

Report of the External Review Team for Twiggs County School System

952 East Main Street
P. O. Box 232
Jeffersonville
GA 31044
US

Elgin Dixon

Date: April 26, 2015 - April 29, 2015



Copyright (c) 2018 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 16

 Findings 19

 Leadership Capacity 22

 Standard 1 - Purpose and Direction 23

 Standard 2 - Governance and Leadership 23

 Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic 24

 Findings 24

 Resource Utilization 27

 Standard 4 - Resources and Support Systems 27

 Findings 28

Conclusion 30

 Accreditation Recommendation 32

Addenda 33

 Individual Institution Results (Self-reported) 33

 Team Roster 34

 Next Steps 36

 About AdvancED 37

 References 38

Introduction

The External Review is an integral component of AdvancED Performance Accreditation and provides the institution with a comprehensive evaluation guided by the results of diagnostic instruments, in-depth review of data and documentation, and the professional judgment of a team of qualified and highly trained evaluators. A series of diagnostic instruments examines the impact of teaching and learning on student performance, the capacity of leadership to effect continuous improvement, and the degree to which the institution optimizes its use of available resources to facilitate and support student success. The results of this evaluation are represented in the Index of Education Quality (IEQ™) and through critical observations, namely, Powerful Practices, Opportunities for Improvement, and Improvement Priorities.

Accreditation is a voluntary method of quality assurance developed more than 100 years ago by American universities and secondary schools and designed primarily to distinguish schools adhering to a set of educational standards. Today the accreditation process is used at all levels of education and is recognized for its ability to effectively drive student performance and continuous improvement in education.

Institutions seeking to gain or retain accreditation must meet AdvancED Standards specific to their institution type, demonstrate acceptable levels of student performance and the continuous improvement of student performance, and provide evidence of stakeholder engagement and satisfaction. The power of AdvancED Performance Accreditation lies in the connections and linkages between and among the conditions, processes, and practices within a system that impact student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Standards help to delineate what matters. They provide a common language through which an education community can engage in conversations about educational improvement, system effectiveness, and achievement. They serve as a foundation for planning and implementing improvement strategies and activities and for measuring success. AdvancED Standards were developed by a committee comprised of talented educators and leaders from the fields of practice, research, and policy who applied professional wisdom, deep knowledge of effective practice, and the best available research to craft a set of robust standards that define institutional quality and guide continuous improvement. Prior to implementation, an internationally recognized panel of experts in testing and measurement, teacher quality, and education research reviewed the standards and provided feedback, guidance and endorsement.

The AdvancED External Review Team uses AdvancED Standards, associated indicators and criteria related to student performance and stakeholder engagement to guide its evaluation. The Team examines adherence to standards as well as how the institution functions as a whole and embodies the practices and characteristics expected of an accredited institution. The Standards, indicators and related criteria are evaluated using indicator-specific performance levels. The Team rates each indicator and criterion on a scale of 1 to 4. The final scores assigned to the indicators and criteria represent the average of the External Review Team members' individual ratings.

The External Review is the hallmark of AdvancED Performance Accreditation. It energizes and equips the institution's leadership and stakeholders to achieve higher levels of performance and address those areas that

may be hindering efforts to reach desired performance levels. External Review is a rigorous process that includes the in-depth examination of evidence and relevant data, interviews with all stakeholder groups, and extensive observations of learning, instruction, and operations.

Use of Diagnostic Tools

A key to examining the institution is the design and use of diagnostic tools that reveal the effectiveness with which an institution creates conditions and implements processes and practices that impact student performance and success. In preparation for the External Review the institution conducted a Self Assessment that applied the standards and criteria for accreditation. The institution provided evidence to support its conclusions vis a vis organizational effectiveness in ensuring acceptable and improving levels of student performance.

- an indicator-based tool that connects the specific elements of the criteria to evidence gathered by the team;
- a student performance analytic that examines the quality of assessment instruments used by the institution, the integrity of the administration of the assessment to students, the quality of the learning results including the impact of instruction on student learning at all levels of performance, and the equity of learning that examines the results of student learning across all demographics;
- a stakeholder engagement instrument that examines the fidelity of administration and results of perception surveys seeking the perspective of students, parents, and teachers;
- a state-of-the-art, learner-centric observation instrument, the Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™) that quantifies students' engagement, attitudes and dispositions organized in 7 environments: Equitable Learning, High Expectations, Supportive Learning, Active Learning, Progress Monitoring and Feedback, Well-Managed Learning, and Digital Learning. All evaluators must be trained, reach acceptable levels of inter-rater reliability, and certified to use this research-based and validated instrument.

The External Review Team's findings and critical observations are shared in this report through the IEQ™ results as well as through the identification of Powerful Practices, Opportunities for Improvement, and Improvement Priorities.

Index of Education Quality

In the past, accreditation reviews resulted in an accreditation recommendation on status. Labels such as advised, warned, probation, or all clear were used to describe the status of a school relative to the AdvancED Standards and other evaluative criteria. Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, AdvancED introduced a new framework to describe the results of an accreditation review. Consistent with the modern focus of accreditation on continuous improvement with an emphasis on student success, AdvancED introduced an innovative and state-of-the-art framework for diagnosing and revealing institutional performance called the Index of Education Quality (IEQ™). The IEQ™ comprises three domains of performance: 1) the impact of teaching and learning on student performance; 2) the capacity of leadership to guide the institution toward the achievement of its

vision and strategic priorities; and 3) use of resources to support and optimize learning. Therefore, your institution will no longer receive an accreditation status. Instead, your institution will be accredited with an IEQ™ score. In the case where an institution is failing to meet established criteria, the accreditation will be under review thereby requiring frequent monitoring and demonstrated improvement.

