# Report of the External Review Team for Madison City 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

Prior to the on-site system review, the AdvancED® External Review Team (Team) began its off-site examination and deliberation of artifacts provided by the Madison City School System (MCSS), headquartered in Madison, AL, with a Team and system joint telephone conference call held on February 27, 2015.  At that time MCSS central office staff addressed system operations and priorities with the six Team members assigned by AdvancED.

In addition, the Team Lead Evaluator announced AdvancED Standard and Domain chairpersons for the Team and explained documents posted on the AdvancED Workspace. The Team began the on-site MCSS system review with an evening dinner held at the system office on Sunday, March 8.  The event was attended by the system superintendent, system AdvancED contact persons, various supervisors, and AdvancED Team members.

An extensive examination of the system using the approved accreditation review process was conducted with an emphasis on the five AdvancED standards.  In addition the Team used the Effective Learning Environment Observation Tool (eleot™),  interviews with MCSS central office staff as well as school leaders and stakeholder groups, system and school artifacts, and school and system survey data to rate the standards.

While on-site, the Team conducted interviews at the system office on Monday, March 9, and toured six MCSS schools on Tuesday, March 10.  The Team completed final deliberations, presented the oral exit report, and departed the MCSS system on the afternoon of March 11.  The MCSS and all schools were well-prepared for the visit with all events appropriately planned and scheduled.  Teachers, staff, students, and other stakeholder groups understood the review process in which the MCSS and its schools were involved. They eagerly participated in the various accreditation activities.  Open and honest discussions and interviews with administration and staff provided valuable information for the Team.  This information, along with a review of artifacts and visits to classrooms, provided an overall view of the learning environment of the MCSS and how thoroughly the AdvancED standards for accreditation were addressed.

There was a wide variety of stakeholder groups present during the visit and numerous interviews took place. The Team interviewed all five MCSS school board members, the superintendent, 43 central office and school administrators, 98 teachers, 24 support staff, 15 parents/caregivers and/or stakeholders, and 38 students for a total of 224 persons.  Each group or individual interviewed was well-informed about the vision and mission of the MCSS and its schools, as well as future MCSS and individual school short- and long-range goals and objectives.  Stakeholders were open in their comments and readily discussed all questions asked by the Team. Several persons interviewed volunteered additional information about the MCSS and its schools that was not included in any Team questions.  In addition to the stakeholder groups mentioned above, the Team randomly observed 63 classrooms utilizing the eleot protocol and examined numerous bulletins, policy manuals, and other school documents.

The Team would like to thank the MCSS board members, system and school administration, all faculty and staff, students, parents, and community representatives for the warm, friendly welcome and for all comforts afforded during the accreditation process.  The Team would also like to extend a special thank you to the various persons who provided meals, refreshments, and technology assistance.  Finally, the Team noted that system and school officials had thoroughly planned for the accreditation visit and arranged all meetings and events to follow the timeline required by the evaluation 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 |
| Administrators | 43 |
| Instructional Staff | 98 |
| Support Staff | 24 |
| Students | 38 |
| Parents/Community/Business Leaders | 15 |
| **Total** | **224** |

# Results
## Teaching and Learning Impact

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning

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

| Indicator | Description | Review Team Score | AdvancED Network Average |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | The system's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level. | 3.00 | 2.69 |
| 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. | 3.00 | 2.55 |
| 3.3 | Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations. | 3.00 | 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. | 3.00 | 2.48 |
| 3.7 | Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning. | 2.00 | 2.67 |

