

Report of the External Review Team for Telfair County Schools

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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 Telfair County School System External Review officially occurred over a period of four days, January 25th-28th, 2015. The External Review Team consisted of five team members who began preparation for the review approximately four weeks prior to arriving on-site.

The External Review Team gathered on a conference call January 16, to make introductions discuss logistics, and receive targeted assignments. During the call those participating were provided focus areas based on both the initial review of school related information and updates not previously shared but obtained through multiple calls with the district contact and Superintendent. The Team communicated via email leading up to the External Review and worked to study and analyze pieces of evidence gathered from the website, Feedback documents, Surveys, Diagnostics, the Self-Assessment, Executive Summary, and other data sources to cultivate understanding and prepare for the initial work session.

The External Review Team arrived at the Parker House Inn Bed and Breakfast and conducted the first team work session on January 25, 2015. Having been instructed to review all Standards carefully and prepare to provide initial ratings during work session one, the team discussed ratings. The team collaboratively and collegially developed questions for the interviews scheduled to take place on the first day of the on-site review,

established target areas needing more specific data collection, divided into interview teams, and prepared to address the need for specific evidence with the assigned school-based experts to gain clarity. The team arrived at the Telfair County School System Board of Education (BOE) at approximately 6 p.m. for a "meet and greet" dinner with system leadership and various stakeholder representatives. After dinner, the team returned to the Parker House Inn to review the next day's agenda and schedule of events.

On January 26, the team members arrived to the BOE at 7:30 a.m. to hear the superintendent's overview of the school system and to conduct a series of personnel interviews with various stakeholder groups, including BOE personnel, school personnel, parent and community members, and other BOE support staff. The team met throughout the day with stakeholders to gather information regarding the school system and individual schools. The team departed the BOE and returned back to the hotel for a working dinner and initial review and discussion of the data collected from the interviews and review of documentation.

The District submitted its materials for the Accreditation Report in a timely fashion. The interviews yielded thoughtful answers to the team's questions, indicating an overall awareness of the External Review process, and eagerness to contribute towards a positive outcome. The self-appraisal averages from the elementary, middle and high schools correspond to the External Review team findings; thereby, validating the system's preparation for the review. Interviews revealed that support staff, parents, and community stakeholders were well informed or participants in the self-assessment process.

On January 27, team members arrived at Telfair Elementary School to have breakfast and meet with the building principal and other school-based support personnel. The principal provided a brief overview of the school and agenda for the site visit. The team spent most of the morning observing teaching and learning in classrooms, reviewing evidence, and conducting interviews of key stakeholders.

At approximately 11:20 p.m. the team traveled from the elementary school to have lunch with the elementary principal and assistant principal in route to the middle school and high school. The team arrived at the middle school and high school at approximately 12:30 p.m. to begin conducting classroom observations, student interviews, and leadership team interviews. At the conclusion of the day, the team returned to the Parker House Inn and held a working dinner session. Team members reviewed evidence gathered, shared findings, discussed the results from classroom visits and other information obtained during the visit. Using the evidence collected, the team engaged in dialogue and verified evidence concerning the degree to which the institution met the AdvancED Accreditation Standards and Indicators. At the end of the evening the team prepared final questions and a list of evidence needed in preparation for the final day on site.

On January 28, the team arrived at approximately 8:30 a.m. on the campus of Telfair County School System Board of Education to begin the work day. Team members met with key stakeholders and others to gather last minute evidence, get final questions answered, and prepare for the last team work session. Collectively, the team reviewed evidence and began to formulate the necessary conclusions needed for completion of the final verification of ratings and prepared for the oral exit report.

Stakeholder perspectives were provided by interviews with the superintendent, board members, parents,

community members, district and school level administrators, teachers, support staff, facilities managers, food service staff, administrative support staff, as well as students, and totaled 193.

On behalf of AdvancED and each team member, we would like to thank the Telfair County School System Board of Education, school administrators, teachers, and all other school system employees for their hospitality, transparency, and overall commitment to the accreditation process. Telfair County School System is to be commended for the countless hours spent preparing for this visit by conducting surveys, preparing a valuable self-assessment, gathering evidence, arranging team member accommodations, opening your school, making available your stakeholders for critical conversations, and responding to the various requests from the external review team. The students and staff were warm, inviting, and welcoming of the team. We also offer a special thanks to the parents, community members and other stakeholders who took the time and made the extra effort to visit with the review team in support of the school and this accreditation process.

