Report of the
External Review Team
for
Haralson 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

The Haralson County School System (HCSS) External Review Team began their consideration of the system's internal review materials in early January. The actual onsite Review occurred March 14th - March 17th and was conducted by a team of five. (Note: Haralson County Schools operate on a four-day school/work week, with Monday as their "off" day. Consequently, the External Review occurred from Tuesday - Thursday, with the First Team Meeting on Monday afternoon.) The Team accomplished all expected tasks efficiently and unencumbered. In accordance with a schedule mutually agreed upon during pre-meeting discussions beginning in January between the Lead Evaluator, HCSS project coordinator, and superintendent. The system provided the required documentation and other Review articles in a timely fashion, allowing the Team to have unbridled access to the work of the system as needed to complete required tasks. Evidence was provided in a well-organized fashion via a special HCSS website, and supported by paper documentation as appropriate. The Team was able to begin its review of supporting documentation in advance of the visit itself.

In preparation for the in-depth exploration, all Team members participated in a webinar of the Orientation Meeting to renew an understanding of expectations, and HCSS specific logistics. Frequent two-way communication between the Lead Evaluator and Team members ensured understanding of tasks prior to arriving on-site. Consequently, during the First Team Meeting on-site on Monday, the Team was able to

connect their pre-work with an engaging discussion of their findings. A special treat of our opening Team Work Session was a group dinner in downtown Carrollton where we were taken by Superintendent Brown and Chief Academic Officer Joseph, to be introduced to a portion of the HCSS Administrative Team as well as some local culture.

Team members attended the HCSS Superintendent's Overview and interview, providing them with the necessary system perspective. The Team then divided up to interview the board members individually in person. Throughout the remainder of the day, Team members engaged in stakeholder interviews to gain insights into the various perspectives shared by each group.

It was the combination of productive time spent in interviews, evidence review, eleot™ observations, and significant team discussions and deliberations that yielded an in-depth and comprehensive collection of feedback with which HCSS can continue to move forward towards their mission to: "produce high-achieving students who will graduate and become productive and responsible citizens." and realizing their vision to: "be recognized as a leader in improving student achievement for ALL students."

The Team wishes to extend appreciation for the tremendous preparation the system leadership offered as the foundation for a quality External Review. Logistical attention to detail, enhanced by responsive communication from system leadership, provided seamless opportunities for the Team to accomplish its work, both prior to arriving in Haralson County, and once there. Artifacts and documents were provided to adequately support the internal review efforts and offered the Team the opportunity to streamline next steps in facilitating an efficient and thorough follow up on-site. Transparent access, coupled with a commitment to the process, as articulated by the superintendent as well as other system and school staff, together with nearly 300 stakeholders, enabled the Team to move forward throughout the Review with fervor, and as active partners in the process of continuous improvement in support of the educational needs of HCSS children.

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	5
Administrators	27
Instructional Staff	110
Support Staff	16
Students	110
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	26
Total	**295**