The three domains of performance are derived from the AdvancED Standards and associated indicators, the analysis of student performance, and the engagement and feedback of stakeholders. Within each domain institutions can connect to the individual performance levels that are applied in support of the AdvancED Standards and evaluative criteria. Within the performance levels are detailed descriptors that serve as a valuable source of guidance for continuous improvement. Upon review of the findings in this report and building on their Powerful Practices, institutional leaders should work with their staff to review and understand the evidence and rationale for each Opportunity for Improvement and Improvement Priority as well as the corresponding pathway to improvement described in the performance levels of the selected indicator(s).

The IEQ™ provides a new framework that recognizes and supports the journey of continuous improvement. An institution's IEQ™ is the starting point for continuous improvement. Subsequent actions for improvement and evidence that these have had a positive impact will raise the institution's IEQ™ score.

Benchmark Data

Throughout this report, AdvancED provides benchmark data for each indicator and for each component of the evaluative criteria. These benchmark data represent the overall averages across the entire AdvancED Network for your institution type. Thus, the AdvancED Network average provides an extraordinary opportunity for institutions to understand their context on a global scale rather than simply compared to a state, region, or country.

It is important to understand that the AdvancED Network averages are provided primarily to serve as a tool for continuous improvement and not as a measure of quality in and of itself. Benchmark data, when wisely employed, have a unique capacity to help institutions identify and leverage their strengths and areas of improvement to significantly impact student learning.

Powerful Practices

A key to continuous improvement is the institution's ability to learn from and build upon its most effective and impactful practices. Such practices serve as critical leverage points necessary to guide, support and ensure continuous improvement. A hallmark of the accreditation process is its commitment to identifying with evidence, the conditions, processes and practices that are having the most significant impact on student performance and institutional effectiveness. Throughout this report, the External Review Team has captured and defined Powerful Practices. These noteworthy practices are essential to the institution's effort to continue its journey of improvement.

Opportunities for Improvement

Every institution can and must improve no matter what levels of performance it has achieved in its past. During the process of the review, the External Review Team identified areas of improvement where the institution is meeting the expectations for accreditation but in the professional judgment of the Team these are Opportunities for Improvement that should be considered by the institution. Using the criteria described in the corresponding rubric(s) to the Opportunity for Improvement, the institution can identify what elements of practice must be addressed to guide the improvement.

Improvement Priorities

The expectations for accreditation are clearly defined in a series of the rubric-based AdvancED Standards, indicators and evaluative criteria focused on the impact of teaching and learning on student performance, the capacity of the institution to be guided by effective leadership, and the allocation and use of resources to support student learning. As such, the External Review Team reviewed, analyzed and deliberated over significant bodies of evidence provided by the institution and gathered by the Team during the process. In the professional judgment of the Team as well as the results of the diagnostic process, the Team defined, with rationale, Improvement Priorities. The priorities must be addressed in a timely manner by the institution to retain and improve their accreditation performance as represented by the IEQ™. Improvement Priorities serve as the basis for the follow-up and monitoring process that will begin upon conclusion of the External Review. The institution must complete and submit an Accreditation Progress Report within two years of the External Review. The report must include actions taken by the institution to address the Improvement Priorities along with the corresponding evidence and results. The IEQ™ will be recalculated by AdvancED upon review of the evidence and results associated with the Improvement Priorities.

The Review

The five-member Twiggs County Schools System External Review Team was composed of three in-state and two out-of-state professional educators. Prior to the on-site review, the Team engaged in pre-training conference calls and organizational email correspondence in preparation for the Team's arrival on Sunday, April 26. Each Team member was assigned a specific accreditation Standard, as well as a mix of seven of the thirty-five system Indicators for examination of evidence and practices. The members prepared for the off-site work by completing all AdvancED training sessions, reviewing Twiggs County system and school accreditation reports, school improvement plans, and the system and school websites. The Lead Evaluator (LE) provided a compilation of all Indicator ratings for the system and its three schools. This artifact served as a visual comparison of ratings from the schools and the system and became a snapshot of practices that possibly were systemic. It further supported the Team in determining interview questions and finally prioritizing actions when Team ratings aligned with the outcomes revealed in the AdvancED Network (AEN) comparisons at the end of the Team deliberations on Tuesday evening.

The LE and Twiggs coordinator had organizational phone conversations and corresponded via email throughout the planning process. The system was very cordial and professional throughout the process, always performing in an efficient manner to ensure optimal results for the Team's visit.

The Team met Sunday, April 26 and began on-site training. A catered dinner was brought in to the hotel each evening. Team training and preparation for Monday's agenda followed the dinner.

Monday the Team viewed presentations by the superintendent and leadership staff and conducted follow-up interviews for additional information and clarification. The interview process continued on Tuesday with each school leadership team participating. Four of the five board members were interviewed Monday. A total of 134 interviews were conducted throughout the visit. The Team session on Monday evening focused on discussions regarding interview data, the determination of questions for school leadership team meetings on Tuesday, the initial Indicator ratings by Team members, and preparation for using the AdvancED Effective Learning Environment Observation Tool™ (eleot™) for classroom observations. Validation ratings from the compilation sheets began to provide trend data for future Team discussions.

