

Report of the External Review Team for Nassau County School District

1201 Atlantic Avenue
Fernandina Beach
FL 32034-3499
US

**Dr. John L. Ruis
Superintendent**

Date: May 1, 2016 - May 4, 2016



Copyright (c) 2016 by Advance Education, Inc. AdvancED™ grants to the Institution, which is the subject of the External Review Team Report, and its designees and stakeholders a non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free license and release to reproduce, reprint, and distribute this report in accordance with and as protected by the Copyright Laws of the United States of America and all foreign countries. All other rights not expressly conveyed are reserved by AdvancED™.

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Results	10
Teaching and Learning Impact	10
Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning	11
Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement	12
Student Performance Diagnostic	12
Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™)	14
eleot™ Data Summary	17
Findings	20
Leadership Capacity	24
Standard 1 - Purpose and Direction	25
Standard 2 - Governance and Leadership	25
Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic	26
Findings	26
Resource Utilization	29
Standard 4 - Resources and Support Systems	29
Conclusion	31
Accreditation Recommendation	33
Addenda	34
Individual Institution Results (Self-reported)	34
Team Roster	35
Next Steps	37
About AdvancED	38
References	39

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

A team of six educators arrived in Nassau County, Florida to engage in the External Review process (May 1-4, 2016) for the Nassau County School District. The school system earned its initial system-wide accreditation in 2006, so this was the second External Review since earning system level accreditation. In preparation for the onsite External Review, the Lead Evaluator emailed and made personal phone contacts to greet members of the Team. A conference call was then scheduled in April with all Team members. During this call, Team expectations were reviewed, logistical planning conducted, and questions from all Team members answered. Additional phone calls and emails between the Lead Evaluator and Team members helped to better prepare everyone for the onsite review.

The Lead Evaluator was in constant contact with the system contact for Nassau County School District. Phone calls, emails and texts were the means of continuous communication between the Lead Evaluator and system contact. The system contact responded quickly and efficiently to any and all requests made by the Lead Evaluator.

In preparation for the review, each Team member reviewed the Accreditation Report for the system, the school reports, the school system's website, and any links to evidence related to each Standard. Team members had

primary responsibility for focusing on one specific Standard but were also responsible for being familiar with all Standards and Indicators. Each Team member had to come to the opening Sunday evening session with an initial rating of all Indicators. On Sunday afternoon, an orientation session was held in which Team members reviewed their preparation work with the entire Team, shared their initial ratings of Indicators, and finalized planning details for the first day of the on-site review. The system contact distributed a thumb drive to each Team member with the system's evidence organized by Standard and Indicators.

Seven of the 15 schools were visited. With there being such a variety of grade structures in schools across the system, the Lead Evaluator selected schools with kindergarten through grade two, some with kindergarten through grade five, some middle schools with grades six through eight, some high schools with grades nine through twelve, and one school with grades six through twelve. Eighty-eight classroom observations were completed in classrooms in the seven selected schools. The Leadership Teams from the schools not visited were interviewed.

The External Review Team thanks the school system and all of the staff who prepared for the External Review. The system contact worked very closely with the Lead Evaluator as the schedule was prepared. Key personnel in the system pulled together the artifacts and evidence in an electronic link organized by Standards and Indicators. This electronic resource was also provided to Team members on a thumb drive upon arrival in the school system.

Throughout the review, the school system personnel were open and transparent. Team members were welcomed into classrooms in all schools. The faculty and staff provided valuable insight through interviews. A total of 282 individuals were interviewed including 5 board members, the superintendent, 41 administrators, 105 staff (teachers and support staff), 26 parents, 17 community persons, and 87 students.

To prepare for the system review, the school system conducted surveys of parents, students and staff. Both the school system and each individual school exceeded the required minimum response rate of 40% for students and 60% for staff. The minimum required rate of 20% for parents was not met. In fact, eight of the 15 schools did not meet the minimum 20% requirement for returned parent surveys. The actual system-wide percentages were 17% for parents, 57% for students, and 84% for teachers. Very little survey analysis by the school system was shared with the External Review Team.

Each school conducted a Self Assessment, as well as the system completing its system-wide Self Assessment. Parents were involved in the internal review at the school level.