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.	2.60	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.	2.00	2.50
3.3	Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	2.60	2.55
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	2.20	2.73
3.5	The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.	2.20	2.57
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	2.20	2.48
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	2.00	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.	2.60	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.	2.40	2.64
3.12	The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	2.40	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.	2.60	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.	2.40	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.	2.00	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.	2.40	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	3.20	3.28
Test Administration	3.40	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.
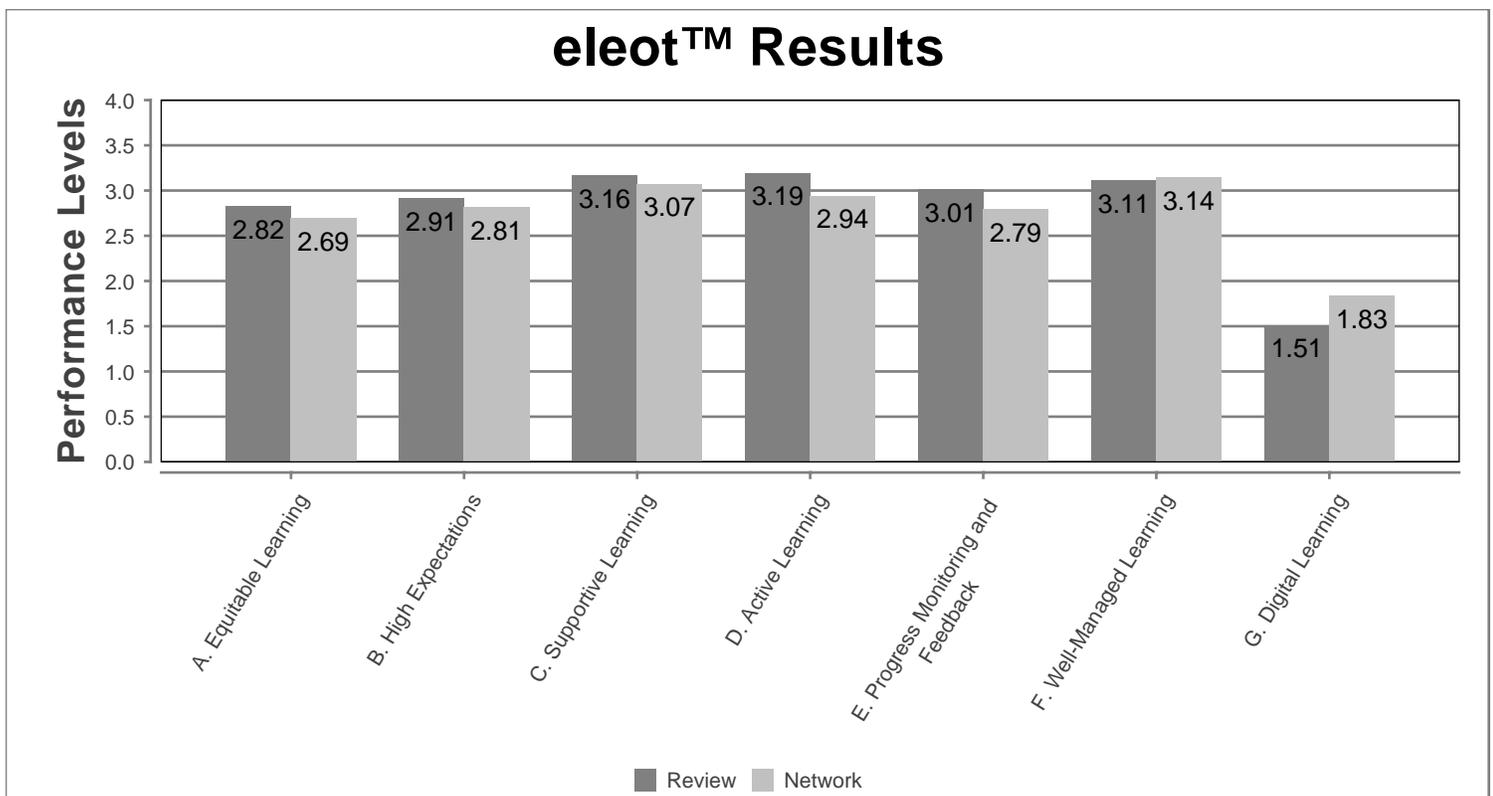
Team members submitted 60 eleot™ classroom observations completed in six schools. With a rating of 3.19, Active Learning Environment received the highest rating, above the AdvancED network average of 2.94. Supportive Learning Environment fell just below at 3.16, again above the AdvancED average of 3.06, and Well-Managed Learning Environment received a score of 3.11 slightly below the AdvancED average of 3.13. The Team assigned the lowest rating, 1.51, to the Digital Learning Environment. This was also lower than the

AdvancED network average which was 1.82.

