



North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), and the Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation (CITA) are accreditation divisions of AdvancED.

## Standards Assessment Report

### Saint Scholastica Academy

122 S Massachusetts St Covington, Louisiana 70433-3400

Prepared for the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review

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# Standards Assessment Report

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# Introduction & Purpose of the Report

## Introduction

### Purpose of the Report

The Standards Assessment Report is designed to serve as a valuable self-assessment and as a tool to help schools prepare for their Quality Assurance Review (QAR). The report is based on the AdvancED standards, which serve as the foundation of the accreditation process. In order to earn and maintain accreditation, schools must meet the AdvancED standards, engage in a process of continuous improvement, and host a Quality Assurance Review at least once every five years.

The Standards Assessment Report engages the school community in an in-depth assessment of each of the seven AdvancED standards. In completing the report, the school identifies the data, information, evidence, and documented results that validate that it is meeting each standard. This self assessment helps the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

The Standards Assessment Report also serves as the primary resource for the Quality Assurance Review Team, which uses the report to prepare for the visit to the school. The team uses insights gathered from the report and information obtained during the on-site visit to provide feedback to the school and to make an accreditation recommendation.

### Structure of the Report

The Standards Assessment Report is organized by the AdvancED standards. For each standard, the report includes four sections: 1) Indicators rubric; 2) Indicators evidence; 3) focus questions; and 4) overall assessment. Each section reinforces the other sections by asking a question that builds on the prior section.

The Indicators rubric enables the school to assess the degree to which practices and/or processes are in place that indicate adherence to the standard and Indicators. For each Indicator, the school may check if the practices and/or processes are highly functional in the school, operational, emerging, or not evident. The school should use the rubric as an opportunity to ask itself challenging questions and to respond with accurate answers geared toward self-improvement. After completing the rubric, the school can quickly see areas of strength and opportunity. The section asks, "To what degree are the noted practices/processes in place?"

The Indicators evidence allows school personnel to think about the practices and/or processes being implemented and identify evidence that will support its responses to the Indicators rubric and focus questions. This section helps school stakeholders engage in a discussion about how it knows it is adhering to the standards. The section asks, "What practices/processes are being implemented, and are they effective?" or said another way, "How do we know we are doing what we say we are doing?"

The focus questions allow the school to expand on and think more deeply about the responses to the Indicators rubric. The focus questions provide an opportunity for the school to describe the systematic and systemic processes that are in place to support its ability to meet the Indicators. The section asks, "How are the

practices/processes implemented?"

The overall assessment describes how well schools are implementing practices and/or processes and the impact these practices and/or processes have on student results and overall school effectiveness. The overall assessment helps schools judge where they are in relation to each standard. The "operational" level is required in order to demonstrate meeting the standard. The section asks, "How well are we meeting the standard overall?"

Together, the Indicators rubric, Indicators evidence, focus questions, and overall assessment provide a comprehensive view of how schools address each of the standards.

## Demographics

Public/Non-public:	<b>Non-public</b>
School Type:	<b>High School</b>
Charter School:	
Enrollment:	<b>751</b>
Gender at School:	<b>Female</b>
Grade(s):	<b>8,9,10,11,12</b>
Location Type:	<b>Suburban</b>
Gender at School:	<b>Female</b>
Religious Denomination:	<b>Christian - Catholic</b>

# Standard 1. Vision and Purpose

**STANDARD:** The school establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the school.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it commits to a shared purpose and direction. The school establishes expectations for student learning aligned with the school's vision that is supported by school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and school effectiveness. The school's vision guides allocations of time and human, material, and fiscal resources.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

**Indicators Evidence:** For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

**Definitions of Indicators Rubric:**

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**INDICATORS:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

**1.1 Establishes a vision for the school in collaboration with its stakeholders:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Leadership demonstrates stakeholder support

Mission Statement visible throughout school and/or district

Policies/Procedures manuals/handbooks demonstrating stakeholder involvement in development of mission

Stakeholder perception data used to develop mission

Stakeholders are knowledgeable about vision, mission

Strategic Plans include mission

**1.2 Communicates the vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Handbooks include vision, mission

Stakeholders are knowledgeable about vision, mission

Website/page includes vision, mission

**1.3 Identifies goals to advance the vision:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Goals distributed through publications and communication

School improvement plan includes vision, mission

School improvement planning incorporates vision, mission

Strategic Plan includes vision, mission

Strategic planning incorporates vision, mission

**1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the school, its students, and the community:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Annual Report

Community-based data

Newsletters, articles

Publications, brochures, handbooks

School Improvement Plan

**1.5 Ensures that the school's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Curriculum demonstrates alignment with vision, mission

Extra -curricular activities incorporate vision, mission

Instructional practices demonstrate alignment with vision, mission

School Improvement Plan demonstrates alignment of vision, mission with teaching and learning

School improvement planning demonstrates alignment with vision, mission

Staff and Parent Handbooks demonstrate alignment of vision, mission with teaching and learning

Strategic Plan demonstrates alignment of vision, mission and teaching and learning

**1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Strategic Plan demonstrates review

Strategic planning process demonstrates review by stakeholders

**Focus Questions:**

***1. What is the process for establishing and building understanding of and commitment to the vision statement among stakeholders?***

St. Scholastica Academy's mission and vision statements are rooted in the Benedictine tradition of the four pillars of Prayer, Work, Study, and Community in order to develop students who are "...Christian women of the future grounded in the Gospel values of the Catholic faith." (St. Scholastica Academy Mission Statement) The school's belief statements further state that "...God, Gospel values, and the teachings of the Catholic Church permeate all that we do, that we work by growing and discovering who we are especially as children of God, and that we prepare our students to lead Christian lives of service and responsibility." The mission and vision clearly articulate Catholic values and beliefs.

Since its beginning in 1903, the school has always stated a mission and vision. The early mission stated that "...the aim of the institution is to develop true Christian women...embracing all that is comprehended in the term education." Official mission and vision statements were created in 1992 as part of the school's first strategic plan. Those documents were reviewed in 1995 during Southern Association Accreditation (SACS) self-study. In 2003, the mission was revised and a statement of beliefs was added to the mission and vision statements. The current mission, vision statement, and statements of belief were reviewed during the 2007 Strategic Plan Convocation and during the current Advanced-Ed SACS CASI process. The strategic planning process for the school occurs every five years by establishing steering committees and holding a convocation to develop a five-year plan for the Academy. Faculty, alumnae, parents, students, and members of the community take part in developing the strategic plan that has as its basis the mission of the school.

The President leads faculty and staff through a review of the mission and vision at the start of each school year. Homeroom teachers review the student handbook with new and returning students to acquaint them with the expectations of a St. Scholastica student. The Advanced-Ed accreditation process (SACS CASI) also provides faculty and staff with an opportunity to revisit the mission and vision.

The school utilizes a variety of pathways, such as printed publications, brochures, web-based technologies, face-to-face meetings, and convocations to communicate the mission and vision to all stakeholders. The mission statement is posted in every classroom, included in the principal's newsletters, the student and parent handbook, the official school website, and the *Wings* magazine which is distributed to the school's stakeholders. Four pillars

engraved with the words Prayer, Work, Study, and Community stand at the entrance of the school as a visual reminder of Benedictine spirituality, which is the cornerstone of our mission. Over 80 % of the teachers, parents, and students surveyed stated they are aware of the mission and vision.

***2. What is the school's process for developing a profile and systematically maintaining and using information that describes the school, its students, and their performance?***

The administrative team, guidance, and other school departments collect and maintain profile data which includes demographics, student performance data, enrollment numbers, financial data, and graduate statistics. Student profile data is maintained by AdminPlus, a web-based administrative program, and includes ethnicity, residence information, special needs, and academic scores. The GradeQuick program, also web-based, is used by faculty to “communicate” with the Admin-Plus program to record and to maintain student grades and to keep track of attendance. Student and parents have instant access to grades in each class via Edline, an internet-based school communication site that provides grade reports for each course in which a student is enrolled.

Standardized test results have always been analyzed by the administrative team and shared with the College Advisor. Average ACT scores and the predicted results analyzed in the annual ACT linkage reports have been shared with faculty, school board and parents. A known area of concern is that scores have never been put into a usable form for teachers as a resource to measure individual student learning potential and performance. The surveys on organizational and instructional effectiveness have also identified use of data as an issue. A goal of this school improvement plan is to get the data into a teacher-friendly format to compare classroom performance and to inform classroom instruction.

Over the summer of 2009, various staff members were trained on FileMaker Pro, a data-base program that captures the students’ standardized test data to be exported to the teacher’s electronic grade book. When the teacher opens his/her class lists, there is a menu that contains all the students’ standardized test data. Teachers have been in-serviced on this feature of GradeQuick and have been instructed to compare the student standardized data to classroom assessment data for alignment or misalignment. This analysis then would inform classroom instruction and lead to possible student learning plans.

Students and their parents receive standardized test scores annually along with documents explaining that data. Guidance counselors meet with each grade level to distribute scores and give explanations of the data. Students are also trained to track standardized test scores and other pertinent college information in the Naviance program. New students are given Naviance training in the second term (spring).

***3. How does the leadership ensure that the school's vision, purpose, and goals guide the teaching and learning process?***

The mission drives and is the measurement for all that occurs at SSA. Even the strategic plan, which is the blueprint for all the current program of work at SSA follows the structure of the four pillars of Benedictine spirituality – prayer, work, study, and community. Self-assessments of school performance, whether a SACS CASI study or the strategic plan structure, utilize the mission, vision, and belief statements as resources for the self-study task to ensure mission, vision, and statements of belief current validity and alignment. Prayer, the first pillar, is at the heart of everything at SSA. At the beginning of each school year a representative of the Benedictine order or the President reviews the mission and the Benedictine charism, exploring with the faculty

how to incorporate this charism into the academic and extra-curricular program. A yearly faculty retreat, led the last several years by Fr. Thomas Perrier, O.S.B., calls the faculty to reflect on the four pillars and how to live them in their lives as teachers as well as in their personal lives.

Monthly School Improvement Plan Sessions (SIPS) are begun with a prayer service to provide opportunities for community prayer. All faculty meetings are opened with a prayer, and the President and Principal include inspirational messages in the weekly faculty bulletin as well as the monthly school newsletter.

SSA provides students with opportunities to pray with daily prayer before school, at lunch, and at the end of the day. Prayer before each class is a teacher expectation that is monitored by administration (a specific way is through course feedbacks). SSA has about ten all-school Masses each year, as well as class Masses and special celebratory events that are centered in a Mass including Family Picnic, Ring Mass, Mother-Daughter event, and senior graduation. Students also experience prayer services (some school-wide; some in a more intimate homeroom setting), class level retreats (which are mandatory), monthly opportunities for Eucharistic Adoration, weekly communion services, monthly rosaries, lunchtime Bible studies, and praise and worship. Opportunities for prayer are also extended to parents through prayer before board meetings, parent assemblies, days of reflection/retreat, a Bible study, and monthly opportunities for Eucharistic Adoration.

A commitment to study and work, the second and third pillars, translating into a commitment to academic excellence, is evidenced by the implementation of a rigorous college prep curriculum, innovative teaching styles, and ACT scores above the state and national averages. The school's 4 x 4 block schedule allows our students to take additional classes and offer an expanded academic program. Parent surveys and alumnae anecdotal data surfaced a perceived disparity between the college prep and honors curricula. It is our plan that this issue will be addressed in the School Improvement Plan through curriculum renewal and data management program.

