 1965 was reauthorized in 1968, 1972, 1976, 1980, 1986, 1992, and 1998. Prior to each reauthorization, Congress reviewed programs and amended policies. Title IX in 1972 made discrimination unlawful. In 1975, Congress passed Public Law 94-142 to protect the education rights of children with disabilities. Largely attributed to the use of experimental curricular trends, student performance was at its lowest during this period of history.

Noted in the review of literature was an era of poor performance in the late 1970s. This resulted in a call to uniformity, a return to more traditional models, and the implementation of national standards. The 1970s erosion of student performance led to the “A Nation at Risk” report (1982). An historical shift towards student performance and accountability resulted in the use of high-stakes tests and a focus on graduation rates and preparation towards postsecondary career and education. This accountability movement has enjoyed unprecedented longevity beginning in 1982 and continuing to 2008. Revisions of the ESEA evolved into the current No Child Left Behind legislation which led to the need for more highly qualified teachers and the unprecedented increase and use of high-stakes testing. Measurement concerned with student performance was focused primarily on established benchmarks and standardized tests.

Research Question 2

To what extent have legislation mandates and policy movements influenced accreditation processes?

Research Question 2 was designed to determine the extent to which legislative mandates and policy movements have influenced accreditation processes. The regional accrediting agencies were, and continue to be, required to provide an annual report to the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE). This agency then validates and gives credence to their accrediting credentials. Adjustments and changes to the accreditation processes are negotiated through painstaking legislative sessions before new resolutions and mandates are delivered. Each regional accrediting body is required to have standards that address student performance. The purpose of the accrediting bodies has been to have standards that advanced academic quality and to have a plan for purposeful change and improvement. Accrediting processes and the standards that are developed by regional offices are powerless without the approval and empowerment given by the USDOE.

Prior to 1895, quality control measures were limited to local boards, and no uniform systems were in place. The Southern Association was established in 1895 as a consortium of like-minded schools that met to discuss educational topics. The first half of the 20th century saw increased involvement and influence from government legislation. ESEA, NDEA, “A Nation at Risk,” and other such legislation led to the current and strict accountability movement of the 21st century. The accreditation processes at this time were based on a strict criterion-based format (Appendix B). In 1932, the Progressive Education Association sponsored the Eight-Year Study (D. Tanner & L. Tanner, 2007). The secondary school commissions of the regional associations set out to establish

standards for secondary school accreditation. The purpose of their research was to discover the shortcomings of secondary schools and the disunity of their curricula with respect to societal expectations.

The most significant mandates began to occur during the 1960s when the government increased its involvement in education. One example happened in North Carolina when legislation regulated visiting speakers at state supported colleges. The Speaker Ban Law (Miller, 1998) was aimed at prohibiting speakers who promoted the cause of the Communist party. SACS was drawn into this controversy between colleges who expected the association's support and the government who determined SACS' status as an accrediting body and who awarded financial aid to its regionally accredited schools. A compromise was finally reached after the threat of lost accreditation. SACS was concerned with the government's influence over free speech and colleges' freedom from unacceptable political influence over internal affairs. From this time forward, the power and influence of SACS continued to grow to new levels.

In further exploring the evolution of accreditation, the second half of the 20th century saw the federal government's expanded role in shaping education. Supporters and critics of accreditation hindered its growth and delayed its eventual rise to prominence. Critics complained that accreditation standards were too focused on quantitative measures, while society was increasingly concerned with individualism and creativity. Many institutions wanted the freedom to nurture their own uniqueness. They did not want to be restricted to a narrow policy of evaluation. They felt that regulation by means of strict quantitative standards was stifling to their growth. The 1970s and early 1980s

brought a phase of disturbance at all levels of education. Numerous reports at the local, state, regional, and national levels described the ill condition of American education. The public claimed that schools were not educating students to be successful in societal roles and called for improved standards and quality. Reports advocated increased legislation and accountability for student outcomes.

It was believed that the highly structured criteria was time intensive and not aligned with the demands of the accountability movement. While the criterion-based instruments focused on teacher qualifications, pupil/teacher ratios, funding, and infrastructure, student performance was not directly addressed. These beliefs led to a model that was self-initiated without specified and established criteria. Critics of this new format argued that it was ambiguous and would fall short of expectations. It was at this point that a new set of SACS standards were introduced prompted by legislative concerns about educational quality and the need for greater accountability. This was a pivotal time period that re-introduced a greater emphasis on educational outcomes, student assessment, and institutional effectiveness. This approach eventually led to a system that focused on an open-ended process of continuous improvement and self-evaluation. During this entire period the ACSI accreditation process remained like that of the original criterion-based SACS model.

Research Question 3

To what extent have the trends related to accreditation processes paralleled the trends of student performance?

The changing face of accreditation resulted in several paradigm shifts that have impacted student performance. The overwhelming issue was the difference between the student performance outcomes of a criterion-based era contrasted with an open-ended based era. The researcher analyzed data from both systems to determine peaks in student performance as a result of more traditional models of evaluation.

The results showed that during a criterion-based period in accreditation history, test scores and graduation rates were higher, but so were dropout rates. During the open-ended era, dropout rates continued to decline; test scores continued to fall; and graduation rates remained unstable. This analysis showed that as high school dropout rates decreased by 2% from 1970 to 1975, there was also a decline in graduation rates. This paralleled the increased college enrollment trend of nearly 2 million more students. The 1960s and 1970s saw an increased surge in college enrollment due to students who did not have the desire to enter into the draft. Grade inflation also became an issue at that time.

It was also determined that test scores and graduation rates in 2005 were still not as high during an open-ended accreditation era as they were in the late 1960s under a criterion-based system. While slight gains were noticed in SAT math scores, a large decrease in the SAT verbal scores resulted in an average score that was 21 points below the 1970 average. These results, displayed in Table 2, may have been influenced by the increased number of college-bound test-takers who represent a broader spectrum of the college-bound population.

Conclusions and Recommendations of the Study

This study sought to: determine the extent that historical events and trends had on legislation related to educational standards, determine to what extent such legislation impacted accreditation processes and standards, and determine the extent of accreditation processes to impact student performance. Based on a review of the literature and the research findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. An appropriate model of accreditation is vital to the continuous improvement of a quality educational institution and student performance outcomes.
2. Legislation can be supportive towards promoting equal opportunities for students.
3. Historical events and trends have impacted the needs and perceptions of society and the educational system in the United States. These needs have not always been aligned with best practices. It is important that legislation is not the based on hasty judgments or misinterpreted data.
4. The longevity of policy and criterion-based standards paralleled student performance. Therefore it is important to slow reactions to purported educational crises, so that the pendulum swing does not become the force behind educational policy.

Implications of the Study

The accreditation process plays a crucial role in ensuring that students are given the opportunity to receive a quality education. Accrediting bodies have to carefully

negotiate standards, policies, and processes through federally mandated guidelines set by the U.S. Department of Education. The present study examined historical trends, legislative mandates, and quality control measures, such as accreditation processes, and whether they paralleled student performance trends.

Based on the review of the literature, student performance trends decreased consistently when the criterion-based processes of the 1970s were replaced with more experimental processes. The decade of the 1980s and 1990s brought decreased scores and lower performance outcomes. Most regional accreditation models were based on shifting open-ended criteria. This could be attributed to a shift in the accreditation process that included an open-ended approach in accreditation standards. The strict criterion-based accreditation design that had been implemented with the Eight-Year Study of 1940 was in place until the late 1970s. New leadership in the early 1980s brought new ideas, new standards, and a new process that had implications for student performance outcomes. Student performance, based on accreditation reviews, saw a decline in progressive improvement and in ongoing quality results. Findings revealed that the greatest student performance came during eras whereby education quality control measures were drawn from more of a site-based standardized criterion (Appendix B). Further research could identify the need for improved quality control mechanisms that might assist in a leveled approach to meeting and improving educational standards.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research needs were identified using the data analysis from the present study.

1. Due to the lack of concrete quality control measures, each state's Department of Education should explore the creation of a criterion-based evaluation of schools.
2. A comparison of each of the 50 state educational systems and their quality control measures should be explored. This would indicate the legislated mandates for each state. Possible research could include the required number of instructional hours, teacher certification criteria, class-size legislation, and minimum standards for curriculum.
3. The U.S. Constitution has granted authority to individual states for education. Present-day student performance in each state, under the current federal focus, could be compared to an earlier time when states had more control. This would suggest a study parallel to the present study to investigate differences prior to and after increased federal controls.
4. Continued research should compare the progress of the newly initiated AvancEd accreditation process as well as the newly proposed processes of the ACSI accreditation model to take effect in the Fall of 2008.
5. Conduct research into external factors, such as legislative mandates (ESEA, NDEA, NCLB) to determine why reading trends do not parallel math trends and why reading has not made gains comparable to those achieved in math.

6. The development of a working model for quality control in education should be explored. Based on student performance outcomes from the highest performance era, a “bottom- up” not a “top-down” approach might be most beneficial. This would also suggest that a user-friendly model, free of federal involvement, might be more successful than an environment characterized by increased federal influences and pressure.