The Team found students to be very respectful of each other, their teachers and other adults in their classrooms. They were heavily engaged in their learning and eager to share in dynamic conversations and dialogues. The Team was interested to observe many discussions relating learning to real life experiences. Students appeared to work collaboratively with each other as a matter of routine, when afforded the opportunity, and eagerly volunteered answers to questions posed by their teachers. Team members were impressed with observations in which technology was well-integrated into the learning environment, though these occurred too infrequently. Many classrooms were alive with energy, enthusiasm, and a zest for learning! As noted elsewhere in the report, the Team believes these "pockets of excellence" have tremendous potential to grow throughout the system, particularly when the framework for collaborative sharing is healthy for teachers, is pervasive, and is maximized.

The Team enjoyed their time in classrooms across the system and were very interested in the parallels that existed in their observations when aligned with the findings from artifacts and interviews. As the Team listened to stakeholders describe the experiences of students throughout the classrooms, particularly when relating the level of student engagement, they were pleasantly able to report that degree of engagement as well.

Additionally, the need for technology enhancement, coupled with professional learning in the area of digital learning and data analysis, was articulated in evidence. The validation by eleot™ observations of the Team's findings from triangulated sources provided beneficial opportunities for guidance and feedback, particularly in the instructional arena.

eleot™ Data Summary

A. Equitable Learning			%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**	**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	2.90	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	30.00%	41.67%	16.67%	11.67%
2.	3.40	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	48.33%	43.33%	8.33%	0.00%
3.	2.98	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	25.00%	55.00%	13.33%	6.67%
4.	2.00	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	8.33%	25.00%	25.00%	41.67%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.82						

B. High Expectations			%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**	**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	3.22	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	35.00%	51.67%	13.33%	0.00%
2.	3.07	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	30.00%	46.67%	23.33%	0.00%
3.	2.37	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	6.67%	48.33%	20.00%	25.00%
4.	3.02	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	30.00%	41.67%	28.33%	0.00%
5.	2.88	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	20.00%	50.00%	28.33%	1.67%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.91						

C. Supportive Learning			%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**	**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	3.25	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	40.00%	45.00%	15.00%	0.00%
2.	3.28	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	43.33%	41.67%	15.00%	0.00%
3.	3.25	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	40.00%	45.00%	15.00%	0.00%
4.	3.25	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	35.00%	55.00%	10.00%	0.00%
5.	2.75	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	16.67%	53.33%	18.33%	11.67%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.16						

D. Active Learning			%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**	**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	3.38	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	51.67%	36.67%	10.00%	1.67%
2.	2.88	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	35.00%	33.33%	16.67%	15.00%
3.	3.30	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	50.00%	31.67%	16.67%	1.67%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.19						

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback			%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**	**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	3.03	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	31.67%	41.67%	25.00%	1.67%
2.	3.07	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	18.33%	71.67%	8.33%	1.67%
3.	3.25	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	31.67%	61.67%	6.67%	0.00%
4.	2.62	Understands how her/his work is assessed	13.33%	45.00%	31.67%	10.00%
5.	3.10	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	36.67%	41.67%	16.67%	5.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.01						

F. Well-Managed Learning			%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**	**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	3.53	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	61.67%	30.00%	8.33%	0.00%
2.	3.33	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	45.00%	45.00%	8.33%	1.67%
3.	2.72	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	21.67%	48.33%	10.00%	20.00%
4.	2.75	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	35.00%	31.67%	6.67%	26.67%
5.	3.20	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	36.67%	50.00%	10.00%	3.33%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.11						

G. Digital Learning			%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**	**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	1.68	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	13.33%	6.67%	15.00%	65.00%
2.	1.45	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	6.67%	10.00%	5.00%	78.33%
3.	1.40	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	6.67%	8.33%	3.33%	81.67%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 1.51						

Findings

Improvement Priority

Implement a systematic, collaborative process for analyzing student achievement data to include standards mapping to inform instructional shifts while ensuring vertical and horizontal alignment to goals for achievement and subsequent learning expectations.

