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# Accreditation Report for Harding Academy

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A Summary of Commendations and  
Required Actions as outlined by  
AdvancED, ANSAA, and NCSA

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Spring 2011

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A Quality Assurance Review Team representing the NCA CASI Arkansas State office, a division of AdvancED, the Arkansas Non-Public Accrediting Association (ANSAA), and the National Christian School Association (NCSA) visited Harding Academy on February 20-23, 2011. The nine member team consisted of professional educators from both public and private school districts in four different states, including Arkansas, Texas, Maryland, and Delaware.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 4 administrators, 25 teachers, 10 administrative & instructional support personnel, 10 parents and business partners, 17 students, and 2 board members. In addition to meeting with district personnel and stakeholders, the team interviewed school stakeholders, observed classrooms, and reviewed relevant school artifacts. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by Harding Academy. Specifically, the team examined the district's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

1. Vision and Purpose
2. Governance and Leadership
3. Teaching and Learning
4. Documenting and Using Results
5. Resource and Support Systems
6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships
7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The Quality Assurance Review team used the standard reports and quality assurance findings to identify common themes, significant accomplishments, and pressing needs facing the district. These became the basis for the overall commendations and required actions that are provided on the following pages.

# **2011 District Accreditation Visit**

## **AdvancED, ANSAA, & NCSA**

### **Commendations, Recommendations, & Required Actions**

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#### *Commendations*

##### **AdvancED**

- Harding Academy has a shared stakeholder purpose; the school community embraces and lives its mission as a faith-based, close-knit family committed to a strong Christian education in a nurturing, Christ-centered atmosphere.
- Harding Academy has developed and continues to cultivate a strong partnership with Harding University.
- Harding Academy forms strong relationships and fosters a positive school climate through effective communication with students, parents, and faculty/staff.
- Harding Academy is blessed with experienced, credentialed, and dedicated teachers who typically have a long tenure at the Academy.
- Harding Academy establishes stability through generational family ties, enrollment growth, and financial security.
- Harding Academy families have great confidence that the administration and faculty are meeting the spiritual, academic, and social needs of the students.

##### **ANSAA**

Harding Academy is to be commended for

- Promoting a spiritual, academic, social, & physical climate that incorporates the components of the school's mission throughout the school community.
- Focusing on the mission and purpose of the school, which leads to involvement in the Searcy community.
- Providing a variety of opportunities for parents to be involved in their student's education, resulting in a strong sense of community and commitment to the school; i.e. PFTA, WatchDOGS, MOTHS, booster club.
- Utilizing a wide variety of avenues for ensuring effective communication with the school families which include, but are not limited to: Survey Monkey, marquee, brochures, newspaper articles, annual Partnership Dinner, and RenWeb software.
- Maintaining a warm, friendly, encouraging and safe environment for all students.
- Securing a highly qualified staff that exemplifies the school's mission through their dedication, commitment, and sacrifice.
- Offering dual credit college courses in Mathematics, Speech, Psychology, Computers, Bible, Wellness, and History.
- Providing a process and personnel to assist in addressing individual student needs.
- Actively pursuing up-to-date technology for enhancing the learning environment.

## **NCSA**

- The mission statement was infused through all aspects of the school's environment and its curricular and co-curricular programs.
- The mission was embraced by all elements of the school community and produced a sense of identity and common cause.
- The mission was demonstrated in extensive student involvement at all grade levels in community service, outreach, and missions.
- The spiritual leadership of the Academy at both levels has contributed to the development of a closely knit, Christ-centered school family culture that nourishes Christian commitment and spiritual growth in the student body.
- Teachers demonstrate a cohesive and deep commitment to leading students to love and serve the Lord.
- Harding Academy provides all the necessary student services so that students have the opportunity and guidance to grow and develop spiritually, emotionally, socially, and academically into productive members of society with the mind and heart of Christ. This is evident in the attitude and behavior of students, staff, faculty, administration, and parents.
- The Academy has up-to-date resources for teachers to use in their classrooms and has provided training on the use of the equipment.
- Harding Academy has an excellent Christian staff, faculty, and administration that provide students the opportunity to see Christ living in all that they do at school and elsewhere. The Christ-like attitude obvious in students is certainly a reflection of the faculty, staff, and administration.

## ***Recommendations & Required Actions***

### **AdvancED**

- **Required Actions**

- Use stakeholder input to develop a clearly defined vision for Harding Academy and then communicate the vision to all community members.
- Develop and implement a long-range strategic plan that is guided by the vision and which includes, but is not limited to financial, facilities, and professional development planning.
- Establish a written Harding Academy standards-based curriculum guide that reflects the Academy's Christ-centered mission and is vertically and horizontally aligned.
- Create and utilize a comprehensive, consistent formative and summative assessment plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the standards-based curriculum and instruction.
- Develop a plan to provide training for faculty on disaggregation and use of assessment data to inform instructional decisions.