| 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. | 1.83 | 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. | 3.00 | 2.60 |
| 3.12 | The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students. | 3.00 | 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. | 3.00 | 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. | 3.00 | 2.48 |
| 5.3 | Throughout the system professional and support staff are trained in the interpretation and use of data. | 3.00 | 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. | 3.00 | 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 | 3.32 |
| Test Administration | 3.00 | 3.62 |
| Equity of Learning | 1.00 | 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.
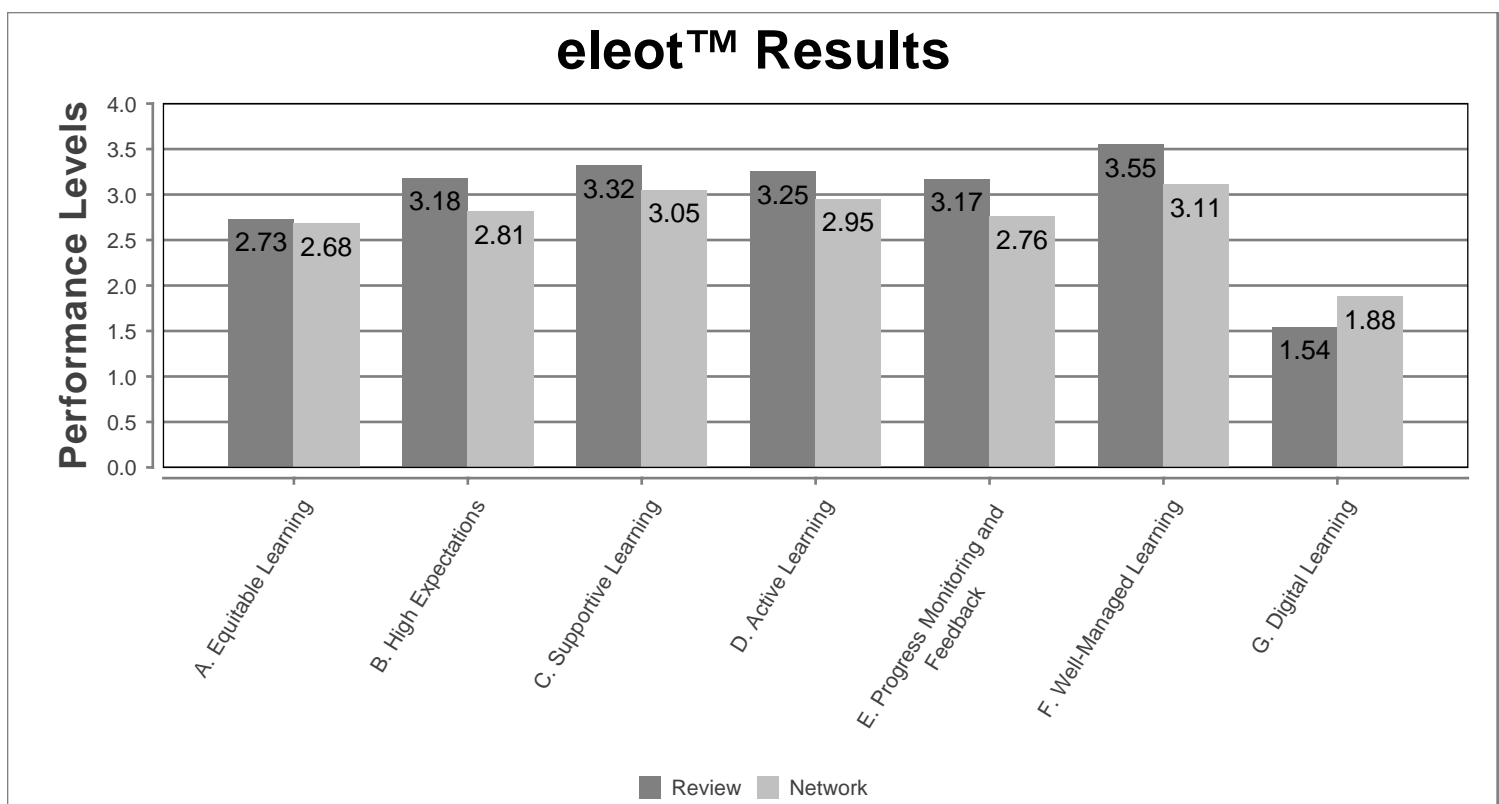


The Team utilized the eleot instrument in observing 63 school classrooms located within the six MCSS schools visited and determined ratings for each of the seven learning environments measured through the use of the instrument.  Areas of highest rating on the eleot scale were the "Well-Managed Learning Environment" and the "Supportive Learning Environment" with scale averages of 3.55 and 3.32.   The third highest area was "Active Learning Environment" with a scale average of 3.25.  AdvancED network averages for these categories were

3.09, 3.03, and 2.94, respectively.