(Indicator 3.2, Indicator 3.4, Indicator 5.4, SP3. Quality of Learning)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.2

Evidence and Rationale

Interviews revealed student achievement data analysis was facilitated at all schools including collaboration among grade level/subject areas. The Team observed evidence of student data rooms, data notebooks, curriculum maps, and lesson plans. However, the assessment data was reported as being completely summative, and not having an immediate effect on instruction. The eleot™ results substantiated that instruction, particularly in the areas of Reading English Language Arts (RELA) and mathematics, lacked individualized learning opportunities. This created a barrier to timely interventions and differentiation of instruction. So while the time was earmarked and some data available, the connection between the analysis and instructional change was fragmented by only a partial picture of student achievement.

Additionally to improve student learning at all levels, recalibrating system-wide collaborative activities, supported by evolving instructional coaching guidance, offers a significant opportunity to improve these foundational structures. In response to the trend of lower RELA and math state assessment scores, Team members reviewed K-12 RELA pacing guides, as well as samples of math pacing guides, and noted the absence of standards, misalignment of standards-based skills, and/or lack of revision to generic state

curriculum maps.

Vertical and horizontal collaboration of teachers who study and align standards Kindergarten through twelfth grade based on dynamic formative and summative student achievement results coupled with grade level learning targets, will help to build more robust standards-based RELA and math instructional programs. This comprehensive approach to data analysis motivates changes in interventions, but also impacts powerful instructional change to benefit higher achievement for all students.

Opportunity For Improvement

Develop and implement a long-range, prioritized professional development plan throughout the system, which supports the systemic and systematic interpretation, evaluation, and utilization of data aligned with identified improvement efforts.
(Indicator 5.3, SP4. Equity of Learning)

Primary Indicator
SP4. Equity of Learning

Evidence and Rationale
As the Team engaged in a review of artifacts, and listened to feedback in various stakeholder interviews, little evidence was presented to demonstrate planned professional development to support professional and support staff members in the evaluation, interpretation, and utilization of data. Research-based best practices for the training of professionals and support staff in the evaluation, interpretation, and utilization of data have not been clearly identified or monitored. While "pockets of excellence" exist in which some departments/grade levels implement effective evaluation and data interpretation strategies, these practices are not system-wide. The central office provides data, however comprehensive analysis and interpretation of data was not as noticeable. The External Review Team noted that although that collection of data does happen, there was little evidence that building level administrators evaluate, interpret or use the data that has been collected to change, alter, or make adjustments to instruction to best meet the needs of students. A clearly developed and fully executed long-range, prioritized professional development plan should be comprehensive, including all stakeholder groups, to facilitate a culture rich with instructional decisions informed by data.

Staff with a full pallet of tools prompted by professional and training materials specific to the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data is necessary to inform and adjust instruction to meet the needs of students. Ready access and understanding of the implications of student achievement data in both a formative and summative sense, ensure appropriately fluid instructional practices at all levels of intervention.

Powerful Practice

HCSS has created classroom learning environments throughout the system in which active student engagement is prevalent.
(Indicator 3.3)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.3

Evidence and Rationale
Through a thorough review of artifacts, surveys, interviews, and observations, the Team noted student engagement in learning activities that was both collaborative and self-reflective. During the Review, and as eleot™ results corroborate, the Team observed more than 60 classrooms in which students were actively and collaboratively engaged in learning activities at all grade levels and subjects. The students were provided appropriate hints and clues by teachers, responded by giving guidance to each other, and encouraged to increase rigor and higher-order thinking within many classrooms. Faculty, staff, parents, and community members demonstrated exceptional care for students and for their learning.

Educational best practices include facilitating classroom settings in which students are engaged actively in learning activities. HCSS accomplishes this by planning learning experiences that are collaborative and cross-curricular with students applying skills to real life situations.