Department chairs meet monthly with the Academic Dean on curriculum and academic program issues. These department chairs are charged with specific tasks of guiding classroom learning within their departments and ensuring that the school's mission, purpose and goals guide the teaching and learning process. The chairs have specific contracted tasks that are directly aligned to these objectives. Examples of those contracted tasks are to observe the learning process in each department members' classroom and review lesson plans and summative assessments.

One other area of concern that has been acknowledged by administration and supported by survey data is the limited number of classroom visitations done by administration. This is being addressed in the SIP through the strategy that calls for members of the administration team to learn and utilize a walk-through strategy. At this point the school has contracted with School Leadership Center to participate in a coaching initiative that will further train the administrators in the walk-through process.

Faculty are required to submit their syllabi to the Academic Dean before posting them on Edline for their students' use. Students, as mentioned before, give end-of-course feedback. This feedback goes electronically to the Academic Dean who reviews it before sending it on to the department chairs to discuss with their individual department members. This order of review has changed this year.

The fourth pillar, community, which also espouses the Benedictine virtue of hospitality, is evident in the service and outreach programs, in the campus ministry and student ministry programs, in the school discipline program (the foundation of which is “discipline with dignity”), the Honor Code, as well as the extra-curricular program. The student handbook, which describes these programs, is reviewed annually by the administrative team. Teachers and students are asked in the spring term for their input, which is considered during the administrative review.

The outreach and community service program is being redefined to more specifically reflect social justice issues and service to the marginalized population within our community. This change was reflected in the student handbook this year. In addition, formation and process components, as well as social justice prayer services and activities were begun last term with more on the drawing board for upcoming years. This should be tied into another SIP goal - redefining the campus ministry program at SSA (Goal 4). Currently, we have contracted with a nationally-known youth and adult ministry consultant to take the school through a strategic planning process to create a new, expanded campus ministry vision and plan for SSA, and to staff it for complete implementation.

Clubs now have learning statements, and there is now a defined process for the initiation of a new club.

Parental involvement is a necessary component for a successful school. At SSA parents are involved as members of the School Board, Parent Club Board, Athletic Association, and in the multitude of activities that are carried out each year. SSA is grateful for and proud of the outstanding support and involvement of its parents throughout the years and for which we were commended as a Blue Ribbon School. Administrative approval of projects and board initiatives ensures alignment with the mission as well as addressing the needs of the school.

***4. What process is used to ensure that the vision and purpose of the school remain current and aligned with the school's expectations for student learning and school effectiveness?***

There are several ways the school ensures that the mission and vision are aligned with school expectations for student learning and effectiveness. All stakeholders are involved in the creation of the school’s strategic plan. Administration, faculty, and staff use the strategic plan along with study of student performance data to create the school improvement plan and academic department goals to guide student learning and effectiveness. The School Improvement Plan is revisited each year by the administration to ensure that it is current and relevant. Faculty members meet monthly in SIP sessions for professional development related to the school improvement plan. School Improvement Plan sessions (SIPS) have included the use of professional study groups, guest speakers, and technology training.

Administrators, faculty members, and the technology department conduct classroom observations and provide prompt feedback to teachers for reflective purposes. Students complete course evaluations to provide feedback to instructors. These evaluations are done electronically and are reviewed by department heads and the Academic Dean. Those participating in faculty Career Ladder (CL) must provide evidence that this student feedback process has been completed and the necessary reflective work has been done with how courses might need to be adjusted for the next term.

Stakeholders are surveyed as part of the strategic planning process and the SACS CASI process. This data is used for ongoing reflection of the mission and vision. Continuous reflection, review, and revision are a key part of the strategic plan.

**Overall Assessment:**

**Highly Functional:** The school has achieved a wide commitment by all groups of stakeholders to a shared purpose and direction. The school has clearly defined expectations for student learning aligned with the school's vision that is fully supported by school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and school effectiveness. The school's vision guides allocations of time and human, material, and fiscal resources. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "highly functional" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Standard 2. Governance and Leadership

**STANDARD:** The school provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and school effectiveness.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it has leaders who are advocates for the school's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction and allocate resources to implement curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders encourage collaboration and shared responsibility for school improvement among stakeholders. The school's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

**Indicators Evidence:** For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

### Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**INDICATORS:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school operates under the jurisdiction of a governing board that:

### 2.1 Establishes policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the school:

*Highly Functional*

#### Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes of governing authority meetings

Procedural policies: emergencies, contact information, calling tree, discipline, due process, logistics, placement and transfer

Staff and/or student handbooks

Students and staff affirm their understanding of discipline policies and due process

**2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the administrative head of the school:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Roles and responsibilities of governing board, advisory councils, and ad hoc committees are clearly outlined

Succession plan demonstrates leadership transitions

**2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Documentation of utilization of all requirement elements of curriculum standards

Documentation with all regulations that apply to accreditation by NCA CASI, SACS CASI, or AdvancED

Staff are knowledgeable about curriculum standards

Staff demonstrates use of curriculum standards in the teaching and learning process

**INDICATORS:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school has leadership that:

**2.4 Employs a system that provides for analysis and review of student performance and school effectiveness:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Record of student performance data analysis

Student database management system

Student performance data are used during staff meetings

**2.5 Fosters a learning community:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

All stakeholders are knowledgeable about the rules of engagement and behavior

Artifacts displayed throughout the school/district demonstrate inclusion of all stakeholder communities

Stakeholders affirm a sense of belonging and engagement

**2.6 Provides teachers and students opportunities to lead:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Agenda and minutes of meetings demonstrate shared leadership with staff

Policies for staff/student leadership opportunities outside the school/district environment

Staff affirm their involvement in shared leadership opportunities

Staff and students affirm their involvement in the accreditation process

**2.7 Provides stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Calendar, agendas, minutes of stakeholder meetings

Committee members are representative of all stakeholder groups

Parent/community compacts

Stakeholders affirm their involvement in the accreditation process

Stakeholders affirm their involvement in the decision-making process

Stakeholders affirm their involvement on committees

**2.8 Controls curricular and extracurricular activities that are sponsored by the school:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Policy demonstrates roles, responsibilities, and compensation for staff responsible for co-curricular and extra-curricular organizations, events, and activities

Record of co-curricular organizations and activities: calendars, membership, sponsors

Record of extra-curricular events and activities: calendars, rosters, chaperones

Staff and students affirm involvement in co-curricular organizations and activities

Staff and students affirm involvement in extra-curricular events and activities

**2.9 Responds to community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Stakeholder survey data

**2.10 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Handbooks demonstrate staff evaluation system

New staff orientation materials

Policies demonstrate evaluation criteria, timelines, and termination processes

Policies demonstrate professional growth opportunities

Professional development plan for all staff

Staff are engaged in professional learning opportunities

Staff are knowledgeable about opportunities for professional growth

Staff are knowledgeable about their evaluation criteria and timeline

### **Focus Questions:**

#### ***1. What is the process for establishing, communicating, and implementing policies and procedures for the effective operation of the school?***

SSA became an Archdiocese-owned school in 1965. The Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools (OCS), headed by Superintendent Sr. Kathleen Finnerty, O.S.U., oversees the academic and financial programs of the school to ensure compliance with Archdiocesan and state policies. The Office of Religious Education (ORE) ensures that the school is in compliance with the Archbishop's directives for religious education of high school age students. Students follow the prescribed religious education curriculum using only textbooks that are in compliance with USCCB-sanctioned texts.

In 2004, the Academy adopted the President/Principal model. The physical plant, advancement, finances, school board, public relations, and long-range planning are the direct responsibilities of the President, who is also the official head of school. The Principal maintains the responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the school, and is accountable to the President.

The school operates under the philosophy of shared decision-making through an administrative team, comprised of the President, Principal, Dean of Students, Dean of Academics, Director of Guidance, Advancement Director and Director of Finance. This larger team meets when the expertise of the full team is needed. An operational team comprised of the Principal, Dean of Students, Dean of Academics, and Director of Guidance meets weekly and operates in a collaborative and collegial manner to carry out policies and procedures for the school.

A school board, advisory in nature, counsels the President and Principal in various school matters including implementation of policies, goals, and objectives. The school board is primarily responsible for finances and facilities. The board is comprised of 15 members who serve three-year staggered, renewable terms to allow for the input of new ideas and perspectives while providing stability through experienced members.

Policies and procedures are communicated in the faculty and student handbooks (the student edition is also published on the school's website). Both handbooks are revised annually by the full Administrative Team with input from faculty. All teachers are given the current edition of the handbook. Students review the changes during orientation. New teachers review the faculty handbook during new teacher orientation. The expectation is that students and faculty will stay current with the handbook changes. All parents and students must sign and return the Handbook Assent form which states that both groups have read the handbook and agree to abide by the guidelines of the school.

Detailed job descriptions have been established for all administrators, department chairs, and staff. In addition, the

administration and faculty have collaborated to create the Profile of a St. Scholastica Teacher which explicitly spells out what is required and expected of a faculty member. Teacher adherence to the Profile of a St. Scholastica Teacher is reviewed with the Principal on a yearly basis.

Faculty meetings and department meetings are held at least once a month to communicate and ensure implementation of policies and procedures. A weekly faculty bulletin is published electronically to communicate items necessary for the operation of the school such as schedule changes, policy adjustments, and reminders. The school maintains a calendar that is posted on Edline and on the website; it is updated periodically. The Advancement Office also sends out a weekly email to all faculty, staff, parents, and students with updates and upcoming events.

Faculty members utilize Edline course pages to inform parents of grades and to post course documents, assignments, and relevant links. Course syllabi are posted on course Edline pages and parents and students are required to sign the syllabi to acknowledge they have read the syllabi and agree to abide by class policies. The school's website communicates all major documents and provides information about current school events.

Teacher, parent, and student opinion survey results indicated that a majority of parents believe that school procedures are communicated effectively and over 90% of parents and students surveyed stated that the school uses technology to provide information about the school.

## ***2. What process does the school's leadership use to evaluate school effectiveness and student performance?***

School effectiveness and student performance is evaluated in a variety of ways. Standardized test scores provide the Administrative Team and faculty with valuable data to evaluate the academic program. The IOWA test is given to prospective 8th graders to aid in course placement. It is also given to 9th and 10th graders to measure student learning growth and to inform curricular changes. Students take the EXPLORE (8th), PLAN (10th), and ACT (11th and 12th) to provide test consistency and continuity allowing faculty and administration to determine student learning performance needs. Some 10th (as of this year) and all 11th take the PSAT. This test helps with AP placement and serves to surface potential National Merit candidates. Some students also take the SAT.

Currently, the Principal, the Academic Dean, Administrative Team, faculty and School Board review standardized test data to determine the success of the academic program. The Director of Guidance also reports the school's average scores to the Administrative Team and this information along with the linkage report data is presented to the school board. Usually, the school's average data is reported to the parents as well.

One part of the school's SIP is to analyze and utilize test data in a more systematic manner. This year student standardized test data were uploaded to Admin-Plus and in turn added to each teacher's grade book. This provides teachers immediate access to this information, allowing them to check the alignment between student classroom performance and standardized data, which aids the teacher in making a student learning plan if necessary. Academic departments also meet to discuss standardized test data, make curriculum adjustments, and to develop ways to include the ACT College Readiness Standards in course work. In working with the ACT program, the data from annual school wide ACT practice tests are uploaded to individual student databases, which students can access to determine learning success or tutorial needs/work.

