

SUWANNEE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
WORKSHOP SESSION
January 10, 2017

AGENDA

- 9:00 a.m. Call to Order/Welcome/Pledge..... Jerry Taylor, Chairman
- 9:02 a.m. Health Insurance Renewal Vickie DePratter
- 9:30 a.m. Finance Software Update..... Vickie DePratter
- 10:00 a.m. Facilities Department Update Mark Carver
- 10:15 a.m. Food Service Department-Personnel Item.....Lisa Dorris
- 10:30 a.m. AdvancED External Review Team.....Janene Fitzpatrick
Final Report **(pgs. 2-40)**
- 11:00 a.m. Adjourn

Report of the External Review Team for Suwannee County School District

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US

**Mr. Jerry A Scarborough
Superintendent**

Date: October 30, 2016 - November 2, 2016



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Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Use of Diagnostic Tools

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

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

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

Index of Education Quality

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

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

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

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

Benchmark Data

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

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

Powerful Practices

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

Opportunities for Improvement

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

Improvement Priorities

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

The Review

A group of six educators from three different states conducted the AdvancED System External Review for the Suwannee County School District from October 30 to November 2, 2016. One External Review Team (Team) member was from Indiana, one from Louisiana and four members were from school districts in Florida. During this four-day period, Team members reviewed numerous documents and artifacts prepared by system and school administrators, conducted extensive interviews with various stakeholder groups including parents, students, teachers, support staff members and administrators from the nine different schools. The team visited 31 classrooms and with the assistance of the AdvancED Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot®) classroom observation rating rubric observed students learning. Included in the system's review were three early learning site reviews, conducted by one of the team members trained to complete the required early learning criteria and conduct the Environmental Rating for Early Learning (erel™) observation rating scale.

Prior to the on-site review, the Team used the AdvancED online workspace to review documents submitted by the school district, including the system Accreditation Report with their Self Assessment ratings, each of the nine schools' Accreditation Reports, the system strategic plan and each school's improvement plan, including the open-ended survey responses from the AdvancED parent, student and staff questionnaires.

Approximately one month before the External Review, team members participated in an evening conference call, providing an orientation for the off-site work and planning for the expectations of reviewing the school system website and the leading documents of the schools in order to become familiar with the demographics of the school district, the community and the student performance data. The Lead Evaluator held numerous phone conversations with the school system contact person and discussed the expectations of the review process with the superintendent prior to the visit.

The External Review Team members began their on-site work on Sunday afternoon, October 30 with a "meet and greet" with the host coordinator for the visit, the superintendent and assistant superintendent plus the school board chair. As the Team reconvened after dinner, they reviewed additional documents that the system leaders had prepared in an electronic form such as organizational charts, findings from budget audits, school schedules and various samples of instructional staff evaluations with the names removed. The Team reviewed the schedule for the on-site visit and prepared for the first day of interviews as well as perused the system website where links were available to access state data charts and graphs of student achievement information.

Monday morning and afternoon were spent interviewing school administrators, four of the five school board members, support staff personnel, parents and community members as well as the principals from the nine schools in the system. Monday evening was spent in Team deliberations, Standards/Indicator ratings, and preparations for Tuesday's school visits.

The Team spent Tuesday visiting all nine schools and observing the many programs in the system. The team member certified to review the Early Learning classrooms spent Tuesday visiting the three school sites of Branford Elementary, Suwannee Primary and RIVEROAK Technical College. When visiting the schools, the Team interviewed students and teachers and observed students learning in classroom settings. Tuesday evening was spent in discussions, Standard/Indicator ratings, and identifying themes across all interviews and observations in the schools reflecting Powerful Practices and possible Opportunities for Improvement.

On Wednesday morning, one of the team members completed additional interviews with the early learning principal from one of the schools. The remainder of the Team finalized six Powerful Practices identified throughout the External Review, one Opportunity for Improvement and one Improvement Priority, including identifying supportive evidence for each of the Indicators listed in the Standards. All of this work culminated in an Exit Report presented to the Suwannee County School District School Board, school administrators, teachers and the public on Wednesday afternoon November 4, 2016.