APPENDIX A
IRB COMMITTEE APPROVAL FORM



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901, 407-882-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Not Human Subjects Research Letter

From : **UCF Institutional Review Board**
FWA00000351, Exp. 5/07/10, IRB00001138

To : **Robert Burris**

Date : **September 27, 2007**

IRB Number: **SBE-07-05171**

Study Title: **AN ANALYSIS OF ACCREDITATION PROCESSES, QUALITY CONTROL CRITERIA, HISTORICAL EVENTS, AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

Dear Researcher:

The UCF Institutional Review Board has determined that your project "An Analysis of Accreditation Processes, Quality Control Criteria, Historical Events, and Student Achievement" is **not human subjects research**. Your project does not fit the following federal regulations definition of research: "A systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge".

Thank you for your time in resolving this issue.

On behalf of Tracy Dietz, Ph.D., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 09/27/2007 02:22:14 PM EDT

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joanne Muratori".

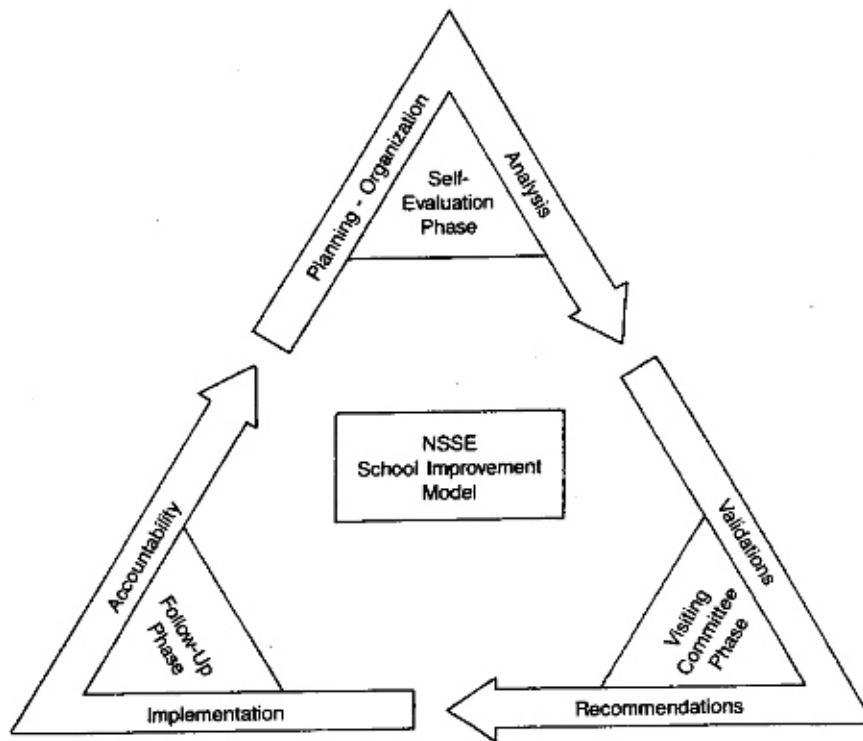
IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX B
SACS SELF-STUDY MATERIALS

MATHEMATICS

SECTION

4-9



**EVALUATIVE CRITERIA
SIXTH EDITION**

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SECTION 4-9 — MATHEMATICS

INSTRUCTIONS

The two fundamental guidelines for school evaluation are (1) *the characteristics of the school and community* and (2) *the school's philosophy and goals*. Therefore, Section 2, "School and Community," and Section 3, "Philosophy and Goals," should be kept in mind when the items of this section are being completed. While making evaluations persons should ask: "How well do the practices in this school meet the needs of the school and community?" and "How well do the practices conform to the philosophy and goals of this school?" When evaluations are made, factors such as size, type, location of school, financial support and state requirements should not be used to justify failure to provide a program or facilities appropriate to the needs of the school and community consistent with the philosophy and goals of the school. Also, the two-fold nature of the process — evaluation and stimulation to improvement — should be kept in mind. Careful, discriminating judgments are essential if these purposes are to be satisfactorily achieved.

Faculty members conducting self-evaluations are encouraged to modify the major expectations and the descriptive criteria when necessary to make them congruent with their school's philosophy and goals and the characteristics of their school and community. In those instances in which significant changes are made, the reasons for the changes should be identified unless otherwise obvious. The "Supplementary Data" subsection should be completed prior to responding to the descriptive criteria. These data will assist in responding to the descriptive criteria and evaluations.

Descriptive Criteria

The descriptive criteria should be judged on the following scale:

- 5 Excellent
- 4 Good
- 3 Satisfactory
- 2 Poor
- 1 Missing But Needed
- na Not Applicable

In the process of arriving at a single numerical rating for an item, the self-evaluation subcommittees and/or the visiting committee members are asked to consider both the extent to which provisions exist and the adequacy with which they are functioning. In those instances in which significant disparity exists between the provision for and the function or utilization of an item observed, a description or recommendation should be included in the self-evaluation and/or the visiting committee report. (Example: If classrooms are exceptionally well equipped but limited use is made of the equipment, the evaluator(s) should assign a less than excellent rating and call attention to the fact that even though the facilities are excellent, their ineffective use results in a lower rating.)

Questions frequently arise about the meaning of points on the scale. A definitive answer is extremely difficult to give. In any entity as complex as a school, it is not easy to describe in detail what "excellent" or "poor" really means on the hundreds of items requiring judgments. The evaluators must draw upon their total professional experiences and make a judgment on the basis

of those experiences. Keep in mind that 5 does not mean ideal or perfect. Some schools are probably underrated in the self-evaluation because some evaluators believe that 5 should be reserved for an unattainably high condition.

Each person who makes an evaluation should try to be accurate in assessing each item. *If a slight change in the wording of an item would make it more appropriate to the school being evaluated, such a change should be made. If important elements of the school's program are omitted, the subcommittee members are encouraged to add descriptive criteria, supplementary data, evaluation items and comments to make the description more complete.* A descriptive criterion may be divided if it appears to have two subjects that are sufficiently different to require individual attention.

Let us consider an example in the use of the scale that examines the statement, "Classrooms are equipped with demonstration facilities." If, in your judgment, the classrooms are equipped with demonstration facilities that are some of the best that you have seen, circle the number "5." If you decide that the demonstration facilities are good but not the best, circle the number "4." Should the demonstration facilities be satisfactory, circle the number "3." If the demonstration facilities are poor, circle the number "2." If the demonstration facilities are necessary but nonexistent, circle the number "1." Should the demonstration facilities be unnecessary, circle "na."

Evaluations

Responses to the descriptive criteria form an information profile reflecting the specific characteristics of a particular aspect of the total area under study. This profile is to be used when responding to the questions under evaluations. The responses to the evaluations should reflect an overall summary judgment of the particular aspect described in detail by the responses to the descriptive criteria.

Comments

The space under the heading "Comments" at the end of each subsection should be used to include additional information needed to provide a comprehensive report of that area and to describe any condition that is not adequately covered elsewhere in the subsection. The space can also be used to clarify or amplify descriptive criteria or evaluations.

Subcommittees are encouraged to use the space under the heading "Comments" any time it will aid in describing the areas or in explaining a judgment.

Structure of this Section

To facilitate description and judgment, this subject area section is structured using the following subsections:

- I. Major Expectations
- II. Follow-Up to Previous Evaluations
- III. Organization for Instruction
- IV. Description of Offerings
- V. Components of the Instructional Program
- VI. Facilities and Equipment
- VII. Learning Climate
- VIII. Evaluations
- IX. Judgments and Recommendations

MATHEMATICS

Name of School _____ Date _____

Self-evaluation by:

_____ (Name)	_____ (Position)	_____ (Name)	_____ (Position)	_____ (Name)	_____ (Position)
_____ (Name)	_____ (Position)	_____ (Name)	_____ (Position)	_____ (Name)	_____ (Position)
_____ (Name)	_____ (Position)	_____ (Name)	_____ (Position)	_____ (Name)	_____ (Position)

I. MAJOR EXPECTATIONS

These expectations are offered for your acceptance, rejection or modification. Please feel free to make changes.

Expectations are those expressed beliefs that govern the activities of personnel and organizations. Major expectations communicate the substance and outcomes of school programs. They are the reference from which behaviors are judged to be reasonable, necessary or appropriate by all school participants. Expectations are expressed in the form of goals and organizational procedures. Expectations should be consistent with district and school goals and be reflected in the formation of student programs. They are expressed in the day-to-day activities of personnel. However expressed, expectations become the most powerful standards for quality in a school.

The skills developed, concepts attained and knowledge acquired through the mathematics program in the secondary school are essential for success as members of society and for application in other curriculum areas. Student acquisition of problem-solving techniques, skills and structures make up the major theme of the mathematics curriculum. Courses and units of instruction are provided in the mathematics program to support this major theme.

The following are major expectations commonly associated with an effective mathematics program.

- Students can apply the four basic mathematical operations.
- Students are able to solve a variety of mathematical problems.
- Students can apply mathematics in their everyday lives and their future vocations.
- Students understand and use the language of mathematics.
- Students can use computers to solve mathematical problems and create mathematical models.
- Students learn to organize data and use these data to support conclusions.
- Students understand the nature and structure of mathematics.

NOTES: a. Any additional major expectations that have been formulated for the school's mathematics program should be recorded in the space provided.

b. Attach a copy of the mathematics program's philosophy, goals and instructional objectives.

I. MAJOR EXPECTATIONS — Continued

1. Indicate the extent to which the expectations for the mathematics program are consistent with:
 - a. The school and community characteristics.
 - b. The philosophy and goals of the total school program.
2. Indicate the extent of the commitment to these expectations.
3. Indicate the extent to which these expectations are appropriate for the needs and interests of the students.
4. Indicate any problems in achieving these expectations.

