

Report of the External Review Team for Long 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

From Sunday, March 29 through Wednesday, April 2 personnel with the Long County Schools with schools and the central office located in Ludowici, Georgia hosted an External Review Team whose primary purpose was to determine how effectively the AdvancED Standards and Indicators were being addressed by the school system. Based on this review the External Review team was charged with the responsibility of making a recommendation concerning the continuing accreditation status of the school district. The five AdvancED Quality Standards contain 41 Indicators and are grouped into three domains, Continuous Improvement, Leadership Capacity, and Resource Utilization. With a rubric attached to each of the Indicators, school personnel are provided guidance and insight into best practice when caring out school functions.

The External Review team was composed of five educators. The associate lead and two other team members were from Georgia. Another team member was from Alabama, and the Lead Evaluator was from Kentucky. The combined educational experiences of the team range from teaching nearly all grade P - 12 levels and several content areas as well as teaching undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students. The team members' administrative experiences include school-level, district-level, school board experience as well as department chair and dean at the post-secondary level.

Before the on-site visit the External Review Team spent a significant amount of time reviewing the substantial amount of evidence provided. To facilitate and organize the visit, conference calls were held with team members on March 10 and March 13. This provided team members opportunities to discuss each of the Standards, the location of the evidence provided by the schools and district, and the logistics of planned activities. During these calls team members were also encouraged to begin looking for recurring themes. In addition to interacting with the team members prior to the on-site visit, the lead evaluator had several phone calls with district personnel to discuss various aspects, logistics, and requirements for the visit.

Following the team's work session on Sunday afternoon, the district superintendent, several members of his leadership team, and some members of the board of education came to the hotel for a meal followed by a "state of the school district" presentation by the superintendent. The presentation included an overview of several data sets that reflected past, current, and anticipated future district conditions. Some of the information included in the superintendent's presentation included

- The district's student population has increased by over 1,000 students over the past 10 years with an increase of 500 students since 2010 alone.
- The district's tax rate of 13.5 mills is among the lowest in Georgia.
- Over the last 12 years, the state has failed to provide an accumulated \$10+ million due to austerity cuts made by the Georgia legislature.

On Monday, the first full day of the on-site visit, the External Review team conducted eleot™ observations in all of the system's schools. The team was divided into small groups ensuring that observations were completed in each of the district's schools. In total, the 56 observations included multiple grade levels and content areas providing team members a broad and inclusive view of what was happening in the district's classrooms.

The team's work on Tuesday primarily focused on interviews. The day began with an interview of the superintendent, followed by interviews with district personnel who had facilitated each of the Standards. One-on-one (one team member for each board member) interviews with each of the school board members provided excellent opportunities for school board members to provide individual insight and comments regarding the effectiveness of the schools' instructional and administrative strategies. Late-day interviews allowed community members and parents representing each of the schools to voice their opinions and observations concerning the district's outreach and involvement of parents and community members' in school activities. After returning to the hotel, the team had another work session during which preliminary ratings for each of the Indicators were discussed. Additionally, emerging themes, and possible Power Practices, Opportunities for Improvement, and Improvement Priorities were drafted.

Wednesday morning activities included further review of evidence and revision of Powerful Practices, Opportunities for Improvement, and Improvement Priorities. After each team member submitted the final ratings for the Indicators, the Index of Educational Quality (IEQ) was calculated. With the Indicator ratings finalized and the IEQ calculated, the exit report was completed in preparation for the meeting with the superintendent. Shortly after a working lunch, the lead evaluator and associate lead evaluator conducted a meeting with the superintendent and some of his central office personnel. During this meeting the entire report was presented and a brief explanation for each of the report's components provided. The day ended with a

called board member during which the lead evaluator presented the exit report to the members of the board of education, central office administrators, and a dozen or so stakeholders from the schools.

