CEASD

Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools & Programs for the Deaf

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Report on the Accreditation Site Visit
for the
ILLINOIS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf

Validation Team

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

The Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD) is a non-governmental, nonprofit, peer-administered organization of diverse educational programs committed to the highest quality of education for students who are deaf and hard of hearing. CEASD's purpose is to ensure the continuous improvement of its member schools through effective leadership, self-study, peer evaluation, accreditation, exemplary programs, and supportive services.

The CEASD and its Board of Directors affirm that this report is a privileged document. It is submitted to the chief executive officer of the school being reviewed, and only he/she is authorized to release the information contained in this report.

The CEASD affirms that the primary purpose of the On-Site Team has been to:
   a. Collect and analyze the information in the Student/School/Community profile
   b. Review the formulation of beliefs and development of the school's mission
   c. Review the identified results for student learning
   d. Review the data analyzed to determine those results
   e. Determine the extent to which instructional and organizational practices within the school are aligned to support student learning
   f. Examine the individual program and support services
   g. Review the School Improvement Plan and its process for review and implementation.

The CEASD School Improvement process is ongoing. A school site plan, developed by a planning team of representative stakeholders from the school and community, should be consistent with the vision of the district's strategic plan. It should contain, at a minimum, the following components: mission, beliefs, two to four measurable student performance objectives, and action plans that detail activities, timelines, individuals/groups responsible, and resources provided to accomplish these objectives.

In addition, a planning process should be in place that will ensure that the school has both the capacity and the will to implement its action plans. The planning process typically includes an internal coordinator responsible for monitoring the plan, procedures for communicating planning activities to the school community, provision for annual reviews of the plan, and one or more action plan teams responsible for implementing the plans.

By choosing the CEASD School Improvement process, the school has made several commitments.

   1. It commits to decision-making and direction-setting that is mission-shaped and mission-driven.
   2. It commits to systematic school planning in a strategic context.
   3. It commits to continuous growth in student achievement.

4. It commits to broad involvement of constituents throughout the process.
5. It commits to compliance with the CEASD guidelines and the Twelve Standards outlined in the guidelines.

The CEASD Validation Team is a group of professional educators appointed by the Executive Director of CEASD to visit a school using the School Improvement process. The purpose of the team visit is twofold. First, the team assesses the planning processes used by the school in developing the plan and determines the school's adherence to planning requirements as outlined by the CEASD guidelines as well as whether the planning processes will ensure continuous improvement and commitment. Second, the team reviews the content of the school's plan to judge the validity and clarity of the plans along with the level of commitment to implementation.

The four members of the Validation Team to Illinois School for the Deaf used the three and one-half day visit to review written documents regarding the plan and its development. The Team interacted with as many of the school's stakeholders as possible regarding their knowledge, understanding and support for the plan. The groups interviewed included the various planning teams, faculty, staff, administration, student leaders, a selected group of students, the Deaf Community, parents, support services team, outreach staff, principals, and business and personnel staff. The team concluded that it had a full and rich observational experience of the school leading to the following report and assessment.

Once again the CEASD Team would like to thank the entire Illinois School for the Deaf community for their warm hospitality. We would especially like to recognize Superintendent, Julee Nist, the co-chairs of the Illinois School for the Deaf School for the Deaf accreditation team; Angela Kuhn, Christine Good-Deal, Katherine Surbeck, Jill Bruington, Allison Fraas, and staff who worked on the self-study for their work in preparing for the visit.

Context of the School
The Illinois School for the Deaf (ISD) was founded in 1839 and is located in the central part of the state, in Jacksonville, Illinois. For the past 179 years, the school has offered both residential programming for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and live more than 25 miles from Jacksonville, and day programming for students who live within 25 miles of Jacksonville. ISD's longevity speaks not just of history but also of a school that is dynamic and evolving so as to provide students who are deaf and hard of hearing with the best and most up-to-date education.

ISD offers educational and residential programming for students in grades PK through 12 and an outreach program for infants and toddlers, aged birth to 3. The programming at ISD offers a language and cultural environment that challenges students with curricula designed to fit their needs, faculty and staff trained in deaf education and culture, as well as inclusion with a peer group of students who share similar communication modes. Residential and day students are encouraged to participate in a wide variety of sports and extracurricular activities that help them become well-rounded and productive adults. Many members of the ISD staff and faculty are deaf or hard of hearing, providing adult role models who are successful in the real world and overcome challenges the students will face as adults.

Students at ISD are treated with respect and are supported in their choices whether they embrace American Sign Language (ASL), spoken language, use of hearing aids, or cochlear implants. ISD has excellent professionals on staff to handle almost any challenge a student may present, including speech pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, social workers, school psychologists, nurses, mental health professionals and audiologists. In January 2011, an audiologist who is a bilateral cochlear implant recipient joined the staff in the ISD Outreach Department and serves as a cochlear implant specialist supporting ISD students and students with hearing loss statewide. ISD utilizes research-based programs, such as Direct Instruction in reading, language, and math. A variety of technology and instructional tools and advanced technologies such as SmartBoards, 3D printers, laser engraver, robotics, and iPads are available to enhance learning. ISD continues to be a leader in deaf education in the state and nationwide.

Student Profile
The Illinois School for the Deaf (ISD) serves students ages 0-21. This population includes deaf and hard of hearing students from throughout the state of Illinois. The students represent a diversity of ethnicity, disabilities (including a broad continuum of degrees of hearing loss), socio-economic status, residency status, and educational background. Demographic data is managed by the student information system: Skyward

Administration Software. Demographic data is collected and reported annually in regard to the above categories.

Illinois School for the Deaf Student Population

	2013	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**
Overall Population	**247**	**242**	**223**	**203**	**200**	**217**
Female	111	113	97	89	91	95
Male	136	129	126	114	109	122

Residential Students (number of students)
Illinois School for the Deaf

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
PreK-8 (Age 4 – 8th grade)	41	40	37	29	23	23
High School (grades 9 – Post High School)	116	101	83	71	68	91
Total	157	141	120	100	91	114

As evidenced by the data below, the student population at ISD includes 47% African-American and Hispanic. This is approximately 33% more than the local school district (District 117) and community at large. In addition, these numbers contradict what is represented in staff diversity where the majority is Caucasian. This unique situation has prompted staff at ISD to research and share information about instructing students who hail from diverse and impoverished backgrounds.   The School Improvement Planning Committee considers these attributes when scheduling professional development sessions for staff. Individual students demonstrating exceptional need are paired with staff including social workers who work closely with the student to develop community and school appropriate social/emotional skills. Student Work Experience program coordinators also seek business representatives to act as role models. To foster positive

community interactions, local police visit the schools and dorms on a periodic basis to establish a rapport with students.

Student Ethnicity 2018 (percent of population)

	ISD	Jacksonville, IL District 117*	Illinois*	United States*
White	43	77	49	52
Black	30	9	17	18
Hispanic	17	4	25	24
Other	9	10	9	6

*http://webprod.isbe.net/ereportcard/publicsite/getReport.aspx?year=2015&code=010691170_e.pdf**http://www.eddataexpress.ed.gov/state-report.cfm/state/IL/

Teacher Information

Teacher Information (percent of teachers)
Illinois School for the Deaf

	ISD	District 117*	Illinois*
Male	19	23.2	23.2
Female	81	76.8	76.8
White	100	97.3	82.5
Black	0	0.5	6.4
Hispanic	0	0.0	5.7
Other	0	2.2	5.5

*http://webprod.isbe.net/ereportcard/publicsite/getReport.aspx?year=2012&code=460691170_e.pdf

Teacher Information 2018 (percent of teachers)

	ISD	District 117	Illinois
Average Teaching Experience (Years)	12.5	13.8	12.9
% of Teachers with Bachelor's Degrees	35	65	33
% of Teachers with Master's & Above	65	35	67

* http://webprod.isbe.net/ereportcard/publicsite/getReport.aspx?year=2015&code=010691170_e.pdf

Student Performance Data

Students at the Illinois School for the Deaf are assessed with a variety of tools in order to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, construct goals and objectives, drive instruction and assess progress. In addition, assessment results guide programming focus, scheduling, material selection and staff development. For the first-time results of the PARCC assessment came back in the Spring of 2018, showing a significant increase in the percentage of students partially meeting standards, along with a corresponding decrease in students not meeting standards, in the English-Language Arts portion of the test.

The Northwest Evaluation Association Measure of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP) is administered three times a year, in the fall, winter, and spring to all students in second grade and above, with the exception of those that are the most cognitively impaired. This assessment addresses the curricular areas of reading, language and mathematics. The test results are reported in an equal-interval RIT scale, providing grade-independent analysis of students' learning. NWEA creates a wide variety of reports for the individual student, classroom, school and district that can be used to track student progress, group students for instruction, and follow the progress of students academically.

Another bridge between assessment and learning is Renaissance Learning's STAR Enterprise, which evaluates both reading and math. Also administered in the fall, winter and spring, STAR Reading and STAR Math report grade level performance and are skills-based assessments which assist in instructional planning. STAR Enterprise is administered on computer and instantaneous results allow immediate information for educators and students to use in guiding instruction and setting goals. The STAR

Enterprise system, however, does not allow for comprehensive data collection to include inactive students (students who are no longer in attendance to ISD).

Students in kindergarten through 12th grade take the Developing Writers Assessment (DWA). Educators score individual writing samples of students, and the analysis of the sample leads to assignment of a numerical score which classifies a student as an emerging, early, transitional or advancing writer. The assessment also provides specific learning objectives for both writing conventions and content for each student through reference to a continuum of writing skills delineated within each area of writing evaluated. The DWA is required to be administered in the fall and again in the spring but may be administered more often if desired by the educator. The average DWA for ISD is a level 5, which is an approximate grade equivalency of 2nd – 3rd.