The eleot observation protocol indicated that the classroom learning environment within the MCSS was positive.  The MCSS provided evidence of an equitable learning environment with many opportunities for student engagement.  However, more opportunities for differentiated learning as well as opportunities for students to learn about their backgrounds and culture would enhance and enrich student learning opportunities.  The lack of observed instances of these activities led to a lower rating on the "Equitable Learning Environment" component of 2.73.

A high expectation for learning was observed in some situations and students were well-managed within the classroom.  Exemplars for assessment were not evident in all classes observed which led to a lower eleot score in some areas.  In particular, the Team noted the absence in other classes of student progress feedback and teacher high expectations for student engagement which led to a lower score in the "Progress Feedback Environment" and "High Expectation Environment" categories.  The respective eleot values for the system were 3.17 and 3.18, respectively.  Though school staffs were prepared for the visit and all teachers observed provided instruction in a rich environment, an absence of student use of instructional technology to enhance teaching and learning was noted in many instances.  System planners are continuing efforts to monitor, and enhance as needed, infrastructure capability to support technology in the future.  However, Team observations supported the notion that more could be made of existing classroom technology for student use.  It is noted that the system score for "Digital Learning Environment" was 1.54 as compared with an AdvancED network average of 1.88.

MCSS students were outstanding in several ways.  Not only were they polite and orderly as they moved about their respective campuses, but they were attentive and focused in classrooms, as well.  Students, as a whole, demonstrated evidence of a well-organized group who respectfully followed school rules.  During class activities, students interacted with each other and worked well together and independently.  It was obvious to the Team that good student behavior was an expectation and part of the routine for attendance at all the system schools visited.

**eleot™ Data Summary**

| A. Equitable Learning | | | | % | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Item** | **Average** | **Description** | | **Very Evident** | **Evident** | **Somewhat Evident** | **Not Observed** |
| 1. | 2.24 | Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs | | 15.87% | 28.57% | 19.05% | 36.51% |
| 2. | 3.43 | Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support | | 52.38% | 38.10% | 9.52% | 0.00% |
| 3. | 3.25 | Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied | | 49.21% | 34.92% | 7.94% | 7.94% |
| 4. | 1.98 | Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences | | 14.29% | 15.87% | 23.81% | 46.03% |
| **Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.73** | | | | | | | |

| B. High Expectations | | | | % | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Item** | **Average** | **Description** | | **Very Evident** | **Evident** | **Somewhat Evident** | **Not Observed** |
| 1. | 3.30 | Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher | | 42.86% | 47.62% | 6.35% | 3.17% |
| 2. | 3.38 | Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable | | 50.79% | 39.68% | 6.35% | 3.17% |
| 3. | 2.76 | Is provided exemplars of high quality work | | 33.33% | 31.75% | 12.70% | 22.22% |
| 4. | 3.27 | Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks | | 42.86% | 44.44% | 9.52% | 3.17% |
| 5. | 3.21 | Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing) | | 42.86% | 39.68% | 12.70% | 4.76% |
| **Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.18** | | | | | | | |

| C. Supportive Learning | | | % | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Item** | **Average** | **Description** | **Very Evident** | **Evident** | **Somewhat Evident** | **Not Observed** |
| 1. | 3.51 | Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive | 60.32% | 31.75% | 6.35% | 1.59% |
| 2. | 3.48 | Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning | 58.73% | 30.16% | 11.11% | 0.00% |
| 3. | 3.33 | Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback) | 52.38% | 33.33% | 9.52% | 4.76% |
| 4. | 3.30 | Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks | 52.38% | 30.16% | 12.70% | 4.76% |
| 5. | 3.00 | Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs | 41.27% | 33.33% | 9.52% | 15.87% |
| **Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.32** | | | | | | |

| D. Active Learning | | | % | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Item** | **Average** | **Description** | **Very Evident** | **Evident** | **Somewhat Evident** | **Not Observed** |
| 1. | 3.52 | Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students | 58.73% | 34.92% | 6.35% | 0.00% |
| 2. | 2.73 | Makes connections from content to real-life experiences | 28.57% | 30.16% | 26.98% | 14.29% |
| 3. | 3.51 | Is actively engaged in the learning activities | 57.14% | 36.51% | 6.35% | 0.00% |
| **Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.25** | | | | | | |