Other data used to evaluate school effectiveness and student performance include student grades, TOPS statistics, AP scores, the number and monetary amount of scholarships awarded, discipline records, attendance records, student course evaluations, LSU Spring testing numbers and student performance in Spring testing, number of National Merit semifinalists and finalists, student performance at District and State Rallies, number of AP scholars, and alumnae feedback.

St. Scholastica Academy has instituted three-hour monthly SIP sessions during the school day to provide faculty and staff time to evaluate school effectiveness and student performance. SIP sessions have been invaluable to the faculty for professional development, technology training, conducting faculty study groups, and evaluating student work in a collegial manner. Specifically, in the 2008-2009 school years, the faculty began a curriculum renewal (SP Goal 1) during SIP sessions to evaluate and vertically align the curriculum, and make recommendations on curriculum matters.

The Administrative Team employs several methods to evaluate faculty to assure school effectiveness and student performance. Faculty members meet with the Principal for annual contract conferences. An important part of these conferences is a discussion of the Profile of a St. Scholastica Teacher as it relates to each individual faculty member; it also includes each teacher's reflection on the school year, and any adjustments to this past school year's plan for the next academic year as a result of that reflection process. Faculty members are periodically though inconsistently observed by the Principal, Academic Dean, Department Heads, Technology Department, and other faculty members each year. Prompt feedback that highlights successful techniques and areas of improvement is provided using various templates. Although these effective evaluation methods are in place, the school has identified this as an area for improvement to be addressed in the action plan.

St. Scholastica Academy regularly solicits the feedback of its stakeholders to evaluate school effectiveness and student performance. Faculty members annually complete surveys to gauge the effectiveness of the Principal for the Archdiocese of New Orleans and other professional groups such as the School Leadership Center. Students complete midterm and end of course evaluations that provide teachers valuable information to revise instruction. Student evaluations are reviewed with department heads and the Academic Dean. Administrators, faculty, parents, students, alumnae, and community members completed various surveys for the SACS CASI process. The faculty used these results to review school effectiveness.

Alumnae also provide additional crucial feedback as to the effectiveness of the school and its overall program. Recent graduates are invited to campus each year to speak to the senior class regarding the freshman college experience. The Administrative Team meets with some of these recent graduates to review the effectiveness of the school's college preparatory curriculum and to solicit suggestions for improvements.

***3. In what ways are stakeholders, including staff, given opportunities to provide leadership and to contribute to the decision-making process?***

St. Scholastica Academy actively seeks to provide its stakeholders opportunities for leadership and decision-making. Faculty members hold a number of leadership positions in the school such as department heads, head moderators, retreat leaders, School Improvement Team members, Cadre, and Curriculum Renewal Committee Members. Faculty members also take the lead with regard to professional development by leading monthly SIPS sessions or by presenting innovative strategies to fellow teachers. Monthly department meetings and Academic Council meetings offer faculty an opportunity to discuss school operations, new course offerings, curriculum issues, and make recommendations.

Perhaps one of the best examples of how faculty members are encouraged to take a leadership role at St. Scholastica Academy is the creation and implementation of the Career Ladder. The Administrative Team, faculty, and School Board of St. Scholastica Academy recognized the need to reward and retain excellent teachers. An extensive process was begun to define an excellent St. Scholastica Teacher and to determine how to quantify excellence. An important component of the career ladder is requiring faculty members to hold leadership positions if they wish to progress through the career ladder. Career Ladder is designed to involve faculty in addressing the school's needs in terms of professional development, student learning needs, faculty spiritual growth, analysis of student performance data, and expansion of technology.

St. Scholastica Academy dedicates itself to developing students who are "...Christian women of the future..." who are ready to become leaders in the community; therefore, several venues exist for students to develop leadership skills. Students may choose to be involved in numerous organizations such as student council, student ministers, team captains and managers, the big sister/little sister program, and at least 20 other clubs. The Academy encourages students to suggest new activities and several student-initiated clubs are now in existence (World Culture Society, Animal Appreciation, Book Club, Latin Club, Pillars, and Legacy). 75 % of students surveyed indicated that the school offers activities that interest them.

The Parent Club and the School Board provide parents with opportunities to provide leadership and input in decision-making. The school works tirelessly to establish an ongoing dialogue with parents and all constituents through a newly designed website and Edline to communicate the goals and/or policies of the decision-making process. Various parent meetings/conference times are scheduled throughout the year, which afford parents the opportunity to meet with faculty and/or administration. The administration has an "open door" policy, which is communicated annually especially to new parents; they are also responsive to parent emails, phone calls, and drop-in visits. Results from parent opinion surveys showed that 90 percent of parents believe that the school provides many opportunities for parental involvement.

The school embarks on the strategic plan process every five years. This is yet another way that all stakeholders assume leadership roles and aid in the decision making process. Administrators, faculty members, parents, students, alumnae, and community members are invited to participate in this process that guides future school objectives.

#### ***4. What policies and processes are in place to ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation?***

St. Scholastica Academy ensures equity of learning opportunities and supports innovation in a number of ways. The school employs three full-time counselors and one full time college advisor to facilitate an equal opportunity learning environment. Counselors and faculty hold SBLC (School Building Level Committee) meetings to implement accommodations such as extended time for test taking, oral testing, and preferential seating. All faculty members are required to hold two help sessions a week to provide additional support to any student who wishes to meet individually with a teacher. During the 2008-2009 school year SIPS sessions, departments participated in curriculum renewal to ensure course alignment with national and state standards and to vertically align the curriculum.

The administration, faculty, and staff are well-known for their commitment to innovative teaching strategies,

professional development, and technology integration. The Scholastica Fellows program, a voluntary study group, exposes teachers to cutting edge developments in instruction and requires implementation of the strategies explored. The Scholastica Fellows have examined such diverse topics as differentiated instruction, assessments, and technology integration. Faculty members are encouraged to attend conferences and workshops and are required to share what they have learned with the entire faculty. Furthermore, monies are budgeted yearly for professional development conferences; attendance at conferences and workshops is a mandatory part of the St. Scholastica Career Ladder. An ambitious one-to-one laptop program began in the spring of 2008. Teachers and students received extensive computer and software training to ensure the success of this program. The Educational Technology Integration Specialists (SSA Technology Help Desk) conduct year-round training for teachers and students in the use of wikis, inspiration, podcasting, and other emerging technologies, troubleshoot laptop issues, and support the overall technology program using research-based best practices.

### **Overall Assessment:**

**Highly Functional:** The school has leaders who are advocates for the school's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction, lend support, and systematically allocate resources for systemic and sustainable implementation of curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders ensure collaboration and shared responsibility for school improvement among stakeholders with clearly defined expectations for each stakeholder group. The leaders provide stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership. The school's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation and are deeply embedded in the way the school functions. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "highly functional" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Standard 3. Teaching and Learning

**STANDARD:** The school provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process. Teachers provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. Teachers give students feedback to improve their performance.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

**Indicators Evidence:** For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

### Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**INDICATORS:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

### 3.1 Develops and implements curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning: *Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Lesson plans that indicate learning objectives

Master schedule

Policy on credit requirements for program completion

Policy on grading criteria

Staff can articulate curriculum sequencing and grouping

Staff can articulate student learning expectations

Staff meet regularly to discuss student progress and remediation

Staff meetings highlight discussions of student learning expectations

Student Handbook outlines student learning expectations

Syllabi or course catalogues

**3.2 Promotes active involvement of students in the learning process, including opportunities for them to explore application of higher-order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Master schedule

Peer editing

Samples of student work

Students affirm their involvement in their own learning

**3.3 Gathers, analyzes, and uses data and research in making curricular and instructional choices:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Assessment data

Course evaluations

Grade reports

Professional development calendar and topics

Staff meet to review current research

Surveys

Transcripts, certificates

**3.4 Designs and uses instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that are research-based and reflective of best practice:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes of staff/grade level/department/program meetings

Lesson plans

Professional development calendar and topics

Professional development plans

Professional learning opportunities focus on best practice instruction

Professional organization membership

Staff meet to share best practices

Staff meetings regularly include discussions about effective instructional design and delivery

Student display of project-based learning opportunities

Variety of instructional design and delivery strategies

**3.5 Offers a curriculum that challenges each student to excel, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Graduation requirements

Master schedule

Staff are knowledgeable about state and national curriculum standards

Standards-based curriculum: state and national standards

Students affirm that there are opportunities to excel

**3.6 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Instructional calendar: days, hours

Master schedule

Policies and guidelines that demonstrate that all program requirements are met

Staff affirm that their instructional time is protected

**3.7 Provides for articulation and alignment between and among all levels of schools:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Staff are knowledgeable about student learning expectations of previous and subsequent grade levels

**3.8 Implements interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Counseling programs: curriculum, schedules, staffing

Policies for student orientation, interventions, remediation

Staff affirm that there are multiple opportunities for students to get support

Students affirm that they have opportunities to get support for their school experience

**3.9 Monitors school climate and takes appropriate steps to ensure that it is conducive to student learning:**  
*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Curriculum reflects attention to issues of school climate

Database of student behavioral incidents

Parents/community indicate that the school/district focuses on positive school/district climate

Policies for student behavior, remediation, due process, appeals

Reward system for positive behavior

Staff affirm that they are involved in promoting positive school climate

Stakeholder Compact: adult and student expectations

Stakeholder satisfaction survey data

Students affirm that they are involved in promoting positive school climate

**3.10 Provides comprehensive information and media services that support the curricular and instructional programs:**  
*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Budget allocating appropriate funds for media services

Calendar and schedule of media services to students

Facilities map indicating media services location

Media services staff demonstrate the use media resources to support student achievement

Staff affirm the use of media services in their curriculum and instructional programs

Students and staff affirm their involvement in media services program

**3.11 Ensures that all students and staff members have regular and ready access to instructional technology and a comprehensive materials collection that supports the curricular and instructional program:**  
*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Budget allocating appropriate funds for technology - software, hardware, and infrastructure

Calendar and schedule of technology services to students

Facilities map indicating technology services/lab

Staff affirm that technology supports their curriculum and instructional programs

Staffing chart demonstrating allocation of appropriate technology staff

Students and staff affirm that technology is embedded within the teaching and learning process

Technology staff/services demonstrate their involvement in support of student achievement

### **Focus Questions:**

#### ***1. How does the school ensure that the curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments are aligned and articulated across grade levels in support of the expectations for student learning?***

The Administrative Team, Academic Council, and academic departments are responsible for ensuring that curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments are aligned and articulated across grade levels in support of student learning. In the past St. Scholastica Academy conducted a curriculum renewal every five years. The school will now conduct an annual curriculum review as stated in the strategic plan (Goal 1). Each department is charged with examining the current scope and sequence of its discipline to make adjustments based on several factors including standardized test scores, best practices, and anecdotal data from faculty, parents, students, and alumnae. Departments also ensure that the curriculum is aligned with state and national standards as well as power standards. Each department's curriculum guide is submitted to the Academic Dean and is in the process of being placed in a digital folder to provide access for use by all faculty members.