It was clear to the Team that the school system was well prepared to host the External Review, both in readying the artifacts and documents to be reviewed and in arranging for the interviews and school visits across the system. The organization for hosting the review was well managed and everyone was candid and professional during the interviews and school visits. Throughout the interview process, faculty, staff, students, support staff, parents and community members provided valuable insight into the teaching and learning processes in the schools.

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	40
Instructional Staff	45
Support Staff	10
Students	96
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	20
Total	216

Results

Teaching and Learning Impact

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

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
3.1	The system's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level.	2.80	2.69
3.2	Curriculum, instruction, and assessment throughout the system are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	2.80	2.49
3.3	Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	3.00	2.59
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	2.60	2.71
3.5	The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.	3.40	2.58
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	2.20	2.48
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	2.60	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.	2.80	2.97
3.9	The system designs and evaluates structures in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the student's school who supports that student's educational experience.	2.80	2.50
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.	2.20	2.47
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	3.20	2.65
3.12	The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	2.60	2.64

Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
5.1	The system establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	2.40	2.66
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.	2.40	2.49
5.3	Throughout the system professional and support staff are trained in the interpretation and use of data.	2.00	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.	2.20	2.50
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.	2.40	2.75

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

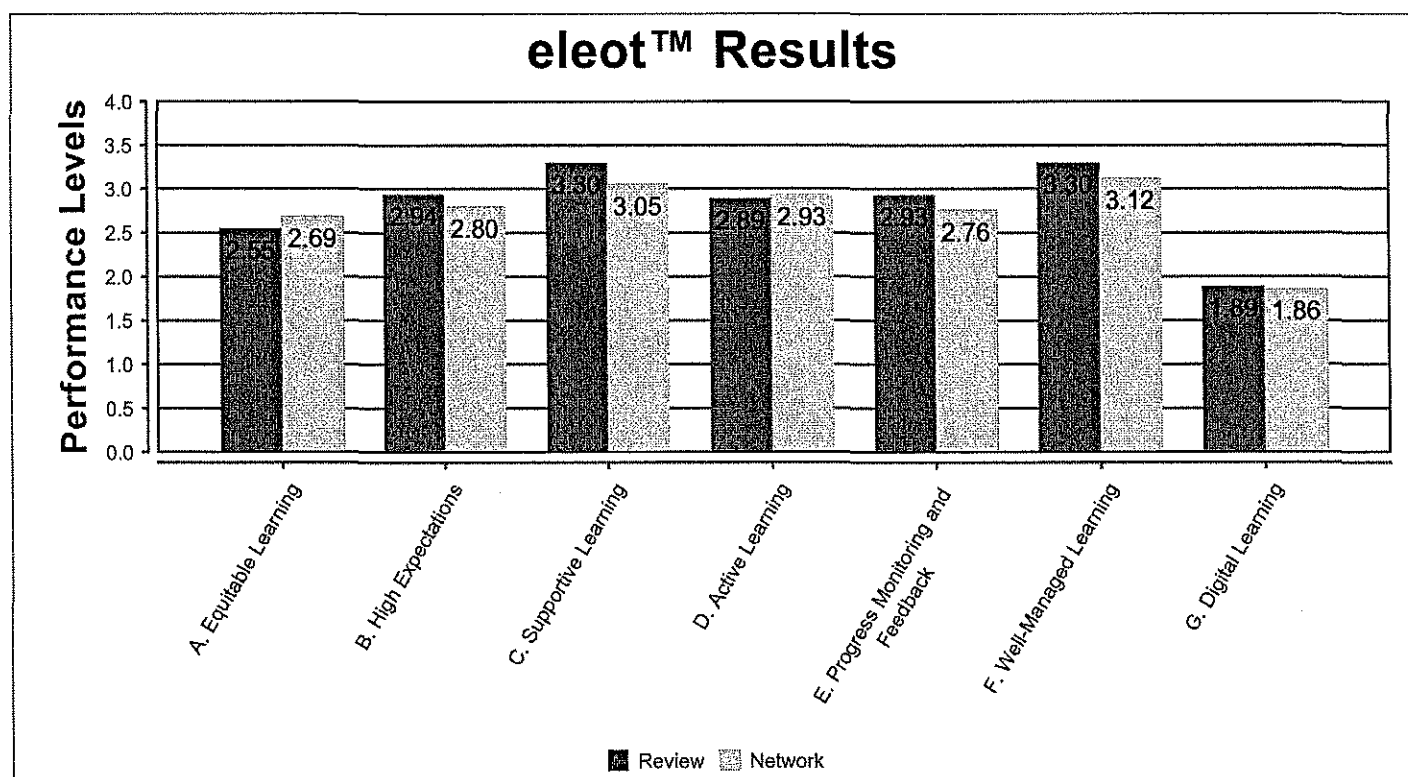
learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important indicators for evaluating overall student performance.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Assessment Quality	3.40	3.33
Test Administration	2.80	3.52
Equity of Learning	2.80	2.54
Quality of Learning	3.00	2.96

Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™)

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

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



The External Review Team utilized the Effective Learning Environment Observation Tool (eleot) instrument in observing 31 classrooms in nine different schools in the Suwannee County School District and determined ratings for each of the seven learning environments as team members visited classrooms. Team members also used the Environmental Rating for Early Learning (erel™) in 11 early learning classrooms in three schools.

The Team observed students learning in preschool through high school content area classes in a variety of subjects and courses. The highest ratings on the eleot scale were in the Supportive Learning Environment (with a team average rating of 3.30 compared to the AdvancED network average of 3.05) and in the Well-Managed Learning Environment (with cumulative average ratings of 3.30 compared to the AdvancED network average of 3.12.) This same positive culture was observed in the erel with preschool children where Positive Guidance and Supportive Interaction were both rated high in the early learning classrooms. The lowest Team ratings in classroom observations with the eleot observation tool were in the Digital Learning Environment with a Team average rating of 1.89 (compared to the AdvancED average of 1.86.) Team average ratings in these sample classrooms were all but one rated above the AdvancED Network Averages even in the Digital Learning Environment, reflecting observations where there were differentiated lessons and activities included in many classrooms where students were self-directed with digital devices. Although there were pockets of excellence in all levels of classrooms, there was no consistency in the use of digital devices to conduct research, solve real-world problems and/or create original works for learning.

With one of the highest ratings in the Well-Managed Learning Environment, team members observed students who spoke and interacted respectfully with the teacher and their peers. They followed classroom rules and worked well in small groups with others. Transitions in most classrooms were made smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another, even in kindergarten classrooms. The Supportive Learning Environment was evident as students demonstrated positive attitudes about the classroom procedures and interactions in learning. Students appeared to take risks in learning without fear of negative feedback from teachers or classmates. Support and assistance were given to students as they asked questions and answered questions that needed revision.

In the Digital Learning Environment, which was rated the lowest of the seven categories on the eleot, team members observed smart boards installed in many classrooms. The device was seen as a teacher-directed tool to display information and present lesson tasks; it was only occasionally observed with students using it as an interactive tool for learning. In almost all classrooms in the Suwannee County School District students were not only polite and orderly, but they were attentive and focused in their classrooms.

Students demonstrated evidence of a well-organized and trained group of learners who respectfully followed school rules. It was obvious to the Team that good student behavior was an expectation throughout the system. In the early learning sites, students operated independently to complete tasks demonstrated for them by their teachers. Students in the high school were observed in the commons areas, with little or no direct supervision and appeared to be self-directed and courteous with fellow students. In the especially designed senior Commons Area, students were relaxed and exuded a sense of confidence in a casual atmosphere where they could interact with their peers at lunch.

eleot™ Data Summary

A. Equitable Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.23	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	19.35%	22.58%	19.35%	38.71%
2.	3.42	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	45.16%	51.61%	3.23%	0.00%
3.	3.26	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	38.71%	51.61%	6.45%	3.23%
4.	1.29	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	3.23%	3.23%	12.90%	80.65%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.55						