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	41
Instructional Staff	89
Support Staff	16
Students	87
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	43
Total	282

Results

Teaching and Learning Impact

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

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
3.1	The system's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level.	3.00	2.68
3.2	Curriculum, instruction, and assessment throughout the system are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	2.50	2.50
3.3	Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	3.00	2.55
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	3.00	2.73
3.5	The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.	3.00	2.57
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	2.67	2.48
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	3.50	2.60

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
3.8	The system and all of its schools engage families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keep them informed of their children's learning progress.	3.00	2.92
3.9	The system designs and evaluates structures in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the student's school who supports that student's educational experience.	2.17	2.40
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	2.50	2.53
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	3.00	2.64
3.12	The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	3.00	2.66

Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
5.1	The system establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	2.83	2.66
5.2	Professional and support staff continuously collect, analyze and apply learning from a range of data sources, including comparison and trend data about student learning, instruction, program evaluation, and organizational conditions that support learning.	2.83	2.41
5.3	Throughout the system professional and support staff are trained in the interpretation and use of data.	2.17	2.15
5.4	The school system engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	2.83	2.46
5.5	System and school leaders monitor and communicate comprehensive information about student learning, school performance, and the achievement of system and school improvement goals to stakeholders.	2.83	2.72

Student Performance Diagnostic

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

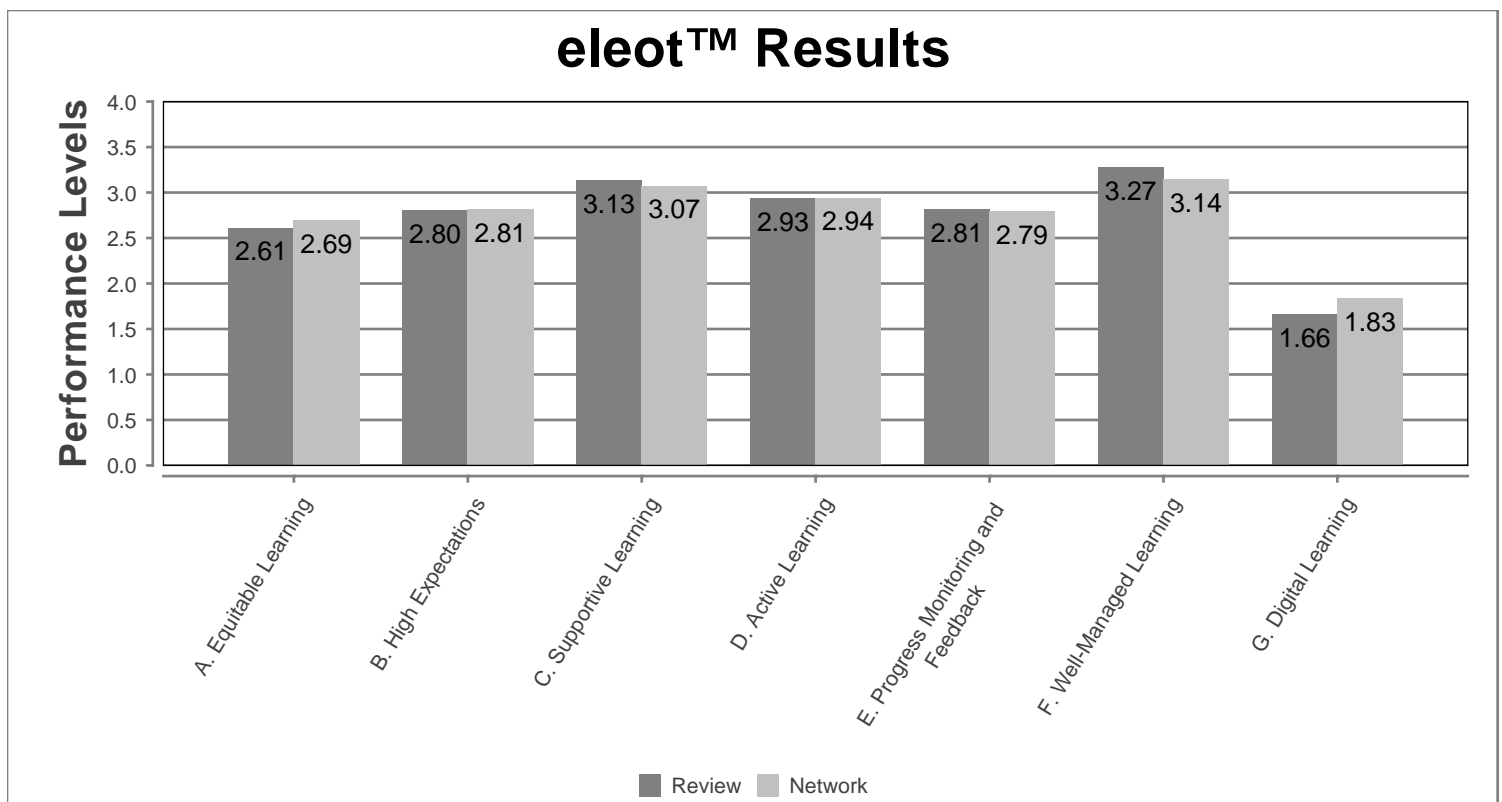
learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important indicators for evaluating overall student performance.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Assessment Quality	3.17	3.28
Test Administration	3.17	3.50
Equity of Learning	2.67	2.44
Quality of Learning	3.00	2.97

Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™)

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

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



The six members of the Nassau County School System Review Team conducted 88 classroom observations in seven of the 15 schools. Observations covered classes in kindergarten through grade twelve. The AdvancED Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool™ (eleot™) was used by the certified Team members for a minimum of 20 minutes in each classroom, providing ample opportunity to assess learners in the seven learning environments. The average scores for Nassau County were higher than the AdvancED Network

(AEN) averages in two of the seven areas.