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	12
Instructional Staff	62
Students	89
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	22
Total	192

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 (Dembo, J., Pane, J., Barney, H., & Christina, R., 2005). The study also identified six

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

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

Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
3.1	The system's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level.	3.00	2.69
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.	1.80	2.54
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	2.40	2.70
3.5	The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.	2.00	2.57
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	2.20	2.48
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	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.	4.00	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.	2.80	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.	2.40	2.57
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	2.20	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.	2.40	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.	2.00	2.48
5.3	Throughout the system professional and support staff are trained in the interpretation and use of data.	2.40	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.	2.00	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.	3.00	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

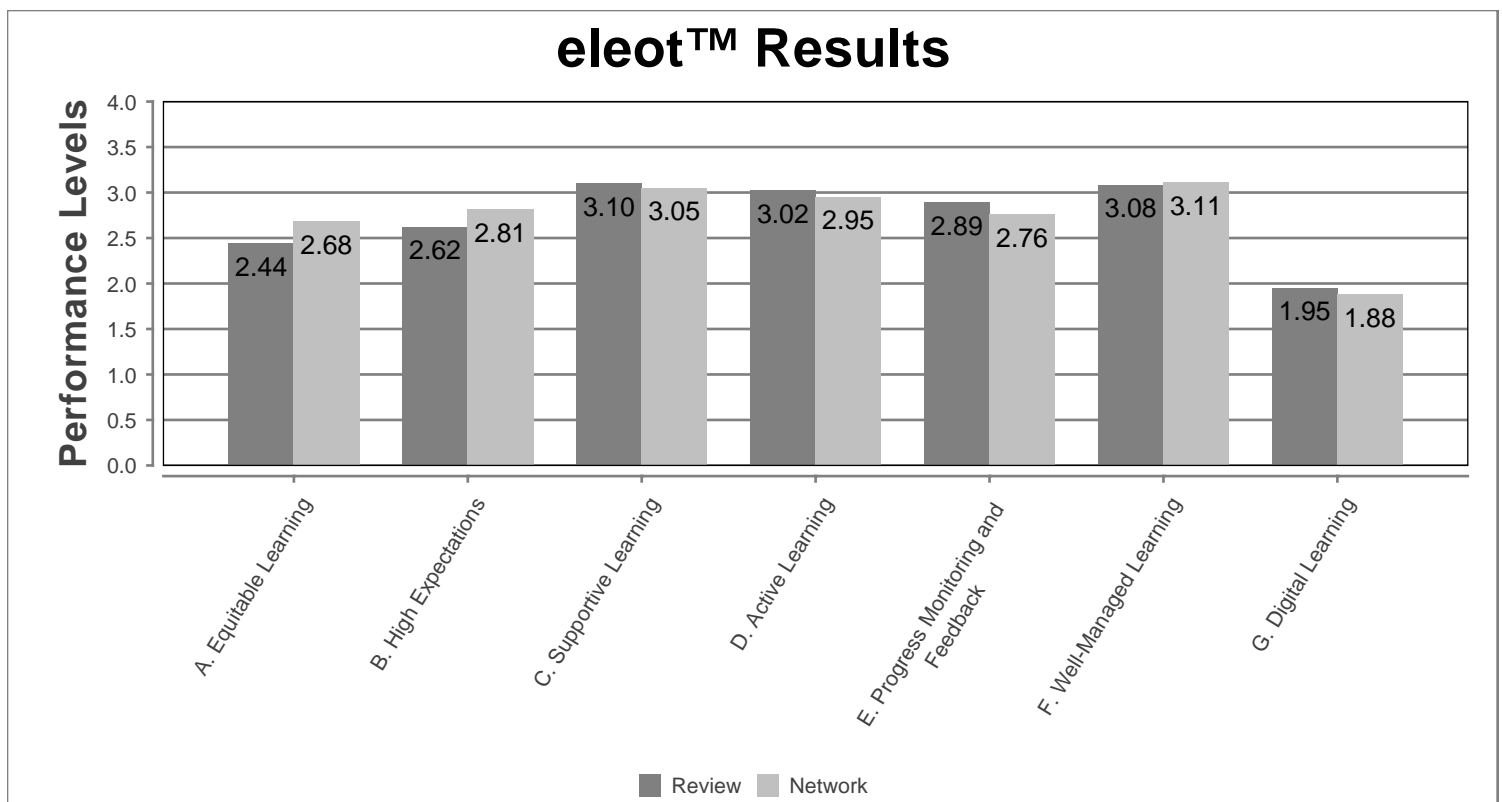
learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important indicators for evaluating overall student performance.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Assessment Quality	3.00	
Test Administration	3.00	3.62
Equity of Learning	1.60	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.