| E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback | | | % | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Item | Average | Description | Very Evident | Evident | Somewhat Evident | Not Observed |
| 1. | 3.03 | Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning | 28.57% | 55.56% | 6.35% | 9.52% |
| 2. | 3.27 | Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding | 41.27% | 46.03% | 11.11% | 1.59% |
| 3. | 3.33 | Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content | 42.86% | 47.62% | 9.52% | 0.00% |
| 4. | 2.97 | Understands how her/his work is assessed | 30.16% | 49.21% | 7.94% | 12.70% |
| 5. | 3.25 | Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback | 39.68% | 49.21% | 7.94% | 3.17% |
| **Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.17** | | | | | | |

| F. Well-Managed Learning | | | % | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Item | Average | Description | Very Evident | Evident | Somewhat Evident | Not Observed |
| 1. | 3.71 | Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers | 74.60% | 22.22% | 3.17% | 0.00% |
| 2. | 3.62 | Follows classroom rules and works well with others | 69.84% | 23.81% | 4.76% | 1.59% |
| 3. | 3.35 | Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities | 61.90% | 23.81% | 1.59% | 12.70% |
| 4. | 3.46 | Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities | 68.25% | 19.05% | 3.17% | 9.52% |
| 5. | 3.60 | Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences | 65.08% | 30.16% | 4.76% | 0.00% |
| **Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.55** | | | | | | |

| G. Digital Learning | | | % | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Item** | **Average** | **Description** | **Very Evident** | **Evident** | **Somewhat Evident** | **Not Observed** |
| 1. | 1.73 | Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning | 12.70% | 12.70% | 9.52% | 65.08% |
| 2. | 1.43 | Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning | 7.94% | 6.35% | 6.35% | 79.37% |
| 3. | 1.48 | Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning | 7.94% | 9.52% | 4.76% | 77.78% |
| **Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 1.54** | | | | | | |

# Findings

**Improvement Priority**

Design and implement a program in all schools where each student has an adult advocate that supports the student's educational experience.

(Indicators 3.9)

*Evidence and Rationale*

Little evidence was presented to show that each student has an adult advocate in his or her school.  The Team noted that the above advocacy existed for some students in some locations; however, a uniform program that advocates for each student is not fully implemented throughout the system.

Student advocacy programs promote personal growth of students through positive relationships with adults. When each student has an adult advocate who monitors achievement, provides ongoing counsel, and assists with a process for decision-making, the student is more likely to be successful at the next level.

**Opportunity for Improvement**

Design and implement a system-wide on-going teacher mentoring, coaching, and induction program to support instructional improvement consistent with system values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

(Indicators 3.7)

*Evidence and Rationale*

The Team noted that there were inconsistencies about a formal mentoring program for new teachers in the system.  The system New Teacher Orientation Program offered at the beginning of the school year was not offered to teachers hired after the year began.  System administrators and the Team noted that numerous

teachers were hired past the start of school due to enrollment increases on a regular basis. Besides connecting to veteran teachers and department chairs within schools, the Team noted that new teachers stated they need additional support in instructional practices, in classroom management skills, and training in system policies and procedures.

Mentoring programs support and retain teachers within a school system. Newly hired teachers who are provided consistent support are more likely to remain with the system and become successful, productive employees.

## Opportunity for Improvement

Provide opportunities for all instructional support staff to take part in professional learning related to evaluation, interpretation, and use of data.
(Indicators 5.3)

### *Evidence and Rationale*

Professional development for certified professionals is aligned purposefully based on the needs of students. The Team reviewed and heard evidence of professional learning plans in place for the system and each school. In addition, systematic data analysis takes place after each formative and summative assessment which provides data about needed professional learning for certified professionals. However, the Team did not observe sufficient evidence as it relates to instructional support staff training in data utilization.

Professional development focused on the specific needs for all students must be established for all staff members. Training in data utilization increases specific expertise for not only teachers but also staff members to assist with a more enhanced instructional program for each student.

## Powerful Practice

The system partners with families in meaningful ways, informs them of student learning progress, and collaborates regularly to increase student achievement.
(Indicators 3.8)

### *Evidence and Rationale*

The Team noted that parents engage in meaningful ways in their children's educational experience within the system. Some evidence of engagement included stakeholder opportunities in system-wide committee involvement, curriculum nights, parent conferences, Academy offerings, and ACT ASPIRE parent nights. Other opportunity activities included chess league, robotics teams, etc. Parents are informed of their children's learning progress through assessment reports, standards based report cards, PTA Council's "Lunch and Learn," and social media for information about the system. In addition, the Team found Parent University offers learning experiences for helping children reach achievement goals and understand assessments. One parent noted, "Within two years my child has gone from a 'C' student to an 'A' student by understanding data and assessments."