Nassau County's highest rating overall was the Well-Managed Learning Environment which was a 3.27 compared to the AEN average of 3.14. The Supportive Learning Environment was the next highest rated environment with an overall rating of 3.13 compared to the AEN average of 3.07. Two of Nassau's learning environments were rated almost the same as the network averages. The High Expectations Environment was rated at 2.80 as compared to the AEN average of 2.81 while the Active Learning Environment was 2.93 compared to the AEN average of 2.94.

The Equitable Learning Environment was rated at 2.61 as compared to the AEN average of 2.69. Progress Monitoring and Feedback was at 2.81 compared to the AEN average of 2.79. Digital Learning was the lowest rated environment for Nassau County School District with an average score of 1.66 compared to the AEN average of 1.83.

In the Well-Managed Learning Environment, students spoke and interacted respectfully with the teacher and their peers. They followed classroom rules and worked well with others. It was obvious that students knew classroom routines, behavioral expectations, and consequences. Transitions were made smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another. Some collaboration among students was observed during student-centered activities.

In the Supportive Learning Environment, students were positive about their learning experiences and demonstrated positive attitudes about the classroom and learning. Students were willing to take risks without fear of negative feedback. Support and assistance were also provided to students so that they were able to understand content and accomplish assigned tasks.

The Digital Learning Environment was the lowest rated area. Student usage of digital tools to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning was "very evident or evident" in 32.96% of the classrooms. Usage of digital tools to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning was "very evident or evident" in 23.86% of the classrooms observed. In only 18.18% of all classrooms observed was it "very evident or evident" that students were using technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning.

In the High Expectations Environment, students were tasked with activities and learning that were challenging but attainable. The Active Learning Environment was highlighted with numerous opportunities for students to engage in discussions with the teacher and other students. Students were actively engaged in the learning activities. In the Equitable Learning Environment, students had equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, and support.

The eleot results align directly with the Powerful Practice on shared leadership and a caring culture (Indicators 1.3, 2.7). The highest rated environments for Nassau County School District were the Well-Managed Learning Environment and the Supportive Learning Environment which are the direct result of a caring, nurturing school system culture. Additionally, the Powerful Practice on having a strong mentoring and coaching program (Indicator 3.7) correlates to having a trained staff who realize the importance of being supportive, interacting

respectfully with their peers and students, actively engaging students in their learning, and providing challenging learning tasks for students.

The low ratings in the Digital Learning Environment align directly to the Improvement Priority (Indicators 5.3, 3.10) in that more intensive staff training is needed to ensure alignment with goals for achievement and instruction. The continuous professional development will result in teachers being better prepared to support students in using digital tools for learning.

Quality teaching is the heart of the instructional program. Focusing on the information provided from the classroom observations on the seven learning environments and the recommended Improvement Priorities will assist the school system in moving forward in addressing the Improvement Priorities outlined in this report.

eleot™ Data Summary

A. Equitable Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.31	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	18.18%	28.41%	19.32%	34.09%
2.	3.18	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	35.23%	50.00%	12.50%	2.27%
3.	3.27	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	42.05%	46.59%	7.95%	3.41%
4.	1.68	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	5.68%	17.05%	17.05%	60.23%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.61						

B. High Expectations			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.99	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	26.14%	50.00%	20.45%	3.41%
2.	3.20	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	31.82%	56.82%	11.36%	0.00%
3.	2.23	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	12.50%	30.68%	23.86%	32.95%
4.	2.93	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	20.45%	55.68%	20.45%	3.41%
5.	2.62	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	14.77%	45.45%	27.27%	12.50%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.80						

C. Supportive Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.22	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	39.77%	44.32%	13.64%	2.27%
2.	3.26	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	40.91%	46.59%	10.23%	2.27%
3.	3.06	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	29.55%	53.41%	10.23%	6.82%
4.	3.19	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	37.50%	47.73%	11.36%	3.41%
5.	2.93	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	25.00%	52.27%	13.64%	9.09%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.13						

D. Active Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.02	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	32.95%	43.18%	17.05%	6.82%
2.	2.70	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	25.00%	38.64%	18.18%	18.18%
3.	3.07	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	38.64%	31.82%	27.27%	2.27%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.93						

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.92	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	25.00%	51.14%	14.77%	9.09%
2.	2.98	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	26.14%	51.14%	17.05%	5.68%
3.	2.99	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	27.27%	50.00%	17.05%	5.68%
4.	2.31	Understands how her/his work is assessed	19.32%	17.05%	38.64%	25.00%
5.	2.85	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	23.86%	46.59%	20.45%	9.09%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.81						

