



# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **School District of South Milwaukee 1<sup>st</sup> in Southeastern Wisconsin to be Awarded AdvancED School System Accreditation**

(South Milwaukee, WI – August 14, 2014) – Superintendent Dr. Rita Olson recently announced that the School District of South Milwaukee has earned recognition as the first school district in southeastern Wisconsin to be awarded School System Accreditation from the AdvancED Accreditation Commission. This distinction by the most rigorous accreditation organization in the United States means that the School District of South Milwaukee and all of its schools meet international standards of quality and demonstrate a commitment to excellence.

The accreditation process involves three ongoing components: 1) meeting high quality standards; 2) implementing a continuous process of improvement; and 3) engaging in quality assurance through internal and external review. The system's accreditation is for a five-year term with regular monitoring of progress and reporting occurring during the term.

“School System Accreditation, as conferred by the AdvancED North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement, recognizes the School District of South Milwaukee for its commitment to excellence, openness to external review and feedback, and desire to be the best we can be on behalf of the students we serve,” shared Dr. Olson.

Dr. Mark Elgart, President/CEO of AdvancED, stated, “AdvancED School System Accreditation is a rigorous process that focuses the entire school system on the primary goal of creating lifelong learners. The School District of South Milwaukee is to be commended for engaging in this process and demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement.”

Parents and interested community members can learn more about the System Accreditation Process at [www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org).

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### **About the School District of South Milwaukee**

South Milwaukee High School has been accredited by the North Central Association since 1909. The District boasts award-winning elementary schools, including a three-time winner of the Wisconsin Promise School of Recognition. The Wisconsin Character Education Partnership (WCEP) selected the

district's schools as *2013 Wisconsin Promising Practices Award Winners* because of their emphasis on character education. *Milwaukee Magazine* (April 2012) ranked the South Milwaukee School District as the #1 "After-School All Star" and South Milwaukee High School as #2 "OVERPERFORMING High School." South Milwaukee seniors earned more than \$1.5 million in scholarships in 2013. The district's "Job-Ready" Certification Program is endorsed by the South Milwaukee Chamber of Commerce.

The School District of South Milwaukee is comprised of four elementary schools serving students in grades 4K-5, a middle school serving grades 6-8, and a high school serving grades 9-12. In addition to comprehensive curricular offerings, each school is supported by guidance counselors, opportunities for gifted and talented students, an alcohol and drug abuse prevention program, and special education services. The needs of 3,300 students are met by approximately 250 professional staff and 100 support staff members. The District is governed by a seven member elected School Board and supports its programs with an annual budget of approximately \$33.5 million dollars.

The School District of South Milwaukee engages staff, students, parents, and community members annually in a dialogue about how to create the best possible future for students. The mission, vision, and core beliefs are reviewed and action plans are created to help meet goals for curriculum expectations, character education, community engagement and capital effectiveness.

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#### **About AdvancED and NCA CASI**

Dedicated to advancing excellence in education through accreditation, research, and professional services, AdvancED is the world's largest education community, serving and engaging 30,000 public and private schools and school systems in more than 70 countries and serving over 16 million students. AdvancED is the parent organization of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI).

NCA CASI is a non-governmental, voluntary association of nearly 10,000 public and private elementary and secondary schools throughout the world.