Parents and families who are involved in their children's educational programs are more likely to have students

who are college and career ready.  As a result of caregiver involvement, children become involved in the educational process, invest in their achievement, and take ownership of their learning.

# 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. | 3.00 | 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. | 4.00 | 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. | 3.67 | 3.20 |
| 2.4 | Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction. | 4.00 | 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. | 3.00 | 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

## Powerful Practice

Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster and work to protect the vibrant, family-like culture they have created that is consistent with the system purpose and direction.
(Indicators 2.4)

### *Evidence and Rationale*

During the interview process, the Team found evidence that the community also fosters a family-like culture that is consistent with the system purpose and direction.  The Team examined artifacts that gave evidence of decisions being made that align with the system strategic plan and purpose.   The Team noted evidence in the system strategic plan of how the governing body expects all personnel and students to maintain high standards of excellence.  Leadership expectations foster a culture consistent with the system purpose and direction.

Creating a culture that promotes high expectations for student achievement is an essential part of a successful school system.  Further, community support for system purpose and direction enhances the probability of student success.

**Powerful Practice**

The governing body takes great pride in ensuring that leadership at all levels has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.

(Indicators 2.3)

*Evidence and Rationale*

During interviews, the Team found that the governing body supports and respects the autonomy of system and school leadership to accomplish goals for achievement and instruction.  During the principal interviews, a principal commented that, "Innovation is not only supported, but encouraged."  Principals also stated that there was autonomy at all levels of operation.  The Team found evidence of leadership meetings, system-wide strategic plans, and board policies that support autonomy at all levels.

It is crucial for leadership in all areas to have the autonomy to set and meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage the day-to-day operations to meet the needs of students.  Understanding the roles and responsibilities of all system and school leaders is what makes autonomy possible.  The governing body should support, protect, and respect the autonomy of those in leadership positions at all levels.

**Powerful Practice**

The governing body works diligently to provide clear, direct policies and practices that support and monitor the purpose and direction of both the system and the schools to enhance student achievement.

(Indicators 2.1)

*Evidence and Rationale*

The Team determined through the interview process that the governing body has policies and practices in place to ensure effective administration of the system and its schools.  The Team learned that the governing body uses rezoning practices as needed to maintain equity in all schools.  During the interviews a parent stated that, "Even though rezoning is an unpleasant necessity, it was handled really well."  The Team determined that there are practices in place for monitoring conditions that support student learning and effective instruction and assessment.  In addition, the Team heard from staff members and board members that the governing body participates in quarterly data meetings which provide the opportunity to monitor conditions for effective administration of the system and the schools.  System artifacts showed evidence of clear, direct policies in place that support the purpose and direction of the system and schools and assist in providing equity for all schools.

In order for a system to operate effectively and efficiently, policies and practices must be in place and monitored regularly by the governing body.  Student learning should always be at the forefront of the decision-making process and stakeholders need to be an integral part of all policy making.  To continuously monitor the effectiveness of the system and schools, it is important for the governing body to participate in monitoring activities such as data meetings on a regular basis.

# 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. | 4.00 | 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. | 3.00 | 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. | 3.00 | 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. | 3.00 | 2.64 |

# Findings

**Powerful Practice**

The system utilizes stakeholder groups and outside agencies to strategically plan for long-range resource management and to provide equity within the system and support for the purpose and direction of the system. (Indicators 4.4)

*Evidence and Rationale*

The system follows policies and procedures outlined in the Alabama Public School and College Authority for long-range capital planning. Careful consideration is given to planning and preserving existing buildings to optimize capital resources and maintain quality educational environments. A diverse group of stakeholders serve on numerous planning committees to ensure equitable distribution of resources. These committees create annual and long-range maintenance and capital project plans which are reported to stakeholders regularly.

Stakeholders expect responsible management of funds allocated to schools. Trust is built between the system and stakeholders when input is sought and valued.