All faculty members are required to write detailed syllabi using appropriate standards and benchmarks. All syllabi are submitted to the Academic Dean and then posted to Edline for parents and students to access. Essential course knowledge and critical questions are included in syllabi to guide instruction throughout the term. Standards-based units have been prepared for many courses and most are available in electronic form on the school server for collegial sharing purposes. All faculty new to SSA participate in a year-long training program to write standards-based units utilizing "backwards design." Units are peer reviewed and the final version is submitted to the Academic Dean for review before they can be posted electronically. Faculty members are required to submit weekly lesson plans based on the standards-based units to department chairs for review.

Standards-based education emphasizes student awareness of essential understanding in relation to the standard and benchmarks addressed during the course of a unit. Some teachers distribute student unit organizers to their students at the start of a new unit of study to encourage student awareness of standards and benchmarks and to provide a framework for all student learning. Critical questions are required components of each unit and are referred to throughout the course of a unit's presentation.

Over 90 % of teachers surveyed using the Survey of Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness reported that the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and is aligned for a shared vision of student learning. Parents and students surveyed believe that the academic program is of high quality, the 4 x 4 schedule allows teachers to engage in a variety of teaching strategies, and that the religion program effectively imparts information regarding

the Catholic faith.

***2. In what ways does the school ensure the implementation of research-based instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that facilitate achievement for all students?***

The administration and faculty of St. Scholastica Academy ensure the implementation of research based instructional strategies and innovations through professional opportunities, observations, and standards-based units and lesson plans. The Administrative Team actively encourages faculty to grow professionally in a variety of ways. St. Scholastica Academy administrators and faculty are members of numerous professional organizations which provide an avenue to stay abreast of current issues and innovative teaching strategies in the various academic disciplines. Faculty members have attended numerous conferences such as those given by National Science Teachers Association, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, International Society for Technology in Education, National Catholic Educational Association, Staff Development for Educators, Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (Foreign Language), National Association of College Admissions Counselors, and National Art Education Association. Faculty members who attend conferences are exposed to innovative research-based practices and are required to share new strategies with the faculty (Career Ladder). The St. Scholastica Academy Career Ladder also includes a strong professional development component to encourage and reward faculty members who commit to grow in their craft.

The Scholastica Fellows program is another way faculty members may elect to learn about new research-based techniques. In the past few years, the Scholastica Fellows program has focused on topics such as Smart Schools, technology integration, choice in assessment, and differentiated instruction. SIPS sessions provide teachers with three hours of job-embedded professional development each month throughout the school year. These sessions have been used to present research-based practices to faculty through guest speakers, study groups, and faculty presentations. In addition, results of the Survey of Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness indicated that 86 % of the faculty believes the school is committed to professional development in fulfillment of the strategic plan.

The implementation of the one-to-one computing program is an excellent example of the school's commitment to stay abreast of 21st century teaching tools. Prior to implementing the program, a technology team of teachers, administrators, and parents was formed to research the benefits of one-to-one computing. After concluding that one-to-one computing would enhance the academic program, the faculty was given extensive training on basic computing skills and technology integration. Students were also trained on basic computer use and software. A Help Desk was established to solve faculty and student computing issues and to support technology integration in the classroom. 98 % of teachers stated that technology is used at St. Scholastica Academy to assist students in their learning. 75 % of parents reported that the one-to-one laptop program has been a positive addition to the curriculum, and 89 % of students surveyed indicated that technology is utilized in the classroom to assist the learning process. This program is also helping to develop responsible, ethical students who are savvy users of technology.

Observations also ensure that teachers are using research-based strategies in the classroom. The Academic Dean, Department Heads, Technology Department, and faculty members periodically observe teachers and provide prompt feedback via written observation templates. The Principal meets with each faculty member at the end of every school year to reflect on the year and the quality of the teacher's instruction.

As stated earlier, standards-based units have been created for most courses and teachers must submit standards-

based lesson plans to department heads and the Academic Dean. Departments also worked collaboratively to plan assessments that reflect current best practices. 15 teachers and two administrators have attended national and regional conferences on differentiated instruction over the past two school years. The topic for Fellows last year was differentiated instruction. Several teachers are piloting specific components of differentiation during this school year.

***3. What processes are implemented to ensure that teachers are well-prepared and effectively implementing the curriculum?***

SSA submits prospective teachers to a rigorous interview procedure and hires only teachers with exemplary backgrounds and proper credentials. A mentoring program is in place to ensure that teachers new to St. Scholastica have all the information and guidance they require to keep current with curricula and school culture; however, the mentoring program may benefit from a more structured approach, which the Academic Dean is currently organizing. New teachers also attend special sessions that teach the process of developing a standards-based unit and techniques for teaching in the 4 x 4 block.

Classroom observations by peers, department heads, and administrative personnel are utilized to ensure that teachers are well prepared to implement a challenging curriculum. Teachers are also an integral part of the shaping of the curriculum itself, making changes based on, among other things, standardized test data from the IOWA, EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT; and on data gleaned from AP test results. In addition to utilizing data to inform curriculum decisions, SSA is currently undergoing a curriculum renewal to update and revise its academic offerings to meet the needs of 21st century learners in a college-preparatory environment. An annual curriculum renewal process will occur after the initial proposed revisions. Finally, SSA provides a means of retaining and rewarding excellent teachers while at the same time giving them the opportunities to improve their craft via the Career Ladder and Fellows programs. These programs give teachers opportunities to learn advanced instruction techniques and to reward them for excellence in teaching.

In SIPS faculty annually examine an innovative instructional topic for study and implementation in the classroom. For the past several years SIPS has been a school-wide initiative. In the future faculty study groups will be the structure for SIPS to allow for individual faculty learning needs. SIPS keep teachers abreast of current curriculum trends and school-wide curriculum needs. Monthly department meetings are held to discuss curriculum renewal through scope and sequence, unit plans, and course development. End-of-the-year conferences between teachers and their department heads are intended to review course evaluations to define improvement goals and adjust curriculum for the next year. Lesson plans are required to be submitted to department heads weekly.

NSSE opinion inventories were used to survey teachers, parents, and students regarding the quality of SSA's academic program. Over 90 % of teachers surveyed indicated that the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and challenges all students to excel. Parents are very pleased with the quality of instruction and 72 % of surveyed parents believe that the school's academic program is challenging. There is a need, however, to address the level of challenge in the college prep program in terms of actual college preparedness.

***4. How does the school provide every student access to comprehensive information, instructional technology, and media services?***

St. Scholastica Academy is dedicated to providing students access to information, instructional technology, and

media services through the one-to-one computing program and the school media center. All faculty members and students and most administrators and staff have a Lenovo ThinkPad with wireless capability to use both at school and at home. The internet has become a powerful educational resource and is used abundantly in the classroom. This capability is supported by the one-to-one computing program and campus-wide internet access. All faculty and students have been trained on the care of the computer and how to use software such as OneNote 2007 and Inspiration. Faculty members have integrated the use of the ThinkPad in course work and students use the laptop to take notes, complete assignments, peer edit work, and to communicate with teachers. All classrooms are equipped with LCD projectors to support the technology curriculum.

One objective of the technology department is to support all facets of technology integration. The technology department operates the Help Desk and handles all computing issues that may arise. Loaner computers are available for use when students or staff have issues so no member of the school is ever without computer access. The technology department also conducts software and application training throughout the school year, and is charged with researching emerging technologies and introducing these technologies to the St. Scholastica community. For example, in the 2008-2009 school years, teachers and students were introduced to wikis and used this technology in conjunction with class projects and the Career Ladder. In the 2009-2010 school years, teachers will explore the use of podcasts and other Web 2.0 applications to further integrate technology into the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners.

Vast amounts of information exist today and the 21st century learner must learn how to access and choose the proper information resource. The St. Scholastica Media Center offers a variety of information resources including books, periodicals, e-books, and databases. All students are trained in the 8th grade on research skills, use of sources, effective use of the internet, and conducting research using online databases such as EBSCO and Literary Research Center. The school media center employs flexible scheduling which allows teachers to schedule the media center for their classes when most appropriate. Computers are also available in the media center for research or printing. The media center is open from 7:30 AM – 5:00 PM for student use. In 2008, the media center implemented Follett's Destiny Library Manager which allows 24/7 online access to the media center's catalog.

NSSE parent opinion survey results show that over 95 % of parents surveyed believe that the school provides access to a variety of technological and media center resources. 87 % of students surveyed believe they have access to a variety of resources and technologies.

**Overall Assessment:**

**Operational:** The school implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The school demonstrates evidence of alignment between the curriculum and instructional practices with systematic implementation across the school. Teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. Teachers give students regular feedback to improve their performance. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "operational" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Standard 4. Documenting and Using Results

**STANDARD:** The school enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and school effectiveness.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures. The system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions to improve student performance. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

**Indicators Evidence:** For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

### Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**INDICATORS:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

**4.1 Establishes performance measures for student learning that yield information that is reliable, valid, and bias free:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

All stakeholders are knowledgeable about behavioral standards

All stakeholders are knowledgeable about grading and appeals

All stakeholders are knowledgeable about learning expectations and targets for student performance

Assessment system that records multiple assessments

Assessment system that safeguards validity, confidentiality, identification

Database that records graduation, completion, GPA, placement, retention rates

Policies that outline targets for behavioral standards: attendance, discipline

Staff affirm the use of multiple measures for student performance

Student/Staff Handbook that outlines grading scales, syllabus criteria, and appeal process

**4.2 Develops and implements a comprehensive assessment system for assessing progress toward meeting the expectations for student learning:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Calendar of assessment activities

Examples of student work are prominently displayed

Policies outline administration of multiple assessments and their purpose

Staff utilize assessment data for the purpose of instructional and program planning

Stakeholders are familiar with the administration and purpose of multiple assessments

Stakeholders implement multiple assessment system

Students affirm knowledge about their learning expectations

The development and administration of multiple assessments consider limited-language learners, students with disabilities, and multiple learning styles

**4.3 Uses student assessment data for making decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning processes:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes from staff meetings indicate use of data to drive instructional planning discussions

**4.4 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness and uses the results to improve student performance:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Data from community/business

Data from multiple surveys indicate wide scale use of data to analyze instructional and organizational effectiveness

Staff utilize perception data from surveys to guide program planning

**4.5 Communicates the results of student performance and school effectiveness to all stakeholders:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes from meetings where student performance and school effectiveness were highlighted

Newsletters demonstrate communication of student performance and school effectiveness

**4.6 Uses comparison and trend data of student performance from comparable schools in evaluating its effectiveness:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Reports that outline comparable data analysis - across schools, districts, states, nationally

**4.7 Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Data reports verify growth in student performance

**4.8 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Policies that outline the conditions for safeguarding and transferring transcripts

Policies that safeguard accuracy and security of all data

Reports that satisfy local, state, and national requirements

**Focus Questions:**

***1. How is the assessment system currently used in your school to analyze changes in student performance?***

There are two major components to the SSA assessment system. The first part is criterion-based with the assessments aligned to national and state standards. The school is currently working to define power standards to outline the essential understandings for their courses. These essential understandings are aligned with what students are expected to know and be able to do in a university setting. Assessments are also reviewed according to Bloom's taxonomy to ensure that higher-order thinking skills are incorporated in all-summative assessments; this is still a work in progress and is an on-going teacher activity.