The Twiggs County Team conducted 50 classroom observations Tuesday using the eleot classroom observation instrument in the three Twiggs County schools: Twiggs County Elementary, Twiggs County Middle School, and Twiggs County High School. Building leadership team members contributed valuable responses that clarified External Review Team inquiries.

Tuesday evening work consisted of analyzing eleot ratings, discussing verifiable pieces of evidence, and finalizing Indicator ratings by each Team member. The AEN Master Worksheet provided data points for consideration of the three types of actions: Powerful Practices, Opportunities for Improvement, and Improvement Priorities.

Team deliberations resulted in four Powerful Practices, two Opportunities for Improvement, and four Improvement Priorities. This was a renewal of accreditation visit for Twiggs County. The over-arching findings of the Team were in the Teaching and Learning Domain as validated by eleot ratings. Twiggs County School System has not had specific coordination in teaching and learning until the recent hire of an assistant superintendent who is now focusing on curriculum matters.

Team members finalized their work Wednesday morning. The superintendent and assistant superintendent met with the LE and Associate LE to view the Oral Exit Report presentation prior to the formal presentation to the board. In the preliminary meetings, clarification was made for any questions raised during the preview meeting.

The External Review Team appreciated the warm hospitality of the Twiggs County Schools' community. The system was well-prepared for the visit and conducted the review with integrity and transparency. All stakeholders are to be commended for their diligence in completing the accreditation process.

Stakeholders were interviewed by members of the External Review Team to gain their perspectives on topics relevant to the institution's effectiveness and student performance. The feedback gained through the stakeholder interviews was considered with other evidences and data to support the findings of the External

Review. The following chart depicts the numbers of persons interviewed representative of various stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder Interviewed	Number
Superintendents	1
Board Members	4
Administrators	4
Instructional Staff	28
Support Staff	6
Students	68
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	18
Total	129

Results

Teaching and Learning Impact

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

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
3.1	The system's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level.	2.20	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.	1.20	2.55
3.3	Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	2.00	2.54
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	2.00	2.70
3.5	The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.	2.00	2.57
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	1.60	2.48
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	2.20	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.	3.00	2.97
3.9	The system designs and evaluates structures in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the student's school who supports that student's educational experience.	2.00	2.46
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	2.00	2.57
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	2.00	2.60
3.12	The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	2.60	2.63

Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
5.1	The system establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	2.00	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.	2.20	2.48
5.3	Throughout the system professional and support staff are trained in the interpretation and use of data.	2.00	2.14
5.4	The school system engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	2.00	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.	2.80	2.85

Student Performance Diagnostic

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

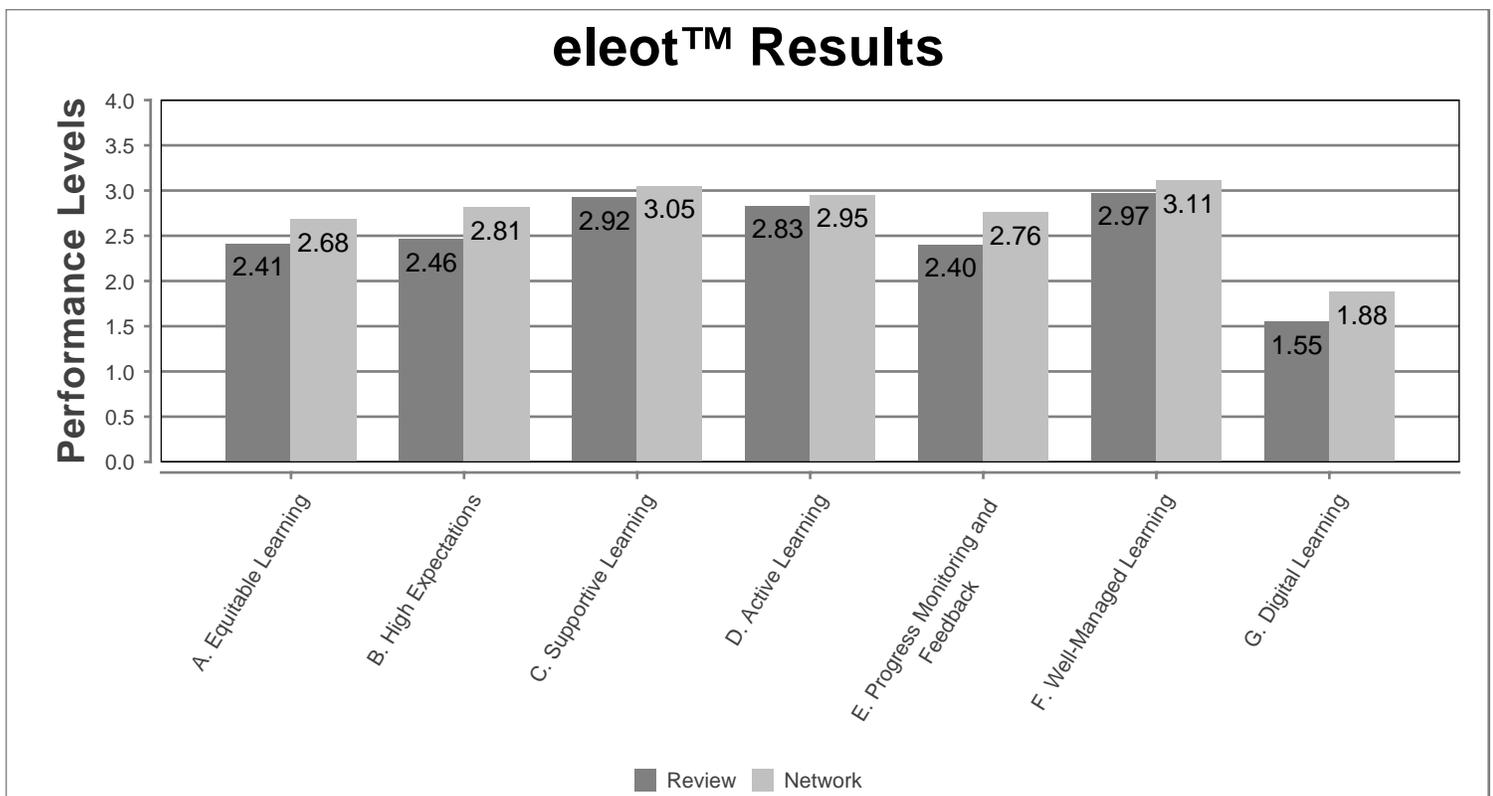
learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important indicators for evaluating overall student performance.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Assessment Quality	3.00	
Test Administration	3.00	3.62
Equity of Learning	3.00	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 five-member External Review Team conducted 50 classroom observations at the three schools in Twiggs County. The AdvancED effective Learning Environment Tool™(eleot™) was used by the certified Team members for a minimum of twenty minutes in each classroom, providing ample opportunity to assess learners in the seven eleot environments. All of the Team ratings were below the AEN averages, many times based on disparities among the classrooms and schools. Twiggs County ratings compared to the AEN in descending