II. FOLLOW-UP TO PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS

1. Describe three to five significant changes currently in effect resulting from the recommendations of previous accreditation evaluations, state educational agency reports, legislation, local assessments, follow-up studies, opinion inventory surveys, needs assessments, etc. (specify the source of the impetus for change).

II. FOLLOW-UP TO PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS — Continued

2. Describe any recommendations of more than three-years standing resulting from accreditation evaluations that have not been implemented and indicate the rationale for those decisions.

III. ORGANIZATION FOR INSTRUCTION

Descriptive Criteria

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. A minimum of two years of study in mathematics is encouraged 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>2. Courses are available throughout the secondary school program to suit the students' abilities and to meet their academic, vocational and everyday life needs 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>3. Provisions are made for instruction of students with special academic needs 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>4. Teachers plan together to develop a sequential program 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> | <p>5. Teachers work together to implement the program at a given level 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>6. Application of mathematics is evident in other areas of the curriculum 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>7. The central theme of the curriculum is the development of problem-solving strategies . 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>8. 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> |
|--|---|

Supplementary Data

If necessary and/or more convenient, data may be provided on extra sheets attached to this section in lieu of the space provided.

(Complete the following table for all mathematics courses; revise as necessary where schedules are modular, block or cycle other than weekly; supplement as necessary with attachments.)

TITLE OF COURSE	REQUIRED OR ELECTIVE		GRADE LEVEL(S)	ENROLLMENT		CREDIT VALUE	NO. OF SECTIONS	RANGE OF CLASS SIZE	PER WEEK	
	R	E		M	F				NO. OF PERIODS (MODS)	TOTAL MIN.

III. ORGANIZATION FOR INSTRUCTION — Continued

Evaluations

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| 1. To what extent are courses available and suited to the abilities and needs of the students? | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 2. To what extent are students electing courses beyond those that are required? | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 3. To what extent is problem solving a unifying factor of the curriculum? | 5 4 3 2 1 na |

Comments

IV. DESCRIPTION OF OFFERINGS

Descriptive Criteria

- | | | | |
|--|--------------|---|--------------|
| 1. The curriculum is consistent with the philosophy and goals of the school | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 11. The curriculum includes study of relation and function and provides the student with opportunities to gain skill in graphing them | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 2. The offerings extend the skills and understanding developed in previous courses ... | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 12. Mathematics courses stressing consumer and vocational-technical skills are available | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 3. Courses at all levels stress understanding and the ability to use important mathematical relations such as equality, inequality and congruence | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 13. Honors/advanced placement courses are available | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 4. Courses at all levels stress understanding of and proper use of mathematical symbols . | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 14. Courses provide opportunities for students to learn about relationships in one, two and three dimensions | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 5. Courses at all levels stress an understanding of estimation skills | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 15. Opportunity is provided for students to organize and analyze raw data and interpret results | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 6. Courses at all levels stress algorithmic and heuristic strategies for problem solving .. | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 16. Opportunities are provided for students to develop computational skills | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 7. Courses include the use of a calculator as an option if appropriate | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 17. Courses provide opportunities for students to use a computer | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 8. Instruction in reading comprehension skills directly related to mathematics is provided at all levels of the program | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 18. Opportunities are provided for students to develop understanding of the structure of mathematics | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 9. The offerings include development of the real and complex number systems | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 19. | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 10. Appropriate courses stress the nature of proof and provide the student with opportunities to develop competency in handling the process of proof | 5 4 3 2 1 na | | |

V. COMPONENTS OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

A. FACULTY

For data on preparation of faculty, see Section 12, "Individual Faculty Member."

Descriptive Criteria

Members of the mathematics faculty:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have the equivalent of at least a major in mathematics 5 4 3 2 1 na 2. Have appropriate academic background for the courses they are teaching 5 4 3 2 1 na 3. Have appropriate certification, if required 5 4 3 2 1 na 4. Actively participate in professional organizations 5 4 3 2 1 na 5. Keep current through professional literature 5 4 3 2 1 na 6. Participate in mathematics workshops, institutes, conferences, professional meetings and inservice programs 5 4 3 2 1 na 7. Demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter that they are teaching 5 4 3 2 1 na 8. Exhibit varied and effective teaching strategies designed to motivate students 5 4 3 2 1 na | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Participate in the selection of textbooks and in the organization of the curriculum 5 4 3 2 1 na 10. Serve as resource persons for mathematics applications in other content areas 5 4 3 2 1 na 11. Advise students regarding careers in fields requiring the use of mathematics 5 4 3 2 1 na 12. Assist the counselor in advising students regarding course selection 5 4 3 2 1 na 13. Consult with the counselor regarding problems with students' progress when appropriate 5 4 3 2 1 na 14. Actively foster articulation with the faculty from feeder schools and colleges and universities 5 4 3 2 1 na 15. 5 4 3 2 1 na |
|---|---|

Supplementary Data

If necessary and/or more convenient, data may be provided on extra sheets attached to this section in lieu of the space provided.

- | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indicate the number of faculty in each of the following categories (do not count the same individual more than once in any one category). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Educational level: <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>Less than Bachelor's degree</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>Bachelor's degree</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>Master's degree</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>Post Master's degree/Certificate</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>Doctor's degree</td><td>_____</td></tr> </table> b. Semester hours (approximate) of preparation in mathematics: <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>0-11</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>12-23</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>24-43</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>more than 43</td><td>_____</td></tr> </table> c. Certification status in mathematics: <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>Certificated</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>Non-certificated</td><td>_____</td></tr> </table> d. Years of experience in mathematics: <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>0-2</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>3-5</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>6-15</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>more than 15</td><td>_____</td></tr> </table> | Less than Bachelor's degree | _____ | Bachelor's degree | _____ | Master's degree | _____ | Post Master's degree/Certificate | _____ | Doctor's degree | _____ | 0-11 | _____ | 12-23 | _____ | 24-43 | _____ | more than 43 | _____ | Certificated | _____ | Non-certificated | _____ | 0-2 | _____ | 3-5 | _____ | 6-15 | _____ | more than 15 | _____ | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Indicate the number of teachers involved in the following faculty development activities during the past three years. <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>School sponsored inservice programs</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>Summer workshops</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>College courses</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>Institutes</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>Other</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>a.</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>b.</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>c.</td><td>_____</td></tr> <tr><td>d.</td><td>_____</td></tr> </table> 3. Indicate the subject-related organizations in which faculty members hold membership and the number of faculty belonging to each organization. <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 60%;"></th> <th style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">NAME OF ORGANIZATION</th> <th style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">NUMBER OF FACULTY</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Local</td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">State</td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">National</td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | School sponsored inservice programs | _____ | Summer workshops | _____ | College courses | _____ | Institutes | _____ | Other | _____ | a. | _____ | b. | _____ | c. | _____ | d. | _____ | | NAME OF ORGANIZATION | NUMBER OF FACULTY | Local | _____ | _____ | | _____ | _____ | State | _____ | _____ | | _____ | _____ | National | _____ | _____ | | _____ | _____ |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|----------------------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|------------------|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|------|-------|--------------|-------|---|-------------------------------------|-------|------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|------------|-------|-------|-------|----|-------|----|-------|----|-------|----|-------|--|----------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|-------|-------|----------|-------|-------|--|-------|-------|
| Less than Bachelor's degree | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bachelor's degree | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Master's degree | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Post Master's degree/Certificate | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Doctor's degree | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0-11 | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12-23 | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 24-43 | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| more than 43 | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Certificated | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Non-certificated | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0-2 | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3-5 | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6-15 | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| more than 15 | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| School sponsored inservice programs | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Summer workshops | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| College courses | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Institutes | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| b. | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| c. | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| d. | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | NAME OF ORGANIZATION | NUMBER OF FACULTY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Local | _____ | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | _____ | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| State | _____ | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | _____ | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| National | _____ | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | _____ | _____ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

A. FACULTY — Continued

Evaluations

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| 1. How adequate is the preparation of faculty members in the subjects they teach? | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 2. To what extent do faculty members keep informed about current educational developments in their teaching areas? | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 3. To what extent does the faculty demonstrate continued commitment to professional growth? | 5 4 3 2 1 na |

Comments

B. INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Descriptive Criteria

- | | | | |
|---|--------------|---|--------------|
| 1. Instruction is directed toward clearly formulated, comprehensive objectives | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 10. Instruction is coordinated with that in other subjects when appropriate | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 2. Specific instructional activities contribute to the comprehensive major expectations of the program | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 11. A variety of instructional methodologies is used | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 3. Careful planning and preparation for instruction are evident | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 12. Provision is made for the instruction of groups of varying sizes | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 4. Drill activities are interesting and meaningful to students | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 13. Provision is made for students to demonstrate solutions and proofs | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 5. Provisions are made for students' individual differences | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 14. Students are informed about professional and vocational opportunities in mathematics | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 6. Examples from other subject areas are used to provide practical applications of mathematics | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 15. Students with mathematics aptitude have access to advanced courses in high school | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 7. Selections from the history of mathematics are included whenever appropriate | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 16. Students with mathematics aptitude have access to counseling regarding the possibilities of continuing post-secondary study | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 8. Discovery techniques and laboratory methods are used when appropriate | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 17. Applications of calculators are evident in instruction | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 9. Students are encouraged to supplement classroom activities in mathematics by using the school library or the mathematics resource center | 5 4 3 2 1 na | 18. Computer activities are incorporated into the program when appropriate | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| | | 19. | 5 4 3 2 1 na |