A new initiative was begun this year to examine units for alignment between essential knowledge and summative assessments. This is happening currently for new teachers and for those who are participating in the Career Ladder. A plan will be developed for the future to extend this practice to all faculty. Units submitted by teachers (new and those who are participating in the Career Ladder) are examined for alignment between essential knowledge (from standards) and summative assessments. Pre-assessments and formative assessments are examined for alignment with summative assessments. The teacher cadre does this examination with feedback given to the teachers for necessary adjustments.

Teachers have been asked this year to meet with any student who has made a D or F on the very first assessment to analyze the student's performance and to devise a plan for better success on the next assessment. Parents will be notified, if appropriate, and given suggestions for how they might help their daughter better prepare. Counselors will be notified as additional support for the student. This initiative is new, and evaluation of successful implementation will be on-going. Initial evaluation of this program is that teacher notification is sporadic at this point in the school year. The school is attempting to adjust this as we continue to try to implement this new initiative.

Faculty members are encouraged to give several varied assessments each term to assess student performance. Assessments are not limited to quizzes and tests as teachers in all disciplines use projects and performance assessments to measure student learning. (Examples: science labs, PE performance assessments, art portfolios, writing assignments and speeches in foreign language). Writing Across the Curriculum is promoted in all courses. The English department has used the 6-Trait Writing process to transform the intermediate writing course and have adopted the use of a 6-Trait Writing rubric to assess writing assignments. Assessments like the Holocaust course website project and the Journalism course final project to develop a socially significant publication not only reflect content but also incorporate Catholic teachings on social justice and other Catholic Identity Standards.

St. Scholastica Academy uses GradeQuick, a web-based grading system, in conjunction with Edline to ensure that parents and students are updated weekly on all course grades. Teachers are required to contact the parents and counselors of struggling students to develop strategies to aid that student. Report cards are issued at midterm and the end of the term.

The second component of the school's assessment system is the standardized testing program. The IOWA Test of Basic Skills helps to inform curriculum change and measure growth in student learning performance. Incoming 8th graders, 9th graders, and 10th graders are administered this test. The ACT testing program provides consistency and continuity and gives valuable student learning performance data to faculty. Eighth graders are administered the EXPLORE test, 10th graders are administered PLAN, and 11th and 12th graders take the ACT. In addition, the ACT testing program provides a "longitudinal" and systematic educational approach to standardized testing ultimately preparing the students for ACT high stakes testing. Any sophomore who wishes, all sophomores in the honors program, and all juniors will take the PSAT. This data provides the school with a tool to use in placing students in AP classes and to identify students who may be close to national merit possibilities for additional prep work. Some of our juniors and seniors also take the SAT depending upon what is required for colleges to which they wish to apply.

A supplement to the ACT testing program is the TCA online study guide to which every student has an individual access code. All students, 8th through 11th, as well as seniors with an ACT score of 21 or less and those who wish to retake the ACT, take a practice test simulating the testing environment. These practice tests are scored and are put into the TCA software. Each student's results are broken down into the skills and knowledge that have not yet been mastered. The software contains tutorials that aid the student's mastery. Students are encouraged to use the software especially in preparation for a standardized test. Juniors and seniors also have the opportunity to take a prep course (on Saturdays) free of charge given by the College Advisor.

A current goal of the administration and faculty of St. Scholastica Academy is to analyze the student assessment data to be utilized to its fullest extent. A data readiness inventory was given to 28 faculty members to discover strengths and weaknesses in data collection and analysis. Results from this survey revealed that the school does collect student data but must develop a protocol to better disseminate and utilize the data. Beginning with the

2009-2010 school year, all standardized test scores have been entered into teacher's Gradequick grade books for better teacher access and use. (See action plan.)

***2. What are you doing to ensure that assessment results are timely, relevant, and communicated in a way that can be used by teachers, students, parents, and external stakeholders to aid the performance of individual students?***

In terms of teacher-made assessments, the faculty is required to give feedback on major assessments in a maximum of five school days for quick reinforcement. This is always a struggle for the English department because of the amount of writing required of the students.

Standardized test scores are reported annually to the administration, then to the School Board, faculty, and parents. The Guidance Department sends home individual test scores along with an information sheet explaining the test results. Standardized test results are now available in every teacher's grade book to further communicate student data to faculty members.

St. Scholastica Academy uses Edline to communicate grades to students and parents in a timely manner. In addition to grades, teachers post assignments (and rubrics) to inform parents and students of expectations. Weekly and interim (four week) course grade updates allow students and parents to take action when a student experiences difficulty with course work. Faculty members are required to contact parents and guidance counselors when a student is struggling in a course. Parent conferences are held once each term. Parents and students can email teachers and vice-versa to communicate about students' learning progress. Overwhelmingly, 92 % of the teachers surveyed with the Data Readiness Inventory indicated that they provide students with frequent feedback and are available to explain assessment results to parents to help them better understand student performance. Over 80 % of parents responding to the survey indicated that reports on student progress are clear and easy to understand.

***3. How are data used to understand and improve overall school effectiveness?***

Standardized test scores, Advanced Placement scores, and grade point averages are reviewed and analyzed to aid in preparing students to meet college admissions and TOPS requirements and to aid guidance in course placement. ACT linkage reports are used by administration to determine the success of the overall school program. St. Scholastica Academy uses comparative data from national and state standardized test scores to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and make necessary adjustments. During the 2009-2010 school years, all academic departments are systematically analyzing standardized test data to develop curriculum-specific strategies to improve the school's overall effectiveness. The Social Studies, Foreign Language, Religion, and P.E. departments are analyzing ACT reading scores to develop strategies for 8th, 9th, and 10th grade levels to incorporate more reading comprehension activities in coursework. The Science department integrates additional graphing exercises into their curriculum to increase student ability in reading and interpreting graphs, a skill that is measured on the ACT test. The math department utilizes daily bell ringers to present students with ACT practice problems and follows those bell ringers with mini-lessons to address student misunderstandings. The English department includes daily edits into their lessons to present students with grammar topics addressed in the ACT test.

Teachers are beginning to use classroom data to evaluate student proficiency in relation to the standards and benchmarks identified in unit plans and to determine if more time is needed to master a concept. Several faculty have been introduced to the teaching methodology of differentiated instruction either through Fellows or regional

or national conferences. Some teachers are piloting some differentiated concepts such as “do-overs” in math and English. The art and English departments also use portfolio assessments to determine proficiency. Student evaluations are conducted at the end of each course and teachers use this data to refine instruction. The technology department has also conducted two school-wide surveys to evaluate the one-to-one computing program and to help in planning future technology initiatives.

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urveys were administered as part of the SACS CASI process to identify strengths and areas of improvement. Survey data was communicated to all stakeholders and the school’s action plan was created by combining the survey data and the school’s strategic plan.

#### *4. How are teachers trained to understand and use data in the classroom?*

An initiative for this school year was to train faculty in using standardized test data to inform their instruction. Using standardized testing interpretive guides, data was disaggregated to surface groupings of students. Skills from various standardized tests were identified and concrete methods for addressing those skills in the curriculum were designed and implemented by the faculty to address the learning needs of each grouping of students. In addition, SIPS and Scholastica Fellows study groups examined the various forms of classroom data that exist and how to use this data to inform instruction. Paper and digital portfolios were designed to demonstrate proficient student work in relation to these concrete teaching and learning methods.

Results from the Data Readiness Survey indicate that many faculty members are not proficient in the use of classroom data and that more training is needed to fully understand and use all forms of data. The school is currently addressing this need in two ways. The St. Scholastica Academy Career Ladder requires all Level Three teachers to become proficient in data collection and use. Level Three teachers will then provide training to the faculty on data analysis and usage. These teacher leaders will also conduct action research in their classrooms to model data collection and data usage to other faculty members. The school has also obtained the services of consultants to aid in the organization and interpretation of data. At the start of the 2009-2010 school years, department meetings were held to discuss data collection and analysis. Standardized test scores were entered in teacher web-based grade books.

#### **Overall Assessment:**

**Operational:** The school uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures that yield valid and reliable results. The system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions to improve student performance. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "operational" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Standard 5. Resource and Support Systems

**STANDARD:** The school has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it has sufficient human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables students to achieve expectations for student learning, to meet special needs, and to comply with applicable regulations. The school employs and allocates staff that are well qualified for their assignments. The school provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness. The school ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

**Indicators Evidence:** For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

### Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**INDICATORS:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

### 5.1 Recruits, employs, and mentors qualified professional staff that are capable of fulfilling assigned roles and responsibilities:

*Highly Functional*

#### Evidence Provided:

Personnel policies ensuring appropriate hiring practices

Professional learning opportunities

Schedules

Staff can affirm that special needs students receive needed support

Staff Handbook

Staff schedules and assignments

Student Handbook

**5.2 Assigns professional staff responsibilities based on their qualifications (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience):**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Professional learning opportunities

Staff can affirm that they are teaching in their major area of study

Staff Handbook

Staff schedules and assignments

Staffing of both administrative and teaching positions is appropriate and adequate

**5.3 Ensures that all staff participate in a continuous program of professional development:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Budget demonstrates appropriate allocation for PD

Calendar, agenda, summaries of PD opportunities

Personnel policies that stipulate PD requirements

Professional development plan

Staff are actively engaged in discussions that have resulted from their professional development experience

Staff are aware of the requirements for continuous learning

Staff can affirm their involvement in professional learning opportunities

Staff implement effective strategies based on their professional development experience

**5.4 Provides and assigns staff that are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Class size indicates appropriate and effective support of student learning

Master schedule

Personnel policies and practices

**5.5 Budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Annual budget

Facilities plan

Infrastructure plans: short and long range

Practices that support appropriate use of allocated funds

School-level budgets

**5.6 Monitors all financial transactions through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Audit reports

Organizational oversight of fiscal authority

Payroll and purchasing policies and processes

Practices that support appropriate use of fiscal resources

Secure management of all fiscal processes

**5.7 Maintains the site, facilities, services, and equipment to provide an environment that is safe and orderly for all occupants:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

All facilities on school/district property are maintained

Facilities maintenance reports and plans

Policies and processes regarding safety

Policies and processes related to student/staff injury

Policies regarding dispensing prescription medications

School/District environment is clean and safe

Stakeholder survey data supporting safety

**5.8 Possesses a written security and crisis management plan with appropriate training for stakeholders:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Crisis intervention plan

Emergency procedures

Secure record system

Staff Handbook

Student Handbook

**5.9 Ensures that each student has access to guidance services that include, but are not limited to, counseling, appraisal, mentoring, staff consulting, referral, and educational and career planning:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Enrollment data

Guidance and Counseling Department

Professional development: calendar, topics

Staff are knowledgeable in all aspects of appropriate social/emotional support for student learning behavior

Staffing of Counseling and Guidance programs

**5.10 Provides appropriate support for students with special needs:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Classroom instruction demonstrates variety of instructional methodologies to support all students

Professional development calendar and topics

### **Focus Questions:**

***1. What is the process for recruitment, induction, placement, development, evaluation, and retention of qualified teachers, administrators, and support staff?***

St. Scholastica Academy begins the teacher recruitment process by determining staffing needs via the master scheduling process and then using appropriate advertisement to identify qualified candidates. The Principal, Academic Dean, and department chairs interview the candidates. Faculty members are placed according to staffing needs, qualifications, and experience. During an orientation, newly-hired teachers learn the culture of the school, strategies for teaching in the 4 x 4 block, integrating technology in the classroom, and school policies and procedures. First year St. Scholastica teachers are also required to attend monthly meetings to learn to write standards-based units and to discuss issues common to first-year teachers. A collegial partner program to provide support to neophyte teachers will be established as part of the Career Ladder program. Second-year teachers receive additional support to aid in their continued success through a mandatory year-long training program. Ongoing professional development is provided and required for all teachers during teacher orientation meetings, SIP sessions, faculty meetings and conferences.

