

Report of the External Review Team for Dodge County School System

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Introduction

The External Review is an integral component of AdvancED Performance Accreditation and provides the institution with a comprehensive evaluation guided by the results of diagnostic instruments, in-depth review of data and documentation, and the professional judgment of a team of qualified and highly trained evaluators. A series of diagnostic instruments examines the impact of teaching and learning on student performance, the capacity of leadership to effect continuous improvement, and the degree to which the institution optimizes its use of available resources to facilitate and support student success. The results of this evaluation are represented in the Index of Education Quality (IEQ™) and through critical observations, namely, Powerful Practices, Opportunities for Improvement, and Improvement Priorities.

Accreditation is a voluntary method of quality assurance developed more than 100 years ago by American universities and secondary schools and designed primarily to distinguish schools adhering to a set of educational standards. Today the accreditation process is used at all levels of education and is recognized for its ability to effectively drive student performance and continuous improvement in education.

Institutions seeking to gain or retain accreditation must meet AdvancED Standards specific to their institution type, demonstrate acceptable levels of student performance and the continuous improvement of student performance, and provide evidence of stakeholder engagement and satisfaction. The power of AdvancED Performance Accreditation lies in the connections and linkages between and among the conditions, processes, and practices within a system that impact student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Standards help to delineate what matters. They provide a common language through which an education community can engage in conversations about educational improvement, system effectiveness, and achievement. They serve as a foundation for planning and implementing improvement strategies and activities and for measuring success. AdvancED Standards were developed by a committee comprised of talented educators and leaders from the fields of practice, research, and policy who applied professional wisdom, deep knowledge of effective practice, and the best available research to craft a set of robust standards that define institutional quality and guide continuous improvement. Prior to implementation, an internationally recognized panel of experts in testing and measurement, teacher quality, and education research reviewed the standards and provided feedback, guidance and endorsement.

The AdvancED External Review Team uses AdvancED Standards, associated indicators and criteria related to student performance and stakeholder engagement to guide its evaluation. The Team examines adherence to standards as well as how the institution functions as a whole and embodies the practices and characteristics expected of an accredited institution. The Standards, indicators and related criteria are evaluated using indicator-specific performance levels. The Team rates each indicator and criterion on a scale of 1 to 4. The final scores assigned to the indicators and criteria represent the average of the External Review Team members' individual ratings.

The External Review is the hallmark of AdvancED Performance Accreditation. It energizes and equips the institution's leadership and stakeholders to achieve higher levels of performance and address those areas that

may be hindering efforts to reach desired performance levels. External Review is a rigorous process that includes the in-depth examination of evidence and relevant data, interviews with all stakeholder groups, and extensive observations of learning, instruction, and operations.

Use of Diagnostic Tools

A key to examining the institution is the design and use of diagnostic tools that reveal the effectiveness with which an institution creates conditions and implements processes and practices that impact student performance and success. In preparation for the External Review the institution conducted a Self Assessment that applied the standards and criteria for accreditation. The institution provided evidence to support its conclusions vis a vis organizational effectiveness in ensuring acceptable and improving levels of student performance.

- an indicator-based tool that connects the specific elements of the criteria to evidence gathered by the team;
- a student performance analytic that examines the quality of assessment instruments used by the institution, the integrity of the administration of the assessment to students, the quality of the learning results including the impact of instruction on student learning at all levels of performance, and the equity of learning that examines the results of student learning across all demographics;
- a stakeholder engagement instrument that examines the fidelity of administration and results of perception surveys seeking the perspective of students, parents, and teachers;
- a state-of-the-art, learner-centric observation instrument, the Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™) that quantifies students' engagement, attitudes and dispositions organized in 7 environments: Equitable Learning, High Expectations, Supportive Learning, Active Learning, Progress Monitoring and Feedback, Well-Managed Learning, and Digital Learning. All evaluators must be trained, reach acceptable levels of inter-rater reliability, and certified to use this research-based and validated instrument.

The External Review Team's findings and critical observations are shared in this report through the IEQ™ results as well as through the identification of Powerful Practices, Opportunities for Improvement, and Improvement Priorities.

Index of Education Quality

In the past, accreditation reviews resulted in an accreditation recommendation on status. Labels such as advised, warned, probation, or all clear were used to describe the status of a school relative to the AdvancED Standards and other evaluative criteria. Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, AdvancED introduced a new framework to describe the results of an accreditation review. Consistent with the modern focus of accreditation on continuous improvement with an emphasis on student success, AdvancED introduced an innovative and state-of-the-art framework for diagnosing and revealing institutional performance called the Index of Education Quality (IEQ™). The IEQ™ comprises three domains of performance: 1) the impact of teaching and learning on student performance; 2) the capacity of leadership to guide the institution toward the achievement of its

vision and strategic priorities; and 3) use of resources to support and optimize learning. Therefore, your institution will no longer receive an accreditation status. Instead, your institution will be accredited with an IEQ™ score. In the case where an institution is failing to meet established criteria, the accreditation will be under review thereby requiring frequent monitoring and demonstrated improvement.

The three domains of performance are derived from the AdvancED Standards and associated indicators, the analysis of student performance, and the engagement and feedback of stakeholders. Within each domain institutions can connect to the individual performance levels that are applied in support of the AdvancED Standards and evaluative criteria. Within the performance levels are detailed descriptors that serve as a valuable source of guidance for continuous improvement. Upon review of the findings in this report and building on their Powerful Practices, institutional leaders should work with their staff to review and understand the evidence and rationale for each Opportunity for Improvement and Improvement Priority as well as the corresponding pathway to improvement described in the performance levels of the selected indicator(s).

The IEQ™ provides a new framework that recognizes and supports the journey of continuous improvement. An institution's IEQ™ is the starting point for continuous improvement. Subsequent actions for improvement and evidence that these have had a positive impact will raise the institution's IEQ™ score.

Benchmark Data

Throughout this report, AdvancED provides benchmark data for each indicator and for each component of the evaluative criteria. These benchmark data represent the overall averages across the entire AdvancED Network for your institution type. Thus, the AdvancED Network average provides an extraordinary opportunity for institutions to understand their context on a global scale rather than simply compared to a state, region, or country.

It is important to understand that the AdvancED Network averages are provided primarily to serve as a tool for continuous improvement and not as a measure of quality in and of itself. Benchmark data, when wisely employed, have a unique capacity to help institutions identify and leverage their strengths and areas of improvement to significantly impact student learning.