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.	2.60	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.	2.60	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.	2.60	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.	2.20	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.	2.80	3.12
2.4	Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction.	2.80	2.97
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	2.40	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.	2.40	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	3.00	3.04

Findings

Powerful Practice

Haralson County School System (HCSS) Board of Education is commended for its ability to govern the system in an efficient, effective, and responsible manner while closely following its policies and regulations. (Indicator 2.2)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 2.2

Evidence and Rationale

Evidence collected by the External Review Team and corroborated by interviews with representatives across various stakeholder groups, indicated that HCSS' governing board uses system data to remain current in their efforts to thoroughly support the schools, while allowing autonomy for each to manage itself. Coupling this web of data collection and resultant improvements with a strategic set of communication tools (i.e., face-to-face meetings, newsletters, annual reports, and presentations, etc.) provides comprehensive information to stakeholders about the effectiveness of this exemplary governing body. A commitment to continuous professional learning through training provides the governing body a chance for ongoing improvement,

supporting their focus on the HCSS purpose and direction.

School boards with laser-like focus on the shared goals of the school system operate without succumbing to personal agendas. Ongoing training in this effort supports renewal of this commitment on behalf of the system's children.

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.	2.60	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.	2.80	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.	3.00	2.74
4.6	The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	2.40	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

Findings

Powerful Practice

HCSS does an exceptional job focusing sufficient time, human capital, and finances in support of its purpose and direction.

(Indicator 4.2)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 4.2

Evidence and Rationale

A comprehensive review of artifacts, interviews, surveys, and observations, provided the Team with myriad evidence of multiple support systems throughout HCSS. Further evidence included small class sizes, protection of instructional time, excellent technology infrastructure and plan, and long-range plans to maintain educational programs, facilities, and schools. The system has been able to protect and support the instructional design and focus of the schools in spite of the consistent changes in enrollment and budgets. It is particularly notable that the system has created a state-of-the-art Career Tech and Agricultural Education (CTAE) facility at the high school in support of the students' Pathways and the State's College and Career Readiness expectations for all students who graduate from Georgia schools.

Best practices in education require time, material resources, and fiscal resources be allocated and well-managed by the system in order to support learning goals.

Conclusion

Haralson County School System enjoys a generally positive culture among staff both at the school and central office level.   A transition in leadership is underway, with a new superintendent (June, 2015), changes in the instructional/academic portion of the leadership chart, coaches and administrative positions. These circumstances pose interesting opportunities for HCSS, along with the ever-present knowledge that change is a reality for the entire system. The administrative team is working to position themselves to embrace and facilitate changes as required to respond to the everyday needs of the system. The strength of the HCSS team, i.e. staff at all levels, will continue to collaborate on behalf of the students they all serve. The positive strides the HCSS School Board has taken in recent years resulted in a 2015 recognition by the Georgia School Boards Association as an Exemplary Board due to its ability to function in a manner that continues to facilitate a more positive partnership between this important leadership team and the remainder of the school system.

A healthy culture within HCSS is fundamental to its continued success. Leadership teams are engaged in efforts to improve student achievement through increased communication (cited by most stakeholder groups as a current area of concern) and more effective collaboration. Improving the overall climate and affording staff a healthy basis for engaging in the system's work is a focused priority for the entire system. Leadership believes that leveraging system strengths to build solutions to current and future challenges is a practice worthy of continuing engagement. Embracing the opportunities as they present themselves to build on well-functioning structures and systems, as well as exercising the courage to change systems when they are not working to their greatest potential, will be the basis for continuing improvement. Blending the strongly rooted ownership in the Haralson County "family", with the strategically placed infusion of new ideas and perspectives can be a wholesome "marriage."