State mandated tests are administered to students in grades 3 through 8 and 11 once each spring. Grades 3 through 8 take the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC.) Students in the 11th grade take the SAT. These tests have been based on the Common Core Standards, but some items associated with the Common Core Standards will be introduced in 2013. Illinois schools may also opt to administer recommended state tests in grade 9, the PSAT 8/9, and in grade 10, the PSAT 10. These tests are administered in the spring of the year. ISD does participate in this optional testing in order to prepare students for optimal performance on the mandatory SAT. The Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) are administered to ISD's students with the most significant cognitive disabilities for whom general state assessments are not appropriate, even with accommodations.

The ISD Evaluation Center is charged with the task of collecting and reporting student data and test scores. Reading, language, and mathematics assessment data demonstrate that students at ISD perform significantly behind their hearing peers. Assessment data is closely monitored to assist in developing individual education plans and addressing deficit areas. Additionally, research based, field tested curricula continue to be implemented in the K – 12 programs. Direct Instruction is a series of research-based programs published by SRA, which include scripted teacher presentation manuals. The teaching scripts have been extensively field tested and revised to ensure that teachers can convey the intended information to students in a clear, concise and effective manner.

SRA Connecting Math Concepts was adopted for our mathematics courses for those students working at the PK-5th levels in mathematics. *SRA Connecting Math Concepts* is a research-supported curriculum that follows a teacher script. The teaching scripts have been extensively field tested and revised to ensure that teachers can convey the

intended information to students in a clear, concise and effective manner. Significant math skills can be taught to at-risk or underperforming students while bringing them up to grade level. The new *Comprehensive Edition* has been revised for levels A-F and grades K-5 and is a proven solution for at-risk students; either as an intervention or as a core replacement. The program contains: 1) Common Core aligned content to help students meet or exceed state standards, 2) Track sequencing that allows students to make connections and rapidly build their understanding of concepts, and 3) Digital resources and activities to engage students' interest and reinforce mastery.

CEASD Standards for Accreditation

INTRODUCTION

The degree to which the school meets the CEASD Standards for Accreditation provides information and data that portray the school's capacity to produce the levels of student performance the school and its community of stakeholders desire and expect.

The 12 Standards for Accreditation, adopted from Middle States, reflect research-based best practices for quality in schools. The Standards also represent the organizational "building blocks" that need to be in place to produce high levels of student performance. The school's self-assessment and the teams' findings related to the Standards leads to identifying the school's strengths and areas in need of improvement.

CEASD Standards for Accreditation for Schools:

Foundational Standards: Standards addressing best practices in the components of a school that provide the *foundations* for quality in the education program, services, and results in terms of student learning.
- Standard 1: Philosophy/Mission
- Standard 2: Governance and Leadership
- Standard 3: School Improvement Planning and Viability
- Standard 4: Finances
- Standard 5: Facilities
- Standard 6: School Climate and Organization

*Operational Standards***:** Standards addressing best practices in delivering the education program, services, and activities to the students.
- Standard 7: Health and Safety
- Standard 8: Educational Program
- Standard 9: Assessment and Evidence of Student Learning
- Standard 10: Student Services
- Standard 11: Student Life, Student Activities and Residential
- Standard 12: Learning Resources and Information Technology

Standard 1: Philosophy/Mission

The Standard: *The school has a clearly written and actively implemented statement of philosophy/mission that conveys the general and specific purposes of its educational program, expresses expectations for quality, and serves as the basis for daily operational and instructional decision making as well as long-range planning. Stakeholders give input into the development of the school's philosophy/mission and understand and accept it. This document is aligned with the community served and is reviewed periodically by stakeholder representatives.*

The Ruling

	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **MEETS** this Standard for Accreditation
X	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **DOES NOT MEET** this Standard for Accreditation. The evidence that supports this assessment is: There was nothing written in the self-study or heard in the interviews/focus groups to support this part of the standard "*Stakeholders give input into the development of the school's philosophy/mission and understand and accept it. This document is aligned with the community served and is reviewed periodically by stakeholder representatives.*" The mission, vision, and beliefs were developed in 2010 and have not been looked at in depth or modified since then.

The Standard

Evidence	Visiting Team
Data from Observations and Interviews	X
The school's philosophy/mission/belief statements	X
Samples of publications that communicate the mission/philosophy to the school's community of stakeholders	X
Marketing, recruitment, and admissions materials	X
Policies related to the philosophy/mission/beliefs	X
Strategic/Long Range Plan Document	X
Student Handbook	X
Activity Calendars, fliers, and daily announcements	X

THE VISITING TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS:
The following is the philosophy, or vision, of the Illinois School for the Deaf:

The vision of the Illinois School for the Deaf is to educate students to become responsible, self-supporting citizens. Our schools will be safe learning communities that encourage students to attain their highest potential in reading, writing, and mathematics. We will empower our students to explore the technological trends and the employment opportunities of the future. (Revised, 2010)

In 2010, as part of the AdvancED accreditation process, the educators, administration, and stakeholders were surveyed regarding suggestions for a proposed vision and mission statement. That information was gathered by the School Improvement Committee and developed into four possible vision statements. Those statements were then given to the administrative and advisory councils to select the final vision statement. The final vision and mission statements were shared with the entire community via email, website, and new posters were created to be displayed on campus.

Furthermore, the Illinois School for the Deaf adheres to a set of beliefs, or mission statements, that help us to achieve our school's philosophy. We believe in:

- Providing a safe, healthy, and respectful learning, living, and work environment.
- Providing an accessible ASL/English bilingual communication environment, respecting all forms of communication for Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals.
- Using each student's unique educational and developmental needs documented in Individual Educational Plans (IEP) to guide their educational program.
- Utilizing, maintaining, and updating cutting edge technology that meets current business standards.
- Providing an instructional program for deaf and hard of hearing students that is most effective when guided by the Seven Principles for Student Success (Freeman & Freeman 1998).
- Providing a supportive and caring atmosphere in order to develop a positive self-esteem and skills necessary to be successful in an ever-changing world.
- Serving the community as an informational resource in current trends and research in the field of deaf education and American Sign Language.
- Sharing the responsibility of educating our students between the parents, students, school and residential personnel, and the community.

Through interviews and focus groups, the team discovered that the mission, vision, and beliefs have not been re-evaluated since 2010. When asked about this some of the responses included "We looked it over and they're just fine", "We know they don't reflect our students now, but we don't want to stir up outside conflict by changing them." and "It's not up to us what the beliefs are, that's an administrative decision".

Periodic reviews of mission, vision and beliefs are one of the most critical parts of the accreditation process and essential for the school to establish strategic directions. Concern about change sometimes prevents schools from addressing these important components and from being as effective as they could in synthesizing the multiple

values and visions that the staff and community might bring to the table. It is precisely these varying viewpoints that make it essential that school communities and stakeholders engage in this process.

ISD must conduct a thorough self-evaluative process asking for feedback from all stakeholders to determine if the mission, vision, and beliefs reflect the unique purpose of the school. Rubber stamping the ones developed eight years earlier does not show the reflection that is needed for school improvement. If one can't define the purpose of the school in Standard 1, how can it be accurately evaluated in all of the other CEASD Standards?

Additionally, conducting a comprehensive review of a school's mission, vision and beliefs can bring stakeholders together to re-visit What we do? (Mission) Why we are here? (Vision) and Who we are? (Values/Beliefs). These not only provide a roadmap for the future, they also communicate to your community what drives your organization.

COMMENDATIONS:

RECOMMENDATIONS:
   1. Review the mission, vision and belief statements of ISD. The current mission, vision, and belief statements were created in 2010. They do not currently reflect the focus of the school which includes an individualized, whole child approach. The vision statement is generic enough to fit any school in the country, so it still fits the vastly changed current student population from the one of 2010, but the beliefs, or mission statements, do not reflect the school's reality. An inclusive process should be established to review the mission, vision, and beliefs through the lens of: What do we do? How do we do it? Whom do we do it for? And what value are we bringing? Bottom Line: What is ISD's reason for being?
   2. All stakeholders, including the Deaf Community, need to be included in this review of the mission, vision, and belief statements.
   3. Use the experience of re-visiting the mission, vision and belief statements as the basis for daily decision-making and for monitoring program effectiveness and student growth.
   4. Use Mission, Vision and Belief work to bring stakeholders together to develop a common understanding of ISD's goals.
   5. Utilize current data to begin the dialogue on Mission, Vision and Beliefs. Reviewing data as an oversight team and then as a faculty and staff is essential to help everyone identify where the school currently stands while also determining where they would like to be. Without a general understanding of the current data, the development of the vision could go in as many directions as there are opinions. The data provide a common, objective understanding and a solid foundation on which to build.

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

The Standard: *The school is chartered, licensed, or authorized by a state, nation, or authority that operates in the public interest. The governance and leadership ensure the integrity, effectiveness, and reputation of the school through the establishment of policy, provision of resources, and assurance of a quality educational program. The governance and leadership act ethically and consistently to assure an atmosphere of mutual respect and purposeful effort on behalf of students and their learning. School leaders foster a productive environment for teaching and learning, timely and open communication with stakeholders, and the vision necessary for day-to-day operations and long-term planning.*

The Ruling

X	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **MEETS** this Standard for Accreditation
	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **DOES NOT MEET** this Standard for Accreditation. The evidence that supports this assessment is:

The Standard

Evidence	Visiting Team
Data from Observations and Interviews	X
Job descriptions for the head of the institution and other key administrative personnel, and all staff members	X
Appraisal tool and/or description of the process used to appraise the performance of the head of the school and other staff members	X
Chart of lines of authority/responsibilities	X
Policies related to governance and leadership	X
Strategic/long range plan document	X
Agendas and Minutes of administrative meetings and other pertinent planning meetings	X
Communication/public relations plan	X

THE VISITING TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS:

ISD is under the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), which is a state agency under the Governor's Office. IDHS and the leadership of ISD work cooperatively together

to assure students who attend ISD receive appropriate services as outlined in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs) following the vision of ISD "to educate students to become self-supporting citizens". IDHS/DRS Administrative Directives are developed in the IDHS/DRS Central Office and are sent to ISD for implementation. All other policy and procedure handbooks are reviewed and updated annually. All policies and procedure handbooks for staff, volunteers and others are available on a shared network drive. Additionally, a dorm parent handbook is available in each dormitory. IDHS/DRS Administrative Rules and Directives are posted on the IDHS Intranet. Policies and Procedures related to students are posted on ISD's website. Parents who do not have access to Internet are provided hard copies of the documents.