While conducting the on-site review of Telfair County School District, the AdvancED External Review Team visited each of the district's schools, observing a total of 61 classes. The team gained incredible insight into the district's and each school's teaching and learning processes and the district's alignment with AdvancED's belief about teaching and learning.

It was evident that the faculty, staff, and leadership work diligently to provide a genuinely caring, supportive, respectful, well-managed, student focused learning environment. The Supportive Learning Environment received the highest ratings on the eleot and was noted as an area to be commended because students and staff demonstrated a positive attitude about the classroom and learning, expressed that learning experiences are positive, and that they are provided assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks without fail at every level. The team's observations and interviews with students while in the classrooms made it easy to conclude that the students and staff are dedicated to student success. Students observed were respectful, followed established rules, worked well with others, clearly understood classroom as well as school based routines, and respected others as well as the established expectations for behavior.

The Well-Managed Learning Environment received the next highest eleot rating. The team agreed that most teachers provide an active learning environment where students are engaged, participate and often interact freely with both teachers and peers. However, there was little interaction between students related to group or team based learning or grouping in some areas in the schools. Additionally, the team indicated that in over 96% of the classrooms visited, it was evident that students knew the rules and that the consequences were fair, clear, and consistently applied.

Students encountered during the classroom observations displayed an extraordinarily positive attitude about learning and their individual classroom experiences. The eleot environments of high expectations and equitable learning received scores slightly lower than the AEN averages of scores. The team determined through observation the following: many students strive to meet the teacher's expectations; students have equal access to classroom discussions, resources, and support; students do not appear to have opportunities to learn about their own and other cultures, backgrounds, and differences in most classes. There was little evidence of exemplars of high quality work presented in most of the classrooms visited giving this area a score of 1.72. Progress monitoring and feedback appeared to be lacking based on the team's observations. Although the school has an amazing digital technology program with a 0.8 ratio of computers to students and interactive smart boards in every classroom, few classes were using digital tools for research or collaboration with students. The area of technology usage by students received a score of 1.95 although the availability of technology received a much higher rating and is commended in other areas of the report. The area receiving the least favorable rating on the eleot 1.59, is related to the student's access to differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs. The district indicated an awareness of this and the team validated, through observation, the differentiation process in the primary grades. It is not however, seen in the other areas but is a focus of future professional development and implementation plans. Overall the eleot™ results indicate a nurturing environment exists in the schools and few areas of concern which can easily be addressed through a continuous improvement process. These findings align with the data noted in the AdvancED network averages.

The climate and culture of the district is one of unity and commitment. The students, staff, community members, parents agree that there is a renewed commitment to excellence and their theme permeates the streets. The superintendent, principals, central office staff, students, and teachers, and parents all agree that the system is one of caring and dedication where they are a "family" and "every student matters". The vision of the district has been one to include, engage, and instruct at a higher level. The schools and classrooms visited

support the new direction of leadership resulting in well-managed, caring, environments where students feel supported and teachers feel valued. Students have access to technology, iPads, calculators, netbooks and other resources to explore the world beyond the classroom in some classes.

The district is celebrating the continued gains in student performance and the community is proud of how schools are supporting their children but must not lose sight of the achievement gaps between the various subgroups. The eleot findings align with the standards of purpose and direction, teaching and assessing for learning, and using results for continuous improvement and serve as evidence of progress toward meeting district and school-based goals.

eleot™ Data Summary

A. Equitable Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	1.59	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	8.20%	11.48%	11.48%	68.85%
2.	3.11	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	27.87%	59.02%	9.84%	3.28%
3.	3.36	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	42.62%	52.46%	3.28%	1.64%
4.	1.69	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	11.48%	14.75%	4.92%	68.85%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.44						

B. High Expectations			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.18	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	29.51%	59.02%	11.48%	0.00%
2.	2.92	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	16.39%	60.66%	21.31%	1.64%
3.	1.72	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	14.75%	9.84%	8.20%	67.21%
4.	2.72	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	13.11%	50.82%	31.15%	4.92%
5.	2.56	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	11.48%	52.46%	16.39%	19.67%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.62						