The quality and efficiency of an organization is often reflected in the way in which its personnel approach all tasks. Personnel with the Long County School System contacted the lead evaluator several months in advance, much earlier than is typical of a school system getting ready for a review, to begin the conversation related to the self-study. This pro-active approach and meticulousness manner in which the pre-visit work was approached continued throughout the team's time in Long County.

The External Review team wishes to express their sincere appreciation for the forthright and transparent manner in which Long County School System personnel prepared for the accreditation visit and the professional manner in which everything was done. All requests were met almost immediately. The hospitality and graciousness of the Long County School Personnel were sincerely appreciated. The attention to detail was exceptional and the timeliness of responding to questions and requests was nearly unparalleled.

Access to all stakeholder groups was unfettered. As a result, conversations and interviews were numerous and ranged from hour-long interviews in which a number of topics were discussed in-depth to shorter interviews during which one or two main ideas were explored. The feedback gained through the interviews brought clarity and better understanding of district-supplied evidence. The interviews, classroom observations, and evidence helped in the triangulation of data and therefore helped ensure the accuracy of all aspects of the final report.

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
Pastors	1
Administrators	11
Instructional Staff	37
Support Staff	8
Students	43
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	11
Total	117

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.	2.80	2.69
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	2.55
3.3	Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	2.80	2.54
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	3.00	2.70
3.5	The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.	3.00	2.57
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	2.80	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	2.67

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.	2.60	2.97
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.	2.00	2.46
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.	3.00	2.57
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	2.80	2.60
3.12	The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	2.00	2.63

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.	2.80	2.67
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.	2.60	2.48
5.3	Throughout the system professional and support staff are trained in the interpretation and use of data.	2.00	2.14
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.	2.80	2.45
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.	2.80	2.85

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

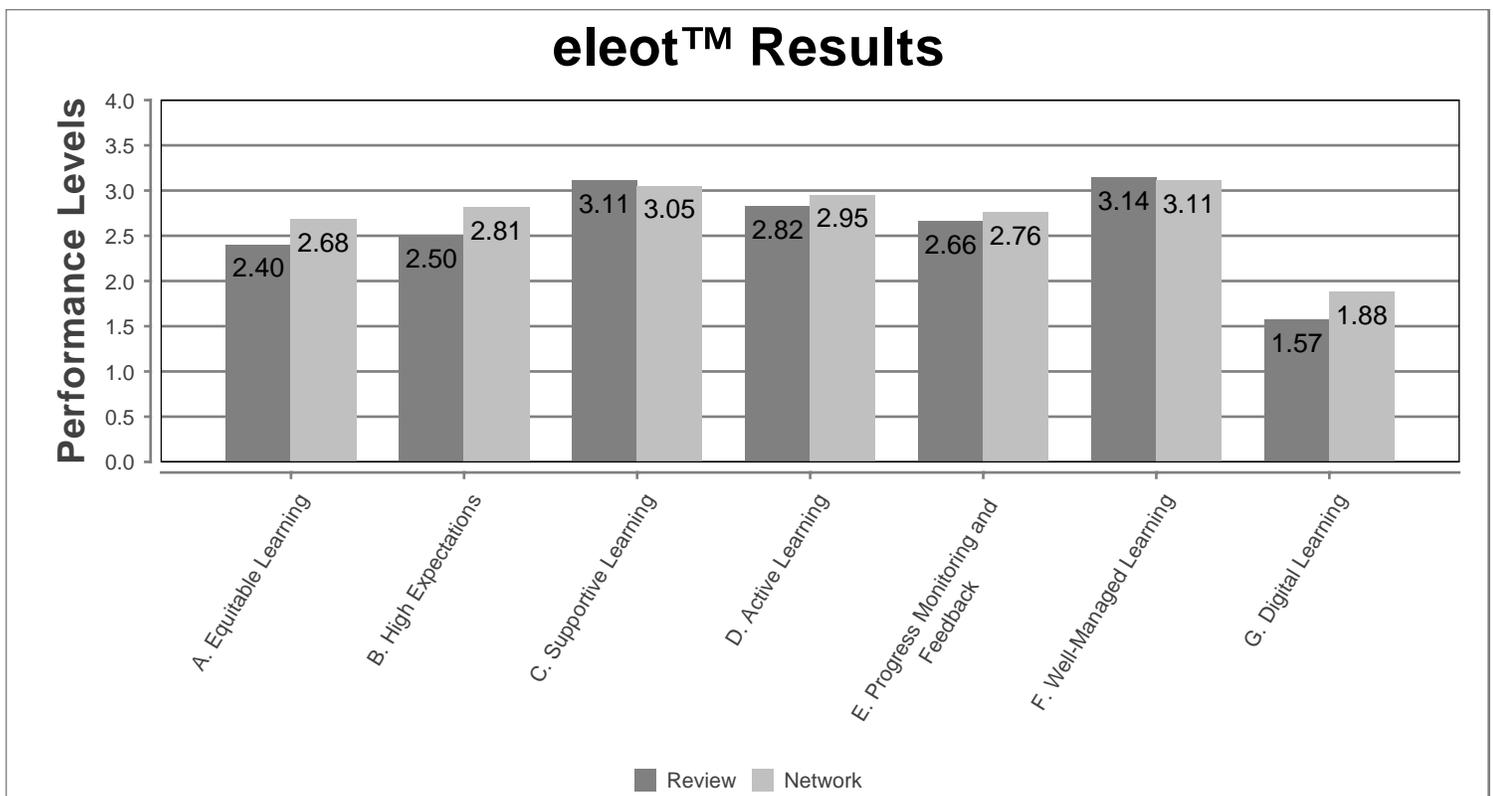
learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important indicators for evaluating overall student performance.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Assessment Quality	3.00	3.32
Test Administration	3.00	3.62
Equity of Learning	2.00	2.52
Quality of Learning	3.00	3.06