Powerful Practices

A key to continuous improvement is the institution's ability to learn from and build upon its most effective and impactful practices. Such practices serve as critical leverage points necessary to guide, support and ensure continuous improvement. A hallmark of the accreditation process is its commitment to identifying with evidence, the conditions, processes and practices that are having the most significant impact on student performance and institutional effectiveness. Throughout this report, the External Review Team has captured and defined Powerful Practices. These noteworthy practices are essential to the institution's effort to continue its journey of improvement.

Opportunities for Improvement

Every institution can and must improve no matter what levels of performance it has achieved in its past. During the process of the review, the External Review Team identified areas of improvement where the institution is meeting the expectations for accreditation but in the professional judgment of the Team these are Opportunities for Improvement that should be considered by the institution. Using the criteria described in the corresponding rubric(s) to the Opportunity for Improvement, the institution can identify what elements of practice must be addressed to guide the improvement.

Improvement Priorities

The expectations for accreditation are clearly defined in a series of the rubric-based AdvancED Standards, indicators and evaluative criteria focused on the impact of teaching and learning on student performance, the capacity of the institution to be guided by effective leadership, and the allocation and use of resources to support student learning. As such, the External Review Team reviewed, analyzed and deliberated over significant bodies of evidence provided by the institution and gathered by the Team during the process. In the professional judgment of the Team as well as the results of the diagnostic process, the Team defined, with rationale, Improvement Priorities. The priorities must be addressed in a timely manner by the institution to retain and improve their accreditation performance as represented by the IEQ™. Improvement Priorities serve as the basis for the follow-up and monitoring process that will begin upon conclusion of the External Review. The institution must complete and submit an Accreditation Progress Report within two years of the External Review. The report must include actions taken by the institution to address the Improvement Priorities along with the corresponding evidence and results. The IEQ™ will be recalculated by AdvancED upon review of the evidence and results associated with the Improvement Priorities.

The Review

Dodge County Schools, a public school system centered in Eastman, Georgia, hosted an AdvancED External Review from January 31-February 3, 2016. The team worked within the system for four days. All schools were visited and received eleot™ observations.

Prior to the visit there was one phone conference between the Superintendent and Lead Evaluator. There were also multiple communications using varied methods between the Curriculum Director, Lead Evaluator and Associate Lead Evaluator.

There were five members on the team. Prior to the team arriving on-site there were two organizational internal phone conferences and additional other communications. The phone conferences addressed logistical components of the review (assignments for standard leads, etc.) as well as introduced the team members to known information about the district. As evidence became available by the school system, team members began an immediate review.

While on-site the team worked from the school district main office, within all district schools and from the lodging facilities. The daytime schedule included presentations by the Superintendent and School District

Accreditation Team, interviews with the Superintendent, all School Board Members and individual school stakeholders, and school visits. The team separated in order to interview School Board Members and stakeholders separately as well as for school visits. All five district schools were visited including the pre-kindergarten site, which is part of one of an elementary school but located at the school district office, and the alternative school.

Off-site work during the visit consisted of team working sessions each night at the lodging facilities with ending times from 9 pm to 12:30 am. The school district provided the necessary support equipment including technology (projector, printer and internet) and necessary meeting supplies (chart paper, markers, etc.).

The External Review Team for AdvancED is thankful to the school system for their hospitality, transparency and commitment to the continuous improvement/accreditation process. It was clearly evident the amount of work that was involved in hosting this external review accreditation visit, including an opening dinner, gathering and providing evidences, creating and delivering presentations, making school board members and school stakeholders available, as well as the logistics of travel, lodging, meals, etc. As the new upcoming AdvancED standards are ever more embedded into the natural education process of the school system, much of the preparation for the next visit will evolve into the natural order of teaching and learning. The district is encouraged to continue to align their education for students within the standards of AdvancED Accreditation so as to continuously improve to provide students the highest quality education in an ever changing world.

Stakeholders were interviewed by members of the External Review Team to gain their perspectives on topics relevant to the institution's effectiveness and student performance. The feedback gained through the stakeholder interviews was considered with other evidences and data to support the findings of the External Review. The following chart depicts the numbers of persons interviewed representative of various stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder Interviewed	Number
Superintendents	1
Board Members	7
Administrators	21
Instructional Staff	85
Support Staff	28
Students	132
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	63
Total	337

Results

Teaching and Learning Impact

The impact of teaching and learning on student achievement is the primary expectation of every institution. The relationship between teacher and learner must be productive and effective for student success. The impact of teaching and learning includes an analysis of student performance results, instructional quality, learner and family engagement, support services for student learning, curriculum quality and efficacy, and college and career readiness data. These are all key indicators of an institution's impact on teaching and learning.

A high-quality and effective educational system has services, practices, and curriculum that ensure teacher effectiveness. Research has shown that an effective teacher is a key factor for learners to achieve their highest potential and be prepared for a successful future. The positive influence an effective educator has on learning is a combination of "student motivation, parental involvement" and the "quality of leadership" (Ding & Sherman, 2006). Research also suggests that quality educators must have a variety of quantifiable and intangible characteristics that include strong communication skills, knowledge of content, and knowledge of how to teach the content. The institution's curriculum and instructional program should develop learners' skills that lead them to think about the world in complex ways (Conley, 2007) and prepare them to have knowledge that extends beyond the academic areas. In order to achieve these goals, teachers must have pedagogical skills as well as content knowledge (Baumert, J., Kunter, M., Blum, W., Brunner, M., Voxx, T., Jordan, A., Klusmann, U., Krauss, S., Nuebrand, M., & Tsai, Y., 2010). The acquisition and refinement of teachers' pedagogical skills occur most effectively through collaboration and professional development. These are a "necessary approach to improving teacher quality" (Colbert, J., Brown, R., Choi, S., & Thomas, S., 2008). According to Marks, Louis, and Printy (2002), staff members who engage in "active organizational learning also have higher achieving students in contrast to those that do not." Likewise, a study conducted by Horng, Klasik, and Loeb (2010), concluded that leadership in effective institutions "supports teachers by creating collaborative work environments." Institutional leaders have a responsibility to provide experiences, resources, and time for educators to engage in meaningful professional learning that promotes student learning and educator quality.

AdvancED has found that a successful institution implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning. The curriculum provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process. Teachers provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. Teachers give students feedback to improve their performance.

