

ALIGNING ACCREDITATION STANDARDS TO THE MY VOICE™ SURVEYS:

NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

In April 2006, the 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 National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) came together to form one strong and unified organization under the name AdvancED. The geographic territory of the Association consists of the states of Arkansas, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Michigan, Iowa, Mississippi, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Navajo Nation, the Department of Defense Educational Activity, and Latin America.

Schools seeking NCA or SACS accreditation must meet certain standards, engage in continuous improvement, and host quality assurance reviews. The My Voice Surveys are an innovative tool for schools to evaluate the seven standards as well as to provide insights for overall school improvement. There are three My Voice Surveys: one for students, one for staff, and one for parents. The charts on the following pages align the seven standards with selected statements from each of the surveys. Please note this represents only a sampling of the surveys' statements. Each complete instrument can be viewed at [My Voice Surveys](#).

Before reviewing the charts, the Fourth Standard bears special mention. Standard 4 states:

Documenting and Using Results - 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.

Among other requirements, Standard 4 calls for assessment systems to

- Be comprehensive;
- Be used to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning;
- Provide an analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness;
- Make use of comparison and trend data from comparable school systems to evaluate student performance and system effectiveness;
- Demonstrate verifiable growth in student performance that is supported by multiple sources of evidence.

Based on over twenty years of research and decades of professional experience asking students, staff, and parents about their perceptions of their school, the My Voice Survey can help schools seeking accreditation broaden and deepen their assessment systems by accessing the voice of all stakeholders. In addition to showing evidence of a school's effort to achieve all seven standards, the surveys themselves are a safe, valid, effective, and reliable way to fulfill the Fourth Standard's expectation of "a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures."

My Voice Student Survey—Selected Statements	Accreditation Standards						
	1. Vision and Purpose	2. Governance	3. Teaching and Learning	4. Documenting	5. Resources & Support Systems	6. Stakeholder Communication	7. Continuous Improvement
School is a welcoming and friendly place.			√		√	√	
Students respect teachers.			√			√	
Tests are an important part of my education.			√	√			√
I enjoy being at school.	√		√				
I feel comfortable asking questions in class.			√				
Student council represents all students at school.		√				√	
I believe I can be successful.	√	√	√				√
I feel accepted for who I am at school.			√			√	
I have a teacher who is a positive role model for me.			√		√	√	√
My teachers present lessons in different ways.			√		√		√
I push myself to do better academically.	√		√	√			√
I see myself as a leader.		√				√	√
I believe I can make a difference in this world.	√	√					√
I have difficulty fitting in at school.					√	√	
Teachers care about me as an individual.			√		√	√	
Teachers make school an exciting place to learn.			√		√	√	√
At school I am encouraged to be creative.			√			√	√
Other students see me as a leader.		√				√	√
Teachers expect me to be successful.			√				√
Teachers care if I am absent from school.					√	√	
I give up when schoolwork is difficult.			√		√		
My classes help me understand what is happening in my everyday life.			√			√	√
I am afraid to try something if I think I might fail.			√			√	
Teachers encourage students to make decisions.		√					√
My parents feel comfortable talking to my teachers.						√	
I am proud of my school.						√	√
If I have a problem, I have a teacher with whom I can talk.			√		√	√	
Teachers recognize me when I try my best.			√	√	√		
I enjoy participating in my classes.			√			√	
Teachers help me learn from my mistakes.			√	√	√	√	
I work hard to reach my goals.			√		√		√
Teachers respect students.			√		√	√	
I put forth my best effort at school.			√	√			√
Teachers think I can be successful.			√		√	√	√
I am a good decision maker.		√			√		
I think it is important to set high goals.			√				√
Students respect each other.					√	√	√
Getting good grades is important to me.			√	√			
What I learn in school will benefit my future.	√		√				√
I know the goals my school is working on this year.	√	√				√	√

My Voice Staff Survey—Selected Statements	Accreditation Standards						
	1. Vision and Purpose	2. Governance	3. Teaching and Learning	4. Documenting	5. Resources & Support Systems	6. Stakeholder Communication	7. Continuous Improvement
Setting yearly goals with my supervisor is important for my work.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Central office understands the unique culture of our school.	√	√			√	√	
We communicate effectively in our building.	√	√	√			√	
I am proud of my school.	√					√	√
I am involved in school-wide decisions.	√	√				√	
I know the goals my school is working on this year.	√	√		√		√	√
Building administration knows my professional goals.	√	√			√	√	√
Staff respect each other.		√				√	
Meaningful professional development opportunities exist in my district.		√			√	√	√
Building administration is accessible to me.		√			√	√	
I feel valued for my unique skill and talents.			√			√	√
At school I am encouraged to be creative.			√		√		
I know my students’ hopes and dreams.			√			√	
Students respect me.			√		√	√	
Our school is a dynamic and creative learning environment.	√		√	√			√
I respect students.			√		√	√	
I encourage students to make decisions.		√	√			√	
I feel confident working with students with special needs.			√		√	√	
If I have a problem, I have a colleague with whom I can talk.					√	√	
I receive constructive feedback from colleagues.					√	√	
I feel confident voicing my honest opinions and concerns.		√			√	√	
I seek out opportunities to learn new things.			√		√		√
Continuing my education is important to my future.			√	√	√		√
I see myself as a leader.		√				√	
I have a colleague at school who is a positive role model for me.					√	√	
Building administration is open to new ideas.		√			√	√	√
My colleagues see me as a leader.		√				√	
I feel comfortable asking questions in staff meetings.		√				√	
I communicate effectively with parents.			√	√		√	

My Voice Parent Survey—Selected Statements	Accreditation Standards						
	1. Vision and Purpose	2. Governance	3. Teaching and Learning	4. Documenting	5. Resources & Support Systems	6. Stakeholder Communication	7. Continuous Improvement
I know the goals my child’s school is working on this year.	√	√				√	√
School is preparing my child well for the future.	√		√	√		√	√
I am actively involved in my child’s education.			√		√	√	
My input and opinions are valued at my child’s school.		√			√	√	
Teachers help my child learn from mistakes.			√	√			√
Teachers encourage my child to make decisions.		√	√			√	
My child feels comfortable asking questions in class.			√				
Teachers at my child’s school make it exciting to learn.			√				
Teachers let me know when my child does well in school.				√		√	
I am proud of my child’s school.	√				√	√	√
Parent evenings/meetings are worth attending.			√	√		√	
My child has a teacher who is a positive role model.		√			√		
I am actively involved in my child’s education.		√				√	
I feel comfortable going to parent-teacher conferences.			√		√	√	
Teachers expect my child to be successful.			√				√
If my child has a problem, there is a teacher he/she can talk to.		√			√		

KEY TO THE 7 STANDARDS

1. Vision and Purpose - 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.

2. Governance and Leadership - 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.

3. Teaching and Learning - 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.

4. Documenting and Using Results - 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.

5. Resources and Support Systems - 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.

6. Stakeholder Communication and Relationships - 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.

7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement - 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.