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.



The external review team completed 56 classroom observations in 4 schools. This included 16 observations at Smiley Elementary School, 13 at Walker Elementary School, 10 at the Long County Middle School, and 17 at the Long County High School.

The highest rated eleot™ domain was a Well-Managed Learning Environment with an average rating of 3.14

compared with a 3.11 AdvancED Network (AEN) average score. The second highest domain was Supportive Learning Environment with an average rating of 3.11 (AEN of 3.05), and the 3rd highest domain with an average rating of 2.82 (AEN of 2.95) was Active Learning Environment. Highest ranking items within each of the top three domains include (1) Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers; (2) Follows classroom rules and works well with others; and, (3) Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences. On the lower end of the rankings, the third lowest domain, High Expectations Environment, has a Long County average of 2.50 (AEN of 2.68). The second lowest rating was Equitable Learning Environment with an average of 2.40 (2.81). The lowest rated domain was Digital Learning Environment with an average rating of 1.57 (AEN 1.88).

While there were classrooms that provided differentiated learning for students, most classroom instruction was whole-group with all students sharing the same expectations and avenues to get there. This is reflected in eleot™ observation A.1 with an average rating of 2.23. Additionally, in the Advanc-ED staff survey 62.22% of high school staff indicated that all teachers personalize instructional strategies to address individual learning needs. Middle school and elementary school teachers were much more likely to point to personalized instruction with over 80% agreeing or strongly agreeing that teachers personalize instructional strategies. Further, a rating of 2.00 by district personnel and personnel at each school for Indicator 3.12 suggests that the school services are not meeting the unique learning needs of all of its students.

With an average of 3.14 the Well-Managed Learning Environment had the highest average rating of all of the Learning Environments. This aligns with Indicator 4.3 that had an average rating of 3.00. Additionally, in the Advanc-ED staff survey, approximately 90% of the staff at each of the schools indicated that the school maintains a safe environment. Moreover, providing a safe and well-managed learning environment aligns with the commentary often repeated during staff and stakeholder interviews. Finally, the use of formative assessment for progress monitoring was generally lower than the Advanc-ED average (Long County 2.66 vs. AEN 2.76).