ISD has nine (9) different union contracts that are negotiated through the Illinois Central Management System. The following unions are represented on ISD's campus: Illinois Federation of Teachers Local #919, Illinois Nurses Union, American Federation of County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Union, Teamsters Union, Carpenter's Union, Electrician's Union, Painter's Union, Plumber's Union, Engineer's Union.

ISD is under the direction of the Illinois Department of Human Services and has a 9-member Advisory Council rather than a governing board. This advisory council exists to offer recommendations and advice to the schools and to express concerns relative to the educational services provided by ISD. There has been a recent change in the make-up of the Advisory Council. In the past, the meetings were not productive due to disagreements between the members. The hope is that the new makeup of the committee will be more productive. ISD is cautioned to make sure that the perspectives of all stakeholders are heard, not just the ones who are in full agreement with ISD's policies and procedures. There is a fine line between having an advisory council that works well together in a mutually respective way and having one that works well together because they are too like-minded.

ISD is part of a state agency so there are no ambiguities in ownership. The buildings, land, and property are owned by the State of Illinois. ISD has had a business education partnership with Nestle USA since 1995. Through this partnership, Nestle USA provides awards, grants, and volunteer hours.

ISD and IDHS have a chain of command, outlined in the organizational chart, that evaluates individuals and programs for effectiveness on daily, weekly and monthly intervals as needed. Daily issues are passed up through the chain via daily reports that are submitted on a regular basis. All employees have annual performance evaluations with established objectives based on job descriptions.

The superintendent is accountable to IDHS. Currently, Illinois has legislation that determines how principals and teachers are evaluated. This system is the Performance Evaluation Rating Accountability System (PERA). This system ties principal and teacher evaluations to student achievement. The superintendent has completed the training to evaluate the principals and the principals are trained to evaluate the teachers. Evaluations are now tied to student growth in achievement.

The leadership encourages accountability by involving the school in accreditation programs through AdvancED and CEASD. Professional staff is required to meet state licensure requirements. Administrative staff and teachers are appropriately licensed. Twenty-nine (29) out of 42 teachers hold master's degrees. Related services staff is also appropriately licensed by the State of Illinois.

All staff are informed annually of policy revisions and participate in mandatory training annually including AIDS Awareness, Blood borne Pathogens, Bullying Prevention, HIPAA (This year, the annual mandated trainings other than CPI and CPR/First Aid were completed online through Public School Works. All professional staff is required to complete training to keep their licenses and certificates. ISD offers CPDUs (Continuing Professional Development Units) for many of the in-services they offer to allow professional staff to complete their required hours.

IDHS and ISD undertake operational and long-range planning in addition to strategic planning directed to meeting ISD's mission and beliefs. ISD is part of the overall strategic planning of IDHS and also undertakes strategic planning through the AdvancED and CEASD accreditation processes. ISD has 1, 3, and/or 5-year plans for budget, technology, capital development, maintenance, and school improvement. The budget funding is dependent on the legislative branch passing an appropriation bill that is signed into law by the Governor each fiscal year.

ISD has gone through a succession of superintendents and interim superintendents over the last several years. The new superintendent has been faced with several serious incidences since she took over the position and has handled them efficiently. The process of going through accreditation, including reviewing the mission, vision, and beliefs, could have been an excellent opportunity for the new superintendent to bring the community together by developing a shared understanding of the ISD's purpose.

Indicator 2.16 states "The school leadership maintains appropriate and constructive relations with families, students, staff, the community, and with each other in the interest of serving the needs of sensitivity to their diverse backgrounds." While ISD has very good relations with families and staff within the Jacksonville area, there is a great deal of animosity with the greater Deaf Community. Also, very little is mentioned about ways to included families from further away such as those from the Chicago area. More emphasis needs to be placed on ways to include these groups, such as (video conferencing). The Deaf Community feels disenfranchised from the school and the visiting team never saw evidence of interactions with families from any distance away.

COMMENDATIONS:
1. School level leadership works well with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and has found DHS's governance to be advantageous.
2. ISD also follows all educational guidelines established by the Illinois Department of Education.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. ISD needs to develop a plan to improve communication with all stakeholders in order to build appropriate and constructive relationships, especially with the Deaf Community.

2. Establish shared decision making teams. Once ISD revisits its mission, vision and beliefs, the Superintendent and the leadership team should communicate that vision and collaborate in building a high performance culture where continuous school improvement is valued by all.

3. Clarify the role and responsibilities of the ISD Advisory Board.

Standard 3: School Improvement Planning and Viability

The Standard: *The school uses a collaborative process to develop and implement a written strategic or long-range plan to improve its educational program and services. Plans are aligned with the school's philosophy/mission and its operational plans, and are focused on continuous improvement of student performance, staff professional and organizational growth. The school utilizes data and research to determine the use of creative marketing, unique partnerships and visibility through community involvement to insure its long-term viability.*

The Ruling

X	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **MEETS** this Standard for Accreditation
	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **DOES NOT MEET** this Standard for Accreditation. The evidence that supports this assessment is:

THE STANDARD

Evidence	Visiting Team
Data from Observations and Interviews	X
Strategic and/or long-range plan	X
Development/institutional advancement plan	X
Enrollment plan	X
Policies related to school improvement planning	X
Marketing plan for viability	X
Community involvement and partnerships	X

THE VISITING TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS:

The Illinois School for the Deaf uses a collaborative process to develop and implement a written strategic/long-range plan to improve its educational program and services. ISD's school improvement plans are reviewed periodically to determine the extent to which outcomes meet expectations. If there is a gap in meeting outcomes, expectations are adjusted based on data gathered from several standardized assessments.

When initially developing a school improvement plan, ISD completes a comprehensive needs assessment to determine strengths and weaknesses. Based on the results, the

School Improvement Team develops draft goals and objectives which are then shared with the entire faculty for feedback prior to final adoption. The goals and objectives are then shared with staff committees to develop action plans for implementation. ISD needs to include the broader Deaf Community and local community in providing feedback to the School Improvement Plan.

ISD provides information about the school's planning process, improvement plans/ goals, and results to ISD stakeholders and the public through a variety of communications – both internal and external.

ISD's School Improvement Plans are supported by its governing body, IDHS/DRS. All School Improvement Plans and other planning documents are approved through the chain of command at IDHS/DRS. ISD participates in two self-study accreditation systems, AdvancED and CEASD.

ISD has an Advisory Council that provides for guidance and consultation to the school. ISD needs to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Advisory Board as the roles and responsibilities are not clear internally and externally.

Since ISD is part of a state agency, it works with the Capitol Development Board (CDB) to develop a five-year plan for all capital projects. ISD also develops five-year plans for facilities, equipment, maintenance and CDB projects. Life Safety projects are the highest priority. Technology plans are developed on a three-year cycle.

Programs for ISD's students are based on data from multiple sources. Each student at ISD is enrolled in Special Education, which requires that the student participate in an Eligibility Review (ER) every three years. Eligibility Review testing is conducted by several specialists, including the classroom educator, audiologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech pathologist, social worker, and psychologist. Following the ER, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed to assure that assuring the student's educational program is tailored to his/her individual needs. The IEP includes baseline data related to academic achievement and functional performance based upon testing and observational data collected. Individual student growth is monitored a minimum of four times per year and adjustments are made as indicated by test data.

ISD Outreach
ISD has maintained numerous partnerships with Jacksonville area businesses and organizations, including Nestle USA, which provide students with valuable work experiences.

For 74 years, ISD has partnered with the Illinois Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Illinois Department of Human Services Bureau of Early Intervention to provide the Institute for

Parents of Preschool Children Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. This Institute brings together parents and their infants and toddlers for a week-long learning experience.

ISD has also maintained a connection with its alumni association and with the Deaf Community in the State of Illinois.

ISD provides Outreach services (including training, education, technical assistance and consultation) to support children with hearing loss statewide, ages birth to 21. Consultant/trainers for ISD Outreach are well qualified for their positions.

School Improvement Plans/Action Plans describe the methods the school will use to accomplish its mission/philosophy and its student performance or organizational objectives. School Improvement Plans/Action plans provide detailed descriptions of the specific actions required to achieve desired results outlined in the student performance improvement and organizational objectives. This is the "doing" part of the plan. Action plans can and should include multiple activities that will engage the school in improvement activities for the next accreditation cycle. Action plans should be specific and tell in detail how the school will accomplish its objectives. Action plans should relate directly to the objectives, but they also should be related to the mission/philosophy.

The Visiting Team has examined the action plan(s) for the student performance and/or organizational objectives according to the criteria for effective action plans listed below.
Action Plan Requirements

Does this action plan:	YES	NO
Include strategies/action steps that are comprehensive in scope?	X	
Include a logical sequence of strategies and/or action steps?	X	
Outline clearly and in detail the action steps to be taken in the first two to three years of the plan?	X	
Include enough activities to ensure that the objectives will be achieved?	X	
Address as many aspects of the institution's programs, activities, and services as appropriate?	X	
Address aspects of the CEASD Standards for Accreditation identified as weak in the institution's self-assessment of how well it meets the Standards?	X	
Identify the resources required to implement the action steps?	X	
Identify the persons/groups responsible for implementing each action step?	X	
Vary the groups/individuals responsible so that the burden for implementation does not fall on just one or two individuals?	X	
Include clear indicators of success for each action step so the institution knows what action steps have been implemented and with what result?	X	
Establish reasonable timelines for implementing the action steps?	X	
Demonstrate discipline and reasonableness by spreading action steps throughout the entire life of the plan so as not to overwhelm the time, energy, and resources available for implementing a plan?	X	

OBSERVATIONS:

The School Improvement Planning Committee will develop an annual professional development plan aligned with the school mission. This plan will be based upon the selected action plans that were developed by the standards' committees. Additionally, the SIP Committee will consider the professional development needs assessment when scheduling in-service trainings.