order are as follows: Well-Managed Environment (2.97/3.11); Supportive Learning Environment (2.92/3.05); Active Learning Environment (2.83/2.95). These three environments were in very close proximity to each other.

With larger gaps between Team ratings and AEN averages were: High Expectations Environment (2.46/2.81); Equitable Learning Environment (2.41/2.68); Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment (2.40/2.76); and Digital Learning Environment (1.55/1.88).

With the polarization noted in the two distribution categories cited, Twiggs County has a clear direction of where to focus first. Contributing areas of weakness included differentiation of instruction, learning about own and other cultures, use of exemplars, understanding how work is assessed, and all three Indicators in Digital Learning Environment. As Team members shared observation results, it was clear that disparities exist from school to school and classroom to classroom. These discussions led to determinations that system and school leaders need to monitor instructional practices and provide immediate feedback and support for learning to improve. There seems to be a need for professional learning to translate into changes in instructional practices, lesson planning, and student-centered activities that include differentiation. Additionally, the connection needs to be clear between data analysis and improved instructional practices to provide equitable and challenging learning experiences for all students.

The Team ratings in eleot observations paralleled the Standards 3 and 5 Indicator ratings. Seven outlier Standards Indicator ratings were in Standard 3, resulting in two Improvement Priorities and one opportunity for Improvement. Twiggs County has just begun to intensely focus on instruction and is positioned for making noticeable improvement with the accreditation outcomes as a guide to increased student success.

eleot™ Data Summary

A. Equitable Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	1.68	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	6.00%	18.00%	14.00%	62.00%
2.	3.04	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	32.00%	40.00%	28.00%	0.00%
3.	3.10	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	32.00%	46.00%	22.00%	0.00%
4.	1.82	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	10.00%	16.00%	20.00%	54.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.41						

B. High Expectations			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.88	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	22.00%	44.00%	34.00%	0.00%
2.	2.74	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	12.00%	54.00%	30.00%	4.00%
3.	1.82	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	10.00%	16.00%	20.00%	54.00%
4.	2.56	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	10.00%	40.00%	46.00%	4.00%
5.	2.28	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	8.00%	34.00%	36.00%	22.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.46						

C. Supportive Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.98	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	20.00%	60.00%	18.00%	2.00%
2.	3.04	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	26.00%	54.00%	18.00%	2.00%
3.	2.90	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	16.00%	60.00%	22.00%	2.00%
4.	3.02	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	28.00%	50.00%	18.00%	4.00%
5.	2.64	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	12.00%	54.00%	20.00%	14.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.92						

D. Active Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.96	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	26.00%	46.00%	26.00%	2.00%
2.	2.50	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	28.00%	24.00%	18.00%	30.00%
3.	3.04	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	38.00%	32.00%	26.00%	4.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.83						

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.48	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	6.00%	52.00%	26.00%	16.00%
2.	2.68	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	8.00%	58.00%	28.00%	6.00%
3.	2.66	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	12.00%	52.00%	26.00%	10.00%
4.	1.90	Understands how her/his work is assessed	8.00%	26.00%	14.00%	52.00%
5.	2.30	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	10.00%	42.00%	16.00%	32.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.40						

F. Well-Managed Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.12	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	34.00%	44.00%	22.00%	0.00%
2.	3.06	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	28.00%	52.00%	18.00%	2.00%
3.	2.90	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	26.00%	46.00%	20.00%	8.00%
4.	2.64	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	20.00%	38.00%	28.00%	14.00%
5.	3.12	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	30.00%	52.00%	18.00%	0.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.97						

G. Digital Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	1.72	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	8.00%	14.00%	20.00%	58.00%
2.	1.50	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	8.00%	10.00%	6.00%	76.00%
3.	1.44	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	4.00%	10.00%	12.00%	74.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 1.55						

Findings

Improvement Priority

Develop and implement protocols for system and school leaders to monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success and continuous professional learning of all staff members.