All in all team members found students to be generally compliant with students respectful and cooperative. In classrooms in which technology was in use, it was being used primarily by the classroom teacher and rarely by the students. Additionally, while use of exemplars as an instructional tool was a goal stated by district and school leadership, the use of this instructional tool was rarely observed in classrooms.

eleot™ Data Summary

A. Equitable Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.23	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	17.86%	25.00%	19.64%	37.50%
2.	3.11	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	39.29%	39.29%	14.29%	7.14%
3.	3.02	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	30.36%	41.07%	28.57%	0.00%
4.	1.25	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	1.79%	1.79%	16.07%	80.36%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.40						

B. High Expectations			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.98	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	26.79%	48.21%	21.43%	3.57%
2.	2.91	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	21.43%	51.79%	23.21%	3.57%
3.	1.41	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	1.79%	12.50%	10.71%	75.00%
4.	2.79	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	21.43%	44.64%	25.00%	8.93%
5.	2.39	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	16.07%	28.57%	33.93%	21.43%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.50						

C. Supportive Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.36	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	50.00%	39.29%	7.14%	3.57%
2.	3.30	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	51.79%	30.36%	14.29%	3.57%
3.	3.12	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	46.43%	26.79%	19.64%	7.14%
4.	3.12	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	42.86%	30.36%	23.21%	3.57%
5.	2.66	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	26.79%	30.36%	25.00%	17.86%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.11						

D. Active Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.98	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	46.43%	23.21%	12.50%	17.86%
2.	2.25	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	14.29%	28.57%	25.00%	32.14%
3.	3.23	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	46.43%	30.36%	23.21%	0.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.82						

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.59	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	25.00%	26.79%	30.36%	17.86%
2.	2.95	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	32.14%	35.71%	26.79%	5.36%
3.	2.89	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	32.14%	32.14%	28.57%	7.14%
4.	2.32	Understands how her/his work is assessed	21.43%	21.43%	25.00%	32.14%
5.	2.55	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	21.43%	32.14%	26.79%	19.64%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.66						

F. Well-Managed Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.52	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	62.50%	30.36%	3.57%	3.57%
2.	3.41	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	55.36%	30.36%	14.29%	0.00%
3.	2.88	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	42.86%	23.21%	12.50%	21.43%
4.	2.52	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	33.93%	19.64%	10.71%	35.71%
5.	3.39	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	48.21%	42.86%	8.93%	0.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.14						

G. Digital Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	1.70	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	19.64%	1.79%	7.14%	71.43%
2.	1.59	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	17.86%	1.79%	1.79%	78.57%
3.	1.41	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	8.93%	5.36%	3.57%	82.14%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 1.57						

Findings

Improvement Priority

Develop and implement a clearly defined comprehensive process for horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment, student assessment, and data inquiry which is inclusive of professional and support staff training in the interpretation and use of data.

(Indicators 3.2, 5.3)

Evidence and Rationale

While the system does have an assessment system in place, interviews with staff, leadership teams, and the district's own self-assessment for this accreditation visit suggested that a comprehensive assessment system is not in place and therefore cannot be regularly and systemically evaluated for reliability and effectiveness for improving student learning. Adequate training has not been provided to all professional and support staff in the interpretation and use of data. The district's self-assessment and interviews reflected few staff members feel confident to make classroom adaptations in the use of data. Clearly, data-informed decisions are critical to successful teaching and learning for Long County students and staff and yet there was limited evidence of the full analysis and use of the many data sets available. Assessment measures locally developed and standardized assessments should be vertically and horizontally aligned across all classrooms to ensure that multiple assessments accurately reflect and inform student performance as well as curriculum and instructional practices in the district.

The alignment will enable systematic improvement goals to be incorporated, monitored and measured to ensure student growth. It will also ensure that the systematic continuous improvement leads the district to build future success and common practices in the use of data that supports learning strategies and district goals.