F. Well-Managed Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.51	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	59.09%	32.95%	7.95%	0.00%
2.	3.48	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	59.09%	30.68%	9.09%	1.14%
3.	3.20	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	46.59%	34.09%	12.50%	6.82%
4.	2.64	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	38.64%	14.77%	18.18%	28.41%
5.	3.50	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	60.23%	29.55%	10.23%	0.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.27						

G. Digital Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	1.90	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	10.23%	22.73%	13.64%	53.41%
2.	1.65	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	5.68%	18.18%	11.36%	64.77%
3.	1.44	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	3.41%	14.77%	4.55%	77.27%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 1.66						

Findings

Improvement Priority

Develop, implement, and monitor a comprehensive staff development program for training professional and support staff members in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment, common grading practices, and alignment with goals for instruction and achievement. (Indicator 3.10, Indicator 5.3, SP4. Equity of Learning)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 5.3

Evidence and Rationale

Interviews with 105 teachers and 41 system and school leadership members, along with the internal assessment documented in the Accreditation Report, indicate the need for continued professional development for all staff in collecting, analyzing, and using data. Even though there was evidence of Data Teams, data chats with students, and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) with discussions on the multiple assessments, the persons interviewed expressed a strong need for more training and support in data analysis and usage.

FOCUS, the student information system, is the system’s tool for the storage, collection, and use of student data. Based on interviews and reviewed documents, the usage of this data system is not consistent throughout the schools, nor has the full capacity of the information system been tapped. One teacher commented, “We’ve had training but need lots more on the interpretation and use of data to drive instruction.” Additionally, leadership team members reported, “We are just beginning to train our paraprofessionals in data usage.”

Interviews and artifacts provided evidence that the system lacks consistent procedures for implementing a common grading system. Eighty-eight classroom observations provided limited evidence that students knew

the assessment criteria in advance of their performance. For example, results from the Effective Learning Environment Observation Tool (eleot™) indicated a score of 2.81 on a 4.0 point scale in the Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment. Within this environment, the behavior “Understands how her/his work is assessed” was scored at 2.31 on the 4.0 scale, which was the lowest rated behavior in this particular learning environment.

One teacher noted, “We’re beginning to get this started but are not there with common grading practices.” Another said, “Currently, how grades are determined is left to the individual teacher.” Yet another teacher stated, “ We don’t have an agreed upon set of procedures within a given department or within a given school.” When students were questioned about grading practices, one replied, “We think they are mostly fair but I am not sure if all teachers grade the same way.” These statements substantiate the need for the use of common grading and reporting policies, processes, and procedures based on clearly defined criteria as identified in the Accreditation Report.

Accurately and efficiently collecting, analyzing, and using multiple sources of data will support consistency in clearly defined grading practices that result in continued student achievement. Training for all personnel on data analysis is critical to achieving this goal.

Opportunity For Improvement

Formalize and evaluate a systemic structure in schools whereby each student is known by one adult advocate in the school who supports that student’s educational experience.

(Indicator 3.9)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.9

Evidence and Rationale

During interviews with parents, students, school-based leaders, and the system-level leaders, the Team found that students are known and contacted by staff for specific conversations at individual schools. These contacts may include, but are not limited to, two meetings per year with their assigned counselor, data chats with teachers, Response To Intervention/Multi-Tiered System of Support meetings, System of Care-Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS), coaches, and activity advisors. The students confirmed that while a formal advocacy program does not exist, they are comfortable seeking out and having a private conversation with a staff member they trust. As one administrator stated, “Each school has some version of student support.” Another administrator said, “Our students know they can go to anyone on staff. Yet, we do not have any formalized structure for advocates to be assigned to students.” After reviewing the system’s evidence, the Team did not find a formalized systemic structure in schools whereby each student is known by one advocate who supports that student’s educational experience over time. Additionally, the system, in its Self Assessment, identified the lack of a structured student advocacy program as an area needing improvement.

Providing every student in every school with an adult advocate is critical to ensuring that educators are aware of the needs of every student so that the appropriate support, guidance, and assistance are available.

Powerful Practice

The school system engages in a systematic mentoring, coaching, and induction program that supports instructional improvement.

(Indicator 3.7)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.7

Evidence and Rationale

Interviews with stakeholders at all levels and visits to seven elementary, middle, and high schools verified that mentoring and coaching are strong aspects of the Nassau County School District culture. Administrators and teachers referenced the strength of the Great Beginnings New Teacher Program, and the system has committed to providing a trained mentor for every new teacher.