The Scholastica Fellows program is a voluntary group led by the Academic Dean that provides teachers an opportunity to further develop professional skills while engaging in collegial sharing. The Scholastica Fellows

program examines best practices and implements cutting-edge, research-based teaching strategies and concepts. This program has served as the catalyst for significant curriculum development and change as well as instructional methodology implementation over the past twelve years.

Administrators and department heads periodically observe teachers at various times throughout the year. The technology team also observes teachers for evidence of technology usage in class. Again, this is an area identified by both faculty and administration in need of improvement. This is an administrative goal for the year that will be aided by participation in a coaching initiative through the School Leadership Center (SLC).

Rewarding and retaining excellent teachers is a goal of the St. Scholastica Strategic plan, and an ambitious Career Ladder has been developed by the administration and faculty to meet this mandate. The Career Ladder consists of four levels that are based on experience, education, leadership positions, evidence of quality and excellence in teaching, and adherence to the Profile of a St. Scholastica teacher. The Career Ladder was also created to encourage continuing education and self-directed professional development. Teachers assess themselves according to the requirements of each level and apply for particular levels through an electronic application process. A peer group and administrators review the applications for quality assurance. Faculty members who successfully complete a career ladder level earn substantial bonuses. Yearly pay raises and service recognition are also used to help retain qualified teachers and personnel.

The school's Parent Club Board provides periodic teacher appreciation luncheons culminating in the annual end of the year luncheon in May. These appreciation efforts help to create an environment of support and contribute to a positive work environment.

***2. How does the leadership ensure that the allocation of financial resources is supportive of the school's vision, educational programs, and its plans for school improvement?***

The five-year strategic plan guides all programs instituted at SSA. It is the role of the President aided by input from the Director of Finance, the Principal, the Finance Committee of the Board, and the School Board to ensure that the current budget 1) is balanced, (2) addresses the needs of the school, and 3) supports the initiatives of the strategic plan. A specific example of the strategic plan informing the budget is Goal 6, which states that appropriate facilities and technology infrastructure are essential to support the school's sustained excellence. The school has begun several initiatives to achieve this goal. A comprehensive web-based inventory system was created in 2008 to maintain an inventory of all school resources. Administrators, faculty members, the technology department, and parents completed a short term and long term technology acquisition and maintenance plan. The Master Site Plan has been revised and a timeline for implementation has been developed and disseminated on the school's website to all stakeholders. Recent Master Site plan completions include LaSalle Hall, Our Mother of Perpetual Help Chapel, and a track at the athletic fields. Property adjacent to the school has been purchased to facilitate future expansion.

As part of the budgetary process all academic departments and school organizations submit detailed budgets to the administration for review and approval. These budgetary requests along with the other major components of the budget are included in the overall development of the school's first draft of the budget. Once balanced and in line with school needs, the initial budget is submitted to the OCS for a preliminary review and feedback. Soon after, the President and Director of Finance present the budget to the Archdiocesan Finance Council for approval. At the beginning of the school year, the initial budget is adjusted to reflect the actual school population as well as any

additional school needs.

### *3. How does the leadership ensure a safe and orderly environment for students and staff?*

School leadership ensures a safe and orderly environment for students and staff in several ways. Student safety is monitored throughout the school day. Teachers are assigned morning, lunch and afternoon duty stations to assist traffic flow and supervise students. To ensure that all students are accounted for, attendance is taken at the start of the school day and at the start of each class period and is electronically submitted to the front office and Dean of Students. A faculty member also is assigned to supervise students in the library after school. Club and organization moderators are required to be on campus with students anytime a club has after-school activities. The student handbook clearly lists all student expectations. Students and parents must sign the assent form to acknowledge they have read and agree to abide by all rules and regulations.

The school maintains a written crisis plan to handle emergency situations. SSA also participates in a parish-wide plan for crisis management which includes specialized training for administrators and aerial photographs of all buildings to allow first responders to act quickly in an emergency. Fire and safety drills are conducted throughout the year and all classrooms have escape routes posted and clearly labeled. The school also utilizes SchoolReach, an online communication system, which alerts parents, students, and faculty to emergency situations and school closures, and gives pertinent reminders of upcoming school activities.

St. Scholastica Academy expects that all students will “strive for the highest level of Christian behavior both on and off campus”. The Dove Discipline System has been created to help students develop self-discipline and respect for themselves and others. Students receive 100 dove points at the start of the academic year and lose points for various disciplinary infractions. The Dove Discipline system also rewards those who maintain 95 % of their points throughout the year with prizes.

The maintenance staff maintains a clean and safe physical plant. Procedures exist to report maintenance or repair issues. Inspections are conducted on a regular basis to ensure a safe environment. The school is cleaned daily by an after-hours maintenance crew.

Once hired, teachers must submit to a background check through Choice Point. Teachers are also fingerprinted with those fingerprints remaining on file with the sheriff’s office. In addition, teachers sign a lifestyle policy in keeping with Archdiocesan requirements.

Special programs are conducted for faculty, students, and parents throughout the year by the guidance department to address topics that promote the well-being of students such as suicide prevention, eating disorders, abuse catechesis, alcohol and substance abuse, internet safety, and bullying.

72 % of parents and 79 % of students surveyed with the NSSE opinion survey demonstrated that St. Scholastica provides a safe and orderly work environment. 88 % of parents and almost 70 % of students believe that students are treated fairly and with respect. Students and parents surveyed also believe that the school provides a safe and orderly environment.

***4. What process is used to ensure and monitor that each student has access to guidance and resource services that meet the needs of the student?***

St. Scholastica Academy has three full-time guidance counselors and one college advisor on staff. The Guidance Department meets with individual students as well as groups of students throughout the school year to offer personal, academic, and college advising. ( When addressing this report with Parent Club Board, some expressed the thought that perhaps Guidance could more deliberately ensure that all students, especially students new to SSA would be seen at least twice a year with the first item being sometime in the months of August to October—before exams.) Students are assigned a guidance counselor when admitted to the school and remain with that counselor throughout their time at the school. Counselors are available before, during, and after school to assist students. The Guidance Department provides faculty members with accommodation forms for all students with special needs. The SBLC meets to discuss how to accommodate students with special needs and the strategies that will enable them to be successful at St. Scholastica. In addition, the Guidance Department invites guest speakers to instruct teachers on accommodating students with special needs. Parents are encouraged to speak with counselors whenever there is a need.

As part of the school's strategic plan, the position of College Advisor was created in the 2007-2008 school year in response to a need to provide more assistance with the college admissions process. The college advisor has implemented the Naviance computer program to track college applications, scholarships, and other information. Students also receive career guidance from the Guidance Department and a Career Day is hosted by the Alumnae Association annually for juniors and seniors to expose them to career choices.

**Overall Assessment:**

**Highly Functional:** The school effectively uses human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables students to achieve and exceed expectations for student learning, to meet special needs of all students, and to comply with applicable regulations. The school systematically employs and allocates staff members who are well qualified for their assignments in all content areas. The school provides and fully supports ongoing, job-embedded learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness, including both professional and support staff. The school ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "highly functional" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

# Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

**STANDARD:** The school fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it has the understanding, commitment, and support of stakeholders. School personnel seek opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership among stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

**Indicators Evidence:** For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

**Definitions of Indicators Rubric:**

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**INDICATORS:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

**6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes, calendar of parent meetings

Calendar of events that promote stakeholder involvement

Parents and community members regularly volunteer time in school/district

Staff affirm that stakeholders are involved in many aspects of school/district

Stakeholder survey data

Stakeholders affirm that they are involved in many aspects of school/district

**6.2 Has formal channels to listen to and communicate with stakeholders:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Calendars, agendas, minutes of parent meetings

Emails, phone answering system

Newsletters, brochures, letters, memos

Parent - Teacher conferences schedule

Policies regarding formal inclusion of stakeholder involvement

Stakeholders affirm they have variety of opportunities to be formally involved in life of school/district

Web page dedicated to parents/community members

Wide variety of stakeholder communication documents/avenues

**6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the school:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Calendar, agendas, minutes, committee membership

Schedule of volunteer activities

Stakeholder survey data

**6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Brochures, pamphlets

Newsletters about student performance

Online calendar, schedule, and news/updates

Parent -teacher conferences

Parent Handbook

Parents and students are involved in making course selections

Regularly published newsletters to community

Stakeholders affirm that they are knowledgeable about student learning

Student Handbook

**6.5 Provides information about students, their performance, and school effectiveness that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders:**

*Operational*

Evidence Provided:

Parent - Teacher Conferences

Report cards

**Focus Questions:**

***1. How does the school's leadership ensure that the school is responsive to community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction?***

The school's strategic plan recognizes that dynamic stakeholder relationships are fostered by strong communications. There are a multitude of ways that St. Scholastica Academy communicates with stakeholders including Edline, face-to-face parent and student conferences, email, school-wide mailings, news releases, and the use of SchoolReach. The administration publishes a monthly newsletter, available on the school's website and Edline, to inform all stakeholders of school events and accomplishments. In addition, weekly emails are sent to all faculty, students, and parents informing them of upcoming school events and accomplishments. The school's website was redesigned for the 2008-2009 school years to fulfill the strategic plan goal (Goal 5) of "launching a website to serve as the center of internal and external communications". The website provides academic, admissions, advancement, alumnae, and school life information to all stakeholders. Each year, a student is selected to write a weekly article for The Times Picayune to report on school activities. The Advancement Office publishes the *Wings* magazine to inform all stakeholders of student and alumnae achievements, school activities, and the school profile. 77 % of parents surveyed using the NSSE opinion survey reported they feel welcome at the school and that the school effectively communicates information.

The administration posts an electronic weekly bulletin so all members of the school staff are aware of school events and schedule changes. The school has an active student council that communicates student concerns and suggestions to the administration. Seniors will be invited to have lunch with part of the administration and the Alumnae Director to give input on any aspect of the program. This initiative began with the current school year.

The administration maintains an open door policy and welcomes parents, students, and staff to bring concerns to them at any time. Faculty members are also required to return parent calls or emails as soon as possible and must document all parent communications. The President and Principal are on the agenda of each School Board meeting and the Principal and Advancement Director are on the agenda of every Parent Club meeting. The Parent Club also initiated a "Parent-to Parent" meeting for new parents, which has access to administration to foster school – related discussion.

St. Scholastica Academy elicits ongoing opinions and suggestions throughout the school year of all stakeholders including students, parents, faculty, alumnae, and community members through the strategic planning and SACS CASI processes. In addition, parents are periodically surveyed to evaluate specific events and procedures. Survey results are used to develop an action plan and to act as a resource for the administration.