(Indicator 3.4, Indicator 3.6, Indicator 3.11)

Evidence and Rationale

The External Review Team conducted 50 classroom observations on Tuesday, April 28, 2015 using the elect observation tool. Overall ratings for the seven elect learning environments were below the AdvancED Network averages; these findings contributed to Team discussions. Three areas for improvement resulted from Team deliberations about the instructional process: 1) the planning of lessons to include differentiated activities; 2) the implementation of the system process with fidelity; and 3) the professional development of the teachers and the monitoring and support required for maximum outcomes in student learning. The system has created a framework that is being implemented in many classrooms but not all. Team observations identified variances in the planning to support this framework. Instructional practices sometimes included group work which was generally called “stations.” This level of engagement consisted of students rotating among the stations, but all students were completing the same tasks. Teacher monitoring in some classrooms was not optimal, leaving some students disengaged or uncertain of expectations. Tasks were at a lower level of knowledge which did not reflect the training teachers had received in Depth of Knowledge studies. Little evidence was found of technology integration; team members commented that the Promethean boards were often used as electronic white boards and did not engage students or enhance lessons. Team findings validated ratings in the system Self Assessment.

Lesson planning based on Best Practices and implementation of professional learning require monitoring and

support to maintain and sustain high levels of student success.

Improvement Priority

Monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment system-wide in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice to provide equitable and challenging learning experiences for all students to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level.

(Indicator 3.1, Indicator 3.2, Indicator 5.1)

Evidence and Rationale

Although walk-throughs are conducted in association with Georgia Teacher Keys, a district protocol needs to be established for additional, short walk-throughs to be implemented following professional learning sessions. This monitoring protocol will provide valuable data regarding the implementation of learned content and skills by an instructional school team. The results of the walk-throughs should be analyzed to determine the next steps. Sharing this data with the Curriculum Director or District Instructional Team for systemic monitoring and follow-up then becomes a systemic process. Although data teams are established, teachers need more involvement in the actual data analysis process and further continuous professional learning to focus on data analysis which is aligned to instructional planning. At each school level there is an intervention time; however, it needs structure and universal focus- either tutorial, interventions, and/or enrichment. Based on External Review Team classroom observations, teachers had different formats. Some used computer programs such as Study Island; in some classes students used another source, and in some classrooms, students did nothing. At the high school and middle school levels, there are benchmark assessments which are used especially from the state department, but if teacher-made assessments are utilized, the validity of those assessments should be explored.

Data-driven instructional planning and practices provide a foundation for improved student learning. Monitoring and adjusting those processes builds sustainable achievement and becomes an assurance for readiness at the next level.

Opportunity For Improvement

Provide system-wide student engagement learning opportunities that require student collaboration, self-reflection, development of critical thinking skills, and the effective use of technology.

(Indicator 3.3)

Evidence and Rationale

The External Review Team found some evidence of student engagement in various classrooms, but this practice was not systemic and lacked certain desirable engagement components. A repeated example of this was noted in the use of stations as a means of engagement and differentiation. In the current practice of stations, much of the work is the same for all students who rotate to each station. Also, stations are not collaborative or reflective in structure and purpose as some eleot™ ratings verify. Discussions and questioning techniques were often at the lower level of critical thinking, generally lacking in challenge. Student use of technology was not systemic or reflective of research, inquiry, communication, or collaboration. Taking

technology integration to the next level can provide opportunities for developing collaborative skills, problem-solving, and communication for all students.

Student engagement that focuses on inquiry, reflection, problem-solving, and verbal and written communication, supported by a digital framework, aligns with 21st-century readiness skills for future success.

Leadership Capacity

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 1 - Purpose and Direction

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
1.1	The system engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a system-wide purpose for student success.	2.60	2.67
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.	2.40	2.69
1.3	The school leadership and staff at all levels of the system commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking, and life skills.	3.00	2.87
1.4	Leadership at all levels of the system implement a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	2.60	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.	2.00	2.96
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	2.80	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.	3.60	3.20
2.4	Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction.	2.40	3.00
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	2.60	2.69

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice in all areas of the system and improved student success.	2.00	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

Improvement Priority

Develop, monitor, and evaluate transparent practices that detail fiscal management at all levels of the system. (Indicator 2.1)

Evidence and Rationale

The External Review Team found limited evidence to support the financial status of grants and operations. Of particular concern was the lack of a secure plan for replacing funding that will expire for the School Improvement Grant (SIG). No detailed budgetary data from the SIG were available in budgetary reports. The system talked about writing for new grants to fund existing programs, but the Team did not see evidence of the start of that process. Board meeting minutes did not indicate specific budgetary monthly SIG updates to inform the board. However, there was a plethora of Title I budgetary information and activities. The Twiggs County School Board has made impressive improvements in operations and practices. A strategic planning process is in place. The next step to effective operations is for pro-active fiscal planning, reporting, and monitoring to become a central focus to sustain desirable programs and the qualified personnel to meet system educational goals.

Long-range strategic financial planning enables school leadership to design and implement programs that support system goals for student success.

Improvement Priority

Implement leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes that result in improved professional practice in all areas of the system and are reflective of the system's purpose and direction to ensure student success.