### **ANSAA**

- **Recommendations**

- Provide regular informal teacher observations to promote professional growth and development of faculty
- Establish an intentional public relations plan that promotes the school within the local community and defines the school's mission and philosophy

### **NCSA**

- **Requirements**

- Develop overall school goals and objectives based on the Academy's mission and philosophy that will be used in curriculum development.
- The Academy must develop a plan for developing comprehensive Christ-centered curriculum for each academic discipline that includes the Mission, Philosophy, Goals, Indicators, Unit Plans, Lesson Plans, Resources, and Evaluation Measures. Substantial progress must be demonstrated within one year, and at least one academic discipline must be completed for all grade levels each year, with all academic disciplines completed in five years.
- Develop a five-year plan as directed in the NCSA Accreditation Manual and submit to NCSA within 90 days.
- Complete all the requirements of the AdvancED accreditation review.

- **Recommendations**

- Harding Academy should develop a formal written plan for continued training on resources. A formal written plan for updating or replacing resources should be developed. A committee representative of all grade levels should be formed to assist in selecting textbooks and other materials based on assessment results that would assure a comprehensive Christ-centered curriculum meeting the needs of the students and the mission of the school.
- Develop a consistent, more comprehensive statement of philosophy.
- The Academy should examine the feasibility of eliminating the teaching duties of the high school counselor and hiring an elementary counselor to assist the Coordinator of Enhanced Learning.

## Standards for Accreditation

The primary requirement for accreditation is that the district demonstrates that it meets the seven standards for accreditation. The findings of the Quality Assurance Review Team regarding the standards for accreditation are summarized below.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Strengths</b> Successful practices deserving of recognition	<b>Opportunities</b> Opportunities for improvement in this area	<b>Findings</b>
<p><b><u>Vision &amp; Purpose</u></b> The system establishes &amp; communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mission statement is infused through all aspects of school’s environment, curricular &amp; co-curricular programs &amp; communications.</li> <li>● Stakeholders articulated strong support for the mission of HA.</li> <li>● Students are extensively involved with community outreach projects &amp; programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Define clearly the “vision” of Harding Academy and the impact that it will have on the Academy.</li> <li>● Establish a long range strategic plan that incorporates the system wide goals and objectives where specific strategies are put into place to advance the mission and the teaching and learning process.</li> </ul>	Operational
<p><b><u>Governance &amp; Leadership</u></b> The system provides governance &amp; leadership that promote student performance and system effectiveness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HA’s integral relationship with Harding University provides the Academy with a rich array of resources and services.</li> <li>● The Academy’s long history dating to 1924 provides a proud heritage and continuity that gives stability and nourishes a strong sense of community among stakeholders.</li> <li>● The new Superintendent has inspired a sense of expectation and renewed energy toward innovations and improvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communicate more widely the benefits provided to the Academy by its relationship with the University</li> <li>● Develop a succession plan</li> </ul>	Operational
<p><b><u>Teaching &amp; Learning</u></b> The system provides research-based curriculum &amp; instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The climate of HA is supportive of student learning and achievement.</li> <li>● The inclusion of technology in the classrooms enhances instruction.</li> <li>● The hiring of a Coordinator of Enhanced Learning to assist students with special needs and students who are academically gifted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop a written curriculum guide that is reflective of the Academy’s mission.</li> <li>● Use collected data for curricular and instructional decisions.</li> <li>● Eliminate the use of computer labs as classrooms.</li> </ul>	Emerging
<p><b><u>Documenting &amp; Using Results</u></b> The system enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and system effectiveness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Administrators, faculty, parents, &amp; students utilize the RenWeb data management software and express satisfaction with the increased and timely communication regarding student progress.</li> <li>● HA administers a number of standardized student assessments and members of the administration &amp; faculty review student results by student and class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Write a formal plan to develop and use additional appropriate assessment methods to better assess students in terms of their strengths and necessary growth areas.</li> <li>● Use the acquired assessment data to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum and instructional methods and to make necessary adjustments to improve student performance.</li> </ul>	Emerging

Standards for Accreditation, con't.

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<b>Standard</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Findings</b>
<p><b><u>Resource &amp; Support Systems</u></b>                      The system has the resources and services necessary to support its vision &amp; purpose and to ensure achievement for all students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HA receives valuable services from HU at little or no cost.</li> <li>• HA has a well written security and crisis plan, enhancing the safety of staff &amp; students.</li> <li>• All faculty members are assigned to their area of certification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, implement, &amp; communicate a facilities plan which includes actions, timelines, and assignment of responsibilities</li> </ul>	<p>Operational</p>
<p><b><u>Stakeholder Communications &amp; Relationships</u></b>                      The system fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HA has a strong mission that is shared among stakeholders.</li> <li>• HA has improved communication through the implementation of the RenWeb system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand stakeholder communication to include alumni, grandparents, &amp; community leaders.</li> <li>• Implement annual stakeholder surveys to determine satisfaction and effectiveness of Academy initiatives.</li> </ul>	<p>Operational</p>
<p><b><u>Commitment to Continuous Improvement</u></b>                      The system establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff members desire to develop long range plans for continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Staff members identified their need for additional training to meet the needs of all students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a formal written plan for long range improvement. This plan should include input from all stakeholders and it should be frequently revisited and modified as needs change and emerge.</li> </ul>	<p>Emerging</p>