Improvement Priority

Establish and monitor a structured program in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one advocate who will support their educational goals as well as career planning needs.

(Indicators 3.9, 3.12, 4.8)

Evidence and Rationale

Based on review documentation and information derived from stakeholder interviews, and district documentation, the External Review Team concluded that Long County School system has yet to develop a comprehensive, systemic long-range plan to ensure that each student is assigned one adult advocate as well as learning support services that meet the unique individual needs of all students. District planning documents that address advocacy, remediation, RTI procedures, multiple intelligences, and gifted resources needs were identified and reviewed but their alignment to ensure district-wide continuity and consistency was somewhat sporadic and uneven. Furthermore, district administrators acknowledged the need for structures to address advocacy as well as provide coordination and evaluation of learning support services for students. While some schools had opportunities that facilitated long-term opportunities for advocacy, these opportunities were not intentional and formally facilitated. Students in Long County would benefit from a formal process of evaluation that is regularly reviewed and implemented.

The development and implementation of a systemic long-range plan could be a significant grounding step in this process.

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	2.67
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	2.69
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.	3.20	2.87
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.	2.00	2.64

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	2.96
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	3.00	2.99
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	3.20
2.4	Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction.	2.80	3.00
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	2.40	2.69

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.	2.80	2.78

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	3.43
Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	3.00	3.12

Findings

Improvement Priority

Design, implement, and monitor a continuous improvement process at all levels with input from all stakeholder groups that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.

(Indicators 1.4)

Evidence and Rationale

Based on review of documentation and information derived from stakeholder interviews, the External Review Team concluded that, while the strategic plan is drafted, the Long County School System has not yet implemented their strategic plan that contains long-range goals and objectives to improve conditions that support student learning. With assistance from the Georgia School Board Association to develop the strategic plan, it was evident that the district is using a sound process. However, the links between the district's strategic plan and all school improvement plans to provide clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning is somewhat tenuous. Also, it is noted that a number of data sets have a baseline year of FY2015. Furthermore, stakeholder interviews and a review of the evidence suggest that at least some of these baselines are yet to be established. Given that there are less than 3 months left in FY2015, attention to all components of the strategic plan is critical. Hence, the importance of monitoring the improvement process

cannot be overstated.

With the instructional components of the district's strategic plan, its implementation and monitoring will help ensure that systemic and continuous improvement will lead to improved student learning.

Powerful Practice

Long County Schools Central Office and School Level Leadership facilitates the development of a culture of teamwork and caring.

(Indicators 1.3)

Evidence and Rationale

Interviews with parents, students, and school-based staff members underscore the caring attitude that is embraced by Long County district-level and school-level leadership. Parents pointed out a number of examples of administrators reaching out to their children to facilitate a feeling of family and caring. In response to questions the superintendent stated the importance of servant-leadership, and noted that was both a personal goal and a goal for the district's leadership team. The school district has partnered with one of the local churches for the "Backpack Buddy" program which provides backpacks full of food for students to take home on the weekend. The school district is also using the services of an outside agency to provide the Student Transition and Recovery (STAR) program. This program is designed as an alternative to suspension and requires the parents' permission for their child to participate. Acting much like a boot camp, students in this program encounter a 'tough love' philosophy and are taught the importance of self-discipline.

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	2.98
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	2.98
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.	2.40	2.67

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.	2.00	2.82
4.6	The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	2.60	2.64
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.	2.80	2.65
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.	2.00	2.64

Findings

Improvement Priority

Develop and implement a plan to ensure that future technology support needs are met and aligned to the system's strategic plan.

(Indicators 4.5)

Evidence and Rationale

Based on a review of the documentation provided, the External Review Team concluded that the Long County School System needs to develop a long range plan to address the necessity for additional staff as the level of technology increases. Similarly, district administrators acknowledged the growing demand for additional technology support given the increasing amount of technology in the school system. It must be noted that the responsibility to provide additional technology support is not confined to the upkeep of available hardware. With an average score of 1.57, the eleot™ Digital Learning Environment was the lowest of all learning environments noted in classroom observations. With some limited exceptions, the External Review Team noted that if technology was being used in the classroom, most frequently it was being used by the teacher. This points to the necessity for professional development related to effective use of technology in the classroom to enrich and extend student learning.