(Indicator 2.4, Indicator 2.6)

Evidence and Rationale

Twiggs County Schools employ the state mandated performance evaluation tools for instructional staff. There is also a Twiggs County Walkthrough Observation Form used to assess the locally adopted framework, instructional delivery, student engagement, instructional strategies and resources, as well as, behavior management and learning environment. Team observations revealed that these instruments have improved some classroom practices, but this implementation is not systemic. Professional training is not systemically transferring into the planning and delivery in all classrooms. Additional data to support the need for improved monitoring and examination of instructional practices resulted from the analysis of the Team rating averages for the seven eleot learning environments which were all below the AdvancED Network Averages (AEN). By improving the processes for using the evaluation instruments to include meaningful discussions and feedback, teachers can make valuable connections from using data for decision-making and applying to planning. Furthermore, they can incorporate professional learning to enhance the classroom environment by increasing student engagement and providing differentiated activities. From individual school Self Assessments and survey results, the Team gleaned further evidence that the implementation of instructional practices to increase student success needs to be implemented with fidelity.

Performance monitoring that includes meaningful conversations and feedback can be the catalyst for improved instructional practices that promote student success.

Powerful Practice

The Twiggs County Board of Education ensures that the superintendent and school leadership have the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and to manage the day to day operations effectively.

(Indicator 2.3)

Evidence and Rationale

From a previous accreditation visit, Twiggs County Schools had received a Required Action that addressed school board duties and responsibilities. An external agency was brought in to assist members in becoming knowledgeable about their roles, responsibilities, and practices as a governing and policy-making board. This precipitated a continuous process for board development resulting in annual whole board training with an external provider as well as board members attending Georgia School Board Association and National School Board Association conferences. Throughout the visit, Team members heard accolades regarding the autonomy that now exists that enables the superintendent and school leadership to meet goals for achievement and to manage day-to-day operations effectively and without interference. Additionally, the Team

heard repeatedly that much improvement came with the hiring of the current superintendent who has practiced transparent leadership and is highly visible within the community. The school board's relationship with the superintendent was described as impressive with "trust" being voiced many times.

Effective school systems have effective boards who understand and practice their specific roles and responsibilities enabling leadership to work with autonomy in meeting system and school goals and managing daily operations.

Powerful Practice

The system has engaged all stakeholder groups in a comprehensive process to communicate a system-wide purpose for student success.

(Indicator 2.3)

Evidence and Rationale

Stakeholder surveys and interviews indicated a substantial increase in communication over the last two years. From the original accreditation visit, the system had a Required Action in this area. All schools have been assigned a Family Engagement Coordinator and Twiggs County Schools now employs a system level Family Engagement Coordinator. Student recognition has become a focus for meetings which have increased parent participation and involvement. The system continues to reach out to businesses to develop new partnerships. In a rural area that expands a large geographic area, participation can be a challenge for many stakeholders. To address this, the system has provided additional locations of meetings, transportation, and childcare to facilitate greater stakeholder involvement. The outcome has been increased promotion and celebration of student success in Twiggs County Schools.

The communicating and maintaining of system level purpose and direction that includes broad stakeholder involvement is an integral part of continuous improvement.

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.	3.40	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.	2.80	2.98
4.3	The system maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	2.80	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.	2.60	2.67

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
4.5	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of information resources and related personnel to support educational programs throughout the system.	2.80	2.82
4.6	The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	3.00	2.64
4.7	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of support systems to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.	2.20	2.65
4.8	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students.	2.00	2.64

Findings

Opportunity For Improvement

Evaluate the effectiveness of support services in meeting the needs of all students.

(Indicator 4.8)

Evidence and Rationale

As the External Review Team reviewed artifacts and interview data, a need for a formal evaluation process of support services was revealed in order to meet the needs of all students. Although there were identified descriptions of IEP and referral processes, there was no evidence of how these areas, as well as counseling services, assessment, education planning, and career planning are evaluated for effectiveness. Some elementary teachers commented that having an Instructional Specialist on the staff is improving the academic support for students. Twiggs County has some community support, but the need is greater than the present level of services. Having a formalized evaluation process is extremely important to ensure the successful implementation of services provided, as well as examining if the services are meeting the needs of all students.

Effective support services assist in ensuring students' emotional, social, and physical success in the academic landscape.

Powerful Practice

Twiggs County High School and Twiggs County Middle School have acquired technology equipment and have updated the infrastructure to support student learning opportunities. Additionally, there is consistent job-embedded professional learning, positioning those teachers to incorporate meaningful digital learning for all students.

(Indicator 4.6)

Evidence and Rationale

As the External Review Team examined artifacts and conducted interviews, it became evident that Twiggs

County School System has a technology plan that outlines strategies for increased infrastructure as well as policies that are designed to support the direction of the school system. There is internet access that supports instructional programs, the student information system (Infinite Campus), and operational support areas such as electronic work order submit forms. The district is increasing the technology staff by adding a part-time staff member to provide technical support. The Team recognized the impact that the job-embedded training made in the effective integration of technology as an instructional tool.

Implementing technology expansion allows school systems to align technology to meet curriculum, instruction, and organizational needs.

Powerful Practice

Twiggs County School System has engaged in a systematic process to recruit, employ, and retain qualified staff to support the purpose and direction of the system.

(Indicator 4.1)

Evidence and Rationale

As the External Review Team examined artifacts and listened during interviews, it became evident that Twiggs County School System employs highly qualified staff members to support their vision and mission. While it can be very challenging for small rural school systems to have successful recruiting efforts, The system has a process for assessing staff needs and documented evidence indicating that 100% of their instructional staff members are highly qualified to teach in their assigned instructional areas. Historical records further verified success in this process when there was a need for extensive teacher and administrative hiring during a transitional period in the system when the new superintendent was hired.