C. Supportive Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.30	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	36.07%	57.38%	6.56%	0.00%
2.	3.36	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	42.62%	50.82%	6.56%	0.00%
3.	3.11	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	22.95%	67.21%	8.20%	1.64%
4.	3.23	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	29.51%	63.93%	6.56%	0.00%
5.	2.49	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	14.75%	42.62%	19.67%	22.95%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.10						

D. Active Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.13	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	34.43%	47.54%	14.75%	3.28%
2.	2.69	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	27.87%	34.43%	16.39%	21.31%
3.	3.23	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	42.62%	39.34%	16.39%	1.64%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.02						

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.72	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	9.84%	60.66%	21.31%	8.20%
2.	2.98	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	21.31%	59.02%	16.39%	3.28%
3.	3.03	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	21.31%	62.30%	14.75%	1.64%
4.	2.84	Understands how her/his work is assessed	18.03%	60.66%	8.20%	13.11%
5.	2.87	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	22.95%	52.46%	13.11%	11.48%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.89						

F. Well-Managed Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.59	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	60.66%	37.70%	1.64%	0.00%
2.	3.39	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	50.82%	39.34%	8.20%	1.64%
3.	2.85	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	32.79%	40.98%	4.92%	21.31%
4.	2.13	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	19.67%	24.59%	4.92%	50.82%
5.	3.44	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	54.10%	39.34%	3.28%	3.28%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.08						

G. Digital Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.23	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	22.95%	22.95%	8.20%	45.90%
2.	1.75	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	19.67%	4.92%	6.56%	68.85%
3.	1.87	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	18.03%	13.11%	6.56%	62.30%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 1.95						

Findings

Improvement Priority

Develop and implement common instructional strategies to be used by all teachers throughout the system. (Indicator 3.2, Indicator 3.3)

Evidence and Rationale

During interviews teachers indicated they have a common grade level planning and professional development time that provides many opportunities for learning and collaboration. Teachers in grades K-2 utilize this time to discuss data and instruction through a coordinated effort with an instructional coach. The External Review Team recognized the system and school leaders have a very real commitment to the improvement of teaching practices as evidenced in their training opportunities and time allocated for teachers. Teachers are afforded complete autonomy in their instructional strategies. While teachers review student performance data, there was little evidence of changes in instruction to meet the needs of each student. Interviewees indicated that interventions mostly consisted of more practice or extra time. Teachers were not able to articulate their understanding of true teaching practices, and students were not able to express how they were being taught. Teaching should consist of a balance between teacher autonomy and a common language for instruction. Students benefit from common strategies, which minimize the directives needed and allow teachers to move quickly into the content of the lesson.

Teachers are using the Georgia Department of Education Standards as their curriculum. Interviews with administrators and teachers indicated the system is working to ensure the system's PreK-12 curriculum guides and planning processes are aligned with the GDOE Standards. These efforts are a work in progress and are planned to continue across the district.

Improvement Priority

Develop, train and engage teachers and support staff in a continuous systematic process for collecting, analyzing, and applying learning information to guide instruction and determine verifiable improvement in student learning.

(Indicator 5.2, Indicator 5.3, Indicator 5.4)

Evidence and Rationale

Artifacts provided by the system included a comprehensive collection of assessment data available to the school staff for use in data analysis. This information provided a view of where students were functioning academically. Interviews revealed there was no collective representation of a child's achievement test data and results K-12. The practice of collecting District Assessments, Common Assessments developed by teachers, and formative and summative assessments for each child enhances the opportunity to gain a more complete view of each student's progress, and make decisions that are aligned with his/her needs. Interviews with teachers indicate they feel the need for more skills in how the data can impact their teaching practice in ways that improve student learning. Teachers indicate anecdotal information and informal conversations occur but are mainly focused on identification. K-2 teachers revealed they use a process of reflection on teaching and learning during their grade level meetings to review and assess student achievement and to connect their instructional practices. While all teachers K-12 indicate they review student performance data, there was little evidence of changes in instruction to lessen the achievement gaps of students.

It was clear to the External Review Team that teachers are very competent in analyzing the multitude of data available to them, and expressed a commitment to increasing student performance by providing interventions at appropriate levels. The district leadership is committed to supporting increased student achievement and staff development. This is evidenced by their support and the time they allocate to staff for planning. While quality professional development is evident and continues to be included in the system plan, it should include all staff who are responsible for student learning.