As the acquisition of additional technology occurs, the need for instructional technology support will increase.

Improvement Priority

Establish and monitor a structured program in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one advocate who will support their educational goals as well as career planning needs.

(Indicators 3.9, 3.12, 4.8)

Evidence and Rationale

Based on review documentation and information derived from stakeholder interviews, and district

documentation, the External Review Team concluded that Long County School system has yet to develop a comprehensive, systemic long-range plan to ensure that each student is assigned one adult advocate as well as learning support services that meet the unique individual needs of all students. District planning documents that address advocacy, remediation, RTI procedures, multiple intelligences, and gifted resources needs were identified and reviewed but their alignment to ensure district-wide continuity and consistency was somewhat sporadic and uneven. Furthermore, district administrators acknowledged the need for structures to address advocacy as well as provide coordination and evaluation of learning support services for students. While some schools had opportunities that facilitated long-term opportunities for advocacy, these opportunities were not intentional and formally facilitated. Students in Long County would benefit from a formal process of evaluation that is regularly reviewed and implemented.

The development and implementation of a systemic long-range plan could be a significant grounding step in this process.

Opportunity for Improvement

Incorporate and monitor the district's strategic plan with fidelity that provides for continuous improvement including all systems operations (e.g., fiscal, capital, instructional, professional development).

(Indicators 4.4)

Evidence and Rationale

A review of the evidence reflects a fairly comprehensive and inclusive strategic planning process is nearly completed. However, there was some concern expressed by members of the External Review Team that multiple baselines are to be established in FY2015 with limited evidence that these baselines have been established. Additionally, while the goals and objectives of strategic plan are systemic, the linkage between the goals and subsequent actions is unclear. Therefore, implementation and monitoring of the plan must reflect a systemic approach that includes best-practice instructional delivery, recruitment of highly qualified personnel, fiscal soundness, and professional development for both classified and certified staff.

When implemented following a systemic approach, the district's strategic plan will provide a blueprint and future decisions.

Conclusion

The Long County School District is a study of contrasts. Reflecting one of Georgia's fastest student population growth rates and one of the state's lowest tax bases creates a number of challenges including the on-going need to provide classroom space and to staff those classrooms with highly qualified teachers. The classroom space issue has been addressed in a number of ways including adding a modular building with 10 classrooms in 2010. Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the Long County High School was opened relieving some of the overcrowding. Additionally, land for construction of another school was recently acquired. Current plans are to include grades 3 - 8 in that facility with construction to begin in fall 2015. When the new school is completed, it will provide the school district leadership some flexibility in structuring grade configuration and much needed, updated classroom space. Nonetheless, the recently opened high school was built for a little over 800 students and will soon reach capacity.

Finding funding solutions for additional classroom space seems paramount. Long County's low tax base combined with the school district's low tax rate and the lack of political support to increase the rate exacerbates the low revenue situation. While any conversation about raising the local tax rate was met with resistance, the superintendent and board of education are encouraged to continue to seek long-term solutions to shortage of classroom space caused by the ever-increasing student population base.

The challenge of attracting and keeping highly qualified teachers was also a theme expressed by many stakeholder groups. With limited out-of-school activities available and neighboring school districts having a more favorable salary schedule, transition of teachers to other school districts impairs the Long County School District's ability to maintain an experienced teaching force. There is some current conversation to identify talented Long County students and encourage them to return to Ludowici to teach.

