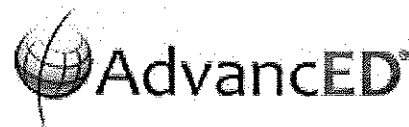


# Report of the External Review Team for Saint Vincent High School

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# Conclusion

Saint Vincent de Paul Catholic High School's vision and mission statement and six Vincentian Educational Values were developed through a comprehensive process involving all stakeholder groups. The review team found a notable commitment to the school's purpose on behalf of the leadership and staff. Every stakeholder, from students to faculty to parents, readily and heartily stated their belief in and appreciation of the values of the school. Students and parents alike noted the sense of tradition at Saint Vincent High and their appreciation of the spiritual aspect of the school's purpose.

The school has a process in place to review and revise their purpose annually, and board policy requires a comprehensive review of the written vision and mission every five years. Communication of the school's purpose is evidenced in a variety of ways throughout the parish and the greater Perryville community. That purpose is literally weaved into every aspect of the school's programs, curriculum, and digital and printed media.

The School Board is very supportive and respects the autonomy of the school leadership to accomplish goals. Over the last three years, the Board has transitioned from an advisory board to a policy-making board with a new constitution approved in school year 2014-2015. The governing Code of Ethics is outlined through the archdiocese and is reiterated in the board constitution.

The permeating culture in the school community doesn't come by accident. School leaders deliberately walk out the school's values on a daily basis in their actions and decisions. They are purposeful in their efforts to model the values and beliefs communicated in the school's stated mission. Triangulation of the Vincentian values is evidenced by student engagement in the classroom as well as student outcomes such as a high volunteer rate, academic outcomes that are higher than the national average, and an overall well-adjusted student body. Within recent years, the school has twice received the prestigious national award for Catholic high schools: Top 5% of Catholic Schools in the Nation.

The notion of shared leadership is an integral aspect of the school's culture. Weekly faculty meetings allow staff members to give input, voice concerns, and be involved in the continued growth of the school. Faculty members participate in the hiring process for teacher vacancies, serve as mentors to new teachers, and function as Care Team members. Staff supervision and evaluation forms are comprehensive in nature and helpful in improving professional and student success. The recently-implemented peer-to-peer observation process is serving to foster discussion regarding instructional practice in the building and promises to be an important stimulus in furthering the development of research-based skills.

With their mission and Vincentian educational values as their guide, Saint Vincent is focused on providing a quality education to all students and educating them in heart, mind, and spirit. The school is facing the challenge of meeting the needs of a diverse student population while focusing on 21st century teaching and learning. In 2013 all teachers began implementing Rigor and Relevance (Quad D) lesson plans in their classrooms. The Rigor and Relevance Framework lessons require teachers to shift from being deliverers of knowledge to facilitators of student learning, with an emphasis on increased technology use and relevant

problem-solving. A comprehensive curriculum map with corresponding aligned objectives, scope and sequence, and common assessments is not available, although administrators indicated a desire to initiate a curriculum mapping process in the near future.

Teachers participate in a variety of collegial conversations regarding professional issues. In a smaller school such as Saint Vincent, informal discussions occur frequently. Faculty and department meetings as well as Professional Development days provide opportunities for professional learning. While teachers appreciate and take advantage of these opportunities, a formal structure to guide discussions about student learning would be helpful.

The school provides various opportunities for new teachers to be mentored and coached in the school's stated purpose, beginning with four days for new teachers in August. The school uses the Mentors' Handbook issued from the Catholic Education Office and assigns mentors for new teachers. The school's student information system, Jupiter Grades, keeps parents informed of their children's educational progress and upcoming school events.