All stakeholders benefit from receiving and responding to comprehensive information about students. These data should be used in analyzing effectiveness of instruction and programs that support student learning. The entire process of continuous improvement is predicated on the belief that ongoing monitoring of comprehensive data contributes to successful growth and achievement of individual learning needs. Consistent improvement plans tied to measurable student learning goals and carefully aligned assessment data will enhance the use of such data in professional learning communities and allow opportunities to review and revise improvement efforts as warranted. A system that monitors and looks deeply at student data within and across grade levels guarantees a seamless and viable curriculum for all students directly aligned to their needs.

Improvement Priority

Further develop existing collaborative professional learning plan and time so that it is linked to improvement results in instructional practice and student performance.

(Indicator 3.5)

Evidence and Rationale

Grade level, department, and district leadership meetings are scheduled on a regular basis. In order to enrich the collaboration time include the following elements: discussions of the results of inquiry practice, examination of student work, reflection, study teams, and peer coaching as part of the routine. These elements when linked to student needs will result in improved instructional practice and increased student performance. Targeted work based on student needs with a focus on ways to change instructional practices may decrease student achievement gaps. The district's Professional Learning Community collaboration time allows teachers to align objectives, activities, collect exemplars, develop and analyze formative assessments in order to determine level of student understanding and to monitor student progress.

Powerful Practice

Telfair County Schools engages families in many meaningful ways in their children's education.
(Indicator 3.8)

Evidence and Rationale

During interviews, parents conveyed their praise for the many means that Telfair County Schools keeps them informed and up-to-date about their children's grades and progress. They reported that the schools and staff are proactive in their overall communication. Parent surveys further substantiated the praise for communication efforts. Stakeholders indicated they are very involved in shaping decisions and working with the schools and the system collaboratively on improvement efforts. One comment stated was, "Whether you have a child in this school system or not does not matter, because as a community we care about our children." A culture of openness and transparency among all stakeholders is embraced and supports the system's purpose and direction.

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.	3.00	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.	4.00	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.	4.00	3.20
2.4	Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction.	3.00	3.00
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	3.00	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.	2.60	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

Opportunity For Improvement

Develop and implement a systemic and systematic continuous improvement process that identifies specific student achievement goals, including action planning identifying measurable objectives, strategies, activities, resources, and timelines with specific assessments designated for monitoring and measuring progress toward the goals.

(Indicator 1.4)

Evidence and Rationale

The district has some processes in place to address continuous improvement. Through interviews and examination of district and school improvement plans it was evident the processes are not formalized in all areas. Because increasing student achievement is one of the goals in the district, activities should be aligned to specific academic areas of need. In addition, evaluation of the strategies and activities should be done in order to continue revision and alignment to ensure organizational effectiveness and achievement.

Powerful Practice

The Telfair County School System Board of Education has a clear and complete set of policies to ensure the

governing body continues to operate responsibly and functions effectively in order to facilitate their purpose of supporting the education of children in the community.

(Indicator 2.2)

Evidence and Rationale

Telfair County Schools Board of Education has implemented a process to evaluate its decisions and actions to ensure practices are in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities. Throughout interviews with stakeholders reference was made regarding the high level of commitment by every board member and how they maintain a clear distinction between their roles and responsibilities. The board participates in professional development which includes conflict resolution, evaluation and fiscal responsibility.

Powerful Practice

The Telfair County School System ensures that leaders have the skills, autonomy, knowledge, and vision to manage the day-to-day operations of the school in a highly effective manner.

(Indicator 2.3)

Evidence and Rationale

The Telfair County School System maintains a clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities of the school leadership teams and the central office staff. Interviews revealed there is a high degree of respect and trust that impacts the successful flow of communication and support throughout the district and with school administrators. It was obvious that these leaders enjoy a healthy culture in which the superintendent and school board entrusted them with the day-to-day operations of the schools. This culture of trust and mutual respect creates the foundation upon which leadership flourishes and ultimately students succeed.

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.	3.20	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.	2.80	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.	2.60	2.82
4.6	The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	3.00	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.	2.60	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

Opportunity For Improvement

Develop, implement and monitor a continuous process that coordinates and evaluates the overall effectiveness of services to support counseling assessment, referrals, educational and career planning needs for all students.