Institutions with strong improvement processes move beyond anxiety about the current reality and focus on priorities and initiatives for the future. Using results, i.e., data and other information, to guide continuous improvement is key to an institution's success. A study conducted by Datnow, Park, and Wohlstetter (2007) from the Center on Educational Governance at the University of Southern California indicated that data can shed light on existing areas of strength and weakness and also guide improvement strategies in a systematic and strategic manner (Dembosky, J., Pane, J., Barney, H., & Christina, R., 2005). The study also identified six

key strategies that performance-driven systems use: (1) building a foundation for data-driven decision making, (2) establishing a culture of data use and continuous improvement, (3) investing in an information management system, (4) selecting the right data, (5) building institutional capacity for data-driven decision making, and (6) analyzing and acting on data to improve performance. Other research studies, though largely without comparison groups, suggested that data-driven decision-making has the potential to increase student performance (Alwin, 2002; Doyle, 2003; Lafee, 2002; McIntire, 2002).

Through ongoing evaluation of educational institutions, AdvancED has found that a successful institution uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures. The system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine strategies to improve student performance. The institution implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the school with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained, and the institution demonstrates progress in improving student performance and institution effectiveness.

Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning

The system's curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning across all grades and courses.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
3.1	The system's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level.	3.00	2.68
3.2	Curriculum, instruction, and assessment throughout the system are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	3.00	2.50
3.3	Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	3.00	2.55
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	3.00	2.73
3.5	The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.	2.00	2.57
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	2.40	2.48
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	3.00	2.60

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
3.8	The system and all of its schools engage families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keep them informed of their children's learning progress.	2.80	2.92
3.9	The system designs and evaluates structures in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the student's school who supports that student's educational experience.	3.00	2.40
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	2.20	2.53
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	2.20	2.64
3.12	The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	3.00	2.66

Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement

The system implements a comprehensive assessment system that generates a range of data about student learning and system effectiveness and uses the results to guide continuous improvement.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
5.1	The system establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	3.00	2.66
5.2	Professional and support staff continuously collect, analyze and apply learning from a range of data sources, including comparison and trend data about student learning, instruction, program evaluation, and organizational conditions that support learning.	3.00	2.41
5.3	Throughout the system professional and support staff are trained in the interpretation and use of data.	2.00	2.15
5.4	The school system engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	3.00	2.46
5.5	System and school leaders monitor and communicate comprehensive information about student learning, school performance, and the achievement of system and school improvement goals to stakeholders.	3.00	2.72

Student Performance Diagnostic

The quality of assessments used to measure student learning, assurance that assessments are administered with procedural fidelity and appropriate accommodations, assessment results that reflect the quality of

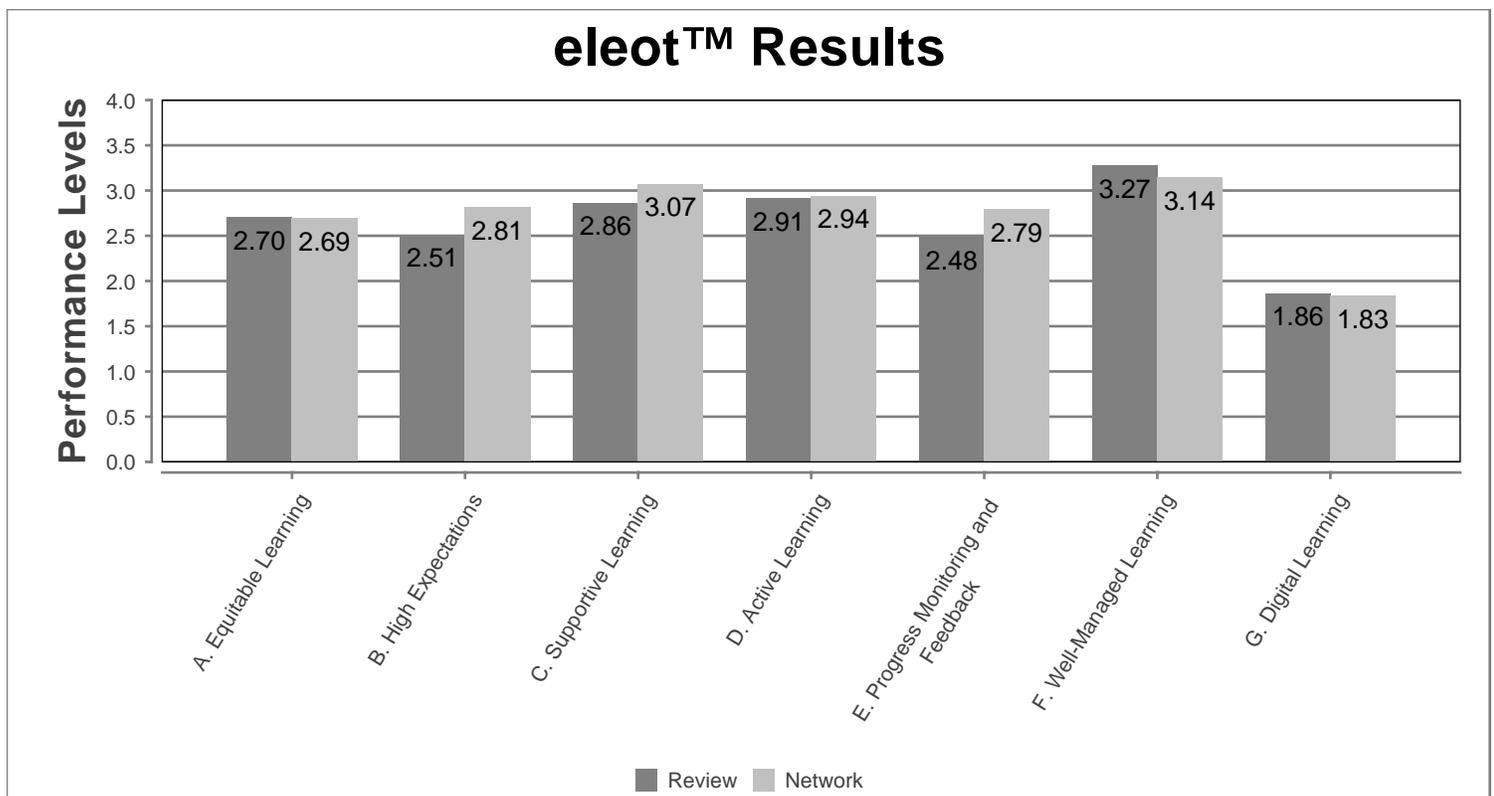
learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important indicators for evaluating overall student performance.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Assessment Quality	3.00	3.28
Test Administration	4.00	3.50
Equity of Learning	3.00	2.44
Quality of Learning	3.00	2.97

Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™)

Every learner should have access to an effective learning environment in which she/he has multiple opportunities to be successful. The Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™) measures the extent to which learners are in an environment that is equitable, supportive, and well-managed. An environment where high expectations are the norm and active learning takes place. It measures whether learners' progress is monitored and feedback is provided and the extent to which technology is leveraged for learning.