B. High Expectations			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.16	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	32.26%	54.84%	9.68%	3.23%
2.	3.23	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	35.48%	51.61%	12.90%	0.00%
3.	2.03	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	16.13%	16.13%	22.58%	45.16%
4.	3.10	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	32.26%	51.61%	9.68%	6.45%
5.	3.19	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	51.61%	25.81%	12.90%	9.68%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.94						

C. Supportive Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.42	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	48.39%	45.16%	6.45%	0.00%
2.	3.52	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	58.06%	35.48%	6.45%	0.00%
3.	3.16	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	41.94%	38.71%	12.90%	6.45%
4.	3.55	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	58.06%	38.71%	3.23%	0.00%
5.	2.84	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	22.58%	48.39%	19.35%	9.68%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.30						

D. Active Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.00	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	32.26%	45.16%	12.90%	9.68%
2.	2.42	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	22.58%	29.03%	16.13%	32.26%
3.	3.26	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	45.16%	38.71%	12.90%	3.23%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.89						

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.87	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	22.58%	54.84%	9.68%	12.90%
2.	3.16	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	22.58%	70.97%	6.45%	0.00%
3.	3.06	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	12.90%	80.65%	6.45%	0.00%
4.	2.61	Understands how her/his work is assessed	12.90%	61.29%	0.00%	25.81%
5.	2.94	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	29.03%	51.61%	3.23%	16.13%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.93						

F. Well-Managed Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.65	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	67.74%	29.03%	3.23%	0.00%
2.	3.52	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	58.06%	35.48%	6.45%	0.00%
3.	3.19	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	41.94%	41.94%	9.68%	6.45%
4.	2.58	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	25.81%	29.03%	22.58%	22.58%
5.	3.58	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	58.06%	41.94%	0.00%	0.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.30						

G. Digital Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.61	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	38.71%	16.13%	12.90%	32.26%
2.	1.48	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	9.68%	6.45%	6.45%	77.42%
3.	1.58	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	12.90%	6.45%	6.45%	74.19%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 1.89						

Findings

Opportunity For Improvement

Create and deploy a marketing plan to advertise the many examples of outstanding programs as well as student, staff and school successes.

(Indicator 5.5)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 5.5

Evidence and Rationale

Although a promotional video about the assets of Suwannee County School District was viewed by the AdvancED Team during the Superintendent's Overview, there were no school or district marketing products observed in the presentation. During interviews with the community members and the parents, it was evident that the schools had great stories to tell about their successes. There were stories about community partnerships in support of students and the wealth of career and technical offerings in CTE classes and career academies; but none of that information was shared in publications that could be used by community leaders as promotional materials. It was quoted by an administrator that "Schools are not very good about 'tooting their own horns'."

In this age of competition, school districts and schools can benefit from designing media to promote school spirit and pride and attract students to their institutions.

Powerful Practice

The Suwannee County School District employs three grant-funded instructional coaches that provide

outstanding support for the improvement of instructional practices of core content teachers, ensuring student success.

(Indicator 3.4, Indicator 3.6)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.4

Evidence and Rationale

The Suwannee School District Accreditation Report listed the addition of three instructional coaches funded through the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) acquired through the Sustainable Educator Evaluation & Compensation (SEEC) grant funds. These three coaches have provided continuous support to classroom teachers in all core content areas. During three different interview sessions, district staff, principal, and teachers indicated that significant improvement in instructional practices were due to the observations and immediate feedback provided by the instructional coaches. Discussions in these interview sessions were rich with regards to the value of classroom modeling of standards, creation of Florida State Assessment (FSA)-like test items, data analysis, the design of rigorous lesson plans based on state standards, instructional differentiation and research investigations to build and sustain best practices in K-12 classrooms. Some notable quotes from interviewees included:

- “We meet on Tuesdays with our instructional coach. During that time he guides us through the application and interpretation of state standards. Then we create rigorous lessons so that our students can master the concepts and demonstrate their understanding with elevated test scores throughout the school year.”
- “We are able to get the support in a timely fashion, have questions answered about how to improve classroom instruction, and continue to learn strategies that allow us to be more effective in the classroom.”
- “As part of our PLC’s our instructional coach helps us match research- based strategies to the needs of our students. I get immediate feedback from my coach on strategies that help me to keep my students engaged. My students are able to attain their personal learning goals.”
- “My instructional coach assisted me with data triangulation using i-Ready, Edgenuity, and FSA that allowed me to determine the learning gaps, as well as to guide me in assisting my students to develop their own personal portfolio.”