Evaluations

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. How effective is the planning for delivery of instruction? | 5 4 3 2 1 na |
| 2. How adequately are the instructional activities adapted to the needs of individual students? | 5 4 3 2 1 na |

Comments

C. MATERIALS AND MEDIA

Descriptive Criteria

1. A wide and balanced range of reading materials is available for students	5 4 3 2 1 na	13. Place a check by each item readily available for teacher use and rate the adequacy of each:	
2. Materials provide for different levels of student abilities and diverse cultural backgrounds	5 4 3 2 1 na	___ books	5 4 3 2 1 na
3. A variety of instructional equipment is available and used	5 4 3 2 1 na	___ periodicals	5 4 3 2 1 na
4. Resource units, study guides and other support materials are available and used	5 4 3 2 1 na	___ calculators	5 4 3 2 1 na
5. Instructional materials are adequate to meet program goals	5 4 3 2 1 na	___ models	5 4 3 2 1 na
6. Adequate provisions are made for the use of computer hardware and software	5 4 3 2 1 na	___ charts	5 4 3 2 1 na
7. Instructional materials, language and strategies are free of sex and race bias and stereotyping	5 4 3 2 1 na	___ transparencies	5 4 3 2 1 na
8. Provisions of the copyright law dealing with the reproduction and utilization of copyrighted materials are observed	5 4 3 2 1 na	___ slides	5 4 3 2 1 na
9. Guidelines have been established for the selection of new instructional materials	5 4 3 2 1 na	___ computer software	5 4 3 2 1 na
10. Faculty members participate on a regular basis in decisions related to the selection of new materials	5 4 3 2 1 na	___ other	5 4 3 2 1 na
11. Teachers consult regularly with media faculty about the acquisition and utilization of resources and services	5 4 3 2 1 na	A variety of instructional materials is available	5 4 3 2 1 na
12. A professional library of current publications and periodicals is accessible to the teachers	5 4 3 2 1 na	14. There is evidence that students and teachers are making use of the variety of instructional materials available to them	5 4 3 2 1 na
		15. Career exploration and development materials are available	5 4 3 2 1 na
		16. Suitable methods are used for ordering and keeping an inventory of materials and media	5 4 3 2 1 na
		17. Annual budget provisions are made for the purchase of consumable supplies and resource materials	5 4 3 2 1 na
		18. Adequate storage is provided for materials and media	5 4 3 2 1 na
		19.	5 4 3 2 1 na

Evaluations

1. How adequate is the scope of instructional materials and media?	5 4 3 2 1 na
2. How adequate is the quality of instructional materials and media?	5 4 3 2 1 na
3. How adequate is the quantity of instructional materials and media?	5 4 3 2 1 na
4. How accessible are instructional materials to the students and teachers?	5 4 3 2 1 na
5. How well are instructional materials organized and maintained?	5 4 3 2 1 na
6. How well are instructional materials utilized by faculty and students?	5 4 3 2 1 na
7. How adequate is the provision for the storage of instructional materials?	5 4 3 2 1 na

Comments

Supplementary Data — Continued

b. Grade level achievement in terms of national, regional, state, local or other norms.

c. Grade level weaknesses.

Evaluations

1. How adequate does the student assessment program provide for individual differences?	5 4 3 2 1 na
2. How effectively are the results of the student assessment program used for:	
a. diagnosing students' developmental characteristics, learning styles and knowledge/skill levels?	5 4 3 2 1 na
b. assessing students' strengths and weaknesses?	5 4 3 2 1 na
c. assessing achievement?	5 4 3 2 1 na
d. assessing students' abilities to use knowledge in new situations?	5 4 3 2 1 na
e. counseling students?	5 4 3 2 1 na
3. How adequate is the reporting of the results to teachers, students and parents?	5 4 3 2 1 na
4. How effectively are a variety of measurement formats (methods) used in the program evaluation and student assessment processes?	5 4 3 2 1 na
5. How adequate is the collection, analysis and interpretation of the data?	5 4 3 2 1 na
6. How effectively are the results of the evaluation program used to assess teaching effectiveness?	5 4 3 2 1 na
7. How effectively are the results of the evaluation program used to make program changes?	5 4 3 2 1 na
8. How adequate is the evaluation program in determining the overall effectiveness of the program?	5 4 3 2 1 na

Comments

VI. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Descriptive Criteria

Facilities

<p>1. The instructional areas are located so that they are convenient to the common uses and in close proximity to related instructional areas 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>2. The instructional areas provide appropriate spaces to accommodate a variety of instructional activities and meet the needs of the handicapped 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>3. The instructional areas have provisions for the adequate control of heat, light, ventilation and acoustics 5 4 3 2 1 na</p>	<p>4. The instructional areas are provided with the appropriate utilities 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>5. The instructional areas meet all safety regulations 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>6. The instructional areas provide adequate, safe and secure storage for supplies and equipment 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>7. 5 4 3 2 1 na</p>
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Supplies and Equipment

<p>1. Check those items available and indicate the adequacy of each:</p> <p>___ chalkboards (wall or portable) 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>___ chalkboard stencils and instruments 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>___ rectangular/polar coordinate chalkboard 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>___ bookcases in rooms 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>___ tackboards/bulletin boards 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>___ overhead projector, sound projector, videotape 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>___ recorder and other visual aids 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>___ copying and duplicating services ... 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>___ geometric models 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>___ calculators 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>___ computers 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>___ mathematical games 5 4 3 2 1 na</p>	<p>___ other 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>A variety of educational equipment and supplies is available to carry out the instructional program 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>2. There is an adequate amount of supplies and equipment available to carry out the instructional program 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>3. The equipment is well maintained and meets all safety requirements 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>4. Provision is made for equipment inventory and maintenance records 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>5. Budget provisions are made for the replacement and addition of equipment 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>6. The furniture is appropriate for the instructional program 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>7. 5 4 3 2 1 na</p>
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Evaluations

<p>1. To what extent are the facilities and equipment conducive to the achievement of the major expectations, goals and objectives? 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>2. How adequate is the space for instructional activities? 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>3. How adequate are equipment and facilities for instructional activities? 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>4. To what extent are the facilities and equipment effectively used for instructional activities? 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>5. How adequate are the storage facilities for supplies and equipment? 5 4 3 2 1 na</p> <p>6. How well is equipment maintained for efficient use? 5 4 3 2 1 na</p>
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Comments

VII. LEARNING CLIMATE

Descriptive Criteria

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The major expectations, goals and objectives reflect a clear sense of purpose 5 4 3 2 1 na 2. The departmental faculty is competent and dedicated 5 4 3 2 1 na 3. The school administration provides adequate resources and encouragement to the department 5 4 3 2 1 na 4. School administration and faculty exhibit high expectations for student achievement 5 4 3 2 1 na 5. Parental and community support exists for the program 5 4 3 2 1 na 6. The instructional program is based on the appropriate diagnosis of students' developmental characteristics, learning styles and knowledge/skill levels 5 4 3 2 1 na 7. Student placement in the program is predicated on adequate faculty advisement and on the development of individual student plans 5 4 3 2 1 na 8. Classroom organization provides for optimum use of instructional time 5 4 3 2 1 na 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Instructional methods and strategies facilitate the performance of individual students 5 4 3 2 1 na 10. All students are provided opportunity and assistance to achieve both the required program and individual student goals 5 4 3 2 1 na 11. Students are provided frequent feedback about their performance 5 4 3 2 1 na 12. The appraisal of teacher performance is oriented toward improvement of instruction 5 4 3 2 1 na 13. Students' self-esteem is enhanced by positive relationships and mutual respect among peers and teachers 5 4 3 2 1 na 14. School and classroom disciplinary standards promote a positive learning environment 5 4 3 2 1 na 15. Students and teachers are recognized for achieving the objectives of the program 5 4 3 2 1 na 16. The facilities are aesthetically pleasing, functional, safe and properly maintained 5 4 3 2 1 na 17. 5 4 3 2 1 na
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Supplementary Data

Attach summary sheets of any school climate survey and student, teacher or parent/community satisfaction surveys administered by the department.

Evaluations

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To what extent does the learning climate of this department support the attainment of the program's major expectations, goals and objectives? 5 4 3 2 1 na 2. To what extent does the learning climate foster individual student satisfaction and self-esteem? 5 4 3 2 1 na 3. To what extent does the learning climate foster individual student achievement? 5 4 3 2 1 na 4. How regularly is the program evaluated in terms of content and student needs, and revised if appropriate? 5 4 3 2 1 na 5. To what degree do the following groups have a positive perception of the learning climate: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. students? 5 4 3 2 1 na b. teachers? 5 4 3 2 1 na c. parents and community? 5 4 3 2 1 na d. school administration? 5 4 3 2 1 na e. district administration? 5 4 3 2 1 na f. board of control? 5 4 3 2 1 na

Comments

VIII. EVALUATIONS

Process Evaluation

1. Summarize evidence that organization for instruction, offerings, instructional components (faculty, instructional activities, materials and media, student assessment and program evaluation), facilities and learning climate contribute to the achievement of the major expectations.
2. Summarize evidence that the program has been carried out as designed.
3. Summarize evidence that the methods of evaluation of the program are valid and reliable in terms of data to be gathered.