HCSS is committed to a culture of continuous improvement. District leadership is committed to serving the unique needs of each school, as well as the system itself.. The formula for successful continuous improvement requires ongoing reflection and evaluation of existing practices and processes. The illumination of areas of strength and success, coupled with an awareness of areas requiring attention, constitute a healthy focus on a better future. HCSS has the opportunity now to utilize the findings of the External Review as an addendum to the direction initiated by their internal reflections and processing. As the system continues to build solutions that ensure they are meeting the needs of each and every student it serves to enable him/her to be the most successful adult he/she can be, the potential is there to acknowledge the powerful realization of the hopes and dreams of the entire school community.

HCSS is fortunate to have structures such as learning/collaborative communities that allow various groupings across the system and within the schools to meet and engage in professional discussions and sharing to maximize reflection and capacity building. Data are available to be a constant source of information for these dialogues and sharing, with the infusion of appropriate professional development to ensure that staff have the necessary tools with which to have those discussions.

Technology use is on the increase within the classrooms of HCSS, fueled by one-to-one hardware initiatives. However, there is a need for a more consistent approach to digital learning. While technology is readily

available throughout the system, it remains primarily a teaching tool, and instances of it being a student learning tool are too infrequent.

It is for the aforementioned reasons, that the Team acknowledges the presence of myriad "pockets of excellence" throughout HCSS. What is not as observable is a consistent, systemic approach to processes and practices; an approach that weaves itself through the entire fabric of the system. All of these issues contribute to the existing culture of the system, and provide the basis for this Team's feedback in support of the ongoing efforts to develop solutions for issues and concerns that have been uncovered through the system-wide internal review efforts. The time is right for the entire HCSS community to own and embrace the opportunity to move forward as one committed community with one focus…. "to produce high-achieving students who will graduate and become productive and responsible citizens."

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:

- Implement a systematic, collaborative process for analyzing student achievement data to include standards mapping to inform instructional shifts while ensuring vertical and horizontal alignment to goals for achievement and subsequent learning expectations.

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	264.39	278.34
Teaching and Learning Impact	248.57	268.94
Leadership Capacity	278.33	292.64
Resource Utilization	285.00	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
Buchanan Elementary School	295.24	300.00	300.00	297.44
Buchanan Primary School	295.24	318.18	300.00	302.56
Haralson County Comprehensive High School	257.14	281.82	257.14	264.10
Haralson County Middle School	328.57	327.27	357.14	333.33
Tallapoosa Primary School	333.33	336.36	328.57	333.33
West Haralson Elementary School	309.52	354.55	300.00	320.51

Team Roster

Member	Brief Biography
Kathy Sergeant	Ms. Kathryn Sergeant is an Educational Consultant, who previously served as the AdvancED Michigan State Director, a position she held for seven and a half years following six years as the Michigan Associate Director. In those positions, she coordinated the accreditation activities and provided professional learning for schools and school systems throughout Michigan. In addition to doctoral coursework in the areas of Leadership and Educational Technology, Ms. Sergeant holds a Master of Science in Educational Administration, a Master of Arts in Counselor Education and a Bachelor of Science in Education. Ms. Sergeant has experience as a teacher, counselor, and administrator in K-12 education with most of this at the high school level, and has also taught at the university level. She has published articles and has made numerous state, regional and national presentations. Most recently, in her position with AdvancED, she was engaged in the Training Development and Deployment Team, and served as a Lead Evaluator for Schools and Systems throughout the country, as well as multiple DoDEA institutions around the world.
Mrs. Charlotte L Foskey	Previous positions: Elementary Education Teacher, Middle School Education Teacher, Reading Specialist, Media Specialist, Graduation Coach, Instructional Coach, System Testing Coordinator Currently Serving as PK-8 Curriculum Director and Instructional Technology Specialist for Jones County Schools. Mrs. Foskey has served as a team member or associate lead on three AdvancED accreditation teams for school systems in Georgia. She co-chaired the internal team in her own district, Jones County School System. Mrs. Foskey holds degrees in early childhood and middle school education as well as Education Leadership. She has also earned certifications in Media and Teacher Support. Mrs. Foskey is currently working on her dissertation as the final requirement of Valdosta State University's Education Doctorate program in Leadership.
Dr. Sharon A Knudson	Dr. Knudson has worked with children in a variety of capacities from professional storyteller to teacher/principal in schools. A summary of her professional experience is 2010-present---Lead Evaluator with AdvancED; 1993-2010---Laramie School District #1,WY-Director, Non-tenured Teacher programs; Director, Professional Development; principal; teacher; and UW graduate instructor. Her WY Certification is Superintendent K-12, Principal K-12, Elementary Education-highly qualified, Speech Pathologist, Ex.-Gen. K-12. Her professional activities related to AdvancED include Lead Evaluator/team member to twenty-three states, DoDEA and International Schools---Japan, Europe, Egypt, Diagnostic Review Lead Evaluator, and Lead Evaluator Mentor. Dr. Knudson has received several national and state leadership and teacher awards. She recently participated as a district observer in a national Teacher & Leader Evaluation Systems research study.