The Benedictine pillar of Community inspires St. Scholastica Academy to be responsive to the needs of the

community. Each student must complete 20 hours of service to the community each school year. This may be done through any non-profit, service-based organization. Furthermore, each grade participates in an outreach day coordinated by members of the faculty to provide service to the community. Students have worked with organizations such as nursing homes, the food bank, Headstart, and Habitat for Humanity. The school embraced as its mission assisting members of the metropolitan New Orleans area who were affected by recent hurricanes. SSA partnered with Mater Dei, a Catholic co-ed high school from Santa Ana, California, which contributed resources and personnel to this endeavor. For two consecutive years during Easter break, students and adults from both school communities worked tirelessly towards this recovery effort. During the Christmas season, classes and clubs adopt families selected by organizations such as Volunteers of America and Head Start to purchase household necessities and gifts for children and their families. Additional service projects have been undertaken by various clubs and organizations such as the Library Club, the Key Club, and so on. The service program is supported by parents and students. 89 % of parents 71 % of students surveyed using the NSSE opinion survey stated that the service program provides students with opportunities to have a measurable impact on the community.

## ***2. How does the school's leadership foster a learning community?***

SSA's administration is a dedicated leadership team that fosters a learning community by providing multi-faceted venues allowing learning to flourish. A comprehensive, challenging curriculum has been established to prepare its students for the college environment. The leadership has a mindset of continuous improvement and has made a deliberate commitment, which is reflected in the budget, to provide its teachers with job-embedded, ongoing professional development that supports innovative teaching. The administration schedules, executes, and facilitates faculty development programs such as SIPS, Scholastica Fellows, the SSA Institute, New and Returning Teacher programs, and the Career Ladder to foster a learning community among faculty members.

The faculty of St. Scholastica also plays a vital role in fostering a learning community. Teachers receive training in the theories and practices of standard-based education and plan courses, units, and individual lessons based on the principle of Backward Design. This practice fosters learning by highlighting the most important ideas and concepts before instruction even begins, thus enabling the teacher and the students to focus on those main points. As a component of backward design, teachers post "critical questions" for each unit to help students focus their learning. However, recognizing that students learn in different ways, the faculty also takes steps to ensure that learning styles are addressed in the classroom enabling students to reach their potential. In collaboration with counselors and students, teachers implement strategies for those students with special needs. The teachers at St. Scholastica also offer regular help sessions for students who may need extra assistance, and 70 % of students surveyed using the NSSE opinion survey indicated teachers do provide help when needed.

A one-to-one computing program has been implemented to provide teachers, staff, and students access to technology at all times. The technology department conducts thorough training to ensure the success of this initiative. Having recently moved to a one-to-one computing initiative, teachers now provide opportunities for learning through technology. In addition, some faculty members conduct in-class technical training for other teachers and students, thus expanding the students' technological capabilities.

In order to better prepare students for college, the faculty also bases some course requirements on a "Writing Across the Curriculum" program. Because writing skills are essential to success in college as well as in the professional world, St. Scholastica Academy seeks to give students opportunity to practice and refine these skills by writing in almost every subject area. Finally, in order to ensure that our students learn continuously with

neither gaps nor excessive repetition, all departments have developed curriculum maps, which will be reviewed annually. Using this process, teachers examine their classes to ensure that the scope and sequence of each subject flow smoothly from one level to another.

Parents are included in this community of learners with programs such as Open House, Parent Education Nights (some topics included Internet Safety, Bullying, Abuse Catechesis), and others, and special parent meetings that address topics such as the college application process, senior year information, new parent information and adjusting to high school, to name a few.

***3. What avenues are used to communicate information to stakeholders about students, their performance, and school effectiveness?***

St. Scholastica Academy's administration and faculty use several avenues to communicate information to stakeholders about students, their performance, and school effectiveness. Each teacher maintains an Edline homepage for each course to post grades, assignments, syllabi, and to facilitate collaborative learning. Many teachers regularly email parents and students with concerns and updates regarding student performance. Counselors regularly facilitate necessary conferences among students, parents, and teachers to ensure better learning success. An annual college forum brings recent graduates back to campus in order to communicate the school effectiveness and student performance from the perspective of young alumnae. The school's website is also an effective way to communicate general school information to all stakeholders. The weekly faculty bulletin, daily online announcements, and a weekly activities email disseminated by the Advancement Office also assist in sharing information.

Quarterly recognition assemblies also communicate good news about student performance to stakeholders. In addition to the normal reporting of sports and other events to local media in order to keep the larger community well informed, SSA has an appointed student reporter who writes a weekly article for The Times Picayune. SSA also creates internal publications such as the *Wings* magazine and the Annual Report to communicate about students, student performance and school effectiveness to parents, alumnae and other stakeholders.

**Overall Assessment:**

**Highly Functional:** The school has the understanding, commitment, and support of all stakeholders. School personnel actively promote and provide regular, systematic opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership among all stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts and can demonstrate a high level of meaningful participation by most shareholder groups. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "highly functional" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

# Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

**STANDARD:** The school establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the school with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained and the school demonstrates progress in improving student performance and school effectiveness. New improvement efforts are informed by the results of earlier efforts through reflection and assessment of the improvement process.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

**Indicators Evidence:** For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

**Definitions of Indicators Rubric:**

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**INDICATORS:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

**7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the school is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school effectiveness, and the school community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform what happens next (Results):**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Continuous/School/District Improvement Plan

Information/Data system

Professional Development Plan: agenda, topics

Record of student performance improvement efforts

Specific program initiative to support continuous improvement

Staff affirm their involvement in a specific program that supports continuous improvement

**7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Parent compact

Stakeholder survey data demonstrating stakeholder involvement in school improvement

**7.3 Ensures that plans for continuous improvement are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school and expectations for student learning:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Data: student performance, stakeholder opinion are used in development of school improvement plan

School improvement plan demonstrates alignment with vision, purpose

Staff affirm their understanding of the impact of programs that support student learning

Staff demonstrate capacity for changing methodologies to increase student performance

Vision, purpose posted in school/district facility

**7.4 Provides professional development for school personnel to help them implement improvement interventions to achieve improvement goals:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Continuous/School/District Improvement Plan

Personnel Policies that outline staff evaluation process

Professional Development Plan: agenda, topics

Staff affirm their involvement in professional learning

**7.5 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders:**

*Highly Functional*

Evidence Provided:

Annual Report

Information/Data system

Newsletters, brochures

Parent-Teacher conferences

## **7.6 Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement:**

*Highly Functional*

### Evidence Provided:

Graduation and retention rates

Information/Data system

Stakeholder survey (satisfaction) data

### **Focus Questions:**

***1. What is the process for continuous improvement used by the school and what are the results that this process is delivering for student performance and school effectiveness?***

St. Scholastica Academy has a long-standing commitment to continuous improvement. Beginning in 1992, the Academy committed itself to a detailed five-year strategic plan program that seeks to guide every aspect of the school including budget, curriculum, staff, personnel, etc. The Strategic Plan continuously evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of school improvements. The process begins with an evaluation of the previous Strategic Plan. A core team, steering committee, and work groups consisting of administration, faculty, students, parents, alumnae, and community members review the previous strategic plan for accomplishments and surface new challenges that face the school. All groups work collaboratively to create a new strategic plan that will guide the school for the next five years. Stakeholders are updated regularly as the school meets the goals and strategies of the Strategic Plan.

Several goals of the current strategic plan have already been implemented "... to provide the best education for our young women in an institution that is ever forward-looking and innovative." (2007-2012 Strategic Plan) A comprehensive annual curriculum renewal process and technology integration are aspects of Goal I of the Strategic Plan that were implemented in the 2008-2009 school year. The St. Scholastica Career Ladder, a major aspect of Goal 2, was also implemented during the 2008-2009 school year to reward and retain excellent teachers. The Career Ladder has already encouraged faculty professional development and reflection on their craft. The position of College Advisor was added in the 2007-2008 school year to assist students in the college application process as recommended in Goal 3. The Strategic Plan is revisited each year and guides the creation of the yearly school improvement program and school goals. The goals for the 2009-2010 school years continue the curriculum renewal process and begin the use of a data management system for coordinated learning outcomes using student data (Goal I). Standardized test scores that are consistently higher than the national and state averages demonstrate the effectiveness of the school's Strategic Plan. Other examples of the effectiveness of the academic program include student achievements at numerous academic competitions, and the high number of scholarship and TOPS monies awarded to graduates. The goals of the Strategic Plan support the Catholic identity of the school by stating that the "...academic program is grounded in the Catholic faith serving the needs of all students..." and that "... a living faith permeates the culture..." of St. Scholastica Academy.

Another school improvement process, which the school utilizes to ensure consistent, on-going improvement is the Advanced Ed self study and re-accreditation process of which this report is a part. This process requires a self-study of the entire school program, a solicitation of stakeholders' perspectives on the program and its

effectiveness, as well as a detailed action plan that requires implantation, monitoring of progress, and annual evaluation of plan implementation with necessary adjustments made for continual improvement success.

***2. What steps are taken to ensure that the improvement goals reflect student learning needs that are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school?***

The school's vision, as stated in the Academy's current Strategic Plan, strives to educate young women, enabling them to "succeed, stand confident, and lead Christian lives of service and responsibility." The vision states further that the academy provides "... an education that is forward-looking, innovative and engages the best educational practices with the goal of becoming the best high school in the Gulf South." This vision and purpose of educating the whole person in a college-preparatory environment is expressed through many facets of the academy on a daily basis. This same vision has been articulated in our action plan for the current SACS CASI renewal process. In formulating this action plan, the administration made every effort to merge the school's Strategic Plan with data gleaned from the SACS CASI process.

There are several goals outlined in the action plan (see action plan). First and foremost, SSA is currently undergoing a curriculum renewal to ensure each student receives an exemplary education that prepares her for the college environment. The alignment of the curriculum to the school's power standards derived from national and state standards ensures that all students' learning potentials are addressed. In addition, a data management system has been developed to provide teachers with easy access to their students' standardized test scores. Teachers utilize this information to drive their instructional practices and address individual student learning needs. A sustainable one-to-one technology program incorporates emerging technologies to ensure that students will be well prepared for the university environment. The implementation of the Career Ladder serves to support and improve the student learning environment. An enhancement of the college advising program and the development of a career counseling program will help to focus and direct students in their college choices and career planning. Redefining the campus ministry program will work to engage more students in the deepening of their spiritual development. Finally, the adoption of a structured observation process will ensure that school improvement goals are actualized in the school's program.

The school's ongoing drive to elevate student education and performance is measured through numerous tangible devices. This include the analysis of standardized test scores, classroom data, scholarship and TOPS awards, the variety and extent of college acceptances, and alumnae college achievement.

Each student is tracked through a computerized student profile that carefully monitors her standardized test score progress. Teachers employ the use of grade book software to monitor student progress on a daily basis. The Guidance Department has implemented an online ACT study prep program. The program entails the administration of an annual diagnostic ACT practice test that is correlated with an online software system. The software system outlines students' critical skills and tailors a tutorial program for remediation. Students are provided with a multitude of services and interventions to improve academic performance. Some of these services include help sessions offered at least two one-half hour sessions per week per teacher outside of class time, the use of Edline that provides feedback to the student on a regular basis, and parent teacher conferences, as well as email. Teachers also recommend students for honors and advanced placement courses when appropriate, ensuring that they are challenged at the appropriate level enabling them to develop to the fullest of their potential. Through the use of standardized test scores, particularly the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, the administration and department chairs regularly engage in curriculum conversations to meet the needs of the current student population.