The Great Beginnings New Teacher Program adheres to the system's commitment to differentiation as it aligns its requirements to the varying induction needs of entering teachers. With a focus on monthly training and weekly collaborative meetings with mentors, the program supports and monitors the success of new teachers in the classrooms. One teacher commented, "I could not have survived my first year without my mentor." New teachers are immediately immersed into a professional learning community that provides them with training on the required learning strategies and professional responsibilities. They are observed and provided with feedback and coaching from their mentors and other district support staff, allowed to observe in classrooms in schools across the district, and provided with additional days of training during the summer. The system continues this support into the teacher's second year in the classroom. The Team reviewed documentation of interactions between mentors and new teachers, and in interviews with over 100 teachers the Team collected extensive evidence noting the importance and success of this induction program. One teacher noted, "We have such a strong support net that it's difficult to fail." Another new teacher stated, "It is a very supportive process."

Mentors attribute their success to the training they receive. In an interview with a teacher mentor, the mentor reviewed the requirements and training provided for all mentors. In addition, the system requires that new teachers complete an evaluation on their mentors. The evaluation results are used to further strengthen the coaching skills of the mentors.

New administrators are also provided with a mentor to assist their acclimation to new responsibilities. They and their mentors participate in system-planned walkthroughs at other schools to observe classrooms and teaching strategies. In addition, principals participate in ongoing training at monthly leadership meetings. This training includes book studies, sharing of best practices, and training on various system initiatives. In interviews, administrators attested to the value and importance of these meetings, along with the high quality of district leaders who lead the training.

Mentoring and support are not limited to new teachers and administrators in the Nassau County School

District. The system is committed to building educational leaders as well. The local Chamber of Commerce offers a year-long program, Leadership Nassau, and teachers who wish to move into administrative roles participate in this training. This is supplemented by the system's leadership development program which includes a focus on the Florida Principal Leadership Standards and certification requirements for Educational Leadership and School Principal.

"The Nassau County School System has evolved from a competitive culture to a collaborative culture of school leaders with support systems," noted one administrator. This statement is verified by the system's strong focus on mentoring and support for educators throughout the system.

Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement and enhance the strong, effective culture found in the system.

Leadership Capacity

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 1 - Purpose and Direction

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
1.1	The system engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a system-wide purpose for student success.	3.00	2.62
1.2	The system ensures that each school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	2.67	2.63
1.3	The school leadership and staff at all levels of the system commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking, and life skills.	3.17	2.89
1.4	Leadership at all levels of the system implement a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	3.00	2.61

Standard 2 - Governance and Leadership

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
2.1	The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the system and its schools.	3.00	2.95
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	2.00	2.92
2.3	The governing body ensures that the leadership at all levels has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.	2.83	3.12
2.4	Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction.	3.17	2.97
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	3.00	2.67

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

Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic

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

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

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Questionnaire Administration	1.00	3.36
Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	2.67	3.04

Findings

Improvement Priority

Commit to and participate in a structured professional development program for all board members regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing board and its individual members.

(Indicator 2.2)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 2.2

Evidence and Rationale

The AdvancED Standards for a Quality School System include requirements for professional development of board members. Interviews with the five board members whose experience spans from one year to 30 years provided evidence of limited participation in formal professional development opportunities. The Team asked the board members why they chose not to be members of the Florida School Boards Association and participate in the continuous training opportunities offered by the Association as do over 60 of the 67 school boards in Florida. Board members stated, "We feel the fees are high and prefer to leave the money in the district's budget for use in the classroom." Members disclosed that the system pays the Association a one-time

fee for new board members to attend an orientation to be an effective board member. However, board members typically do not pursue additional training due to lack of availability of training options and/or personal choice. A review of the minutes of board meetings did not include any mention of training activities attended by board members. System personnel, in the completion of the internal assessment for the Accreditation Report, identified the need for board members to participate in continuous professional development regarding their roles and responsibilities as board members to meet the requirements of a highly qualified board of an accredited school system.

The Team also asked about board member participation in webinars and other online training opportunities for governing boards. No board members responded positively about participation in such opportunities that did not require travel costs. The main message communicated by all board members was the board's decision to not participate in training opportunities in order to save money for classroom needs.

Nassau County School District's mission of "developing each student as an inspired life-long learner and problem solver with the strength of character to serve as a productive member of society" was discussed in numerous stakeholder interviews. Additionally, the core values were mentioned, especially the two dealing with all people being responsible for their own actions and everyone needing to be life-long learners. Many interview settings included questions regarding everyone's obligation to participate in continuous professional development that is focused on the accomplishment of the mission and core values of the system. Very little evidence could be found to validate that board members were participating in a systematic, formal professional development process to support the mission of the school system.

Governance and leadership are key factors in organizational effectiveness. Participation in a systematic, formal professional development process will improve the overall effectiveness of the governing body.

Powerful Practice

The district and school leaders practice and encourage shared leadership, thus creating a caring culture that positively impacts the educational efforts of the staff and students across the school system.