Observations of classrooms or other learning venues are conducted for a minimum of 20 minutes per observation. Every member of the External Review Team is required to be trained and pass a certification exam that establishes inter-rater reliability. Team members conduct multiple observations during the review process and provide ratings on 30 items based on a four-point scale (4=very evident; 3=evident; 2=somewhat evident; and 1=not observed). The following provides the aggregate average score across multiple observations for each of the seven learning environments included in eleot™ as well as benchmark results across the AdvancED Network.



There were 50 classrooms observations conducted during the on-site review covering all schools within Dodge County Public Schools. The learning environment ratings as determined by eleot observations from highest to lowest and in alignment with the AdvancED Network averages were as follows:

Domain 6: Well-Managed Learning Environment - Rating 3.27; .14 above the AdvancEd Network average.

Domain 4: Active Learning Environment - Rating 2.91; .03 below the AdvancEd Network average.
Domain 3: Supportive Learning Environment - Rating 2.86; .20 below the AdvancEd Network average.
Domain 1: Equitable Learning Environment - Rating 2.70; .01 above the AdvancEd Network average.
Domain 2: High Expectations Environment - Rating 2.51; .3 below the AdvancEd Network average.
Domain 5: Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment - Rating 2.48; .31 below the AdvancEd Network average.
Domain 7: Digital Learning Environment - Rating 1.86; .04 above the AdvancEd Network average.

Throughout the classrooms within the school district the learning environments were well-managed. The teachers had clear command of classroom management processes. Transitioning from one component of a lesson plan to another, which often involved student movement around the classroom, was performed with ease. Behavior issues were non-existent during classroom observations. These successes in establishing a well-managed learning environment led to this Domain (number 6) earning the highest eleot™ rating (3.27).

The Response to Intervention (RTI) processes within the district were evident throughout all schools. The school-based staff noted that the Rtl District Coordinator is among the most active, if not the most active district support staff personnel with in-depth active engagement in the schools. The fact that Domain 1, Equitable Learning Environment, was above the AdvancEd Network average supports the efforts of this system initiative.

Technology use was evident throughout the school system. Teachers were using interactive whiteboards for large group instruction as an example. Students had opportunities to interact with desktop computers in many classrooms. Interviews with district and school-based level staff provided evidence for plans to continue to improve all components of technology use for students to include infrastructure. The current implementation of technology within the school system resulted in eleot observation ratings being above (.04) the AdvancEd Network average.

As part of continuous improvement the school system should consider their eleot™ ratings and the AdvancEd Network averages for analysis in improvement. For example, the Well-Managed Learning Environment (Domain 6) was the highest rating for the district and above the AdvancEd Network average (+.14). The lowest eleot™ rating domain (number 7) Digital Learning Environment was above the AdvancEd Network average (+.04). Additionally, 5 of the 7 domains (High Expectations Environment/-.30, Supportive Learning Environment/-.20, Active Learning Environment/-.03, Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment/-.31 and Well-Managed Learning Environment/-.14) were all below the AdvancEd Network average. These results reveal the following:

1. The school district's domains that are below the AdvancEd Network average stand to improve to at minimum reach the average;
2. Even above the AdvancEd Network average the Digital Learning Environment has room to improve as compared to the other domains within the district;
3. The domains that are above the AdvancEd Network average at .01 (Domain 1/Equitable Learning Environment), .04 (Domain 7/Digital Learning Environment) and .14 (Domain 6/Well-Managed Learning Environment) through the model of continuous improvement should continue to increase and further separate

their levels above the AdvancEd Network average.

Within the model of continuous improvement all systems should look to improve within all domains. The school system can use the eleot™ ratings as part of making future decisions for their teaching and learning direction.

eleot™ Data Summary

A. Equitable Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.40	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	18.00%	30.00%	26.00%	26.00%
2.	3.28	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	36.00%	58.00%	4.00%	2.00%
3.	3.22	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	32.00%	58.00%	10.00%	0.00%
4.	1.92	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	2.00%	22.00%	42.00%	34.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.70						

B. High Expectations			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.88	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	14.00%	66.00%	14.00%	6.00%
2.	2.78	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	16.00%	50.00%	30.00%	4.00%
3.	1.74	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	4.00%	10.00%	42.00%	44.00%
4.	2.66	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	16.00%	38.00%	42.00%	4.00%
5.	2.50	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	12.00%	36.00%	42.00%	10.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.51						

C. Supportive Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.00	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	22.00%	58.00%	18.00%	2.00%
2.	3.08	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	20.00%	68.00%	12.00%	0.00%
3.	3.02	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	26.00%	54.00%	16.00%	4.00%
4.	2.80	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	22.00%	46.00%	22.00%	10.00%
5.	2.42	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	10.00%	38.00%	36.00%	16.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.86						

D. Active Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.08	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	28.00%	56.00%	12.00%	4.00%
2.	2.54	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	12.00%	46.00%	26.00%	16.00%
3.	3.12	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	36.00%	40.00%	24.00%	0.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.91						

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.26	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	0.00%	44.00%	38.00%	18.00%
2.	2.58	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	10.00%	46.00%	36.00%	8.00%
3.	2.86	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	12.00%	64.00%	22.00%	2.00%
4.	2.24	Understands how her/his work is assessed	10.00%	32.00%	30.00%	28.00%
5.	2.48	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	10.00%	46.00%	26.00%	18.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.48						

F. Well-Managed Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.42	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	48.00%	46.00%	6.00%	0.00%
2.	3.38	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	48.00%	42.00%	10.00%	0.00%
3.	3.26	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	54.00%	20.00%	24.00%	2.00%
4.	2.80	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	38.00%	24.00%	18.00%	20.00%
5.	3.48	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	58.00%	32.00%	10.00%	0.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.27						

G. Digital Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.00	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	14.00%	24.00%	10.00%	52.00%
2.	1.70	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	6.00%	16.00%	20.00%	58.00%
3.	1.88	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	4.00%	28.00%	20.00%	48.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 1.86						

Findings

Improvement Priority

Develop and implement a system level instructional support process for student learning at all levels to include but not be limited to teacher collaboration, common grading, common assessments, student exemplars, specific student feedback, authentic assessment, real-life experiences, differentiated instruction and data-based instructional decision-making.