Using the services of the Georgia School Board Association, the Long County School District began its strategic planning process in the spring 2014. As expected, a review of the strategic planning process used in Long County reflects multiple opportunities to involve a wide range of internal and external stakeholders. The strategic planning process seemed to follow the standard steps used in most effective strategic planning processes including identification of strengths, weaknesses, general and specific goals, and action steps to ensure the plan is implemented. Some of the performance objectives include (1) ensure all students are college and career ready; (2) provide high quality, effective instruction; (3) ensure a high quality workforce; and, (4) provide efficient and effective support services. The External Review Team noted that most of the baselines are to be determined during FY2015.

Now that the strategic plan has been developed, it is critical that the goals and objectives identified inform many of decisions. In some ways, the easy part of strategic planning has already been completed. It is in using the strategic plan and its carefully constructed components that real improvement begins. Additionally, given that each of the schools has an improvement plan, ensuring that the strategic plan and the schools' improvement plans are completely aligned is critical in order to best serve the district students.

The first Improvement Priority, focusing on horizontal and vertical alignment, when fully implemented will

provide a more seamless experience for students. While it was clear that work had been done to help ensure horizontal alignment of curriculum and other instructional components, vertical alignment requires intentional and on-going, planned activities of educators representing all schools. Nonetheless, both horizontal and vertical alignment is necessary to maximize student learning. Additionally, given the wealth of data available, the use of those data to inform major decisions was lacking. Training of both professional and support staff in the interpretation and use of those data is an important next step.

Many times during the review, External Review Team members heard Long County school personnel speak about the family atmosphere they hoped to encourage in the schools. The second Improvement Priority aligns with that often-stated goal, "Establish and monitor a structured program in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one advocate who will support their educational goals as well as career planning needs." During interviews some internal stakeholders indicated this was already in place. However, when pressed on the issue, it was noted that student advocacy is an informal process and presently there is no formalized process to ensure that ALL students are properly protected.

Given that the district already has developed a strategic plan, it's important that the goals, objectives, and action items within the strategic plan inform decisions and provide guidance for future planning. To help ensure that the strategic plan stays front and center, the External Review Team identified an Improvement Priority that states, "Design, implement, and monitor a continuous improvement process at all levels with input from all stakeholder groups that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning." While much of this work has been completed, there is still work to be done, especially as it relates to establishing baselines.

Finally, while personnel within the Long County School District have invested limited financial resources in securing technology, the human resources needed to maintain the available technology are limited. As the amount of type of technology available in the district continues to grow, the need to secure additional human resources to support the technology will also become more and more obvious.

The External Review Team left the Long County School District encouraged by the quality of its leadership especially the school board, the superintendent, central office leadership, and building-level leadership. The quality of leadership combined with careful planning and efficient use of limited fiscal resources bodes well for the students of Long County, Georgia.

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:

- Design, implement, and monitor a continuous improvement process at all levels with input from all stakeholder groups that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.
- Develop and implement a clearly defined comprehensive process for horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment, student assessment, and data inquiry which is inclusive of professional and support staff training in the interpretation and use of data.

- Develop and implement a plan to ensure that future technology support needs are met and aligned to the system's strategic plan.
- Establish and monitor a structured program in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one advocate who will support their educational goals as well as career planning needs.

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	272.68	282.79
Teaching and Learning Impact	265.71	274.14
Leadership Capacity	293.33	296.08
Resource Utilization	260.00	286.32

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
Ernestine Smiley Elementary School	276.19	290.91	271.43	279.49
Long County High School	252.38	263.64	271.43	258.97
Long County Middle School	285.71	318.18	271.43	292.31
Walker Elementary School	276.19	318.18	257.14	284.62