(Indicator 1.3, Indicator 2.4)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 2.4

Evidence and Rationale

During interviews with 282 stakeholders and observations in 88 classrooms, the Team determined that both system and school administrators and staff align decisions and actions toward continuous improvement to achieve the system's mission and to enhance student success. This was highlighted for the External Review Team as they visited seven of the system's schools. The system has established a strong learning community, which includes principals, teacher teams, and parents. Activities such as book studies, ongoing professional development for staff, and parental engagement strengthen the academic learning environment. Stakeholders also affirmed and the Team experienced the warm and welcoming atmosphere in each school.

A number of principals and teachers indicated that they graduated from local high schools and returned to work in the Nassau County School District because of the family atmosphere and strong community spirit. Staff members frequently stated, “We are family and have a strong support system for each other.” “Building relationships takes time, but it’s an important part of our culture,” stated one school administrative team. “The superintendent and the system level staff have an open door policy,” stated a school administrator. The system’s leaders actively and consistently support and encourage collaboration as evidenced by the establishment of the Nassau Education Foundation, the upcoming implementation of a program of assigning one computer to each student for educational growth (one-to-one), the nurturing of a collaborative vs. a competitive culture, the cultivation and promotion of leaders from within the system, and the provision of numerous opportunities for shared leadership. The collective impact results in a system characterized by strong collaboration and community.

Staff formally and informally work together and assist each other in the support of student achievement and success. These findings were supported by the 88 classroom observations conducted in classrooms from kindergarten through grade twelve across the school system. The External Review Team used the Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™) to identify and document observable evidence of classroom environments that were conducive to student learning. The Well-Managed Learning Environment (3.27) and the Supportive Learning Environment (3.13) scores were above the AdvancED Network averages. These results highlight the positive and open culture in the system that encourages collaboration, cooperation, and support for staff and students.

When the leadership and staff of a school system commit to a culture based on shared values and beliefs, all levels of the organization will be positively impacted.

Resource Utilization

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

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

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

Standard 4 - Resources and Support Systems

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
4.1	The system engages in a systematic process to recruit, employ, and retain a sufficient number of qualified professional and support staff to fulfill their roles and responsibilities and support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, and educational programs.	3.00	2.92
4.2	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, educational programs, and system operations.	2.83	2.93
4.3	The system maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	3.00	3.05
4.4	The system demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning in support of the purpose and direction of the system.	2.67	2.63

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
4.5	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of information resources and related personnel to support educational programs throughout the system.	3.00	2.74
4.6	The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	2.83	2.54
4.7	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of support systems to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.	2.83	2.66
4.8	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students.	2.50	2.60

Conclusion

The Team identified several pervasive themes that emerged during the time spent in the school system. It was obvious to the Team that there is a caring culture that is committed to shared values and beliefs. Almost every person interviewed mentioned the pride exhibited from being a part of the school system and how there is a clear focus on maximizing educational opportunities for every student. That clear focus leads to another theme of collaboration and support. The collaborative spirit and commitment to improvement were demonstrated through collaborative planning with Professional Learning Teams across the system, pacing guides developed per subject area and/or grade level, a strong mentoring program for new staff, full implementation of the Marzano Framework for Effective Teaching, and the emphasis on leadership development.

Relationships were a point of conversation with every group that the Team interviewed. The superintendent's overview on the first day of the review stressed the importance of building relationships. From that time forward, the Team heard and observed the strength of the relationships in Nassau County School District. The superintendent and staff meet with various stakeholders, both internal and external, to build relationships. An Education Foundation had been established recently, and many of those interviewed stated the strong relationships between the school personnel and the community were the reason for the success of the Foundation.

The findings from the 88 classroom observations regarding a well-managed and supportive learning environment were indicative of the caring culture of the entire school system. The well-managed learning environment was observed in classrooms from kindergarten through high school. Students spoke and interacted respectfully with teachers and peers. Classroom routines were known by students, and they readily followed classroom rules. The supportive learning environment was also observed throughout the school system. Students demonstrated a positive attitude about the classroom and learning and were willing to take risks in learning without fear of negative feedback.

The superintendent is a committed leader who has created a culture that values communication as he operates with transparency and communicates with everyone very openly. In fact, the entire administrative team from the system level to the school level was characterized as an effective leadership team who is very accessible to stakeholders. "Everyone has an open door policy," stated one administrative team member.

The themes of a caring culture, a commitment to shared values, building relationships, shared leadership, high standards, collaboration, and a supportive environment will be the forces that Nassau County School District can build upon to bring about student success and organizational effectiveness.

The school system recognizes its challenges and has some major activities already planned in order to better focus on success for all students. Although the system has a structured professional development plan, there is still a need to conduct more training for professional and support staff on the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and common grading practices. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) meet on a regular basis, Data Teams meet, and data chats with students are held periodically. Yet, the system is working diligently to embed these practices long-term in the culture of the

system.

The governing board had not been participating in the professional development required of a quality board of an accredited school system. Their reasoning was to save the money that would have been spent on their training to be used in classrooms for instruction. Now that the governing board recognizes the need to participate in the required training, they are agreeable to rectify this weakness.