(Indicator 3.5, Indicator 3.6, Indicator 3.10)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.5

Evidence and Rationale

In the District Accreditation Report, interviews with school and system level staff, the district's strategic plan and classroom observations, the team witnessed well-managed learning environments. In return, the students were well behaved and respectful. Classroom rituals and routines were clearly evident. The evidences revealed a lack of (1) collaboration among instructional staff, (2) common grading practices, (3) common assessments, (4) student exemplars, (5) specific student feedback, (6) authentic assessment, (7) real-life experiences, (8) differentiated instruction and (9) data-based instructional decision-making. Developing a system level process for expectations that teachers will collaborate in order to regularly plan vertically and horizontally will provide students in similar classes and/or grade levels assurances that the quality of education will be equitable. Implementing common expectations as evidenced by items such as common course descriptions, course syllabi, pacing guides and a clearly defined grading process better ensures the attainment of content knowledge and skills will be evaluated consistently across grade levels and courses.

Improvement Priority

Produce and enact a professional development plan for classroom educators for coordinated horizontal and vertical instructional strategies to include but not be limited to teacher collaboration, common grading, common assessments, student exemplars, specific student feedback, authentic assessment, real-life experiences, differentiated instruction and data-based instructional decision-making.

(Indicator 3.11, Indicator 5.3, SP4. Equity of Learning)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 5.3

Evidence and Rationale

In the District Accreditation Report, interviews with school and system level staff, the district's strategic plan and classroom observations, the team witnessed caring educators with a strong desire to provide students a high-quality education meeting their individual needs. The evidences revealed a lack of (1) collaboration among instructional staff, (2) common grading practices, (3) common assessments, (4) student exemplars, (5) specific student feedback, (6) authentic assessment, (7) real-life experiences, (8) differentiated instruction and (9) data-based instructional decision-making. There exists an emphasis of professional development facilitated by organizations external to the school district. While these professional development opportunities can be valuable as a means of supporting this and other systems simultaneously, should they not meet the specific needs for this school system; additional support must be obtained. Where there is expertise internally, it is optimal to use it as it builds capacity. Otherwise, the professional development support offered by the external organization(s) currently used must be negotiated to include topics specific to the needs of the district; otherwise, the school district should research other available service providers. The options for professional development should result from a needs assessment that will result in topics including, but not limited to, those determined by the External Review Team (exemplars of student work, providing specific feedback to students, authentic assessment, real-life connections/experiences, differentiated instruction and data-based instructional decision-making).

Opportunity For Improvement

Develop and implement a formal two-way process that ensures that all stakeholders within the district have an opportunity to provide a greater amount and more meaningful input, feedback and recommendations to support student success.

(Indicator 3.8)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.8

Evidence and Rationale

Interviews with district staff, school staff and stakeholders revealed that there are numerous ways that the district and schools communicate to the community and parents. Stakeholders stated that forms of communication include open houses, agendas, progress reports, parent conferences, newsletters, surveys, local newspaper articles, websites, and One Call. These current processes are implemented more so in a one-

way format from district/school to stakeholder. A more consistent two-way communication process to solicit significant input and constructive feedback from all stakeholders will enhance and empower parent and families and further enrich the district/school culture.

Leadership Capacity

The capacity of leadership to ensure an institution's progress towards its stated objectives is an essential element of organizational effectiveness. An institution's leadership capacity includes the fidelity and commitment to its institutional purpose and direction, the effectiveness of governance and leadership to enable the institution to realize its stated objectives, the ability to engage and involve stakeholders in meaningful and productive ways, and the capacity to enact strategies to improve results of student learning.

Purpose and direction are critical to successful institutions. A study conducted in 2010 by the London-based Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) reported that "in addition to improving performance, the research indicates that having a sense of shared purpose also improves employee engagement" and that "lack of understanding around purpose can lead to demotivation and emotional detachment, which in turn lead to a disengaged and dissatisfied workforce."

AdvancED has found through its evaluation of best practices in more than 32,000 institutions around the world that a successful institution commits to a shared purpose and direction and establishes expectations for student learning that are aligned with the institutions' vision and supported by internal and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and overall institution effectiveness.

Governance and leadership are key factors in raising institutional quality. Leaders, both local administrators and governing boards/authorities, are responsible for ensuring all learners achieve while also managing many other facets of an institution. Institutions that function effectively do so without tension between the governing board/authority, administrators, and educators and have established relationships of mutual respect and a shared vision (Feuerstein & Opfer, 1998). In a meta-analysis of educational institution leadership research, Leithwood and Sun (2012) found that leaders (school and governing boards/authority) can significantly "influence school conditions through their achievement of a shared vision and agreed-on goals for the organization, their high expectations and support of organizational members, and their practices that strengthen school culture and foster collaboration within the organization." With the increasing demands of accountability placed on institutional leaders, leaders who empower others need considerable autonomy and involve their communities to attain continuous improvement goals. Leaders who engage in such practices experience a greater level of success (Fink & Brayman, 2006). Similarly, governing boards/authorities that focus on policy-making are more likely to allow institutional leaders the autonomy to make decisions that impact teachers and students and are less responsive to politicization than boards/authorities that respond to vocal citizens (Greene, 1992).

AdvancED's experience, gained through evaluation of best practices, has indicated that a successful institution has leaders who are advocates for the institution's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction and allocate resources to implement curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders encourage collaboration and shared responsibility for school improvement among stakeholders. The institution's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation.