The commitment to hiring highly qualified staff provides a foundation for students to succeed at each grade level.

Conclusion

Twiggs County School System serves 1019 students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 in three schools. An alternative program is housed in a classroom in Twiggs County Middle School. The system began the internal renewal accreditation process under the leadership of the new superintendent and assistant superintendent two years ago. As the External Review Team reviewed system and school accreditation documents, held interviews, examined evidence, and conducted classroom observations, several themes surfaced: 1) leadership had greatly improved in the past two years; 2) academic focus was in its initial stage of continuous improvement; 3) the system had been successful in hiring highly-qualified teachers, many of whom had the capacity to be effective teacher-leaders, and 4) the system had made great strides in governance and parent communication.

Challenges prevail in Twiggs County that have an impact on student learning. As in most school systems across the country, financial constraints have made program funding, buildings, salary increases, and professional development areas of concern. In spite of these obstacles, Twiggs County moves forward in its quest for providing an excellent education for its students. Technology challenges are prevalent throughout the system and community. Again, Twiggs has updated its infrastructure to support student learning, resulting in a Powerful Practice that recognizes efforts at Twiggs County High School and Twiggs County Middle School for its consistent job-embedded professional learning, positioning those teachers to incorporate meaningful digital learning for all students.

As Team members experienced each phase of the accreditation process, it became evident that instruction must be the main focus for continuous improvement and felt confident this will happen. There is solid, trusted leadership, a supportive board that knows its roles and responsibilities, a beginning of a strategic plan, and recognizable teacher capacity. There is work to be done, but Twiggs County has a dedication to its students and community. During the superintendent's closing meeting, a Venn diagram was shared that gave a visual representation of how the various actions left by the Team support the system's desire to achieve its goals of excellence for its students. How Twiggs County approaches the Improvement Priorities and Opportunities for Improvement will be important. The Team believed that a collaborative process for designing the strategies for implementing the actions can build needed ownership by all stakeholders. The actions are a guide to success for all students, for continuous improvement across all areas and sustainability for the future. Twiggs County is positioned for success. The system now has a roadmap that becomes the foundation for growth and sustained continuous improvement as the dedicated members of this system fulfill their mission to inspire, challenge, and prepare all students to compete globally.

Improvement Priorities

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

- Develop and implement protocols for system and school leaders to monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success and continuous

professional learning of all staff members.

- Develop, monitor, and evaluate transparent practices that detail fiscal management at all levels of the system.
- Implement leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes that result in improved professional practice in all areas of the system and are reflective of the system's purpose and direction to ensure student success.
- Monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment system-wide in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice to provide equitable and challenging learning experiences for all students to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level.

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	254.42	282.79
Teaching and Learning Impact	227.62	274.14
Leadership Capacity	285.71	296.08
Resource Utilization	270.00	286.32

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

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

Addenda

Individual Institution Results (Self-reported)

Institution Name	Teaching and Learning Impact	Leadership Capacity	Resource Utilization	Overall IEQ Score
Jeffersonville Elementary School	280.95	309.09	300.00	292.31
Twiggs County High School	276.19	318.18	257.14	284.62
Twiggs County Middle School	300.00	300.00	285.71	297.44

Team Roster

Member	Brief Biography
Mrs. Mary Anne Hipp	<p>As a retired school administrator, Mary Anne Hipp currently serves as a Lead Evaluator for AdvancED and provides educational consulting services to school personnel and boards. She holds Bachelor and Master degrees in Music Education, certifications in Elementary Education and Early Childhood, and a Master +30 in Educational Leadership. She has 50 years of experience across the United States, serving as teacher, Catholic school administrator, Director of Bayou Charter School for Dyslexic Students, and Consultant for the Recovery School District of Louisiana. For the past seven years she has served as Vice President of the Board of Directors for the Ashton School in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. She enjoys educational writing and has been a contributing author on several American and International educational blogs.</p> <p>Certifications:</p>
Mr. Morris Lamar Arrington	<p>Presently, Morris Lamar Arrington serves as one of the University Supervisors at Albany State University. Prior to this experience, he retired as an educator with 29 years of service in the state of Georgia. After retirement, he moved to South Carolina and served as the Deputy Superintendent for Hampton District 2 in Estill, South Carolina. Also, he is a graduate of Georgia Southwestern University where he received his undergraduate and graduate degrees. Later he completed his leadership certification after completing coursework at West Georgia University, and in 2000, he received his Specialist degree in Educational Leadership from NOVA Southeastern University. Furthermore, during Mr. Arrington's thirty-three years in education, he has served as a classroom teacher for twenty-two years and worked as an administrator at all levels from Kindergarten to district office. In addition, Mr. Arrington hold administrative certification in Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina and he has been trained in Teacher Keys and Leader Keys. Prior to this year, Mr. Arrington has served on 7 SACS-AdvancED Visits. Finally, he resides in Thomasville, Georgia.</p>
Dr. Ann Williams-Brown	<p>Dr. Ann Williams-Brown is the Science Coordinator for the Houston County School System and she teaches courses for Middle Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (MGRESA). She lives in Warner Robins, Georgia. Before becoming the science coordinator, she served as a high school science teacher, assistant principal of instruction, and an adjunct professor at Macon State College and Georgia Military College. Dr. Williams-Brown served on the Georgia State Council for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS-CASI). She has also served as the chairman for numerous school accreditation visits and currently serves as a lead evaluator for school district review teams. Dr. Williams-Brown holds a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Mercer University, Master of Science in Biology from Georgia College and State University, Educational Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership and Doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Georgia.</p>
Dr. April Childers	<p>Dr. April Childers is the Deputy Superintendent of Floyd County Schools. She began her career 22 years ago as a high school mathematics teacher. Other positions held in education include elementary gifted education teacher, instructional coach, data analyst and director of strategic planning and accountability. Dr. Childers' education includes a Masters of Arts and Educational Specialist in Math Education, Doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction, and Leadership certification along with endorsements in gifted education, reading, and teacher support specialist.</p> <p>Dr. Childers has written several grants that were funded for Floyd County Schools including \$1.2 million for professional development for math and science teachers. Dr. Childers is the co-chair for Floyd County School's AdvancEd review scheduled for 2015-16 school year.</p>