Product/Outcomes Evaluation

1. Summarize evidence that students are achieving the major expectations of the program.
2. Summarize evidence that the program contributes to the achievement of those goals identified in Section 3, "Philosophy and Goals."

IX. JUDGMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengths

Describe those aspects of the program that are most satisfactory.

Limitations

Describe those aspects of the program that are in most need of improvement.

Recommendations

Describe, in priority order, specific means for correcting the limitations.

APPENDIX C
SACS HUMAN RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

SACS Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools
Human Resources

Membership	1-249	250-499	500-749	750-999	1000-1249	1250-1499	1500-up
Administrative Head	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Administrative or Supervisory Assistants	0	.5 0 (elem)	1 .5 (elem)	1.5 1 (elem)	2 1.5 (elem)	2.5 2 (elem)	**
Guidance Professionals	.5	1 .5 (elem)	1.5 1 (elem)	2 1.5 (elem)	2.5 2 (elem)	3 2.5 (elem)	**
Library or Media Specialists	.5	1	1	1	2* (secondary) 1 (middle-elem)	2* (secondary) 1 (middle-elem)	**
Support Staff for administration, library media, or technology	1 .5 (elem)	2.5 1 (elem)	4 1.5 (elem)	4.5 2.5 (elem)	5 3 (elem)	5.5 3 (elem)	6 3 (elem)

*After employing one professionally qualified librarian or media specialist, the school may employ a professionally qualified technology or information specialist, assigned to the library media center, to meet the requirement.

**One (full-time equivalent) staff member shall be added where needed for each additional 250 students over 1,500.

Source: Public School Standards, 2005.

APPENDIX D
SACS UNIFICATION ANNOUNCEMENT

The Unification of NCA CASI, SACS CASI, and NSSE
Announcement to Accredited Schools and Districts

We are pleased to announce that the Board of Trustees of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) and the Board of Directors of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) have voted to bring together NCA CASI, SACS CASI, and the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) into one strong and unified organization that will serve as a national leader for quality education.

With our shared mission of advancing the quality of education, we will work to enhance the three pillars of accreditation; high standards, quality assurance, and continuous improvement, while providing a more unified and national voice for the profession on issues of educational quality.

This unification creates the world's largest education community, representing over 23,000 public and private schools and districts in 30 states and 65 countries and serving over 15 million students. Through our strong state presence and volunteer network, we will leverage our size and global network to deliver the powerful combination of accreditation, research, and school improvement in a customized way to every school and district we serve. NCA CASI and SACS CASI will maintain their brand names so that schools will continue to enjoy the brand recognition of our respective accreditation seals, while gaining access to a broader network of schools and greater resources.

Over the course of the 2006-07 school year, we will share more of the exciting details of this unification with you; however, we would like to highlight in this announcement several of the benefits that the unification will bring to accredited schools and districts: First, it will enable us to leverage a greater network of best practices and the strong research base of NSSE to provide you with higher quality products, services, and support. Second, it allows us to build on the best of NCA CASI and SACS CASI processes to deliver an accreditation process that is meaningful, useful, simple and does not duplicate effort with state or federal requirements – this responds directly to feedback we have received from you. Third, it provides us with an opportunity to build a national team chair-training curriculum that will heighten the value and impact of on-site reviews. Fourth, it provides a national platform that allows us to move from a regional organization to a national and international advocate for the profession on educational quality.

Source: SACS *Proceedings* 2006, 58(4).

APPENDIX E
ACSI LIST OF SELF-STUDY QUESTIONS

Standard 1, Philosophy and Foundations, articulates the vision, mission, and core values of the school. Schools are required to answer the following questions of the Self-Study in compliance to Standard 1:

1. Describe how the school's philosophy, mission, vision, and core values were developed.
 - a. How was the school community involved in the writing, revision, and/or review?
 - b. What issues of concern, if any, were identified in the development, revision, and/or review of the philosophy?
 - c. What student learning expectations have been included in the core values?
2. What is the schedule for review of the school's philosophy statement?
3. Describe the process used to evaluate the school's effectiveness in meeting its stated philosophy, vision, and mission:
 - a. At the board level.
 - b. By the administration, faculty, and staff.
 - c. With students and parents.
 - d. With the greater school community.
4. How are current school families informed and educated in an ongoing way about the school's philosophy?
5. How are all school personnel oriented to the philosophy, vision, and mission of the school?
6. List the documents and publications that include statements of the school's philosophy, vision, and mission. Indicate whom these publications are designed to serve.
7. After you review the philosophy question in each of the self-study sections, comment on how effectively your school has integrated the philosophy into the school's programs and operations.
8. As you consider spiritual formation, decide what programs and activities encourage the students to integrate their biblical worldview with daily walk and service.
9. What are the indicators you use to determine the spiritual health of your school?

Standard 2, School Organization, provides a rationale for admissions standards, school governance, and finances. Schools are required to answer the following questions of the Self-Study in compliance to Standard 2:

Admissions Standards

1. When was the written admissions policy last revised, and what changes were made? Who was involved in reviewing the admissions policy?
 - a. What issues, if any, need to be addressed regarding admissions?
 - b. How are applying families/students made aware of the mission of the school?

2. How are entrance examinations and other student records used in the admissions process?
3. Describe the school's procedures for assuring that admissions policies are followed.
 - a. How successful have these procedures been?
 - b. What procedures are in place to assess newly enrolled families/students for their adjustment to and satisfaction with the school?
4. What individual or group generally makes the final decision regarding admissions? How does the school ensure that this individual/group has adequate information to make a decision?
 - a. To whom would an appeal of an admissions decision be directed?
 - b. What procedures are in place for dealing with the appeal of an admissions decision?
5. What provision is made for scholarships, tuition assistance, or tuition reduction?
 - a. How is eligibility determined and prioritized? Is an outside review group used to assess the level of need of families applying for financial assistance?
 - b. What individual or group makes the decision about who receives assistance?
 - c. What are the major needs of the financial aid program?
6. What evidence exists that the school is meeting the needs of all students who are admitted?
7. International schools only: How do government policies regarding admissions of host country nationals impact the school's admissions policies?

School Governance

1. Describe the structure of the school board/committee/entity.
2. List the spiritual qualifications for board membership.
 - a. Identify other criteria in the board member selection process.
 - b. What is the term of office for board members and board officers?
3. Describe the selection process of board members. Evaluate the effectiveness of the process and note any trends and/or patterns.
4. Describe your plan for orientation and ongoing training of board members.
5. Explain the policy regarding school employees and their spouses or other relatives serving on the board or school staff. Which of these relationships, if any, currently exist?
6. Assess the policy regarding the employment by the school of spouses or children of board members.
7. What is the board's policy and procedure regarding the hiring of the chief administrator?
 - a. What individuals have input regarding this process?
 - b. How does the process indicate the board's commitment to hiring the best candidate?

- c. International schools only: How effective is the system of mission-appointed board members (if such exists) in operating as a link between mission administrations and the school?

Functions

1. What are the board's primary functions, and what evidence suggests that the board fulfills its role effectively?
2. What is the role of the chief administrator in working with the school board, and what evidence suggests that the administrator and board work together effectively?
3. How are board members trained to understand the distinctives of a Christian philosophy of education?
4. How does the board demonstrate the application of biblical principles in dealing with issues and problems?
5. Describe the code of ethics established for the school.
6. Describe the process that the board uses to formally evaluate the chief administrator.
 - a. How often is this formal written evaluation done?
 - b. How effective is this evaluation process?
 - c. What changes, if any, are warranted in the process, and when might they be implemented?
 - d. What steps are followed to address unfavorable evaluations?
7. What processes does the board/administration use to gather employee feedback?
 - a. How does the board/administration rate the effectiveness of these procedures?
 - b. How often are these data formally collected?
8. How is the board involved in developing the school's strategic and/or long-range plan?
 - a. What individuals have input regarding the long-range plan, and how is this input accomplished?
 - b. Evaluate the school's planning process and current long-range plan.
 - c. How is the long-range plan communicated to the entire school constituency?

The Pastor or Mission (for church- or mission-sponsored schools only)

1. Describe the pastor's or mission's relationship to the school board/committee/entity and to the chief administrator.
2. Define the roles of the pastor or mission and the school board/committee/entity in policy and decision making.
3. What role does the pastor or mission play in the spiritual life of the school?
4. What evidence suggests that the pastor's or mission's commitment to the Christian school is part of the overall ministry of the pastor or mission?