# Conclusion

The Team found that MCSS is committed to providing opportunities for students to achieve. High expectations are evident from the community and system which promote a positive learning environment in schools. As a result of high expectations, the system commits to utilizing data to inform practices and align resources to meet the unique needs of each student.

The Team noted the implementation of instructional leadership teams to provide instructional strategies, to monitor the implementation of those strategies, and to revise the expectations for increased student learning. In addition, system Instructional Partners serve as a liaison with the system, school, and teachers to ensure best practices and data utilization are implemented with fidelity. Through the use of data to monitor growth and analyze assessments, programs are evaluated and staff are trained as a continuous process to provide readiness for students at the next level.

The Team discovered the need for a system-wide formal mentoring program for new teachers. Since there is not a formal mentoring program for new teachers employed at and after the school year has begun, the Team recommends that the system design and implement an on-going teacher mentoring, coaching, and induction program to support instructional improvement consistent with the system values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

The Team commends the system for engaging parents in meaningful ways in their children's educational experience. Some evidence of engagement included opportunities for involvement in the child's educational process such as serving on system and school level committees, providing resources for student success, and participating in activities during and after school. To increase the opportunities for student success, an advocacy program that provides support for each student should be designed and fully implemented throughout the system. The Team noted that interactions among teachers, administrators, and students were positive; however, a student advocacy program is not implemented throughout the system.

After the review of artifacts, interviews with stakeholders, and examination of the system self-assessment, the Team found MCSS engages in a systematic process to review and revise the purpose for student success. The review process focuses on student learning and includes representatives from many stakeholder groups. The system stated it did not, however, randomly select members from all stakeholder groups. Random selection of stakeholders should be accomplished during the next strategic planning cycle. System policies, procedures, and professional practice support high expectations for the success of all students. The Team found that system documentation provides evidence of monitoring and feedback regarding school data. Evidence further supports a commitment to shared values and beliefs and is regularly reflected in communication among school personnel.

MCSS focuses on student achievement in various ways. First, challenging educational programs are implemented so that all students are academically successful. Next, observations indicated a commitment to instructional practices that include active student engagement. Furthermore, continuous improvement plans that are written and implemented annually focus on academic growth and engage various stakeholders.

All MCSS schools are expected to maintain student profile data aligned with the system purpose. System goals are identified using analysis of the profile data and these goals are communicated to parents. The MCSS continuous improvement plan includes measurable objectives, strategies, activities, resources, and timelines for achieving system goals.

The Team noted that MCSS had policies and practices in place to ensure effective, efficient, and equitable administration of the system and its schools.  Evidence provided that documented policy committee meetings were held to review, revise, or reform policies as needed.  Artifacts showed that the system monitored conditions that support student learning, effective instruction, and assessment practices.

During the interview process, the Team heard evidence that supported the belief that the governing body ensures that leadership at all levels has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction. Principals interviewed expressed that they had the autonomy to manage day-to-day operations and to put in place practices that would ensure that all student needs would be met. The Team also observed during interviews and classroom observations that parents, students, and faculty all foster a culture consistent with the system purpose and direction.  The term "family" was repeatedly heard during multiple interviews and observations when the culture of the system and schools was discussed.  The Team noted that both the governing body and central office administration worked diligently to establish equity of support for resources among the system schools.

The Team found that the governing body consistently aligned decisions and actions toward continuous improvement, maintaining high standards for educators, and holding students to high standards in all courses of study.  The Team discovered during interviews that leaders throughout the system support innovation, collaboration, shared leadership, and professional growth.

Overall, the Team noted that the governing body, both system and school leadership, and school staff work effectively together to create a purpose and culture that promotes learning and growth in MCSS.  These efforts helped to provide a nurturing place where students can become lifelong learners that are prepared for college and careers.

Successful schools must have sufficient resources and systems of support to engage in sustained and meaningful efforts as part of a continuous improvement cycle. The Team found evidence that MCSS has a multitude of resources and support systems to provide services for its fiscal, environmental, technological, and safety needs. Additionally, documented processes prove that support systems are in place for the health and welfare needs of the students.

The Team noted there is a systemic process for recruiting and employing highly effective instructional staff through teacher recruitment procedures to support the purpose and direction of the system. Job-embedded professional learning contributes to the retention of qualified staff.