The system recognizes these needs and is making plans on what must be done to achieve success on these two initiatives. With these Improvement Priorities becoming targeted initiatives that focus on student success, the school system will be able to overcome its challenges.

The Improvement Priorities can serve as a roadmap that can form a foundation for growth and improvement. The Improvement Priorities are those things that the Team identified as preventing the school system from being as effective as it could be in meeting accreditation standards and policies. Ensuring the system has a plan to more thoroughly train the professional and support staff in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data and to have the governing board participate in the continuous training required of board members can have a major impact on improving student performance and system effectiveness.

Nassau County School District will be held accountable for addressing the Improvement Priorities outlined by the External Review Team. By addressing these identified actions, the school system may enhance the capacity of the district to reach a higher level of performance and find success for every student.

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:

- Commit to and participate in a structured professional development program for all board members regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing board and its individual members.
- Develop, implement, and monitor a comprehensive staff development program for training professional and support staff members in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment, common grading practices, and alignment with goals for instruction and achievement.

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	280.49	278.34
Teaching and Learning Impact	284.92	268.94
Leadership Capacity	270.83	292.64
Resource Utilization	283.33	283.23

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

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

Addenda

Individual Institution Results (Self-reported)

Institution Name	Teaching and Learning Impact	Leadership Capacity	Resource Utilization	Overall IEQ Score
Bryceville Elementary School	357.14	400.00	357.14	369.23
Callahan Elementary School	361.90	400.00	357.14	371.79
Callahan Intermediate School	390.48	400.00	385.71	392.31
Callahan Middle School	376.19	363.64	385.71	374.36
Emma Love Hardee Elementary School	357.14	390.91	357.14	366.67
Fernandina Beach High School	361.90	372.73	328.57	358.97
Fernandina Beach Middle School	361.90	390.91	357.14	369.23
Hilliard Elementary School	390.48	400.00	385.71	392.31
Hilliard Middle Senior High School	304.76	309.09	314.29	307.69
Southside Elementary School	357.14	400.00	357.14	369.23
West Nassau County High School	371.43	372.73	300.00	358.97
Yulee Elementary School	342.86	400.00	357.14	361.54
Yulee High School	342.86	354.55	342.86	346.15
Yulee Middle School	361.90	327.27	357.14	351.28
Yulee Primary School	361.90	400.00	357.14	371.79

Team Roster

Member	Brief Biography
Dr. Cheryl C Allread	<p>Dr. Allread's career spans over 40 years. She retired from Marion County Schools in South Carolina after having taught math and science for 7 years, serving as principal for 11 years, as assistant superintendent for instruction for 11 years, and as district superintendent for 7 years. After retirement from 36 years working in Marion County, she began working as a consultant with the S.C. State Department of Education, serving as Liaison for low-performing schools/Palmetto Priority Schools. She also conducted academic audits, served as principal mentor and served as a leadership coach in instructional supervision. Dr. Allread serves as Field Consultant for AdvancED in S.C. and works as Lead Evaluator for AdvancED in schools and districts across the country, as well as continuing to work as a private consultant with schools in instructional supervision.</p>
Ms. Valerie Sommerville	<p>Valerie Sommerville serves AdvancED as a Florida Trainer, as a member of the AdvancED Florida Council, as a lead evaluator for individual school and early learning External Reviews, as a team member for system, corporate, and distance learning External Reviews; and conducts Readiness Visits for new applicant schools. She also serves as a team leader for the Council on Occupational Education postsecondary school or college accreditation teams. Valerie holds a Master in Education degree from the University of Central Florida with additional coursework for Vocational Director and a Bachelors degree in Home Economics with a minor in Mathematics from Montclair University, NJ. She has forty-four years of educational experience: teaching at an inner city middle school, a suburban high school, an adult special education program, and postsecondary continuing education and serving as a district Senior Administrator and as an Assistant Director of a technical center.</p>
Dr. Charlotte Draper	<p>After 25 years of service, Dr. Charlotte Draper retired from Shelby County School District as the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. She served in that position for twelve years. She first started her career in education as a fourth grade teacher. She was an Assistant Principal and then Principal before going to the Central Office as Assistant Superintendent. Dr. Draper did her under graduate work at the University of Montevallo in Montevallo, Alabama. She received her Masters Degree and Education and Specialist Degree from the University of Montevallo. She received her Doctorate in Education from Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. Dr. Draper is a Facilitator and member of the Oxford Roundtable, Oxford University – St. Anne College, Oxford, England. She received a fellowship in the 2000 Fulbright Educator Program, Tokyo, Japan, and was the recipient of the 1989 Distinguished Teaching Award in Elementary Science awarded by the National Science Teachers Association. She is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Montevallo and works with Pearson Prentice Hall Publishing Company as a Curriculum Specialist.</p> <p>Dr. Draper has served on AdvancED District Review Teams for the past six years. She serves as Lead Evaluator on local school review teams within the State of Alabama.</p>