Standard 1 - Purpose and Direction

The system maintains and communicates at all levels of the organization a purpose and direction for continuous improvement that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
1.1	The system engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a system-wide purpose for student success.	3.00	2.62
1.2	The system ensures that each school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	3.00	2.63
1.3	The school leadership and staff at all levels of the system commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking, and life skills.	3.00	2.89
1.4	Leadership at all levels of the system implement a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	3.00	2.61

Standard 2 - Governance and Leadership

The system operates under governance and leadership that promote and support student performance and system effectiveness.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
2.1	The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the system and its schools.	3.00	2.95
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	3.00	2.92
2.3	The governing body ensures that the leadership at all levels has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.	3.00	3.12
2.4	Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction.	3.00	2.97
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	3.00	2.67

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice in all areas of the system and improved student success.	3.00	2.76

Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic

Stakeholder Feedback is the third of three primary areas of evaluation in AdvancED's Performance Accreditation model. The AdvancED surveys (student, parent, and teacher) are directly correlated to the AdvancED Standards and indicators. They provide not only direct information about stakeholder satisfaction but also become a source of data for triangulation by the External Review Team as it evaluates indicators.

Institutions are asked to collect and analyze stakeholder feedback data, then submit the data and the analyses to the External Review Team for review. The External Review Team evaluates the quality of the administration of the surveys by institution, survey results, and the degree to which the institution analyzed and acted on the results.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Questionnaire Administration	4.00	3.36
Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	4.00	3.04

Findings

Opportunity For Improvement

Develop and implement a process for meaningful and consistent engagement with all district schools to ensure visibility, guidance, and direction.

(Indicator 2.4, Indicator 2.6)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 2.6

Evidence and Rationale

Interviews with school staff revealed a belief that the role of district personnel is limited to a support function of a macro level. There was a clear desire for more active engagement and presence from key district personnel to ensure a greater sense of direction and to validate progress toward goals similar to those provided by the Response to Intervention Coordinator and the Director of Technology. The strategic direction for each school should be crystallized through a more dynamic, hands-on relationship between district personnel and classroom teachers.

Powerful Practice

There exists a culture of caring, empathy and dedication among teachers and staff.

(Indicator 2.4, Indicator 3.7)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 2.4

Evidence and Rationale

Interviews with school-based staff and stakeholders, and classroom observations reveal the altruistic feelings by teachers and staff for the academic and social-emotional well-being of children. There are clear processes in place to support children, and the personnel facilitating the support clearly have the best interest of the children in mind. Whereas processes are not yet in place for academic collaboration among educators, staff members are spending time outside of their contracts to organize themselves to best serve children. Additionally, educators spend time off contract during the summer months for professional development to be best prepared to meet the needs of the student population. There is an affinity for children to be successful in academics and in life.

Resource Utilization

The use and distribution of resources must be aligned and supportive of the needs of an institution and the students served. Institutions must ensure that resources are aligned with the stated mission and are distributed equitably so that the needs of students are adequately and effectively addressed. The utilization of resources includes an examination of the allocation and use of resources, the equity of resource distribution to need, the ability of the institution to ensure appropriate levels of funding and sustainability of resources, as well as evidence of long-range capital and resource planning effectiveness.

Institutions, regardless of their size, need access to sufficient resources and systems of support to be able to engage in sustained and meaningful efforts that result in a continuous improvement cycle. Indeed, a study conducted by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (Pan, D., Rudo, Z., Schneider, C., & Smith-Hansen, L., 2003) "demonstrated a strong relationship between resources and student success... both the level of resources and their explicit allocation seem to affect educational outcomes."

AdvancED has found through its own evaluation of best practices in the more than 32,000 institutions in the AdvancED Network that a successful institution has sufficient human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables students to achieve expectations for student learning, meets special needs, and complies with applicable regulations. The institution employs and allocates staff members who are well qualified for their assignments. The institution provides a safe learning environment for students and staff. The institution provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff members to improve their effectiveness and ensures compliance with applicable governmental regulations.

Standard 4 - Resources and Support Systems

The system has resources and provides services in all schools that support its purpose and direction to ensure success for all students.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
4.1	The system engages in a systematic process to recruit, employ, and retain a sufficient number of qualified professional and support staff to fulfill their roles and responsibilities and support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, and educational programs.	3.00	2.92
4.2	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, educational programs, and system operations.	3.00	2.93
4.3	The system maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	3.00	3.05
4.4	The system demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning in support of the purpose and direction of the system.	3.00	2.63

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
4.5	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of information resources and related personnel to support educational programs throughout the system.	2.80	2.74
4.6	The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	3.00	2.54
4.7	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of support systems to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.	3.00	2.66
4.8	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students.	3.00	2.60

Conclusion

There are three general themes related to organizational effectiveness and student success that emerged during this review.

1. The School Board and Superintendent perform within appropriate roles, responsibilities and guidelines for an effective system-wide purpose to support student success. The School Board knows and understands their roles and does not micromanage the district. The Board Members rely on the Superintendent to administer the school system and align their work strictly through school board policies. The Superintendent has brought stability to the system, whereas there were previously five Superintendents in five years prior to the current Superintendent. The School Board and Superintendent work successfully together to make the process of running the district efficient.
2. There is a culture of caring, empathetic and dedicated teachers and staff. It was clearly evident through eleot classroom observations and interviews with classroom teachers that they altruistically care for the social-emotional and academic well-being of the children in their school.
3. There are well-managed learning environments. As noted above the educators have earned the confidence of the children, and the classroom educators are successfully implementing teaching and learning practices in a manner that promotes and supports increasing student achievement. There are clearly established routines, rituals, transition processes to effectively and efficiently support a variety of different types of learning activities.

A major activity the school system has planned is the implementation of their technology initiatives. The school system is currently performing above the AdvancEd Network average for Digital Learning Environment (1.86 rating, +.04) which is commendable. The system recognizes the work required to continue to be able to provide digital academic experiences to students. The district should remain committed to meeting the goals so as to widen the gap between their Digital Learning Environment rating and the AdvancEd Network average. Additionally, and in alignment with a challenge noted below, the school system should collaborate with the stakeholder community on the implementation of the types of devices that will be supported at schools.

Challenges the School System faces include:

1. Building time into the classroom educator work calendar to promote collaboration between teachers of the same grade level and school, as well as between schools and levels. Outside the box and creative thinking will be required to do this. Identifying and communicating with other districts can provide established practices that can be considered for implementation in part or whole.

This collaborative time will permit teachers the ability to establish needed common grading practices and common assessments that will better organize the consistency of the educational experience for students within the school district, as well as alignment and preparation for state assessments.