Team Roster

Member	Brief Biography
Dr. David Barnett	<p>David has recently been selected as the founding Dean for the Patton College of Education at the University of Pikeville in Pikeville, KY. Prior to accepting this position, David worked thirteen years as a faculty member at Morehead State University (MSU) in Morehead, KY. His responsibilities at MSU also included department chair and assistant dean. Prior to moving to higher education, David served in the public schools for twenty-seven years. His P-12 experience spans a number of different roles including his beginning as a middle school math teacher to school district superintendent. He holds a number of teaching and administrative certificates. He completed his doctorate in educational leadership at the University of Kentucky in 1986.</p>
Dr. Alieka Cherlyn Anderson	<p>Dr. Alieka Anderson is an Assistant Principal at The Intown Academy in Atlanta Public Schools. Dr. Anderson was elected to the Clayton County Board of Education by the people of District 8, in July of 2008. Dr. Anderson served as Board Chair from September 2008 through December 2010. Dr. Anderson holds a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood from Brenau University. She also holds a Master's degree in Instruction from Central Michigan University and an Educational Specialist's degree in Educational Leadership (K-12) from Argosy University. She earned her Doctorial degree in Educational Leadership (K-12) at Argosy University in 2010. Dr. Anderson has one son, Brian Covington, Jr. who attends school in the Clayton County Public School system and she is a big advocate for public school education.</p>
Dr. Cynthia A Anderson	<p>B.S.-Elementary Education & Industrial Psychology-Auburn University, Auburn, AL; M.S.-Middle Grades (concentrations in Math & Social Studies)-West Georgia State University-Carrollton, GA; Ed.S.-Middle Grades and Leadership-West Georgia State University Ed.D.-Educational Leadership-University of Georgia, Athens, GA.</p> <p>As a public school educator, Dr. Anderson has served as a classroom teacher, Instructional Lead Teacher, Principal, Director of Professional Learning, Director of Elementary Curriculum, and Director of Middle Grades Curriculum. For over 12 years, she served as the Accreditation contact for her school district which involved working with all schools in the district to achieve and maintain state accreditation and AdvancED accreditation.</p> <p>Dr. Anderson recently retired after 36 years in a public school system. Currently, she serves as a Field Consultant for the Georgia Office of AdvancED and has served as the Lead Evaluator for numerous External Review Teams in districts throughout the South and Midwest as well as schools within the state of Georgia. In the past, Dr. Anderson has taught undergraduate and graduate classes for Clark-Atlanta University; Clayton State College and University, and the University of Georgia. Currently, she serves as an Assistant Professor for Mercer University.</p>
Ms. Penny L Christian	<p>Ms. Christian is employed as a Social Studies Instructor at Francis Marion High School in Perry County. She is in her second year teaching social studies at Francis Marion High School. Previously, she taught at Robert C. Hatch in Perry County for 22 years. Ms. Christian is a graduate of the University of Alabama. She has a Bachelors and Masters degree in Secondary Education Social Studies. In Alabama, she has an A and B teaching certificate. Ms. Christian is an ACCESS teacher. Ms. Christian has served on numerous AdvancED school and district teams both in state and out of state. She is trained to be a lead evaluator in the state of Alabama. Originally, she is from Tuscaloosa County in Alabama. Presently she lives in Uniontown.</p>

Member	Brief Biography
Mr. Kevin Gaines	<p>After graduating of Hart County High School, Kevin went to Georgia Southern University where he graduated with a Bachelors of Science in Mathematics Education. He then went on to receive a Masters in Education Administration from Clemson University and a Education Specialist in Education Administration from Lincoln Memorial University. He taught high school math for two years at Metter High School and seven years at Banks County High School. He served three years as Assistant Principal at Stephens County High School before moving over to his alma mater, Hart County High School, as Principal. His wife, Erin, teaches kindergarten at Hartwell Elementary. He has a daughter, Peyton, in the fourth grade and a son, Riley, in first grade.</p>
Mrs. Monica S. Lanier	<p>Monica is currently serving as the Assistant Superintendent of Organizational Effectiveness for Bulloch County Schools. Responsibilities of this division include strategic planning, school improvement planning, teacher and leader effectiveness, professional development, testing, data analysis, information systems, instructional technology, and federal programs. Previous experiences in Bulloch County Schools include 5 years as the federal programs director and 10 years as a business education teacher. Before returning to Bulloch County to serve as the federal programs director, Monica was the director of the Educational Technology Center at First District RESA for 10 years.</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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