Finance

1. Give illustrations of God's provision in the finances of the school during the past three years.
2. How and by whom is the annual budget constructed? What is the period of the fiscal year?
 - a. How does the staff, who are affected by the various budget categories, give input regarding the budgeting process?
 - b. Discuss the budget preparation timeline and any adjustments that seem to be indicated.
 - c. Describe the effectiveness of the budget preparation process.
3. How has the cost of educating students been determined?
4. How is the board kept up-to-date on budgetary matters?
 - a. What type of reports are given to the board, and how often?
 - b. How effective is this reporting procedure?
5. Report on the most recent audit/financial review by responding to the following items:
 - a. When was the last audit/financial review conducted?
 - b. Who conducted the audit/financial review?
 - c. Describe the area(s) identified as strengths or weaknesses.
 - 1) What improvements, if any, have been suggested?
 - 2) What is the school's analysis of these suggestions?
 - d. How are the audit/financial review results made available to the school's constituency?
6. What accountability process and what procedures are in place to ensure the timely payment of the school's financial obligations?
 - a. If an account is past due, how does the school handle the situation?
 - b. Is there a history of past-due accounts? If so, please explain.
7. How and by whom is the annual compensation schedule determined and communicated to the school staff? Reflect on how your compensation package compares with those of the educational community.
8. How and to what extent are financial matters reported to the school's constituents?
9. Define the process by which tuition is established. In what time of the year is it established?
10. What is the policy on delinquent tuition accounts, and how effective is this process?
11. What is the total amount of long-term debt, if any, that is the school's responsibility?
 - a. What is the annual amount of debt service including both interest and principal payments?
 - b. What plans, if any, are in place to accelerate the payments toward indebtedness?
12. What is the overall financial status of the school, and what concerns, if any, does the school have about its finances?

13. What indicators demonstrate that the school has a sound fiscal reputation in the community?
14. Analyze the flow of income into and/or out of the school. Does the school's program require subsidizing from other sources, or does excess income go to other ministry avenues? What is the justification of this flow, if it exists, and do all segments of the school community know of this financial arrangement?

Development Program

1. What percentage of the current operating income comes from tuition and fees?
2. From what other sources has the school received income (foundation grants, corporate or matching gift programs, fund-raising activities, etc.)?
3. How much has the school received from each source?
4. How does the school raise money for capital expenses such as buildings and property?
5. Describe the philosophy and organization of the school's fund-raising activities.
6. How was the long-range development plan formulated? How frequently is the plan reviewed, and by whom?

Standard 3, School, Home, and Community, describes the constituency served by the school through a Christian-based education, and contains a nondiscriminatory clause. Schools are required to answer the following questions of the Self-Study in compliance to Standard 3:

1. Complete and analyze a demographic study that includes enrollment history of the past three years, enrollment projections, reenrollment patterns, student withdrawal data, and descriptive data of the student body, the parent constituency, the local community served, and the alumni.
 - a. In what ways has the data collected regarding enrollment history of the past three years affected the programs and planning process of the school?
 - b. What components of school operation have been affected by the enrollment projection/reenrollment data gathered from the study? What actions have been instituted or planned in response to this study?
 - c. How has information gathered from families who withdrew contributed to school improvement initiatives?
 - d. In what ways has the school used information about the student body to improve its enrollment policies and practices so that they are in accordance with its mission, vision, and objectives?
 - e. Examine and evaluate the information collected regarding parental vocation, income level, church or mission affiliation, geographic proximity, and communities of residence. How have these data assisted the school in developing plans and priorities for school improvement?
 - f. If the school includes a high school program, what are the implications recognized by the school through follow-up studies of graduates, and how

- have these impacted the academic, student activities, and guidance services of the school? (How have the results of the demographic studies been used to modify or improve the programs of the school?)
- g. If the school does not have a high school program, evaluate studies that have been completed of student performance and adjustment in the schools to which the students matriculate.
 - h. Using the data gathered from this study, in what ways do the alumni validate that the school has been successful in meeting its mission and objectives?
2. In what ways can the school demonstrate that Christ is honored and that professional ethics are practiced in intraschool relationships with students, teachers, support staff, board members, and administrators?
 3. List and describe the parent fellowships/organizations currently in the school. How do these fellowships/organizations enhance communication and relationships within the school?
 4. How does the school communicate and effectively foster positive relationships with like-minded churches or missions represented in the school community.

Standard 4, School Personnel, speaks to the character, training, professional development, supervision, and evaluation of staff. Schools are required to answer the following questions of the Self-Study in compliance to Standard 4:

Staff Summary

1. Complete the chart of personnel (use table 4a).
2. Explain how the number of administrative and instructional personnel is sufficient to implement the school's programs.
3. Discuss the number of part-time personnel and how they impact the effectiveness of the school.
 - a. How does the use of part-time personnel strengthen your instructional and noninstructional program?
 - b. Analyze what the future development of the school suggests for the part-time personnel.
4. Describe the policies and outline the procedures for selecting school personnel by addressing the following items:
 - a. Provide the guidelines for the screening and hiring process.
 - b. Who has final authority for selection and hiring?
 - c. How are school positions advertised? How effective are these strategies?
 - d. Discuss the adequacy of the job descriptions for personnel and how these descriptions are utilized in the selection process.
5. What professional development opportunities are provided for all school personnel to grow spiritually and professionally?
 - a. List the professional development opportunities that have been provided over the past three years.

- b. How much money is allocated in the current budget for professional development?
- c. Evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development program.
- 6. Describe the policies and procedures for selecting, orienting, and evaluating substitute teachers.
 - a. Evaluate the adequacy of these procedures.
 - b. What evidences exist that substitutes are carrying out the instructional focus of the school?
- 7. Explain how the number of clerical, maintenance, and custodial staff is sufficient to ensure the efficient operation of the school.
 - a. Are there areas where the school's professional staff is hindered by having to perform tasks that could more effectively be handled by non-instructional staff?
 - b. If problems exist, what plans, if any, are in place for correcting them?
- 8. What percentage of the faculty is currently teaching in the subject area(s) of their educational credentials and training? See appendix C, Certification Report.
 - a. What are the implications of this data?
 - b. Explain the circumstances for teachers not teaching in their degree field or area of training.
- 9. What procedures do you have in place to assess the reasons employees choose to leave your school?
 - a. What conclusions can you draw from this data?
 - b. What steps are you taking to address any noticeable patterns obtained from this data?

The School Administrators

1. Describe the spiritual qualifications, the academic preparation, and the educational experience of the chief administrator and other administrators.
2. Excluding the chief administrator, how and by whom are other administrators evaluated?
3. Assess the accuracy and adequacy of the job description for the school administrator(s).

The Instructional Staff

Fill in table 4b, including only the full-time teachers for the current year.

1. Discuss the implications of the data in this chart.
2. Describe the school's policies on supervision and evaluation of the instructional staff by addressing the following items:
 - a. How and by whom are the teachers supervised?
 - b. How often are the teachers evaluated?
 - c. What opportunities are teachers given to have input in their evaluation process?
 - d. In what ways is the supervision program most commendable?

- e. In what ways could the supervision program be improved?
3. Describe the methods used to keep evaluation information confidential.
4. How are the evaluations used in providing direction and in determining renewal or termination of contracts, and how effective are these procedures?
5. How are faculty commended for the effectiveness of their ministry?
6. What school procedures may a teacher follow when informed that a contract is not being renewed?
7. How are teachers helped to establish effective classroom control and create a stimulating learning environment, and how effective is this assistance?
8. How are teachers encouraged to develop a Christian philosophy of education, and what ongoing training is provided? What evidences exist that the instructional staff have an understanding of the Christian philosophy of education?

The Non-instructional Staff

1. Describe the spiritual and job qualifications of the clerical, maintenance, custodial, developmental, financial, and other non-instructional staff.
2. Describe the school's policies on supervision and evaluation of the non-instructional staff. How have these policies been effectively implemented?
 - a. How and by whom is the staff supervised?
 - b. How often is the staff evaluated?
 - c. What opportunities are staff given to have input in their evaluation process?
 - d. In what ways is the supervision program most commendable?
 - e. In what ways could the supervision be improved?
3. Describe the methods used to keep evaluation information confidential.
4. How are the evaluations used in providing direction and in determining renewal or termination of employment? Describe the effectiveness of these procedures.
5. How are staff commended for the effectiveness of their ministry?
6. What procedures do non-instructional staff members have available when informed that the contract is not being renewed?
7. List the training opportunities, by category, for non-instructional personnel.

Volunteers

Identify and explain policies and procedures for utilizing school volunteers, including their orientation and training.

International Schools Only

1. Note the nature, locations, and effectiveness of the annual recruitment trips made by the school administrator.
2. What is the role of sending agencies and mission boards in the recruitment of school staff?

Standard 5, Instructional Program, defines standards for curriculum, instructional strategies, assessments, policies, and procedures. Schools are required to answer the following questions of the Self-Study in compliance to Standard 5:

Note: Address for each school division or level (i.e., kindergarten [K5], elementary, junior/middle, and/or high school).

General Characteristics

1. Define the meaning of quality instruction to your school.
2. Give some examples of biblical integration in the instructional program.
 - a. Describe and give examples of planned integrative experiences.
 - b. Describe and give examples of unplanned integrative experiences.
 - c. In subjects where non-explicitly Christian texts and resources are used as the primary source of information, explain how the school is teaching in a manner different from non-Christian schools.
3. Describe the most significant curricular and/or instructional changes implemented during the last five years.
 - a. Analyze the effectiveness of these changes.
 - b. Evaluate the adjustment of the faculty to these changes.
4. In what areas/subjects/departments is the school considered most effective, and why?
5. How does the curriculum design assist teachers in communicating to students an understanding of contemporary issues from a biblical worldview?
6. What methods of analysis are used to determine the overall effectiveness of the curriculum?
 - a. What is the overall effectiveness of the curriculum?
 - b. How was this determined?
 - c. What are the implications of this analysis?
7. In what ways does the curriculum accommodate the special needs and interests of exceptional and learning-disabled students?
8. How do the curriculum design and instructional program meet the needs of the various cultural, ethnic, and racial groups in the school community?
9. Describe the uses of technology in the instructional program.
 - a. What improvements are needed in the use of instructional technology?
 - b. Is a plan and time frame in place for some of these improvements?
10. What policies exist concerning grading and the monitoring of learning over grading periods and school years? Have these policies ensured equity and fairness from teacher to teacher and from student to student?
11. Describe the assessment methods used by the school.
 - a. How are these methods appropriate in evaluating student learning?
 - b. How does assessment relate to the philosophy, mission, and vision of the school?
 - c. How do these methods of assessment used by the school promote improvement of the instructional program?
12. International schools only: What procedures exist within the school to

incorporate children from non-English speaking homes into the academic program? How successful are these procedures?