The School Improvement Planning Committee will monitor progress on an ongoing basis and at least annually. These action plans will be posted to the ISD website for access by all school stakeholders. Progress will be updated on the website annually as well.

COMMENDATIONS:
1. ISD used a collaborative process to develop and implement a written strategic plan to improve its educational program and services using an annual report with clear goals, objectives and measurables.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. ISD needs to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Advisory Council
2. ISD needs to include the broader Deaf Community and local community in providing feedback to the School Improvement Plan.

Standard 4: Finances

The Standard: *Financial resources are sufficient to provide the educational opportunities defined in the school's philosophy/mission. The business practices of the school are ethical. These practices promote confidence in the school's ability to manage fiscal and material resources in a responsible manner and follow prescribed budgeting and accounting principles. The majority of resources available for school purposes are dedicated to the school's operations.*

The Ruling

X	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **MEETS** this Standard for Accreditation
	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **DOES NOT MEET** this Standard for Accreditation. The evidence that supports this assessment is:

THE VISITING TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS:

The school finances are currently appropriate to meet the needs of the students. As a state agency, the school business office operates under the Comptroller's Uniform Statewide Accounting System (CUSAS). This system is designed to ensure compliance with legal requirements for using public funds and is in accordance with accepted business practices. The ISD business office complies with procedures as outlined in the Statewide Accounting Management System Procedures Manual (SAMS Manual), which assists ISD with the operation of the statewide accounting system.

Currently the ISD budget is stable to meet needs without any unforeseen expenditures. This covers all operating lines and personnel service lines. As a state agency, ISD is not permitted to charge fees for any of its services; therefore, the school does not generate income.

COMMENDATIONS:

1. ISD Finances are in order and the internal audit process had no significant findings.
2. ISD receives nice donations from various funders, organizations and companies for students needs and programs.
3. ISD has developed a good long range plan to help get funding for facility needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Explore if the sidewalks are in good enough shape to be in compliance with ADA accessibility regulations.
2. ISD should continue to look for any budget savings based on possible shared staff, services, or resources with ISVI or other organizations.

Standard 5: Facilities

The Standard: *School facilities are safe, clean, and well maintained. The physical environment supports delivery of the educational program/services as well as optimal student development and achievement. Facilities are appropriate and adequate to implement the philosophy/mission of the school. They are regularly inspected for effective operation and meet all applicable laws including health and safety code requirements.*

The Ruling

X	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **MEETS** this Standard for Accreditation
	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **DOES NOT MEET** this Standard for Accreditation. The evidence that supports this assessment is:

The Standard

Evidence	Visiting Team
Data from Observations and Interviews	X
Floor plan of facilities	X
Long-range facilities plan	X
Maintenance/repair schedules	X
Plans for any facilities improvements	X
Policies related to facilities	X
Health and Safety Inspections	X

THE VISITING TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS:

The Illinois School for the Deaf (ISD) consists of 16 buildings (500,000 square feet), on a 55-acre campus. School facilities are safe, clean, and well maintained. The physical environment supports delivery of the educational program/services as well as optimal student development and achievement. Facilities are appropriate and adequate to implement the philosophy/mission of the school. They are regularly inspected for effective operation and meet all applicable laws including health and safety code requirements. Emergency plans for a variety of events are posted in every classroom, office and other rooms across the campus. ISD has implemented 24/7 security personnel when students are on campus.

Housekeeping staff are responsible for keeping the buildings clean, safe and healthy. Separate contracts are maintained with outside firms which help maintain the electrical, plumbing and heating and cooling systems, should the repairs require skill sets that ISD staff do not possess.

In addition, a complete fire alarm system monitors every room on campus. This system provides visual and audible alarm notification to the students and staff in the event of fire, tornado, or other emergency. The school has completed projects to install new sprinklers in several dorms.

The ISD campus is maintained through several procedures and systems. Work orders are sent via email for requests for specific repairs. These requests are submitted daily by staff from across campus and received by the Chief Engineer. These work orders are received, tracked, and entered into a work order log. All stakeholders interviewed felt this was an efficient system and that requests are handled in a timely manner. Capital requests are submitted annually to ensure current standards for schools and related facilities are met. The leadership of the school provides for an annual maintenance budget, which includes buildings and grounds. There is a Capital Development Board project requested to upgrade and install security systems and improvements. Due to the state budget crisis, progress has been put on hold for this project.

Engineers are on duty on a 24-hour basis anytime students are on campus and when the boilers are in operation for heat in the winter. The engineers are responsible for monitoring all safety, heating and air conditioning systems on campus, and visit each building no less than one time per shift. During these visits, engineers check all "vital" systems in the building. ISD also uses automated systems to check things such as chemical levels in the pool, thermostats, and air quality.

The State Fire Marshall conducts annual inspections of each building on campus. ISD has contracts with several companies to ensure that the elevators are serviced and inspected and pest control is effective.

ISD instructional areas are safe, attractive, and equipped to meet the needs of students who are deaf or hard of hearing and those who have additional disabilities. Visual alarm systems alert students to fires, tornados, and other emergencies. Most of the administrative offices are located in the Main Building, and are safe, attractive and functional. ISD has several locations on campus which can accommodate conferences. Ample space is available for student activities including the gyms, swimming pool, teen centers for the junior high and high school students, in the dorms, outdoor playgrounds, basketball courts and football and baseball fields. Storage space is ample throughout the campus.

In the last several years, a significant amount of black top at ISD has been replaced; Repairs to the concrete and sidewalks on campus are made yearly, at a cost of $15,000.

ISD has done a good job with this amount of funding considering how much sidewalk and blacktop there is around the campus.

COMMENDATIONS:
1. The facilities are very well maintained and updated on a continuous cycle as the budget allows.
2. Work orders are completed in an efficient manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. None at this time.

Standard 6: School Climate and Organization

The Standard: *The school's organizational structure and climate facilitate achievement of its core values as expressed in the philosophy/mission. The school culture supports successful implementation of age and developmentally appropriate educational programs and services. Roles, responsibilities, expectations and reporting relationships are clearly defined. Administrative, instructional, and support staff are qualified, competent, and sufficient in number to effectively provide quality educational experiences. The school regularly conducts staff performance appraisals and offers professional development opportunities informed by its philosophy/mission. Relationships among the staff and leadership are collegial and collaborative.*

The Ruling

X	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **MEETS** this Standard for Accreditation
	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **DOES NOT MEET** this Standard for Accreditation. The evidence that supports this assessment is: (Include recommended stipulations.)

THE STANDARD

Evidence	Visiting Team
Data from Observations and Interviews	X
Organizational chart for the school and school system	X
List of members of the professional and support staffs	X
Salary schedules and descriptions of benefits packages for teachers, specialists, and support staff	X
Contracts (e.g. union, collective bargaining agreements)	X
Results of any climate survey	X
Instruments used for evaluating the performance of the staff	X
Professional development plan	X
Policies related to school climate and organization	X

THE VISITING TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS:

The Superintendent of the Illinois School for the Deaf oversees the operations of all programs on campus. These programs include education, residential life, and support services. Each of these areas is further divided into departments, and each department is managed by an administrator who reports directly to the superintendent.

Web-based Skyward Family Access promotes communication with families. Through the Skyward system, parents can access IEPs, assignments, grades, discipline reports, progress reports, the school calendar, attendance records, G.P.A., and standardized test scores.

Skylert is an emergency messaging system that generates phone calls, emails, and texts to all staff and select students in the case of an emergency. ISD maintains open communication with parents through a variety of means.

To provide consistency in following policies and procedures, all manuals that outline procedural operations on campus are available through the shared drive accessible to all staff. Job descriptions are governed by the state agency Central Management Services (CMS). School administration is currently working with CMS to review each of the job descriptions and realign these descriptions with current duties and expectations. All school personnel and additional service providers must maintain current licensure as required by the State of Illinois. All staff members must also participate in mandated online trainings, as determined by their job descriptions.

The Student Life Director monitors union directives and labor laws and policies for all AFSCME employees. He ensures that union contracts are followed, and monitors union grievances. The Director also ensures that working conditions and workloads correspond to what is established in each job description.

Each staff member is evaluated annually. During the evaluation process, goals for each employee are established through a cooperative effort between the supervisor and staff member.

The educational program is managed by the principals who report directly to the Superintendent. Principals are assigned supervisory responsibilities based upon physical location and areas of expertise. There are four principals on campus – one in PK- 8 program, one in Career and Technical Education (CTE) program, and two in the High School program.

The Director of Student Life manages all residential-related staff and services. Each dorm is grouped according to gender and age. Staff-student ratios in the residential program follow the guidelines established by the Department of Children and Family Services. Student support services include health services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech/language pathology, audiology, social work, and psychological services. A wide variety of student extracurricular activities are also available (including athletic programs and service clubs) for students of all abilities.

Safety issues and periodic disaster trainings are managed by the Chief Engineer and his staff. ISD collaborates with the State Fire Marshall and the Jacksonville Police Department on a regular basis.

COMMENDATIONS:
1. School community is in agreement that effective communication happens internally about operations and activities.
2. There is a lot of respect among students, staff and peers within ISD.
3. There is great communication between ISD staff and parents.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. ISD should develop a recruitment plan for hiring more culturally and ethnically diverse teachers and professional support staff.

Standard 7: Health and Safety

The Standard: *A safe, orderly, and healthy environment for teaching and learning is provided. The school adheres to local, state, and federal government health and safety requirements. Health, safety, preventive/emergency procedures, and crisis management policies are clearly written, well documented, implemented, and updated regularly.*

The Ruling

X	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **MEETS** this Standard for Accreditation
	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **DOES NOT MEET** this Standard for Accreditation. The evidence that supports this assessment is:

THE STANDARD

Evidence	Visiting Team
Data from Observations and Interviews	X
Emergency and crisis plans	X
Records of most recent health and safety inspections	X
Record of emergency drills	X
Emergency Procedures section of Faculty Handbook	X
Abuse and neglect policy	X
Visitor Policy and Procedure	X
Wellness Committee Activities	X

THE VISITING TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS:

As reported in the self-study and validated during interviews with various stakeholders, ISD is considered to be a safe school due to the perception that the town is small enough where everyone knows everybody. Anytime an unknown person is on campus, staff quickly attend to this person. The visiting committee noticed there is no fence at the perimeter of the campus but stakeholders believe it is not necessary because of the community they reside in. All ISD staff are required to display a picture ID badge at all times. The front doors at the Main Building are locked and all visitors and non-school personnel are required to report to the front desk and sign in. Visitors must surrender their government issued picture ID card for a visitor badge and return it at the end of the visit to retrieve their ID cards. Security video cameras are strategically located in buildings.