Interviews with students indicated a high percentage of them could identify at least one adult who they could reach out to in time of need. The school has taken the initial step to implement an Advisement program, where a small group of multi-age students is assigned to a faculty member during their time at the school. The focus is on developing a positive relationship with each student and an opportunity to discuss his/her academic performance and emotional/social needs. The guidance counselor, along with the newly-hired learning consultant, works closely with students who may need academic assistance at any given time. In addition, the closely-knit community provides an opportunity for faculty to know students and their families on a more personal basis.

Documentation was provided to demonstrate that there is an ample number of qualified staff members to fully support the school's purpose, direction, and educational program. Instructional time and materials appeared to be sufficient and used in a way that supports the school's purpose and direction. The facilities are clean, well-maintained, and safe. Numerous safety measures are in place, including school-wide drills, emergency bags with first aid kits in each classroom, and a buzzer with an intercom and video system for access into all campus buildings. A fully-equipped media/resource center supports students and school personnel to support educational programs.

The school has hired a full-time technology networking coordinator, and during summer 2015 the entire campus achieved wireless access throughout. Two mobile carts and an additional 60 Chromebooks are available for student use. A technology plan is in place to become a 1:1 school over the next few years.

The school maintains a well-defined student assessment system which provides a wealth of school and student data that is subsequently analyzed by school staff. The assessment data at this time are primarily of a summative nature and based on standardized test results. Some teachers are making use of pre- and post-assessment data to measure student mastery of concepts. Formalizing the written curriculum with a mapping process and providing direction during structured professional learning time should enhance the assessment

system already in place.

Saint Vincent de Paul High School has a rich tradition of being a premier parish high school, but they are committed to continuous improvement. They have in place a comprehensive five-year strategic plan with accompanying measurable goals related to student achievement. They measure their progress toward meeting those goals on a regular basis.

They have already begun several initiatives to that effect. Most notable might be a focus on improving instructional practice in the building by consistently implementing Quad D lesson plans, as well initiating peer-to-peer observations. The additional challenge of identifying individual student progress has begun to be addressed with the hiring of a Learning Specialist. By turning their attention to teacher collaboration about individual student outcomes, the school should continue to see even greater academic and personal student success.

The two Improvement Priorities build on the structure already in place at Saint Vincent High School. A comprehensive curriculum mapping process will help the school more clearly define what and when students are expected to learn and how they will be assessed for that learning. Coupled with a formal structure to guide teachers in their discussions regarding curriculum and student assessment, the school can expect to continue its strong academic tradition.

## **Improvement Priorities**

The institution should use the findings from this review to guide the continuous improvement process. The institution must address the Improvement Priorities listed below:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive curriculum map that is aligned both vertically and to national and state standards.
- Formalize and fully develop the existing collaborative team structure to provide direction, accountability and documentation of school improvement efforts.

# Accreditation Recommendation

## Index of Education Quality

The Index of Education Quality (IEQ™) provides a holistic measure of overall performance based on a comprehensive set of indicators and evaluative criteria. A formative tool for improvement, it identifies areas of success as well as areas in need of focus.

The IEQ™ comprises three domains: 1) the impact of teaching and learning on student performance; 2) the leadership capacity to govern; and 3) the use of resources and data to support and optimize learning.

The overall and domain scores can range from 100-400. The domain scores are derived from: the AdvancED Standards and indicators ratings; results of the Analysis of Student Performance; and data from Stakeholder Feedback Surveys (students, parents, and staff).

	External Review IEQ Score	AdvancED Network Average
Overall Score	292.31	278.34
Teaching and Learning Impact	276.19	268.94
Leadership Capacity	313.64	292.64
Resource Utilization	307.14	283.23

The IEQ™ results include information about how the institution is performing compared to expected criteria as well as to other institutions in the AdvancED Network. The institution should use the information in this report, including the corresponding performance rubrics, to identify specific areas of improvement.

Consequently, the External Review Team recommends to the AdvancED Accreditation Commission that the institution earn the distinction of accreditation for a five-year term. AdvancED will review the results of the External Review to make a final determination including the appropriate next steps for the institution in response to these findings.