Member	Brief Biography
<p>Dr. Ruth Jacoby</p>	<p>Dr. Ruth Jacoby has been involved in the educational field for over 40 years. She started as a classroom instructor, served as a principal and then Executive Director of Education. For the past 16 years her passion has been in the Charter School movement and has worked with and for Somerset Academy Inc. which is a national and international organization for over 40 schools. Her many years of experience and hard work has brought her many awards. Dr. Ruth has also written 6 books which are published by Jossey-Bass Publishers (Teacher Talk, Parent Talk, Principal Talk, School Board Talk, test and Homework Talk). She also gives speeches and presents professional development on many educational topics.</p>
<p>Dr. Kiawana Kennedy</p>	<p>Dr. Kennedy is a native of Atlanta, Georgia and has proudly served the students of metro Atlanta and surrounding areas for more than two decades. Dr. Kennedy’s educational accomplishments include a Bachelor of Science in Middle Grades Education from West Georgia College. She continued her education and earned her Masters and Specialist Degrees in Administration and Supervision. In 2000, Dr. Kennedy graduated from the University of Georgia where she earned a Doctorate of Educational Leadership Degree. She later received her Gifted Endorsement. Dr. Kennedy has completed the SUPES Academy Superintendent Leadership Preparation Program to enhance her professional learning experiences.</p> <p>The roles in which she has honed her craft by ensuring quality learning for all include serving as an elementary and middle school teacher, an assistant principal at the middle school level, and principal of multiple levels. During her tenure as principal, numerous accomplishments were achieved including six grant awards, Platinum Award for Greatest Student Gains on the CRCT awarded by the state of Georgia, five Title 1 Distinguished School awards from the state of Georgia, and a School Bell award from Georgia Association of Elementary Principals.</p> <p>Dr. Kennedy is a strong advocate for all students and continued her passion by serving as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the City Schools of Decatur. During that time, Dr. Kennedy evaluated and implemented learning resources; she collaborated with teachers for the development of curriculum guides; strengthen the system wide Response to Intervention process by providing professional learning and procedures for RtI Coordinators; collaborated with staff members to create and provide support for the Standards Base Report Card at the fourth and fifth grade levels; provided leadership to the Early Intervention Program and Gifted Services Program as well as coordinated the FTE process for these areas.</p> <p>Additionally, she has served as an active member of numerous educational committees as well as held memberships or provided services such as President Elect of District 12 Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals; Advisory Council for West Georgia’s Education Department; Association for the Supervision of Curriculum Development and Georgia Association for Gifted Children.</p> <p>Dr. Kennedy currently serves as Chief Operating Officer for the benefit of the students, staff, and families of the City Schools of Decatur where she oversees Registration/Enrollment, Safety, Technology, Custodians, Nutrition, Transportation, Maintenance and Facilities.</p>

Next Steps

1. Review and discuss the findings from this report with stakeholders.
2. Ensure that plans are in place to embed and sustain the strengths noted in the Powerful Practices section to maximize their impact on the institution.
3. Consider the Opportunities for Improvement identified throughout the report that are provided by the team in the spirit of continuous improvement and the institution's commitment to improving its capacity to improve student learning.
4. Develop action plans to address the Improvement Priorities identified by the team. Include methods for monitoring progress toward addressing the Improvement Priorities.
5. Use the report to guide and strengthen the institution's efforts to improve student performance and system effectiveness.
6. Following the External Review, submit the Accreditation Progress Report detailing progress made toward addressing the Improvement Priorities. Institutions are required to respond to all Improvement Priorities. The report will be reviewed at the appropriate state, national, and/or international levels to monitor and ensure that the system has implemented the necessary actions to address the Improvement Priorities. The accreditation status will be reviewed and acted upon based on the responses to the Improvement Priorities and the resulting improvement.
7. Continue to meet the AdvancED Standards, submit required reports, engage in continuous improvement, and document results.

About AdvancED

AdvancED is the world leader in providing improvement and accreditation services to education providers of all types in their pursuit of excellence in serving students. AdvancED serves as a trusted partner to more than 32,000 public and private schools and school systems – enrolling more than 20 million students - across the United States and 70 countries.

In 2006, the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), both founded in 1895, and the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) came together to form AdvancED: one strong, unified organization dedicated to education quality. In 2011, the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) that was founded in 1917 became part of AdvancED.

Today, NCA CASI, NWAC and SACS CASI serve as accreditation divisions of AdvancED. The Accreditation Divisions of AdvancED share research-based quality standards that cross school system, state, regional, national, and international boundaries. Accompanying these standards is a unified and consistent process designed to engage educational institutions in continuous improvement.

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.