ISD has around the clock staff at the Health Center and Power Plant any time students are on campus. Both departments double as an emergency response team in any situation warranting an appropriate response. ISD has a centrally operated visual and aural fire alarm system including smoke detectors. For any tornado warning, ISD connects with the county emergency response director's office. ISD engages its entire staff in annual training sessions on emergency response to various situations such as weather, tornado, gas leak, campus lockdown, and other emergencies. ISD adheres to the state of Illinois standards on emergency response drills.

ISD's drinking water quality is tested monthly by the city water department. Water fountains are located in each building and ISD has recently added drinking stations that fill water bottles.

ISD mandates that all staff working with students directly receive annual training on medication self-administration. Medical staff administrate all students' prescribed medications. Nurses are in accordance with the Illinois Nurse Practice Act and the Health Center is in compliance with guidelines set by Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois Department of Human Services. The Health Center works in collaboration with local fire, police, health departments, etc., on safety and wellness strategies for the overall campus. Nurses at the Health Center assume the responsibility of phone messengers after hours when the switchboard or dorm is unavailable to answer a call.

ISD developed a policy and procedure for off-campus events and field trips to ensure the safety of students and staff as well as reduce the liability risks. All buildings post evacuation signs in logical spots guiding people during emergency evacuation during fire or tornado alerts.

ISD always expects students to communicate with staff of their whereabouts by sign in/out sheet or by carrying a pass with date and time for tracking purpose.

COMMENDATIONS:
   1. ISD has an updated school safety plan and an abbreviated version with concise and specific directions to make it easy for staff to implement in the event of an emergency.
2. ISD has developed policy and procedures to ensure the safety of all students participating in field trips.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
   1. ISD needs to develop an intranet to share confidential school information such as students' daily attendance and student appointments.
   2. ISD needs to develop a more reliable communication system between school and dorms for students who are kept in the instructional program after school.
   .

Standard 8: Educational Program

The Standard: *The educational programs consist of both carefully planned and well-executed curriculum programs that include appropriate content standards, solid instructional pedagogy, and appropriate assessment based on research and best practices. The educational programs are adequately financed, are periodically reviewed, and are mission-appropriate. They are developed to meet and address the needs of students and are designed to produce student learning at all levels. Effective policies and practices are in place, along with instructional materials, technology, and equipment that are appropriate, current, functional, and well maintained. Educational programs are aligned with state, local, and district requirements as necessary and are supported by adequate record keeping and good communication. The school provides appropriate Early Intervention and Outreach Services to critical stakeholders.*

The Ruling

X	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **MEETS** this Standard for Accreditation
	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **DOES NOT MEET** this Standard for Accreditation. The evidence that supports this assessment is:

The Standard

Evidence	Visiting Team
Data from Observations and Interviews	X
Program of studies or other overview of the components of the educational program (lesson plans, unit plans, IEPs)	X
Scope and sequence charts	X
Written curriculum guides for each component of the educational program	X
Master schedule	X
Policies related to educational program	X

THE VISITING TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS:

Overall Educational Program

The Illinois School for the Deaf offers a comprehensive educational program for its students, based on state standards of learning, aligned with assessment and implemented via carefully selected pedagogy. Teachers are well-qualified and provided

with ample educational materials and direction. Teachers are clearly committed to student progress and meeting individual student needs. Given the wide range of communication choices and student profiles, this is quite a task.

ISD is a program that uses two languages for instruction, American Sign Language (ASL) and English. All students are expected to learn ASL and it is used in some classroom instruction (more so in the upper grades) and throughout the dormitory program. English is taught through a variety of modes. All students are expected to learn to read and write English. Many students at ISD have significant auditory access and Cued English is used in instruction in the lower grades. In addition, since the direct instruction reading program requires teachers to follow a standard script, ISD uses simultaneous communication (sim-com), using spoken English with supporting signs, to present these lessons in instruction.

The visiting team spent considerable time inquiring about language use with school personnel during the validation team visit, in order to understand the choices and implementation of language instruction. It is clear that ISD has made an extensive commitment to meeting individual needs of students. It was less clear to the visiting team how these choices integrate into an overall schoolwide strategy of language instruction that is effective and equitable for all deaf and hearing instructional staff as well as the wide range of student abilities and preferences. This complexity has also affected the school's relationship with its Deaf community. Therefore, we strongly recommend that ISD pursue language planning in order to clarify its use of the two languages and multiple modes of delivery throughout the day and in different environments around campus. Language planning is an empowering process that will guide the school community in essential discussions and reflection about the acquisition, learning and use of the two languages at ISD, identify the real issues experienced by the deaf and hard-of-hearing students (and staff) at the school, and take actions to resolve those issues. It also offers a framework for the school to effectively clarify to the school community its approach and language implementation and provide sound pedagogical support for its choices.

ISD has selected direct instruction as the main instructional strategy for reading, language and mathematics instruction. The curricula used include Reading Mastery, Corrective Reading-Decoding, and Math Connections.

Direct Instruction is a series of research-based programs published by SRA, which include scripted teacher presentation manuals. The teaching scripts are designed to ensure that teachers can convey the intended information to students in a clear, concise and effective manner with fidelity and consistency. The Direct Instruction programs employ specific teaching strategies such as achievement-based grouping, small group instruction, fast-paced lessons, frequent unison responding and careful monitoring of individual progress.

As a supplement, ISD uses the Accelerated Reading (AR) and Math (AM) programs from Renaissance Learning. These programs employ the STAR assessment to gauge student progress, In AR, students read books within their zone of proximal development, ZPD, then take a corresponding quiz on the computer to check for understanding and earn

points toward their goal. Personal goals are set quarterly for each student by their teacher. Accelerated Reading is designed to serve as the practice component of a comprehensive reading program.

Accelerated Math is also used as a supplement to the core math curriculum. The AM program provides individualized practice assignments at each student's level, allowing for differentiated instruction. Immediate feedback is also provided when practice assignments are scored, allowing teachers to interpret the data and guide instruction. Information gleaned from AM is used to help determine areas of need in mathematics and to develop appropriate IEP goals/objectives.

ISD also is participating in a trial use of Spatial-Temporal math, a visual, non-language based approach to developing math concepts in game format. This program is mainly delivered via tablets.

ISD is also using the Thinking Maps program, which consists of eight visual patterns each based on a fundamental thought process, to develop higher-order thinking skills. These patterns can be used across every grade level and curriculum area as an integrated set of tools. Maps were observed posted in most classrooms, but we did not have the opportunity to see them in action.

Other content areas, such as science and social studies, use curriculum based on the Illinois state standards. Some of this content has been developed by teachers as well as taken from textbook companies and other programs. All the published programs offer curriculum guides and instructional scripts that are used throughout the school programs.

Students are offered opportunities to take additional classes in the arts, health and physical education, as well as other electives. ISD also offers an extensive career and technical education (CTE) program, with course offerings in the areas of Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics, Computer Education, Technology and Engineering, as well as Family and Consumer Science. These courses are offered as electives to students based on their transition plans and expressed areas of interest.

For students with significant cognitive disabilities, ISD uses the PCI Reading Programs. PCI is a curriculum created specifically to teach students with developmental disabilities, autism, and significant learning disabilities how to read. The program initially focuses on teaching sight words and "real-world" nouns and verbs through a system of repetition, "hands-on" practice, controlled-vocabulary reading, and high-interest activities. This vocabulary is then used as exemplars for teaching onsets and word families. Students learn the basics of word analysis, word building, and decoding in a uniquely scaffold introduction to phonics. The third level then introduces new genres of nonfiction and poetry and integrates comprehension, writing, and fluency skills into the lesson cycle.

To further address the needs of those students with significant cognitive disabilities, curriculum from Unique Learning System is utilized. Monthly thematic units of study are downloaded and guide instruction. The unit lesson plans address functional and life skills

needs, defined in three levels of differentiated tasks to accommodate the diversity of learners with significant cognitive disabilities. The high school program also includes the Functional Living Skills (FLS) classes. These courses are designed to meet the needs of students with significant intellectual disabilities.

ISD offers a Student Work Experience (SWE) program that provides students with academic, vocational and occupational courses. In their junior year, students can be placed in on-campus job experiences after successfully completing an interview. During their senior year, students complete career interest surveys and interviews, and then can be placed in on-campus or off-campus employment.

ISD offers an additional program. The Transitional Living Program (TLP) for students between the ages of 18 and 21 who desire additional learning opportunities to enhance academic achievement, develop employment and independent living skills. Students in this program may engage in functional skills classes, career and technical education courses, academic high school classes or community college courses, depending on their abilities and needs. TLP student live on campus in a separate dorm program where they work on developing employability, daily, community, and personal living skills.

ISD implements two programs to foster a positive learning and living environment for its students. Although bullying does not seem to be a problem at ISD, students did indicate that some "teasing" and "picking on each other" does occur. Bullies2buddies is the program used to support younger students who have been identified as needing improved resilience to bullies. ISD also implements the Positive Behavior and Supports Program (PBS). Positive behavioral expectations for all environments on campus are developed and posted. School teams meet monthly to evaluate the efficacy of the program, review behavior data, and identify at-risk students needing additional support.

ISD has chosen to implement a series of highly scripted programs using direct instruction as the basis of their instructional program. This format has been selected to address the varied and complex learning needs of its students, as well as to ensure fidelity of curriculum implementation. Additionally, the contract that teachers operate under allows little to no time for teachers to meet together after school to discuss and develop curriculum.