2. A professional development plan that includes but is not limited to exemplars, authentic assessment, real-life experiences, differentiated instruction and data-based instructional decision-making. The school system should continue to use services provided by the State of Georgia for professional development, and collaborate with them for professional development needs topics aforementioned and identified through a professional development needs assessment. The system should look internally and externally for other professional develop service providers which may address these needs.

3. Establish regular two-way communication with parent/community stakeholders for meaningful input. The school district has a number of ways to provide information to parent/community stakeholders but is more limited in their process to receive regular input from these same groups. Although the parent/community stakeholder groups report their satisfaction with the school district, effectively increasing the collaborative nature upon which they can provide meaningful feedback and recommendations for consideration to be acted upon will increase their current levels of satisfaction. Greater two way communication will promote parent and stakeholder engagement within the school district.

4. Active engagement of district staff within the system. The schools report their knowledge of district staff personnel, and the workload expected of them. They also noted their need for more in-depth involvement of district personnel for support. The Response to Intervention (RtI) Coordinator has proven to be an established best-practice model for the district, as reported by school staff. An analysis of the nature of the in-depth involvement of this position should occur and taken into consideration as to how other district-level support positions can similarly provide increasing levels of in-depth support.

The school system has been provided Improvement Priorities to develop and implement a system level instructional process and professional development plan to support improved instruction and student learning at all levels to include, but not be limited to, teacher collaboration, common grading practices and common assessments, student exemplars, specific student feedback, authentic assessment, real-life experiences, differentiated instruction and data-based decision-making. This Improvement Priorities can be the driving force for a road map for growth and improvement, to be accompanied by the Opportunities for Improvement and Powerful Practices. The Opportunities for Improvement serve as additional recommendations, and the Powerful Practices are strengths that still require development and growth. In further developing each of these areas the school system will place itself in a position to best assure it is providing its students stronger educational opportunities, experiences and quality.

Improvement Priorities

The institution should use the findings from this review to guide the continuous improvement process. The institution must address the Improvement Priorities listed below:

- Develop and implement a system level instructional support process for student learning at all levels to include but not be limited to teacher collaboration, common grading, common assessments, student exemplars, specific student feedback, authentic assessment, real-life experiences, differentiated instruction and data-based instructional decision-making.

- Produce and enact a professional development plan for classroom educators for coordinated horizontal and vertical instructional strategies to include but not be limited to teacher collaboration, common grading, common assessments, student exemplars, specific student feedback, authentic assessment, real-life experiences, differentiated instruction and data-based instructional decision-making.

Accreditation Recommendation

Index of Education Quality

The Index of Education Quality (IEQ™) provides a holistic measure of overall performance based on a comprehensive set of indicators and evaluative criteria. A formative tool for improvement, it identifies areas of success as well as areas in need of focus.

The IEQ™ comprises three domains: 1) the impact of teaching and learning on student performance; 2) the leadership capacity to govern; and 3) the use of resources and data to support and optimize learning.

The overall and domain scores can range from 100-400. The domain scores are derived from: the AdvancED Standards and indicators ratings; results of the Analysis of Student Performance; and data from Stakeholder Feedback Surveys (students, parents, and staff).

	External Review IEQ Score	AdvancED Network Average
Overall Score	296.10	278.34
Teaching and Learning Impact	283.81	268.94
Leadership Capacity	316.67	292.64
Resource Utilization	297.50	283.23

The IEQ™ results include information about how the institution is performing compared to expected criteria as well as to other institutions in the AdvancED Network. The institution should use the information in this report, including the corresponding performance rubrics, to identify specific areas of improvement.

Consequently, the External Review Team recommends to the AdvancED Accreditation Commission that the institution earn the distinction of accreditation for a five-year term. AdvancED will review the results of the External Review to make a final determination including the appropriate next steps for the institution in response to these findings.

Addenda

Individual Institution Results (Self-reported)

Institution Name	Teaching and Learning Impact	Leadership Capacity	Resource Utilization	Overall IEQ Score
Dodge County Achievement Center	233.33	263.64	242.86	243.59
Dodge County High School	319.05	345.45	314.29	325.64
Dodge County Middle School	261.90	318.18	314.29	287.18
North Dodge Elementary School	285.71	309.09	285.71	292.31
South Dodge Elementary School	280.95	309.09	242.86	282.05

Team Roster

Member	Brief Biography
<p>Dr. Mark Quintana</p>	<p>Dr. Mark Quintana has been a professional in education for 21 years. He has served 18 years in the positions from teacher to Magnet Program Coordinator to district level administrator for Broward County Public Schools, Florida. Broward County Public Schools is the nation's 6th largest school system with approximately 265,000 students and 230 schools. In his last administrative posts, he was second in command for all curriculum and the head of the Office of School Improvement. In the latter position he simultaneously served as the District lead for accreditation. Mark also has 17 years experience working as a college/university adjunct professor, adjunct instructor for online high schools and a consultant. In his full-time work, Mark currently serves as a Senior Education Consultant for Promethean. In this position he supports schools and districts nationwide and internationally on continuous/school improvement and technology integration initiatives. Mark holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from the State University of New York College at Oswego, Master of Education degree in Exceptional Student Education from Florida Atlantic University, an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Leadership and Doctorate of Education degree in Child and Youth Studies from Nova Southeastern University. Dr. Quintana also has served as a Lead Evaluator for AdvancEd.</p>
<p>Mrs. Annette Johnson</p>	<p>After graduating from the University of West Georgia in 1985 with a Bachelor degree in Middle Grades Education, Annette began her teaching career as a 6th grade math teacher in Cedartown, Georgia and continued to teach middle school students for the next 21 years. Over the years, she has taught math, reading, English, science, computer applications and technology. She received a Masters degree in Middle Grades Education from Berry College in 1988, a Specialist degree in Instructional Technology from University of West Georgia in 2006, and added Educational Leadership in 2008. In 2006 Annette left the classroom to work as the System Data Specialist for Haralson County School System. From 2006 to the present, Annette's job responsibilities have evolved from System Data Specialist to School Improvement Specialist to Director of Instruction and Assessment to her current position as Chief Academic Officer.</p>
<p>Dr. Michael E. Lodico</p>	<p>Michael Lodico spent 31 years in the public schools of North Carolina, serving as teacher, curriculum specialist, school administrator, regional center consultant, and central office director. He retired as assistant superintendent for curriculum of Asheville City Schools in 2008. He has degrees from Cornell University and Western Carolina University. His doctoral dissertation (2003) was a study of the characteristics of most improved high schools in North Carolina. He has worked as a Lead Evaluator for AdvancED since 2010, leading review teams in 14 states.</p>