(Indicator 4.8)

Evidence and Rationale

The External Review Team did not find a specific system designed to evaluate and determine the counseling, assessment, referral, educational and career planning needs of all students. School counseling staff expressed the need for additional counseling resources to support the various needs of students, primarily within the middle and high school levels. Staff indicated they worked with outside independent services to support students.

Conclusion

The External Review Team identified Powerful Practices that emerged strongly during the External Review process. They, together with identified Opportunities for Improvement and Improvement Priorities, support the rating of specific Standard indicators as well as general themes that became evident to the team.

Telfair County School System is firmly focused on the success of its students. The school board has a solid understanding that their personal visions do not automatically become the organization vision. There is great trust between the school board and the superintendent. The board's evident trust of the superintendent carries over into the entire school community, fostering confidence among stakeholders and staff. Through interviews with the superintendent, board members, building administration, teachers and parents, it was evident that the school board does not interfere with the daily operations of the school. Parents expressed, there is no need to circumvent the identified chain of command, as it was well known that shared responsibility exists within the system. There is a high level of trust at all levels and an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of staff.

The superintendent and the school board has created a strong commitment within the system to strive for performance excellence. All administrators and staff are working in concert to accomplish the goals and implement the programs and strategies identified. The superintendent indicated in his overview the system has focused on "Four Tenets of Leadership: Rigor, Respect, Relationships, and Relentless" as a framework for pursuing excellence. In addition to the focus on this framework the district has had an intentional focus on the stabilization of finances and the district's commitment to the mission to, "Instill Excellence and Pride." It was reported by many stakeholders the belief they are collectively beginning to realize the, "school system constitutes an inestimable and lasting force in the development of the student." The External Review Team heard loud and clear from the superintendent that the greatest strength of the system was its people and their commitment to continually improving student success and the effectiveness of the organization. To foster this relationship, the superintendent has worked diligently to promote a climate of transparency in all matters and at all levels within the organization. Interviews revealed the superintendent is highly visible and available.

The Telfair County School System leadership team has a desire to continue to implement it's work on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy system-wide. They have begun the process with grades PK-3 this past year. The current plan will help support and strengthen their continuous school improvement process and improve their vertical alignment within the district. The Team identified the need for developing a systemic and systematic formal process using their Professional Learning Communities to further identify instructional strategies PK-12. Having a formal plan will ensure the district continues to decrease student achievement gaps.

The Telfair County School System has the capacity to meet the goals and the improvement opportunities noted by the External Review Team. From the governing board, to the superintendent and leadership team to the students, the system operates effectively with a caring and loving attitude to serve. The community and district leaders have a true passion for improvement and the ability to ensure students are successful.

Improvement Priorities

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

- Develop and implement common instructional strategies to be used by all teachers throughout the system.
- Develop, train and engage teachers and support staff in a continuous systematic process for collecting, analyzing, and applying learning information to guide instruction and determine verifiable improvement in student learning.
- Further develop existing collaborative professional learning plan and time so that it is linked to improvement results in instructional practice and student performance.

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	273.17	282.79
Teaching and Learning Impact	248.57	274.14
Leadership Capacity	313.33	296.08
Resource Utilization	277.50	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
Telfair County Elementary School	323.81	372.73	342.86	341.03
Telfair County High School	295.24	309.09	285.71	297.44
Telfair County Middle School	295.24	327.27	314.29	307.69