These factors all make DI a logical choice for curriculum. However, ISD should be aware of the potential downsides to this choice. There is a significant body of research on DI that is mixed (Karen Eppley & Curt Dudley-Marling (2018) Does direct instruction work?: A critical assessment of direct instruction research and its theoretical perspective, Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy, DOI: 10.1080/15505170.2018.1438321).

It is evident that highly structured instruction can generate performance gains in conventionally measured early literacy and numeracy. However, controlled content and highly structured lesson pacing do not encourage engagement with students' cultural backgrounds and context. This is especially relevant at ISD where the demographics of the instructional faculty and the student population do not match. DI can restrict the

teacher's professional capacity to vary instructional pace and curriculum content depending on the student cohort. Strict tracking and ability grouping can disadvantage some students. ISD teachers therefore need to ensure that, in addition to these highly structured programs, all students have access to a robust and engaging reading instructional activities with literature that is reflective of their own diversity.

Basic skills acquisition is necessary, but not sufficient, for sustained achievement gains in literacy and math. This requires a much broader conception and development of the scope and sequence of the literacy curriculum, and a deep understanding of where and how all the language arts of visual and oral/auditory comprehension, use of ASL, spoken language proficiency, Cued English, spelling and orthography, writing and genre, and new multi-literacies fit together. Language planning will guide these discussions and allow all involved to develop a more comprehensive understanding of this complexity and the subsequent choices for instruction and curriculum.

Early Intervention Services and Outreach

ISD operates The Kline House 0-3 Parent/Infant Program, and is an integral part of the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EDHI) system in the state. ISD early intervention staff work with members of the Illinois EDHI program and the Division of Specialized Care to provide an annual Institute for Parents of Preschool Children Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. The 0-3 Kline House educators work closely with local audiologists and the Early Intervention system to help ensure a smooth and quick timeline from screening to services.

The primary assessment and guiding tool in the Kline House program is SKI-HI, developed by SKI-HI Institute at Utah State University as a resource for early interventionists and families of children 0-5 years of age who are deaf or hard of hearing. Curriculum topics include child development, sample dialogues for initial visits, communication options, language acquisition, literacy development, degrees and types of hearing loss, audiograms and amplification options.

The ISD program operates out of three offices across the state of Illinois covering approximately 75 counties. All three staff members hold an Illinois Early Intervention credential as Developmental Therapy/Hearing Specialists (DTH) as well as an Illinois Early Intervention Evaluator credential and an active Illinois Teaching Certificate.

Services are provided to families who meet the state guidelines. Sessions focus on aspects of hearing loss, communication, language acquisition, and auditory development as agreed upon in the Individualized Family Service Plan. All communication options are presented in a non-biased manner and direct services to the child are delivered following the preferred communication mode of the family. Sessions occur in the family's home or in a location requested by the family and are scheduled at times that are convenient for the family and appropriate for the child.

COMMENDATIONS:
1. Teachers and staff are fully committed to meeting the individual needs of all their students.
2. ISD teachers have access to a wide array of instructional materials and programs
3. ISD offers multiple program options for their students, including academic and vocational courses, electives, work experience opportunities, taking courses at local schools, and work experience opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. As a school that uses two languages and multiple modalities in its campus learning and living environments, ISD should conduct deliberate language planning that would help define its communication policy and determine how language use is allocated across the campus in a variety of settings. Deliberate language planning will engage all stakeholders in the community by bringing to light several useful questions that educators can ask with respect to planning teaching and learning for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.
2. ISD should consider the potential pitfalls of implementing a fully scripted instructional program in reading and math, especially its potential effect on student engagement, motivation, and autonomy (issues identified by teachers as a top training issue).

Standard 9: Assessment and Evidence of Student Learning

The Standard: *The school systematically collects and rigorously analyzes quantifiable and observable evidence of individual learning and growth from multiple valid and reliable sources. Evidence of student learning is used to evaluate and improve curriculum effectiveness, instructional practices, professional development, and support services. Progress in student learning and performance is expected and is accurately, clearly, and systematically reported to the school community.*

The Ruling

X	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **MEETS** this Standard for Accreditation
	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **DOES NOT MEET** this Standard for Accreditation. The evidence that supports this assessment is:

The Standard

Evidence	Visiting Team
Data from Observations and Interviews	X
Example of student transcript	X
Example of student report card	X
Reports of the results of assessments administered to students	X
Policies related to assessment of student learning	X
Schools participation in the state assessment system	X

THE VISITING TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS:

The Illinois School for the Deaf (ISD) systematically collects, analyzes and shares evidence of student learning and growth from multiple sources. ISD participates in all state-mandated assessments. These include the state assessment for reading and math from the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC), Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS), ACCESS testing for English Language Learners (ELLs), the Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (P-SAT), the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT – which is required for graduation), the Illinois Science assessment, and the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment

(DLM-AA). Additional assessments given in the early years include the SKI-HI Language Development Scale, the Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP), the Infant-Toddler Meaningful Auditory Integration Scale (IT-MAIS). The INSITE Developmental Checklist is also used for assessing the developmental skills of multi-disabled sensory impaired children. The validation team was informed that Illinois will no longer participate in the PARCC as the state has decided to develop and administer their own assessment.

In addition to state-mandated assessments, ISD has chosen to use internal assessments that give them more actionable information that can influence instruction. Many state-mandated assessments are not sensitive enough to show the kind of growth that ISD students make annually. They are also administered at the end of the year to assess learning. This forensic evidence, with results often delivered the following academic year, does not necessarily inform instruction. Therefore, ISD uses the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment and the STAR assessments from Renaissance Learning. These assessments are administered periodically throughout the academic year to gauge progress. The MAP, an adaptive online assessment, measures reading, language and mathematics skills and reports data in RIT scores. The assessment reports also provide more detailed information about student progress that is helpful in composing IEP goals. The assessment also sets growth targets for each student based on their performance. In addition, the STAR assessments are part of the Accelerated Reading (AR) and Math (AM) programs that target reinforcement of basic skills. The STAR assessments are short, computer-adaptable assessments that provide teachers and students with immediate and actionable information.

Another assessment ISD has chosen to administer is the Developing Writers Assessment (DWA). Student writing samples are evaluated and assigned a numerical score which classifies a student as an emerging, early, transitional or advancing writer. The assessment also provides specific learning objectives for both writing conventions and content.

Assessments of employment and independent living skills are also administered to transition-aged students. These includes the Transition Competence Battery (TCB) for the majority of ISD high school students, the Kaufmann Functional Academic Skills Test (K-FAST) for students enrolled in functional life skills classes, the Career Scope, the PICS (Picture Interest Career Survey), as well as some curriculum-based assessments. Administration of these tests is used for transition planning for ISD students toward post-secondary employment and education goals or other post-secondary options. They may also be used to determine IEP goals and objectives. Scores from these tests are shared with students, parents and staff during transition meetings in conjunction with IEPs.

The assessments administered at ISD are all tracked, analyzed and shared. Each student's assessment scores are kept together and tracked linearly to assist in marking progress. The assessment results appear in the IEP document and are discussed during IEP meetings. These assessment results are used to set progress goals throughout the educational program and to track students' readiness for post-secondary options. There is a high degree of assessment literacy among the ISD teaching staff. Teachers are able to explain the assessment results to parents in an accessible manner. Students are engaged in tracking their own progress as well. This involvement engenders motivation to succeed and ownership of learning by the student.

ISD has made efforts to track graduates of the school to better assess the effectiveness of their school program. Privacy statutes, and the fact that most graduates do not live in the Jacksonville area, have made collecting this information a challenge. We recommend that ISD continue their efforts in this area.

ISD also uses overall assessment results to inform school and curricular decisions. Use of data has led to changes in curriculum and methodology of instruction. While progress is being made by students, ISD staff is not satisfied with the results and continues to seek ways to improve instructional effectiveness and student performance.

COMMENDATIONS:
1. ISD administers a comprehensive battery of assessments, both state mandated and internally chosen, throughout the year to track student progress.
2. Assessment results are evaluated, reviewed with teachers, and explained to parents through IEP meetings and documents.
3. Older students are involved in tracking their own assessment progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. ISD staff should continue and strengthen their efforts to track graduates in order to assess program effectiveness.

Standard 10: Student Services

The Standard: *The school implements written policies and procedures, in partnership with families and the community, that provides all students with, or refer them to, services that are age-and developmentally appropriate to optimize opportunities for life-long success. Student services are systematic and integral to the educational program. They are provided by qualified personnel, sufficiently financed, periodically evaluated, and philosophy/mission appropriate.*

The Ruling

X	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **MEETS** this Standard for Accreditation
	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **DOES NOT MEET** this Standard for Accreditation. The evidence that supports this assessment is:

The Standard

Evidence	Visiting Team
Data from Observations and Interviews	X
Guidance and counseling plan	X
Examples of student schedules	X
Results of follow-up studies of graduates	X
Policies related to student services, including guidance and counseling, admissions, transportation, food services, and special education	X
Admissions policies and criteria	X
Suicide Assessment Procedures	X
MOUs with outside service providers	X
Sample health service forms, student health record, and IEPs	X

THE VISITING TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS:
There are a wide variety of supports for the students at ISD. This includes a psychologist, social workers, health center staff, and a transition coordinator just to name a few. There are policies in place for various mental health concerns. The school nutrition team follows all guidelines and the transportation services run smoothly.

Student services address academic skills development, social skills development, personal growth and career planning and that counselors, administrators, teachers and/or other staff members share responsibility for providing guidance and support to students ISD has the needed support staff in each building to provide the support services. These individuals are assigned caseloads, have regular appointments with students and are in close contact with educators and parents when additional needs are identified. Support service providers serve as members of the IEP/ER teams, interact with the educators and administrators daily and make themselves available to students when needed.

There is a strong transition program including work experience and vocational classes. The goal of transition services is to help the student gain competitive, integrated employment and independent living. There is a need to gather follow up information on graduates. This has been a recommendation in past accreditation visits as well. Printed information such as emails and letters are not generating responses. It might be worthwhile to reach out to the alumni organization or create a video to send out instead.