Strategic resource management was evident in the system long-range capital plan.  The Team noted as a

strength the capital plan for improvement and maintenance of existing facilities where some schools are newer and others aging.  The plan was aligned with the needs of the system and input from stakeholders was instrumental in ensuring that long- and short-range plans were equitable among all schools. The system's inclusion of stakeholders in the capital planning process ensures a responsible use of funds.

Safety is of high importance to the system as evidenced in many ways. A system safety director oversees the safety plans for all buildings, equipment, SRO officers, and transportation. The Team observed a particular emphasis on the security of buildings where students are present. The Lobby Guard Visitor Check-in kiosk and electronic entry doors for staff highlight the importance placed on keeping students and employees safe and secure.

Through interviews and observations, the Team noted that school facilities were clean, well maintained, and rich in educational resources to support the mission of the system.  These observations support a healthy working and learning environment for students and staff.  Effective support systems and programs are planned and implemented to meet the diverse social and emotional needs of students.  The Team found that improvements could be made in the technology infrastructure throughout the system.  The system has adopted a Bring Your Own Device policy to assist with technology utilization.  System plans are in place for the purchase of additional hardware to support technology utilization.

The team found that the system has ample resources and support systems to provide a quality educational program for students.  Stakeholders, system personnel, and the community work closely and collaboratively to ensure that the system sets and meets attainable goals for continuous improvement of support services.

# 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 and implement a program in all schools where each student has an adult advocate that supports the student's educational experience.

# 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 | 303.66 | 282.79 |
| Teaching and Learning Impact | 284.92 | 274.14 |
| Leadership Capacity | 330.56 | 296.08 |
| Resource Utilization | 312.50 | 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 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bob Jones High School | 304.76 | 309.09 | 300.00 | 305.13 |
| Columbia Elementary School | 304.76 | 318.18 | 300.00 | 307.69 |
| Discovery Middle School | 290.48 | 318.18 | 300.00 | 300.00 |
| Heritage Elementary School | 300.00 | 309.09 | 285.71 | 300.00 |
| Horizon Elementary School | 276.19 | 309.09 | 300.00 | 289.74 |
| James Clemens High School | 290.48 | 327.27 | 342.86 | 310.26 |
| Liberty Middle School | 304.76 | 345.45 | 271.43 | 310.26 |
| Madison Elementary School | 276.19 | 290.91 | 171.43 | 261.54 |
| Mill Creek Elementary | 316.00 | 309.09 | 285.71 | 309.30 |
| Rainbow Elementary School | 252.38 | 272.73 | 285.71 | 264.10 |
| West Madison Elementary School | 300.00 | 345.45 | 285.71 | 310.26 |

# Team Roster

| Member | Brief Biography |
|---|---|
| Dr. David E Gullatt | Dr. David E. Gullatt is a graduate of Louisiana Tech University and the University of Kansas.  He has served as a supervisor of administration and curriculum, elementary and secondary principal, and teacher for 29 years within the public schools of Louisiana.  For 15 years following those assignments he held teaching, administrative, and supervisory positions in higher education at both Northwestern State University (LA) and Louisiana Tech University.  Dr. Gullatt has served as Program Head, Department Head, and Dean of the College of Education at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, LA, retiring in 2012.  He has published 22 professional, juried scholarly articles and given over 70 national and international presentations addressing school accountability, operational safety, institutional effectiveness, school law, and student academic growth.  For the past 9 years he has served on both SACS and NCS AdvancED System Accreditation visits as Lead Evaluator for over 40 system accreditation visits.  Presently Dr. Gullatt is Vice-Chair of the Louisiana SACS-CASI Council and is a field representative for AdvancED in Louisiana.  He also serves as an adjunct professor of educational leadership and doctoral research at Louisiana Tech University. |
| Mrs. Debbie N Deavours | Debbie Deavours is a  PreK-6 elementary principal at Berry Elementary School in Berry, Alabama. She has been an educator for over thirty years. Mrs. Deavours attended school, completed her student teaching, taught, and is now leading the school in her own community. In addition to being an elementary principal, Mrs. Deavours was a middle school principal for two years. <br><br> Mrs. Deavours holds a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from the University of Alabama, a master's degree in Elementary Education from the University of Alabama, and a certificate in Education Leadership from the University of West Alabama. She is a National Board Certified Teacher in General/Middle Childhood. She is currently working on her Doctorate Degree in Instructional Leadership. <br><br> Throughout her career, Mrs. Deavours has written many successful grants, totaling over $1,200, 000 for her school in the last five years alone.  Her school is the only school in the system that is AMSTI, Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative, trained. Berry Elementary holds the distinction of being a Leader in Me Leadership School, as well. Mrs. Deavours works with AdvancED on school and district accreditation, annually. Most recently, she earned the distinction of being AAESA President, the Alabama Association of Elementary School Principals. |
| Mrs. Judy S Wesley | Judy Wesley, a lead evaluator for AdvancED, currently chairs teams throughout the United States and Latin America.   Though retired from Marion School District One in SC, she is still a dedicated educator serving as a field consultant for AdvancEd   and received the 2012-13 AdvancEd's Excellence in Education Award for South Carolina.  Judy started her career as a high school English teacher with a BA from Campbell University. During her 34 years in MSD 1, she also served as a tennis coach, director of federal programs, director of assessments, and grant writer. After retiring from the school system in 2004, Judy worked with Francis Marion University as a supervisor of student teachers. She also has worked with the SC Department of Education to assist low-performing schools. |