Curriculum Development

1. Describe the means by which curriculum and/or instructional decisions are made in the school.
 - a. Evaluate the effectiveness of this procedure.
 - b. Indicate how the professional expertise of the faculty is used in this process.
2. How have external resources and outside consultants been used in curriculum planning, assessment, and development?
3. Explain how the curriculum is under continuous evaluation.
 - a. What are the procedures?
 - b. How are faculty committees used in this process?
4. What is the process of keeping the curriculum guides up-to-date?
 - a. How are revisions to the guides accepted for inclusion?
 - b. How often does this occur?
 - c. Assess the effectiveness of this process.
5. Define the relationship between textbooks and the school curriculum. How are textbooks selected in the school?

Standard 6, Library, Media Resources, and Technology, describes the expectations of library volumes, personnel requirements, facility and budget.

Schools are required to answer the following questions of the Self-Study in compliance to Standard 6:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the selection, training, and professional development of the staff in library/media services and technology.
2. Evaluate the use of volunteers in library/media and technology services.
3. Explain how each grade level or department utilizes the library, media resources, and technology resources to support the learning objectives of their instructional program. How adequate is this program in meeting the goals of the school?
4. Evaluate how accessible the media center and technology resources are to all students, staff, and faculty in respect to location and hours of service.
5. How effective are the procedures that are used in evaluating the acceptability of resources and the handling of complaints from the school community?
6. How adequate is the space allotted for media center and technology usage in regard to the comfort and work space for individual and group users?
7. How adequate and accessible is space for storage and for the processing of materials?
8. Assess the degree to which the technology plan has been effective in directing the school in technology. Has the plan worked?

Standard 7, Student Services, addresses student activities, guidance services, and health services. Schools are required to answer the following questions of the Self-Study in compliance to Standard 7:

Student Activities

1. What is the purpose and rationale of the student activities program?
2. List the student activities by category and level of participation by gender using the chart below.* What conclusions do you draw from the data?
**Use Student Activities Table for question 2.*
3. What special opportunities do the geographical location and/or facilities of the school provide for the types and varieties of activities?
4. What role do students play in initiating and leading student activities (e.g., student government)?
 - a. What leadership training is offered in student activities (for junior/middle and/or high school levels)?
 - b. What mechanisms exist for student feedback?
 - c. What impact does student feedback have upon the activities program?
5. How are the advisors and coaches selected, oriented to their responsibilities, and supervised?
 - a. How are the individuals compensated for working with these activities?
 - b. Are the responsibilities for activities spread among enough members of the staff?
6. How do advisors and coaches effectively integrate biblical principles within the activities program, and how is that evaluated?
7. Describe the role and program of auxiliary organizations that support student activities.

Facilities and Equipment

1. Discuss the adequacy of the facilities utilized for the activities program.
2. Describe the budgeting process and explain how priorities are determined.
3. Explain the procedure for scheduling the facilities for student activities.
 - a. How are conflicts in the schedule resolved?
 - b. Who constructs and controls the facilities calendar?
4. Describe the condition of facilities and major equipment.
 - a. Is there adequate maintenance and custodial support for the activities?
 - b. Is there a regular safety review of activity areas?
5. What is the transportation plan for student activities? Is this plan effective?

Guidance Program

1. Describe the organization and distinctives of the school's guidance services.
 - a. For the elementary and/or middle school/junior high level.
 - 1) If the school does not have an organized and staffed guidance department, indicate how guidance services are performed and who has the major responsibility for meeting these needs.

- 2) What is being done in career awareness at these levels?
- b. For the high school level.
 - 1) Include all of the components of the program (college selection, precollege admissions testing, career guidance).
 - 2) List the guidance personnel and note the specific training and responsibility of each person.
 - 3) How are high school students assisted in planning their secondary school schedules?
2. Describe the responsibilities of the teachers in the guidance program for each school division.
3. Assess the effectiveness of the guidance services for each school division and indicate how that was determined.
4. Explain how the services of the guidance program are communicated to parents and students, and assess the effectiveness of this communication.
5. What additional counseling/guidance resources are readily available to the school? How is it determined when and how to utilize these resources?
6. If your school offers a complete high school program, what are the future educational plans of the current seniors?
*Use Future Plans Table for question 6.

Testing

1. Describe the school's entire standardized testing program.
2. What is done to assist classroom teachers to administer, interpret, and use standardized tests? Assess the effectiveness of this preparation and training.
3. What special services does your school offer to meet the needs of students as indicated by achievement results?
4. What information is given to parents about standardized test scores, and how is it communicated?

School Records

1. What information is kept in the students' cumulative records folders?
2. Who has access to the cumulative records, and what is the procedure for accessing the records?
3. How are transfer credits evaluated and recognized by the school?
 - a. From accredited schools.
 - b. From nonaccredited schools.
 - c. From nontraditional schools.
 - d. From home schools.
4. To what extent do counseling and referrals rely on an informal network of teacher communication, and what are the implications of this fact?

Special Needs

1. What process does the school have in place to identify students with special needs?

- a. How are guidance personnel/teachers trained to identify students who have special needs?
- b. How effective is this training?
2. Describe the program for the students identified with special needs.
3. What responsibility do the guidance staff and/or teachers have for dealing with students who have special needs?
4. What categories of special needs have been identified in your current student population, and how many students are in each category?
5. How is the school adequately providing for the students identified with special needs?

Health Services

1. Describe the extent of the student health services program.
2. What evidence indicates compliance with local and state health requirements, codes, and reporting procedures? If the school is located in a non-English-speaking area, have relevant regulations been translated into English for staff use? Present evidence that, in addition to local requirements, the school complies with generally accepted requirements of developed countries.
3. What is the school's procedure for handling a communicable disease situation?
4. Describe the visual, auditory, scoliosis, or other health screening done at the school.
 - a. How often are these screenings administered, and to whom?
 - b. Who administers them?
 - c. Are they optional or required?
5. How are school personnel prepared to deal with blood-borne pathogens, HIV, and related issues involving a blood-related injury accident? Describe the procedures for these types of injury accidents.
6. What are the defined procedures for the reporting of alleged or suspected child abuse?
7. What are the qualifications of personnel working in any aspect of student health services (i.e., first-aid training or CPR)?
 - a. What are the first-aid training requirements for all faculty members?
 - b. Are there special first-aid training requirements for some staff?
 - c. How current is the training?
 - d. What are the implications of these data?
8. How are teachers, staff, and coaches trained to handle injuries, emergencies, etc.?
 - a. Minor emergencies?
 - b. Major emergencies?
 - c. Comment on the adequacy of these training procedures.
9. What is the emergency medical information card procedure?
 - a. Where are the cards kept?
 - b. When are these cards used?

10. Describe the school's accident report system and assess its adequacy.
11. How are health records maintained and kept confidential?
12. What steps are in place to inform the faculty about the health needs of individual students and about the responsibility of the faculty to the student?

Standard 8, Support Services, is concerned with standards for transportation, food services, and safety and crisis planning. Schools are required to answer the following questions of the Self-Study in compliance to Standard 8:

Transportation

1. Who oversees the transportation needs of the school, and what are the qualifications for this role?
2. Describe the qualifications for all drivers who transport students for school activities and evaluate how these qualifications comply with government regulations.
3. Evaluate how the school's policy for using vehicles not owned by the school ensures the safe transportation of students.
4. How effectively is the school meeting all government requirements?
5. Assess the adequacy of the liability, vehicle, and property-damage insurance policies carried by the school.
6. Describe the in-service training provided by the school for its drivers and assess its effectiveness.
7. Give evidence that the school is adhering to its policies for routine safety inspections, servicing, and repair of school-owned vehicles.
8. Describe the frequency and kinds of student evacuation drills. Analyze the effectiveness of these drills.
9. Evaluate the effectiveness of the policy for reporting school vehicle accidents, including communication with parents, media, and the community.

Food Services

1. Describe and evaluate the effectiveness of the food services program.
2. Give evidence that the food services program complies with all applicable codes.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the school lunch program in light of the percentage of students purchasing school lunches or other school-prepared foods.

Safety and Crisis Planning

1. Summarize how the Crisis Management Plan addresses the following concerns:
 - a. Noncustodial parents.
 - b. Campus intruders.
 - c. Bomb threats or other threats to campus safety.
 - d. Violent threats by students.

- e. Weapons on campus.
 - f. Natural disasters (i.e., earthquakes, hurricanes).
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of decision making and the communication between employees, parents, and separate buildings/campuses during times of crisis situations.
 3. How are faculty and staff members trained to handle emergency situations? Evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of these training procedures.
 4. Identify and analyze the types of counseling services that are provided to students and school employees following a crisis.
 5. Describe any situations in the past three years in which the school has had to implement any portion of its Crisis Management Plan. Discuss any changes that were made as a result of evaluating the effectiveness of the plan in each situation.