The Health Center at the Illinois School for the Deaf operates as a 24/7 unit, consisting of several specialized services to address the health and individualized needs of students. The services provided address not only the physical needs of the students but also their emotional and psychological needs as well.

ISD Dining Hall offers nutritionally balanced meals that meet Federal Lunch Program Guidelines and Standard Nutritional Information is available upon request. ISD also caters to the dietary needs of individuals who are diabetic, have special diets or food allergies.

ISD provides transportation for the majority of the students. Since 2013-2014 all students have been sent home every weekend. Students are also transported for work experiences, athletics, extra-curricular and dorm activities.

COMMENDATIONS:
1. There are a wide variety of support staff who provide services that meet the need of the whole child as well as support what teachers are doing in the classroom.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. ISD needs to get creative in finding ways to gather follow up data for graduates.

Standard 11: Student Life, Student Activities and Residential Living

The Standard: *The school provides access to non-discriminatory student activities that are age-and developmentally appropriate to supplement the educational program. A balance of academic, social, co-or extra-curricular and service activities is maintained. Student activities are selected to foster intellectual, cultural, and social growth as well as physical health and wellness. Student activities provide opportunities for student leadership and social interaction and encourage development of student interests. These activities are adequately financed, periodically reviewed by stakeholders, managed by school governance and leadership, and appropriate to the school's philosophy/mission.*

The Ruling

X	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **MEETS** this Standard for Accreditation
	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **DOES NOT MEET** this Standard for Accreditation. The evidence that supports this assessment is:

The Standard

Evidence	Visiting Team
Data from Observations and Interviews	X
Samples of student publications—e.g., yearbook, student newspaper, literary magazine	X
Budget for all athletic activities	X
Budget for all non-athletic activities	X
Policies on academic eligibility	X
Policies related to student life and student activities	X
Residential Handbooks, Procedures, etc.	X
TLP Activities Calendar	X

THE VISITING TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS:.

ISD recognizes the value in raising students in a whole student concept through an array of after-school activities, leadership opportunities, athletic participation, social skills development and other activities and programs. By doing this, ISD strives to promote and

develop social skills, leadership skills, sense of community, cooperation, independent living skills and life-long knowledge that students carry to adulthood.

These are offered to all students including day students. The athletic activities involve interscholastic competitions for high school students. Elementary students participate in YMCA sports program and other local sport associations. Middle school students participate in local school leagues. Students with additional disabilities are encouraged to participate in athletic competitions either with mainstream students or in special leagues catering to their needs.

ISD students and staff generally support a community of mutual respect among each other including families, volunteers, and visitors. It is made possible through annual mandatory training sessions for employees such as the code of conduct, sexual harassment, violence in the workplace, assertive communication, school communication policy, and a nonviolent crisis intervention program. The collaborative effort between school and residential program is evident through the demonstration of shared information through frequent team meetings among students, teachers, residential staff, administrators and families. ISD has a clear policy on following the chain of command in resolving disputes and enforces this well. Staff, families and students are encouraged to attend all public school events such as homecoming, prom, athletic events, awards programs. ISD encourages families and students participate their Individual Education Program (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) meetings and ensures that everyone has barrier-free communication access during their meetings. ISD's Outreach hosts three parent conferences annually inviting both ISD parents and non-ISD parents.

Videophones are numerous in residential settings, providing opportunities for connections between students and their families. Families have access to their children's grades, academic performance, discipline, to name a few through Skyward. ISD's handbooks are posted on the school's website as well as school calendars, schedules, and staff contact information.

ISD emphasizes students' privacy in the dorms. Residential staff show respect by making their presence known by flashing lights or waving to get their attention before entering rooms. Should a student's room be investigated for a safety reason, a supervisor's approval is required prior to entering the room. ISD has a policy governing students' entering other students' rooms. Staff adheres to the HIPAA and FERPA laws regarding students' mail, medical information, disciplinary actions and other confidential information.

All new residential staff are required to become certified as a Residential Care Worker (RCW) after receiving a comprehensive training on the school's history, mission and belief, handbooks, policies and procedures. All trainees regardless of their ASL skills are required to pass the sign language proficiency interview at the appropriate skill level. The Residential Care Worker Trainee program offers intensive training sessions guiding new trainees to become certificated as a RCW.

ISD ensures that all students are safe and accountable by following the guidelines on staff to student ratio as established by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Students are supervised at all times when they are under their care. Students communicate their whereabouts by signing in and out at dorms. Residential staff practice periodic checks on students and the overnight staff check on students every 30 minutes throughout the night.

COMMENDATIONS:
1. ISD residential dorms are a livable space for students where they thrive academically and socially.
2. ISD staff continuously and responsibly supervise students.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. ISD needs to devise clear procedures in locating a missing student.
2. ISD needs to create a professional development budget line item for residential staff to attend the National Student Life for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Conference every two years.

Standard 12: Learning Resources and Information Technology

The Standard: *Information resources, materials, and technology are accessible and of adequate scope, quantity, and quality to facilitate the school's pursuit of its total educational program. These resources encourage all students and staff to broaden and extend their knowledge and skills. Access to appropriate information resources and technology is provided for students and staff. Appropriate instruction is offered to develop student and staff inquiry, research, and information literacy skills. Information technology equipment is functional and well maintained.*

The Ruling

X	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **MEETS** this Standard for Accreditation
	It is the Visiting Team's assessment that the school **DOES NOT MEET** this Standard for Accreditation. The evidence that supports this assessment is:

The Standard

Evidence	Visiting Team
Data from Observations and Interviews	X
The information resources and technology plan(s)	X
Budget for information resources and technology	X
Acceptable Use Policy	X
Availability of information resources including hardware and software	X
Availability of information technology equipment	X
Policies related to information resources and technology	X

THE VISITING TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS:

The IT Department consists of 4 full-time staff who have met the necessary qualifications set forth by their state issued job titles (Information Specialist I, II, Analyst I, etc.) and maintained through continuing education units. The staff in this department monitors the network and oversee the school's administrative software (teachers' grade books, students' Individualized Education Plans, discipline, attendance, food services and state reporting),the Skyward Student Information System and Skylert, the school's communication system, the health center software package, the school's emergency

notification software, Renaissance Learning assessments and education, Northwest Evaluation Assessment software, a Google-docs based overtime system, and a hardware database.

The department provides support for school-licensed hardware and software, as well as school-owned cell phones and the campus phone system. Furthermore, the department establishes accounts for parents and local education authorities from the students' various home school districts in order to provide 24-hour access to students' grades, IEPs, schedules, discipline incidents, and test results. IT staff attend annual conferences, webinars, workshops, and online trainings, and utilize resources outside of the school providing hardware and software support.

Due to a lack of budget for the past two years, resources have not been allocated in this manner. Instead, necessary equipment has been acquired primarily through grant funding. Both the IT staff and educators are pro-active in the exploration of technologies which support their students' education. Robots, 3D printers, CNC plasma cutter, laser engraver, Z-space virtual reality stations, iPods, iPads, classroom responders, blogs, and a Mac ASL/video lab are some examples. All classrooms utilize touchscreen boards and document readers are available if desired by the educator. Classroom technology also includes Sound Field amplification systems for those students utilizing residual hearing. The school receives federal e-rate grant monies, providing monies to update, maintain, and replace outdated hardware and explore new technologies every two years, honoring requests as appropriate and available. Additionally, ISD reports data on the ISD's Annual Report.

Staff contact onsite IT for one on one support regarding the use of technology and equipment. Group workshops are also provided as requested and online training is available. Currently, ISD uses paper forms or contacts the IT department via phone to make any technology requests or repairs. ISD should look into having an internal electronic requests as well as having the ability to track needs at ISD to help the IT department tailor to meet the needs of the students and staff.

The IT Department works with Springfield's Central Management Services (CSM) who controls the Internet filtering software to ensure that online access to Blackboard-type interfaces are unblocked.

New staff to ISD, as part of their employment packet, receive the guidelines for state issued email access as well as internet guidelines. After reviewing the policies and procedures, staff are given email and internet access as related to their job duties. During the training period, new staff are introduced to the technology resources available and the media center.

The Computer Acceptable Use Agreement is reviewed annually and updated as needed. Parents are provided a copy and must sign permission for their student to use Internet resources. Students are provided a copy and watch a video in American Sign Language and English that explains each expectation and the consequences. The

student then initials the agreement/understanding. Educator Aides monitor students' computer use through screen viewing technology as well as apply proximity control.

COMMENDATIONS:
1. Technology which meets the students and staff needs are evident on campus.
2. ISD keeps up with new technology which applies to the curriculum and learning needs of the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. ISD should explore the availability/expansion of technology use in the residential settings.
2. ISD needs to look at increasing its bandwidth needs for the school as there is a need for such video application used by students and staff to meet the need of visual learning.
3. ISD should look into improving its technology infrastructure which includes the ability to improve its phone system (i.e. VOIP System)
4. ISD should work on its Accepted Technology Use Policy for its staff and students to allow for use of mobile technology on campus as it is critical to meet the staff and students' needs for visual learning and communication.
5. ISD should continue to support its staff with appropriate Professional Development on the use of technology.
6. ISD should explore an internal electronic technology needs request that can easily be monitored and track all needs on campus. (i.e. School Dude)

Summary of Major Commendations and Recommendations

The Visiting Team has offered many commendations and recommendations throughout the report, many of which echo Illinois School for the Deaf's own conclusions within its Self Study. The major commendations and recommendations to follow represent trends of data gathered or consistent themes from within the Visiting Committee's review of the Self-Study, interviews with staff, students, committees and other stakeholders and observational data supporting the standards.

Ultimately, the Visiting Committee developed a shared perspective that these conclusive major commendations and recommendations were the most important for the school to both recognize and utilize toward the enhancement of its continued growth.