Member	Brief Biography
<p>Dr. Duke Bradley</p>	<p>Dr. Duke Bradley, III is a lifelong educator with over 15 years of collective professional experience. Originally from Columbus, Georgia, Dr. Bradley has spent much of his formative years and adult life in Atlanta. Dr. Bradley holds a B.A. in English Literature from Morehouse College, M.A.T. from Brown University, a law degree from John Marshall Law School and a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from The University of Southern Mississippi. He has also completed the Harvard University Graduate School of Education’s Leading Change in Education Systems Program of Study.</p> <p>Dr. Bradley taught high school English at two DeKalb County, Georgia high schools and later attended law school. While in law school, Dr. Bradley worked as a congressional intern, focusing his research on education policy and worked for 4 years as a legal studies instructor and program coordinator with the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education after graduation.</p> <p>Most recently, Dr. Bradley served as Executive Director of Wesley International Academy (WIA), a K-8 open-enrollment public charter school operating in partnership with Atlanta Public Schools. At WIA, Dr. Bradley was credited with several key accomplishments – chief among them was securing charter renewal, managing the school’s re-accreditation process, and overseeing the full authorization of the school’s International Baccalaureate programs. Managing an operational budget of over 8 million dollars, Dr. Bradley also secured additional revenues through the award of federal grants including the highly competitive federal dissemination grant. Under his leadership, Wesley International Academy has earned several other honors including the distinction of being featured on NBC’s Today Show.</p> <p>Prior to Wesley, Dr. Bradley managed startup operations and strategy for Chattahoochee Hills Charter School alongside Board Chairman John C. Reid, and worked in New Orleans, Louisiana – having contributed to the city’s 24 million dollar Phase I education reform initiative by founding one of that state’s first transformation charter schools. For his work, he received national recognition - having been featured in media outlets such as US News, TheGrio.com, American Public Radio, News Hour, NPR, and the Times-Picayune. In 2015, Dr. Bradley was named an Education Policy Fellow with the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education and was accepted into the most recent cohort of New Leaders Council. Dr. Bradley is a member of the 100 Black Men of Atlanta, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated, and is an alumnus of the United Way of Metro Atlanta’s Volunteer Involvement Program.</p>
<p>Dr. Drew Moore</p>	<p>Drew Moore began his teaching career as an elementary music teacher in Shreveport, Louisiana. In 1978 he moved to the Middle Laboratory School at Northwestern State University adding multiple subjects to his teaching repertoire and began working in accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) which accredited his school. Professional experiences include public school education, media director at a residential high school for the gifted in math, science, and performing arts; instructor for the local university and university laboratory school administrator. Retired after thirty-three years in public and higher education, he now chairs and serves as Team Member on External Review Teams at the school, district, distance learning, and corporate levels. Drew also serves on the Louisiana State AdvancED/SACS committee and the AdvancED Accreditation Commission. Degrees include: Bachelor of Music Education, Master’s in Music, Specialist Degree in Public School Administration and Doctorate in Education Technologies from Northwestern State University in Louisiana and additional graduate work at Memphis State University in Tennessee and Louisiana State University- Shreveport.</p>

Member	Brief Biography
Mrs. Creacy C Sermons	<p>Creacy Clemons Sermons is a native of Valdosta, GA, and attended Lowndes County Schools, Albany State University and Valdosta State University. She earned her Master's in Elementary Education and Educational Specialist degree from Valdosta State University. During her long and enjoyable career as an educator in Lowndes County Schools, her first teaching opportunity was in elementary school. After two years in elementary, she transferred to middle school and served as a middle school language arts teacher and basketball and track coach. In 1996, she served as an assistant principal at Parker Mathis Elementary school and at Lowndes High School in 2000. In 2001, she was named principal of Parker Mathis Elementary School for grades PK thru 8. Later in 2008, she was assigned the principal of a new two story school, Westside Elementary. During her leadership Westside Elementary was named a School of Excellence. Presently, she is the director of student services and professional learning for Lowndes County Schools. She has served on several AdvancED/SACS review teams. Previously, she has actively served on the United Way Board and Vadosta State University advisory committee for middle grades. Currently, she is serving on Wiregrass GATAPP Advisory Board, and LOCOGA Federal Credit Union Supervisory Committee.</p>

Next Steps

1. Review and discuss the findings from this report with stakeholders.
2. Ensure that plans are in place to embed and sustain the strengths noted in the Powerful Practices section to maximize their impact on the institution.
3. Consider the Opportunities for Improvement identified throughout the report that are provided by the team in the spirit of continuous improvement and the institution's commitment to improving its capacity to improve student learning.
4. Develop action plans to address the Improvement Priorities identified by the team. Include methods for monitoring progress toward addressing the Improvement Priorities.
5. Use the report to guide and strengthen the institution's efforts to improve student performance and system effectiveness.
6. Following the External Review, submit the Accreditation Progress Report detailing progress made toward addressing the Improvement Priorities. Institutions are required to respond to all Improvement Priorities. The report will be reviewed at the appropriate state, national, and/or international levels to monitor and ensure that the system has implemented the necessary actions to address the Improvement Priorities. The accreditation status will be reviewed and acted upon based on the responses to the Improvement Priorities and the resulting improvement.
7. Continue to meet the AdvancED Standards, submit required reports, engage in continuous improvement, and document results.

About AdvancED

AdvancED is the world leader in providing improvement and accreditation services to education providers of all types in their pursuit of excellence in serving students. AdvancED serves as a trusted partner to more than 32,000 public and private schools and school systems – enrolling more than 20 million students - across the United States and 70 countries.

In 2006, the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), both founded in 1895, and the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) came together to form AdvancED: one strong, unified organization dedicated to education quality. In 2011, the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) that was founded in 1917 became part of AdvancED.

Today, NCA CASI, NWAC and SACS CASI serve as accreditation divisions of AdvancED. The Accreditation Divisions of AdvancED share research-based quality standards that cross school system, state, regional, national, and international boundaries. Accompanying these standards is a unified and consistent process designed to engage educational institutions in continuous improvement.

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