Member	Brief Biography
Dr. Julie A Brown	Dr. Julie A. Brown, a native of Decatur, Ga., has been a dedicated educator for 30 years as a teacher, department chair, administrator, and professional learning designer. Currently, Dr. Brown serves as Principal of PATH Academy, a public charter school in DeKalb county. Dr. Brown's role includes professional learning for the district on the research review board. At the local school level, Dr. Brown works diligently in improving overall school performance in academics, behavior, and attendance through professional learning design that focuses on student engagement, climate, teaching and learning expectations, and a collaborative school structure. Dr. Brown's local school accomplishments include providing leadership to regain Adequate Yearly Progress for two middle schools and one high school with all schools maintaining that status throughout Dr. Brown's tenure, especially in the area of English language learners. Dr. Brown published in January 2011 "A Delphi Study of Best Practices for English Language Learner Achievement." This study was written in conjunction with a team of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) educators in a panel of 40. As a second language learner of Spanish, Dr. Brown has mastered the language through extensive study both domestic and abroad. Dr. Brown is dedicated to school improvement through multiple methods, but especially in the area of language acquisition. Dr. Brown's motto for all professional learning is "If it works for an ELL, it works." Through Dr. Brown's leadership, her schools have earned local and regional recognition. For example, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools recognized Dr. Brown's school as notable achievement in the areas of leadership, unity, and student partnerships and invited Dr. Brown and the principal to train other administrators at the regional conference. Dr. Brown's schools have also been recognized as National School of Excellence, Georgia Title 1 Distinguished School, Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) "Making Middle Grades Work" award, Rewards Schools, and SREB's top ten schools in the southeast recognition.
Mrs. Mary Yolanda Holloway	Mrs. Holloway has an embedded passion for education and is a 17 year veteran. She holds an Associate of Arts Degree in marketing, an undergraduate degree in Communication Disorders, and a master's degree in Administration of Elementary and Secondary Education. She has also be conferred a Specialist in Education in Administration of Elementary and Secondary Education. Her professional experience encompasses serving as a high school assistant principal, resource teacher, speech therapist, testing coordinator, and administrative assistant. Mrs. Holloway has also had the experience of studying abroad in the field of educational leadership. Mrs. Holloway, is an experienced AdvancEd external review team member and is currently in doctoral candidacy, conducting research on; "Understanding Distributed Leadership through the Perceptions of Principals, Assistant Principals and Teacher Leaders in Secondary Schools ".
Ms. Kisha Thompson	Kisha is a teacher at a high school in Georgia. She has worked in school districts in Mississippi, Tennessee, and Alabama. She has held the positions of teacher and assistant principal. Kisha obtained her B.S. from The University of Alabama, her MA from Mississippi University for Women, her Ed.S. from Union University, and is currently working towards her Ed.D, also from Union University. She has been a member of the national education associations, several state associations, and Kappa Delta Pi.

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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