Team Roster

Member	Brief Biography
Dr. Jennifer Horvath	<p>Dr. Horvath is the Indiana State Associate Director for the NCA CASI/AdvancED. She has lead many School External Reviews in Indiana and has also served as a System Lead Evaluator. Prior to her involvement with NCA CASI, she taught elementary school for 12 years. She also served as an Instructional Coach, Staff Developer, Director of Title I and Special Services, Administrator in a public school's central office. Dr. Horvath holds certifications in Early Learning, Reading, Special Education, and Administration. She has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Business Administration, a Masters of Arts in Teaching, a second Masters in Administration and Supervision, and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership.</p>
Dr. Greg Benton	<p>Dr. Benton currently serves as an Area Superintendent in Henry County Schools, currently ranked the seventh largest public school system in Georgia. Dr. Benton has served in a P-12 public school system for 18 years, including experiences as a classroom teacher, assistant principal at the middle school level, building principal at the elementary level and at the Georgia Department of Education as a School Improvement Specialist and Director of Teacher and Leader Quality. Dr. Benton has a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Georgia State University, a Master's and Specialist degree in School Administration from The University of West Georgia, and a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from Mercer University.</p>
Ms. Mary L Mickelson	<p>Ms. Mickelson is an AdvancED certified Lead Evaluator and has chaired / served on NCA-CASI and SACS-CASI school and district QAR teams in Indiana, Alabama, Arizona, Michigan, Kentucky, North Carolina, Texas and Virginia. Mary has served as DoDEA External Review / QAR team Lead Evaluator / chair or Associate Lead for more than 30 DoDEA schools in Europe, Japan, Korea, and stateside locations. She has served as Lead Evaluator / chair or Associate Lead for international school teams in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. Mary has worked extensively with AdvancED as an Indiana state committee member (ten years as the state superintendent's designee). Ms. Mickelson is currently an adjunct instructor for graduate education and transition to teaching programs (including student teaching). Mary has written and teaches curriculum and instruction courses for online graduate education programs. Particular areas of expertise include: continuous improvement at the school and district levels; data-driven decision-making; curriculum and instructional improvement; and professional development. Mary served the Indiana Department of Education in several roles: Director of School Accreditation (approximately 2200 public and non-public schools); education consultant for accreditation and gifted/talented education. In addition, Mary has experience at the local school and district levels: grant writer / manager; continuous improvement and assessment director; gifted/talented education coordinator/teacher/curriculum developer; music educator. Ms. Mickelson holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Indiana State University and the gifted/talented education endorsement from Purdue University.</p>

Member	Brief Biography
<p>Mrs. Pam Baggett</p>	<p>Pam Baggett is an educator with the Dodge County School System in Eastman, GA. In 23 years of teaching Mrs. Baggett has taught a range of subjects including Reading, Science and Language Arts. She is currently the media specialist for Dodge County Middle School. Mrs. Baggett has served as a sponsor for the Junior Beta Club, Student Council, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Science Club, and Global Achievers. During her career she has coached technology teams that participated in local and state competitions including Promote GA and Georgia Movie Academy bringing home local and state winners for four years.</p> <p>Mrs. Baggett received a Bachelor's degree in Housing from the University of Georgia, a teaching certificate in Middle Grades Education from Mercer University, a Master's degree in Middle Grades Education and Media Specialist add-on from Georgia College and State University and a Specialist degree in Middle Grades Education from Georgia Southwestern College.</p> <p>She has had the honor of serving on the State School Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Council and was named Dodge County Board of Education's Example of Excellence five times.</p> <p>Mrs. Baggett has been happily married to her high school sweetheart, Farrell, for 32 years. They have two sons, Andrew, age 27 and Parker, age 21. She is an active member of Plainfield Baptist Church in Eastman where she has served as an interpreter for the Deaf Ministry for over 21 years.</p>
<p>Dr. Catherine L Barnes</p>	<p>Dr. Catherine Barnes has been in education for over 25 years. She is an internationally published author of three Amazon 5 Star Rated books and several other publications, Certified Personal and Professional Advancement Strategist/Coach/Consultant, and is a member of the PWN Speakers Bureau. She has served as a Teacher, Academic Coach, Assistant Principal, Vice Principal, Principal, and Consultant in the public school system and currently serves as the Executive Director of School Supervision for the Alachua County Public School System. She earned a Bachelors and Masters Degree from the University of Florida, a Masters from Jacksonville University, and a Doctoral Degree from Nova Southeastern University. She is a graduate level adjunct instructor, a leadership development mentor, and school accreditation specialist serving with AdvancED (formally SACS/CASI) for over 10 years.</p> <p>Dr. Barnes provides professional development throughout the country on various topics related to data collection, interpretation, and usage as well as how to engage to positively impact instructional practices and student achievement, customer service and parental engagement methods that work, instructional evaluation for administrators and providing productive feedback. Additionally, she started Duval County's first research based single-gender instructional model based on brain research which indicates that male and female instructional needs are different. She has been recognized nationally for the research on this project, including being featured on CNN.</p>
<p>Dr. Alan D Smith</p>	<p>I have served with the Tift County School System for 26 years. My background is predominantly in K-5 although I have served as an administrator at Tift County High School. I served as K-5 building principal for 10 years before serving as an Assistant Director for Pre-K-5 Instruction for 2 years. I was recently named the Director for Pre-K-5 Curriculum and Instruction.</p> <p>I have served on one External Review team. I had the wonderful opportunity to work with a team at a Montessori school.</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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