***3. What process is used to ensure that the school personnel are provided professional development and technical assistance to implement interventions and achieve improvement goals?***

Professional development continues to be an integral part of the requirement for all members of the faculty at St. Scholastica Academy. The Career Ladder provides a vehicle for technical assistance for teachers as well as professional development. The faculty is engaged in ongoing professional development on the most innovative teaching strategies. These in-service sessions, consistently presented in the context of the four pillars, serve as the philosophical foundation of the institution. Faculty meetings are held regularly, during which time a portion of the meeting is devoted to professional development. Monthly SIP sessions, however, continue to be the primary vehicle for professional development. These sessions, which are built into the school calendar, provide a three-hour block of time during which teachers work diligently on such important programs as: standards and benchmarks in education, integrating technology into the curriculum, writing across the curriculum, offering choice in product (assessment), aligning curriculum with power standards, developing scope and sequence for each course, and teacher-led learning communities on a research-based topic of choice. These sessions provide continuous learning for faculty to address the learning needs of their students. They represent very tangible evidence of the school's efforts towards consistently improving student learning at St. Scholastica Academy.

The guidance department has recently participated in Life Skills Training which is being taught to our present eighth and tenth grade classes. The department regularly attends and presents to our students, parents, and faculty workshops on such relevant issues as teen suicide prevention, eating disorders, substance abuse issues, as well as internet safety and cyber bullying. A technology department was also created to support teachers and students as a 1:1 computing program was initiated at the school.

Many of SSA's teachers and administrators have presented at state, regional, and national conferences. Two of our administrators are NSDC (National Staff Development Council) Academy graduates and one teacher is national board certified. Department members regularly attend conferences to remain current on information in their field. Some examples of such conferences are: NACAC (National Association of College Admissions Counselors), LSTA (Louisiana Science Teachers Association), NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics), NCEA (National Catholic Educational Association), course specific locally initiated seminars (Social Studies), SBE seminars (Standards Based Education), NAEA (National Art Education Association), Advanced Placement workshops, ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education), and Differentiation Conferences. These conferences ensure that the faculty at St. Scholastica Academy remains on the "cutting edge," providing its students with the most innovative educational experiences. Monies for this program are partially funded by the Annual Giving Fund, allowing the school to pay for teachers' and administrators' conference expenses.

***4. How does the leadership ensure that the improvement plan is implemented, monitored, achieved, and communicated to stakeholders?***

School leadership meets continually to evaluate current Strategic Plan success and chart future strategies for mapping the plan's progress. Because the school's SACS-CASI action plan was developed from the current strategic plan, its successful monitoring and implementation is ensured. Both the Administrative Team and a committee of the School Board monitor the progress toward achieving the goals of the Strategic Plan.

The Academy recognizes the importance of making known to the community, and most specifically its stakeholders, the successes of the academic program. This communication takes place through numerous channels. Our school website continuously updates its viewers on the most current achievements of both students and faculty. The Advancement Office utilizes numerous means of communication such as Wings, our annual publication mailed to all stakeholders of the Academy. Newspapers, newsletters and alumnae bulletins (also available through Edline) also offer communication. Through these regular publications, the Academy is able to apprise our stakeholders of improvement efforts that have taken place.

The Strategic Plan is revisited at the start of each academic year at faculty meetings. Academic departments devise strategies that will be implemented during the academic year to meet goals and objectives outlined in the improvement plan. At the start of the 2009-2010 school years, departments began a formal process to analyze student data in order to best use this data for instruction and assessment.

### **Overall Assessment:**

**Highly Functional:** The school fully implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns all functions of the school with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are systemic, sustained, and fully embedded, and the school demonstrates significant progress in improving student performance and school effectiveness. New improvement efforts are clearly informed by the documented results of earlier efforts through reflection and assessment of a highly sustained, continuous process of improvement. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "highly functional" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Conclusion

The following focus questions reflect the school's overall analysis of its internal evaluation of the accreditation standards.

### Focus Questions

*As you review your responses to the standards, what major trends, themes, or areas of focus emerge that cut across the seven standards?*

Three major trends emerge after a review of the responses to the focus questions on the Standards Assessment Report. First, there is a solid commitment to the mission, vision, and the four pillars of Benedictine spirituality at St. Scholastica Academy. The mission, vision, and the pillars guide all initiatives, instruction, and school activities.

The second theme evident in all seven standards is the strength of the processes put in place by the administration, faculty, and staff to ensure student learning, communication with all stakeholders, and school improvement. The school has implemented processes to accomplish strategic planning, curriculum renewal, and to facilitate professional development. Varied communication channels also exist to support communication with all stakeholders.

The final trend evident in the report is a commitment to continuous improvement and reflection. The strategic plan guides all school endeavors and makes certain that all school initiatives are focused on educating young women “to succeed, stand confident, and lead Christian lives of service and responsibility.” There is a strong commitment to professional development, reflective teaching, and embracing cutting-edge research-based practices. The school is committed to providing the resources necessary to offer a challenging, college-preparatory curriculum and to support students spiritually and emotionally.

*Based on your review of these cross-cutting themes/trends and each of the seven standards, what would you consider to be your school's greatest strengths?*

The greatest strength of St. Scholastica Academy is the commitment of school community members to the four pillars of Benedictine spirituality, academic excellence, and meeting the needs of all students. Administrators, faculty members, parents, and students are devoted to the mission and to the success of school endeavors.

The challenging academic program of St. Scholastica Academy is also a strength. Administrators and faculty members work collaboratively to provide a strong, college preparatory program that exceeds state requirements. Honors and Advanced Placement courses are offered in most disciplines to challenge students. The school implemented a one-to-one computing program to enhance the curriculum and develop technologically savvy users.

Another strength of St. Scholastica Academy is the dedication to "...encourage each student to achieve her maximum potential..." in a community of learners. (National Catholic Education Association) The school provides a supportive environment that encourages the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and social growth of each student. Regularly scheduled Masses, prayer services, Eucharistic adoration, service program, and required religion classes minister to the spiritual needs of students. The guidance department is available to assist any student with an academic or personal issue. The department also sponsors several programs throughout the school year to address issues that affect adolescent girls. The school offers many extracurricular opportunities to help students grow socially.

The professional development program is yet another strength of St. Scholastica Academy. Administrators are committed to providing time and monetary resources for teacher professional development. SIP sessions, Career Ladder, and Scholastica Fellows are innovative professional development opportunities available for teachers. This commitment to professional development has resulted in high levels of student achievement and the use of inventive teaching to meet the needs of all students.

***What would you consider to be your school's greatest challenges?***

Four challenges surfaced during the self study process. First, the school must continue to provide resources that meet student needs while operating within a possibly static financial base. Second, the school must continue to implement the strategic plan, especially with regard to curriculum renewal, continued development of the Career Ladder, and the design of an enhanced campus ministry program. Third, the school has faced the challenge of maintaining a family-like atmosphere as enrollment has grown. Finally, the school faces the challenge of designing a comprehensive plan to use student data to design school-wide goals, curriculum, staff development and to address individual needs of students.

***How will you use the insights gained from this self-assessment to inform and enhance your quality assurance and continuous improvement efforts?***

The self assessment process has reaffirmed that St. Scholastica Academy offers a strong academic program in a supportive environment. St. Scholastica also offers effective professional development opportunities to foster continuous student learning. The school will incorporate all seven standards into the strategic planning process and communicate information on the standards to all stakeholders. Insights gained from this self assessment will guide school efforts to make testing data more available to teachers and to provide teacher training in testing and classroom data usage. The school will also continue its efforts to integrate technology into classroom instruction. The school improvement plan will be reviewed annually and revised as needed.

# Standards Assessment Report Summary

Standards & Indicators	Not Evident	Emerging	Operational	Highly Functional
<b>1. Vision and Purpose</b>				
1.1 Establishes a vision for the school in collaboration with its stakeholders				✓
1.2 Communicates the vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support			✓	
1.3 Identifies goals to advance the vision				✓
1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the school, its students, and the community			✓	
1.5 Ensures that the school's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process				✓
1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate				✓
<b>2. Governance and Leadership</b>				
2.1 Establishes policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the school				✓
2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the administrative head of the school				✓
2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations				✓
2.4 Employs a system that provides for analysis and review of student performance and school effectiveness			✓	
2.5 Fosters a learning community				✓
2.6 Provides teachers and students opportunities to lead				✓
2.7 Provides stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership			✓	
2.8 Controls curricular and extracurricular activities that are sponsored by the school				✓
2.9 Responds to community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction			✓	
2.10 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel			✓	
<b>3. Teaching and Learning</b>				
3.1 Develops and implements curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning			✓	
3.2 Promotes active involvement of students in the learning process, including opportunities for them to explore application of higher-order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning			✓	
3.3 Gathers, analyzes, and uses data and research in making curricular and instructional choices			✓	
3.4 Designs and uses instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that are research-based and reflective of best practice				✓
3.5 Offers a curriculum that challenges each student to excel, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity			✓	
3.6 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning				✓
3.7 Provides for articulation and alignment between and among all levels of schools				✓
3.8 Implements interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning			✓	
3.9 Monitors school climate and takes appropriate steps to ensure that it is conducive to student learning			✓	
3.10 Provides comprehensive information and media services that support the curricular and instructional programs				✓
3.11 Ensures that all students and staff members have regular and ready access to instructional technology and a comprehensive materials collection that supports the curricular and instructional program				✓
<b>4. Documenting and Using Results</b>				
4.1 Establishes performance measures for student learning that yield information that is reliable, valid, and bias free			✓	
4.2 Develops and implements a comprehensive assessment system for assessing progress toward meeting the expectations for student learning			✓	
4.3 Uses student assessment data for making decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning processes			✓	
4.4 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness and uses the results to improve student performance			✓	
4.5 Communicates the results of student performance and school effectiveness to all stakeholders			✓	

4.6 Uses comparison and trend data of student performance from comparable schools in evaluating its effectiveness				✓
4.7 Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance				✓
4.8 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations				✓
<b>5. Resource and Support Systems</b>				
5.1 Recruits, employs, and mentors qualified professional staff that are capable of fulfilling assigned roles and responsibilities				✓
5.2 Assigns professional staff responsibilities based on their qualifications (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience)				✓
5.3 Ensures that all staff participate in a continuous program of professional development				✓
5.4 Provides and assigns staff that are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school				✓
5.5 Budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement				✓
5.6 Monitors all financial transactions through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system				✓
5.7 Maintains the site, facilities, services, and equipment to provide an environment that is safe and orderly for all occupants				✓
5.8 Possesses a written security and crisis management plan with appropriate training for stakeholders				✓
5.9 Ensures that each student has access to guidance services that include, but are not limited to, counseling, appraisal, mentoring, staff consulting, referral, and educational and career planning				✓
5.10 Provides appropriate support for students with special needs			✓	
<b>6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships</b>				
6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning			✓	
6.2 Has formal channels to listen to and communicate with stakeholders				✓
6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the school				✓
6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders				✓
6.5 Provides information about students, their performance, and school effectiveness that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders			✓	
<b>7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement</b>				
7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the school is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school effectiveness, and the school community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform what happens next (Results)				✓
7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement				✓
7.3 Ensures that plans for continuous improvement are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school and expectations for student learning				✓
7.4 Provides professional development for school personnel to help them implement improvement interventions to achieve improvement goals				✓
7.5 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders				✓
7.6 Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement				✓