COMMENDATIONS
1. The facilities are very well maintained and updated on a continuous cycle as the budget allows.
2. ISD has an updated school safety plan and an abbreviated version with concise and specific directions to make it easy for staff to implement in the event of an emergency.
3. ISD offers multiple program options for their students, including academic and vocational courses, electives, work experience opportunities, taking courses at local schools, and work experience opportunities.
4. Assessment results are evaluated, reviewed with teachers, and explained to parents through IEP meetings and documents.
5. There are a wide variety of support staff who provide services that meet the need of the whole child as well as support what teachers are doing in the classroom.
6. ISD keeps up with new technology which applies to the curriculum and learning needs of the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS
1. All stakeholders, including the Deaf Community, need to be included in the review of the Mission, Vision, and Belief statements.
2. Establish shared decision-making teams. Once ISD revisits its mission, vision and beliefs, the Superintendent and the leadership team should communicate that vision and collaborate in building a high-performance culture where continuous school improvement is valued by all.
3. ISD needs to develop an intranet to share confidential school information such as students' daily attendance and student appointments.
4. ISD should develop a recruitment plan for hiring more culturally and ethnically diverse teachers and professional support staff.
5. As a school that uses two languages and multiple modalities in its campus learning and living environments, ISD should conduct deliberate language planning that would help define its communication policy and determine how language use is

allocated across the campus in a variety of settings. Deliberate language planning will engage all stakeholders in the community by bringing to light several useful questions that educators can ask with respect to planning teaching and learning for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

6. ISD needs to be more persistent in gathering follow up data for graduates.

Accreditation Recommendation

After its visit to the school, and after considering the evidence seen and heard during the visit, the CEASD Visiting Team is charged with making a recommendation to the CEASD Board regarding the accreditation action the committee should take.

Based on the evidence presented by the school in its Self-Study Document and supporting documentation, and based on the evidence seen and heard by members of the Team from the school's community of stakeholders, the Team recommends to the CEASD Board that it takes the following accreditation action. This recommendation will be acted upon at the next regularly scheduled CEASD Board Meeting.

PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION

A school granted Provisional Accreditation does not meet one or more of the CEASD Standards for Accreditation and/or does not include all of the requirements of the self-study. The school is provided with specific corrective actions that must be followed in order for the school to be awarded full accreditation. The corrective actions are required within a specified time period. Provisional Accreditation is typically granted for a period of one year.

The Standard for Accreditation not met is:

Standard 1
The evidence that supports this assessment is that there was nothing written in the self-study or heard in the interviews/focus groups to indicate that the ISD community convened its stakeholders to provide input into the development of the school's philosophy/mission, nor was there any evidence to indicate that the philosophy/mission is aligned with the community served and understood and accepted by its stakeholders. The mission, vision, and beliefs were developed in 2010 and have not been critically reviewed nor modified since that time.

In order to meet this Standard, ISD must initiate a comprehensive self-evaluative process of asking for feedback from all stakeholders to see if the mission, vision, and beliefs reflect the unique purpose of the school. A process should be established to review the mission, vision, and beliefs through the lens of: What do we do? How do we do it? Whom do we do it for? And what value are we bringing? Bottom Line: What is ISD's reason for being? All stakeholders, including the Deaf Community, need to be included in this review of the mission, vision, and belief statements.

When a school examines its core purpose and values it is common to have differences and conflicting expectations. This is all part of the very healthy process that eventually leads to ways to maximize stakeholder values and make strategic trade-offs. Absent

this important process in the self-study for accreditation, difficulties arise as to how to measure new programs or initiatives to be developed or how student performance will be measured.   Although not meeting only one standard does not typically lead to provisional accreditation, in this case it impacted many of the standards. The lack of self-reflection and the discrepancy between what the self-study and information on the website state versus information gathered during interviews, focus groups, and observations impacted the following areas.

- Standard 2: Governance and Leadership- ISD has gone through a succession of superintendents and interim superintendents over the last several years. The new superintendent has been faced with several serious incidents since she took over the position and has handled them efficiently. The process of going through accreditation, including reviewing the mission, vision, and beliefs, could have been an excellent opportunity for the new superintendent to bring the community together by developing a shared understanding of the ISD's purpose and more importantly its values and beliefs.
- Standard 3: School Improvement Planning, Outreach, and Viability- the school improvement plan must be aligned with the school's mission and beliefs and if these are not updated and accurate, as reported to us by stakeholders in focus groups, then the school improvement plan will not be as informed as possible, nor will it be positioned to ensure success.
- Standard 6: School Climate and Organization- The staff of ISD and families who live close to the campus are very positive in their support towards the school. There is a disconnect between the larger ISD Community which is not as positive towards this school. Some of this disconnect comes from a perception of dissonance between the public persona of the school and what others perceive is actually happening in the school. Through the process of developing the mission, vision and beliefs of ISD, there will be multiple opportunities to develop a shared understanding of the changing population of the school and the shifts in instructional strategies and language planning that are already happening but are simply not reflected in the belief statements.
- Standard 8: Educational Program-ISD has made an extensive commitment to meeting individual needs of students. It was less clear to the visiting team how these choices integrate into an overall schoolwide strategy of language instruction that is effective and equitable for all deaf and hearing instructional staff as well as the wide range of student abilities and preferences. This complexity has also affected the school's relationship with its Deaf community. Identifying the needs of the current students and then conducting language planning for those needs is an empowering process that will guide the school community in essential discussions and reflection about the acquisition, learning and use of the two languages at ISD, identify the real issues experienced by the deaf and hard-of-hearing students (and staff) at the school, and take actions to resolve those issues throughout the day and in different environments around campus. It also offers a framework for the school to effectively clarify to the school community its approach and language implementation and provide sound pedagogical support for its choices.

Next Steps

- *Follow-up on Major Recommendations*: At the next visit the school will be expected to review progress and implementation on the major recommendations, in this case conducting mission, vision and beliefs work. You may choose to seek some neutral facilitation to ensure your process is comprehensive and leads to a feeling that stakeholders had an opportunity to be heard. The more open the process, the more you will see key values and beliefs start to emerge. This work will strengthen your school improvement plan by helping you identify goals and objectives to fulfill your mission. Having witnessed some of the excellent work at ISD, we know this is possible. When you feel you have conducted this work you may contact the CEASD accreditation chair to request full accreditation when completed.

- *Implement the School Improvement Plan*

When CEASD grants accreditation to a school, it does so with the understanding that the school will make a good faith effort to implement the School Improvement Plan that served as one of the bases for accreditation.

- *Conduct Periodic Reviews of the School Improvement Plan*

While CEASD does not "collect" evidence of the school's annual review of the School Improvement Plan, the school is expected to conduct periodic reviews of its Plan. The purpose of the periodic reviews is to ensure that progress is being made in implementing the Plan, to update and revise the Plan as needed, and to pause to celebrate successes. The school should keep records of what transpired during each review such as meeting agendas, minutes, documented changes to the Plan, and summaries of results of the assessments being used to measure progress toward achieving the objectives. Documentation will be required by the next Visiting Team.

- **Prepare for Reaccreditation**

At the beginning of the next cycle of the school's accreditation term, begin a new self-study in preparation for the visit of the next Visiting Team. CEASD is on a five year cycle but will follow the cycle of the regional accreditation body if joint visits are initiated.

Conclusion

Once again, on behalf of entire CEASD Team, I would like to extend our thanks for your hospitality. You made each of us feel welcomed, and it was wonderful to be a part of this campus community for the visit. You let us observe your teaching, answered our questions, and shared your students with us in an atmosphere of respect and thoughtfulness

We congratulate Illinois School for the Deaf for their commitment to school improvement and the accomplishments they have met so far in the CEASD process. We wish Illinois School for the Deaf much success in their continual work in implementing their comprehensive school improvement plan and hope that our recommendations will be helpful in ensuring a positive future for Illinois School for the Deaf.

We observed many positive aspects of the school. The facilities are superbly maintained, the dorms are inviting, and the support services that are offered, including transition services, are bountiful and meet the needs of the whole child. The instructional program is very focused on the individual needs of each child and this was reflected in almost every interview and focus group in which we participated. Innovative strategies and instructional programs are used.

There have been many changes in top leadership as well as outside criticisms over the past few years and it appears that the smaller ISD community has become much closer because of this. The students and staff are very committed to ISD and the families from the nearby area adore the school. Because of this though, there has been a lack of self-assessment. The current beliefs do not reflect the changes in student population and individual instructional needs that have happened over the last eight years. The current mission, philosophy, and beliefs are not reflective of what is happening in the school, leading to a disconnect from the larger Deaf Community. Stakeholder communication has broken down and bridges need to be mended.

Because there has been so much criticism from outside sources, the school staff have understandably needed to be their own cheerleaders. In doing so though, there has been a missed opportunity to use the accreditation process to redefine the school. A process should be established to review the mission, vision, and beliefs through the lens of: What do we do? How do we do it? Whom do we do it for? And what value are we bringing? Bottom Line: What is ISD's reason for being?

Going through this process allows for a mutual understanding of the purpose of the school and allows all stakeholders to comprehend the reasons behind some of the structures and instructional strategies that are used at ISD. The majority of the staff support what they are doing but aren't able to verbalize why things are in place without becoming defensive.

Our team is hopeful that by looking at updating your current mission, vision, and belief statements you will be able to emphasize the positive shifts that have taken place as your student population has changed over the last several years. Helping the community to understand how ISD is meeting the individual needs of these students while allowing language access for all will hopefully lead to better collaboration with a larger group of stakeholders.

ANALYSIS OF STANDARDS

STANDARD	MET	NOT MET
Standard 1 Philosophy/Mission		Standard-Stakeholders give input into the development of the school's philosophy/mission and understand and accept it. This document is aligned with the community served and is reviewed periodically by stakeholder representatives.
Standard 2 Governance and Leadership	X	
Standard 3 School Improvement Planning and Viability	X	
Standard 4 Finances	X	
Standard 5 Facilities	X	
Standard 6 School Climate and Organization	X	
Standard 7 Health and Safety	X	
Standard 8 Educational Program	X	
Standard 9 Assessment and Evidence of Student Learning	X	
Standard 10 Student Services	X	
Standard 11 Student Life, Student Activities and Residential	X	
Standard 12 Learning Resources and Information Technology	X	