| Member | Brief Biography |
|---|---|
| Mr. David Buddenbaum | David Buddenbaum has been in education for 22 years as a teacher, technology specialist, assistant principal and principal at the elementary and middle school level.  He currently is the assistant superintendent of schools for Hart County Charter System in Hartwell, Georgia. Before coming to Hart County he worked in Rockdale County Georgia for 18 years as a teacher, coach, technology specialist and administrator. Mr. Buddenbaum has a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Ball State University in Elementary Education with a minor in Special Education, a Master's Degree from Walden University in Technology Instruction, and a Specialist Degree from Lincoln Memorial University in Education Leadership and Supervision.<br><br>Mr. Buddenbaum's philosophy of education is that all people should be challenged to improve by setting, monitoring, and adjusting their goals to ensure they are on track to meet their career aspirations. In order to accomplish that goal, teachers, administrators, students, parents, and community members must work collaboratively in all aspects to provide meaningful learning experiences to ensure improvement is being made as students grow. |
| Mrs. Cathy M Jones | Mrs. Cathy Jones is currently the Principal of Wills Valley Elementary School in Fort Payne, Alabama and has been there 10 years.  Prior to that, she was the Assistant Principal for 4 years at Albertville Elementary School in Albertville, Alabama.  Mrs. Jones also taught second grade for 9 years in Albertville prior to going into administration.  Mrs. Jones earned a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from Jacksonville State University in 1992; a Master's Degree in Elementary Education from the University of Alabama in 1998; and a Master's Degree in Education Administration from the University of Alabama in 1999.  She also received a National Principal Mentor Certification in 2011. |
| Mrs. Theresa Kay Roman | Theresa Roman is the principal of Argyle Elementary School in Orange Park, Florida. She has been an administrator at Argyle for almost 10  years; 2 as an assistant and 8 as the principal. Through her leadership and working with the best staff in the district, Argyle has earned an A grade on state assessments for 9 years.<br>Theresa earned a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education from the University of North Florida in Jacksonville. She holds a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from the University of North Florida.<br>Theresa has taught kindergarten in the Department of Defense Dependent's School in Spain. Additionally, she has taught Exceptional Education and Title 1. As a Title 1 teacher, she was a presenter on multiple occasions at Florida Reading Association Conferences and International Reading Association National Conferences.<br>She has extensive knowledge and experience working with students and parents from a wide range of demographics. |
| Mrs. Rebecca Stallings | Rebecca Stallings graduated from the University of Alabama with a B.S. and M.A.  in Elementary Education. She recieved her Ed.S from Samford University in Educational Administration.  With twenty-eight years teaching experience, she taught thirteen in Tuscaloosa City Schools and fifteen in Homewood City Schools, teaching sixth, seventh, and eighth grade language arts and social studies, as well as gifted education.  In 2001, she received her National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certificate in Early Adolescent/English Language Arts, and was recertified in 2011.  She serves as an Instructional Advisor for Homewood City Schools and on the Advance Education State Board. |

# 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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