Member	Brief Biography
Mr. David N Frankel	David retired in August 2010 as a Technology Consultant from Wayne RESA which required working closely with local school district teachers and administrators in developing district wide technology plans and professional development programs. He is currently teaching and working with faculty at two local universities in Detroit designing online courses and collecting data. David developed online courses using Blackboard and Moodle. He has been a classroom teacher, project coordinator and reviewed grants for the U.S. Department of Education, the Michigan Department of Education, Fulbright Scholars, and other statewide organizations. He is proficient with Microsoft Word, PowerPoint and Excel and continues to learn different software programs available for educators. Being retired, he has worked independently with school districts and organizations to design professional development programs and assist in the implementation of the Common Core.
Mrs. Beth Mims	Beth Mims is the Chief Academic Officer for the Wakulla County School System in North Florida. She lives in Crawfordville, Florida. Mrs. Mims has spent over 33 years in education as teacher, principal, and director. Her current responsibilities include professional development, curriculum, strategic planning and accreditation, and instructional materials. She oversees the Instructional Services Department in the Wakulla County School System and works actively with the Content Advisory Committee for Writing with the FLDOE Test Development Center. She also serves as the co-chair for the PAEC Professional Development Council, which serves small and rural districts in Region I of Florida. Mrs. Mims holds degrees in Elementary Education and Educational Leadership from Florida State University. She is Reading Endorsed and has served as a trainer for reading and writing courses.
Ms. Janet Stephenson	Ms. Stephenson works as a School Improvement Specialist for Brevard Public Schools in central Florida. Her work involves working with the district's lowest performing schools on closing the achievement gap. She holds a master's degree in elementary education from the University of Central Florida and is currently pursuing her doctorate from American College of Education. Previously, she has served Brevard Public Schools as a classroom teacher, literacy coach, gifted teacher, and Response to Intervention trainer. She brings 15 years of classroom experience combined with 9 years at the district office supporting K-12 schools. Additionally, she has taught education courses as an Adjunct Professor at Eastern Florida State College.

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.

References

- Alwin, L. (2002). The will and the way of data use. *School Administrator*, 59(11), 11.
- Baumert, J., Kunter, M., Blum, W., Brunner, M., Voxx, T., Jordan, A., Klusmann, U., Krauss, S., Nuebrand, M., & Tsai, Y. (2010). Teachers' mathematical knowledge, cognitive activation in the classroom, and student progress. *American Educational Research Journal*, 47(1), 133-180.
- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. (2012). *Shared purpose: the golden thread?* London: CIPD.
- Colbert, J., Brown, R., Choi, S., & Thomas, S. (2008). An investigation of the impacts of teacher-driven professional development. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 35(2), 134-154.
- Conley, D.T. (2007). *Redefining college readiness (Vol. 3)*. Eugene, OR: Educational Policy Improvement Center.
- Datnow, A., Park, V., & Wohlstetter, P. (2007). *Achieving with data: How high-performing school systems use data to improve instruction for elementary students*. Los Angeles, CA: Center on Educational Governance, USC.
- Dembosky, J., Pane, J., Barney, H., & Christina, R. (2005). *Data driven decision making in Southwestern Pennsylvania school districts*. Working paper. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Ding, C. & Sherman, H. (2006). Teaching effectiveness and student achievement: Examining the relationship. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 29 (4), 40-51.
- Doyle, D. P. (2003). Data-driven decision making: Is it the mantra of the month or does it have staying power? *T.H.E. Journal*, 30(10), 19-21.
- Feuerstein, A., & Opfer, V. D. (1998). School board chairmen and school superintendents: An analysis of perceptions concerning special interest groups and educational governance. *Journal of School Leadership*, 8, 373-398.
- Fink, D., & Brayman, C. (2006). School leadership succession and the challenges of change. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 42 (62), 61-89.
- Greene, K. (1992). Models of school-board policy-making. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 28 (2), 220-236.
- Horng, E., Klasik, D., & Loeb, S. (2010). Principal time-use and school effectiveness. *American Journal of Education* 116, (4) 492-523.
- Lafee, S. (2002). Data-driven districts. *School Administrator*, 59(11), 6-7, 9-10, 12, 14-15.
- Leithwood, K., & Sun, J. (2012). The Nature and effects of transformational school leadership: A meta-analytic review of unpublished research. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48 (387). 388-423.
- Marks, H., Louis, K.S., & Printy, S. (2002). The capacity for organizational learning: Implications for pedagogy and student achievement. In K. Leithwood (Ed.), *Organizational learning and school improvement* (p. 239-266). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- McIntire, T. (2002). The administrator's guide to data-driven decision making. *Technology and Learning*, 22(11), 18-33.
- Pan, D., Rudo, Z., Schneider, C., & Smith-Hansen, L. (2003). *Examination of resource allocation in education: connecting spending to student performance*. Austin, TX: SEDL.