Standard 9, School Facilities, requires attention to safety regulations, classroom size, recreation and athletic areas, fire, health, and sanitation. Schools are required to answer the following questions of the Self-Study in compliance to Standard 9:

1. Describe the setting of the campus including the size (acreage) of the property and the number of buildings and their square footage.
 - a. How many classrooms are on the campus?
 - b. Is there a master site plan of the campus, and if so, how current is it?
2. Describe all major campus buildings including the approximate age, use, and notable features of each.
 - a. What is the average square footage of the classrooms?
 - b. How many square feet would this amount to for each child if the classes were at enrollment capacity?
3. Describe, in general terms, the playgrounds, activity areas, and athletic fields.
4. In what general ways is the campus most suitable for the school's students and program?
5. What significant limitations or needs, if any, are apparent on the campus?
6. How does the school's geographical location affect the type of facilities and/or campus?

Fire, Safety, Health, and Sanitation

1. Does the school identify all emergency exits?
 - a. How is the flow of student traffic directed to each exit?
 - b. Does each room have clearly posted evacuation routes?
2. Does the school comply with all required safety codes?
 - a. How does the school utilize the local fire marshal, other officials, or other means to be certain it is complying with local, city, county, and state codes?
 - b. How frequent are the school's fire drills and other evacuation drills, if any?

- c. What types of emergency warning devices does the school utilize?
 - d. How effective is the evacuation warning system and process?
 - e. How often and by whom is the campus inspected for general safety issues?
3. Evaluate each of the following as it relates to creating a comfortable and pleasing environment for the school:
 - a. Heating.
 - b. Cooling.
 - c. Ventilation.
 - d. Lighting.
 4. How often are the restrooms and drinking fountains cleaned and inspected?

Buildings

1. How adequate is each building for the size of the school, the school divisions, and the instructional program?
2. How adequate and accessible are the storage facilities?
 - a. Does each regular classroom have adequate storage space?
 - b. Is the space suitable to its needs?
3. Describe the features of each of the following specialty rooms that are a part of the campus:
 - a. Auditorium, sanctuary, or chapel, including stage, backstage areas, storage, audio and projection equipment, and furnishings.
 - b. Band and choral music rooms.
 - c. Computer classroom.
 - d. Gymnasium, including locker rooms, equipment storage, and related areas (i.e., athletic fields, playgrounds) used for physical education and athletics.
 - e. Home economics laboratory, including its safety features.
 - f. Industrial arts, including safety features for the room and the equipment.
 - g. Science laboratories, including equipment, safety features, storage of chemicals and other hazardous materials, prep room.
 - h. Special education rooms.
 - i. Visual and performing arts rooms.
 - j. Teachers' rest area and workroom.
4. How are distracting sounds and activities prevented from disturbing the atmosphere of instructional classrooms?
5. Evaluate the adequacy of the office area. If there is more than one area, address each separately.
 - a. Location and size of offices in relation to the school's size and programs.
 - b. Signs, direct access, and waiting area for parents and students.
6. Describe the adequacy of the office equipment including copy machines, etc.
7. Evaluate the adequacy of the school's communications system.
 - a. Clock and/or bell system.
 - b. Intercom and public-address system.

- c. Telephones.
 - 1) External communications.
 - 2) Internal communications.
- d. Communications technology.
 - 1) Computers and email.
 - 2) Fax.
 - 3) Voice mail and/or other systems.
 - 4) Cell phones/radios, etc.

Building Maintenance

1. What organized maintenance procedures does the school follow?
 - a. Do the procedures include both responsive and preventive maintenance?
 - b. Evaluate the adequacy of the maintenance program.
2. What procedures does the school have for keeping the buildings clean?
 - a. What personnel are responsible for cleaning the buildings?
 - b. Evaluate the adequacy of the custodial program.

Grounds

1. How adequate is the provision for maintenance of the play areas, fields, and grounds?
2. How frequently is the playground equipment inspected?
3. Describe the condition and evaluate the adequacy of the parking areas for faculty, students, and visitors.
4. How has student safety been safeguarded in the school vehicle and car pool loading and unloading zones?
5. How was the safety and supervision plan developed for play and recreation areas and for athletic fields?
6. What provision has been made for fire and medical vehicles to have unobstructed access to the property and buildings during an emergency?
 - a. Have emergency procedures ever been practiced?
 - b. Discuss the adequacy of the emergency procedures.
7. What provision has been made for the safe storage of grounds maintenance equipment and related chemicals?
 - a. How is the use of maintenance equipment regulated in areas where children are present?
 - b. How well are maintenance and utility areas posted and safeguarded from unauthorized personnel?
8. How well is the campus lighted for evening activities?
 - a. How is security provided for during these events?
 - b. How adequate is this system?

9. What procedures are in place to ensure that visitors to the campus are directed to the school office before visiting classrooms or coming in direct contact with students?
 - a. How is this controlled access monitored?
 - b. Assess the compliance of this system with reasonable student safety precautions.

Standard 10, School Improvement Plan, calls for statements of goals for the program, strategies for reaching the goals, assessment and reporting procedures, and promotion of student learning and accomplishment. Schools are required to answer the following questions of the Self-Study in compliance to Standard 10:

1. List all the challenges and needed improvements from the “Major Strengths and Needed Improvements” items of each self-study section.
2. From that list, rank order any that are viewed as major improvements needed by the school.
 - a. How were these prioritized?
 - b. Who had input to the prioritizing of the needs?
3. List strategies that the school may use to make the major improvements noted on the prioritized list.
 - a. What human and budget resources will these improvements require?
 - b. What are the major impediments, if any, to implementing the components of the plan?
 - c. What strategies may the school use to make the improvement?
 - d. What human and budget resources will this improvement require?
 - e. What are the major impediments, if any, to implementing the plan?
 - f. Who will be in charge of implementing the plan?
 - g. Who will monitor and report to the governing board and community the status of the plan?
4. Put each of the major improvements on a projected year-by-year timeline that is reasonable for accomplishing these objectives.
5. How does the school plan to use this list as part of its long-range or strategic plan?

APPENDIX F
SACS QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW CERTIFICATION

Quality Assurance Review Certification – Public Schools
 (For use with Quality Assurance Reviews to Individual Schools)
 Council on Accreditation and School Improvement
 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

SCHOOL:
SYSTEM:

Date(s) of Visit:

I. Evidence of Meeting Standards

Standard	Meets Expectations	Meets Expectations with Recommendation	Does Not Meet Expectations List deficient indicators, if any (e.g. 3.5, 6.7, or 4.6)
Standard 1: Beliefs and Mission			
Standard 2: Governance and Leadership			
Standard 3: Curriculum			
Standard 4: Instruction			
Standard 5: Assessment and Evaluation			
Standard 6: Resources <small>List names of personnel in violation (6.3, 6.4, 6.5)</small>			
Standard 7: Support Services for Student Learning			
Standard 8: Stakeholder Relationships and Communications			
Standard 9: Citizenship			
Standard 10: Continuous Process of Improvement			

Note: In the professional judgment of the quality assurance review team, if a standard is rated "meets expectations with recommendation" there should be a recommendation(s) related to the standard in the narrative of the report.

Note: In the professional judgment of the quality assurance review team, if a standard is rated "does not meet expectations" the indicator(s) not met should be listed in the "list deficient indicators" column.

II. Demonstration of Continuous Improvement

Use the following rubric to identify the school's level of effectiveness in engaging and demonstrating a continuous process of improvement.

Absent	Emerging	Operational	Exemplary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is little or no evidence of a continuous process of improvement. ○ There is limited awareness among staff of the process of continuous improvement and its importance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The improvement process is episodic (sometimes but not consistently evident). ○ There is growing awareness among most staff of the improvement process and its importance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The improvement process is almost always evident. ○ There is general awareness among staff of the improvement process and its importance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The improvement process is consistently evident or routine, aligned with other practices, and focused on achieving the vision and expectations for student learning. ○ Almost all staff is aware of the improvement process and understands its importance and how it impacts other people and practices in the school.

LEVEL OF EFFECTIVENESS: (Check the appropriate box.)

ABSENT EMERGING OPERATIONAL EXEMPLARY



"Helping Schools Improve Student Learning"

APPENDIX G
ADVANCED RECOMMENDATION FOR SCHOOL-BASED ACCREDITATION

AdvancEd
 Recommendation for School-Based Accreditation
 For Quality Assurance Review Teams

Purpose: To analyze the school’s adherence to the *AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools* and make an accreditation recommendation for school-based accreditation.

Directions: Step One: Complete an overall assessment for each accreditation standard reflecting the consensus and sound professional judgment of the Quality Assurance Review Team. Step Two: Make an accreditation recommendation using the guidelines below.

	Not Evident	Emerging	Operational	Highly Functional
Accreditation Standards				
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.				
Resources 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 Communication 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.				

Source: AdvancEd School-Based Accreditation

ACCREDITATION RECOMMENDATION:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accredited
<input type="checkbox"/> Accredited Warned
<input type="checkbox"/> Accredited Probation
<input type="checkbox"/> Deny or Drop Accreditation | All standards rated at or above the Operational Level
One or More Standards rated at Emerging
One or Two Standards rated at Not Evident
Three or More Standards rated at Not Evident |
|---|---|

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