Students were engaged on content rich performance tasks and could articulate curriculum concepts important to the task at hand. Teachers monitored and assessed student performance both formatively and summatively. The impact of the instructional coaches on research based best practices can positively impact classroom instructional strategies.

Powerful Practice

The Suwannee County School District has initiated an effective system of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) as a forum for teacher networking and professional development.

(Indicator 3.5, Indicator 3.11)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.5

Evidence and Rationale

It was reported in interviews that the PLCs are in their infancy as an organizational practice. Observations revealed that this innovative process holds promise to move the organization to more effective educational practices. It was observed that on the first Wednesday of each month during the school year, all teachers and support staff participate in a full day of professional development with PLCs to review student data, learn new instructional strategies, and receive training for new programs and services. Listed in the system Strategic Plan was a 98% participation rate in professional development activities in the district.

When teachers and staff members participate in professional learning communities, there is greater likelihood that students will benefit from higher student learning and teachers will experience more effective teaching techniques based upon research.

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.	2.80	2.68
1.2	The system ensures that each school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	3.00	2.68
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.	3.40	2.90
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.	3.60	2.65

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.	3.40	2.97
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	3.20	2.96
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	3.17
2.4	Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction.	3.40	3.03
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	4.00	2.74

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice in all areas of the system and improved student success.	2.80	2.70

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	2.00	3.42
Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	2.00	3.03

Findings

Powerful Practice

Suwannee County School District has established extensive partnerships with community organizations, area educational institutions, agencies and local businesses resulting in expanded learning opportunities for all students.

(Indicator 2.5, SF1. Questionnaire Administration)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 2.5

Evidence and Rationale

The Suwannee County School District System Accreditation Report listed many partnerships supporting programs and services for students in all nine schools. Those partnerships included community agencies, service organizations, business leaders and parents. There were more than 150 community volunteers who continuously provided input as advisory council members for RIVEROAK Tech Center courses as well as the school based Career Technical Education (CTE) classes and high school academies. Interviews with all stakeholders indicated these career pathways benefit the Live Oak and Branford communities. Interviews and

observations revealed that there is a long history of collaboration with community organizations. The depth and breadth of initiatives between the Suwannee County Schools and the communities are too extensive to list. However, some notable examples are:

- RIVEROAK Technical College (RTC) and the Suwannee Virtual school support students who need credit recovery, additional classes to support advanced placement courses, dual enrollment options and industry certifications.
- “Watch Dogs” (Dads of Great Students) is an active dad’s club that mentors and supports students in the schools.
- Early Learning Matters is a partnership with community leaders called “Reading Pals” who read with prekindergarten students monthly.
- The school system provides parent training opportunities and technical assistance with FOCUS on-site to the local Health Department and the large poultry processing plant employees.
- Rotary Club provides books for classrooms and school libraries.
- The participation of local business leaders, parents, students and administrators helped to craft the new Suwannee Strategic Plan to be distributed widely in the 2016-17 school year.
- Suwannee Leadership Achievement Program (SLAP) identifies students in need through the school Early Warning System (EWS) and matches community mentors with students who need advocates.
- The monthly student recognition luncheons, honoring students and parents, are sponsored by the Suwannee Academic Boosters.

Strong bonds between the community and schools can produce effective collaborative partnerships to foster long-standing support for the academic, physical, social and emotional needs of all children in the schools.

Powerful Practice

Throughout the Suwannee County School District schools, both leadership and school staff are highly regarded as caring, responsive and reflective of the district’s mission “...to educate all students in a safe and supportive learning environment....”

(Indicator 1.3, Indicator 2.4)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 2.4

Evidence and Rationale

In interviews with both internal and external stakeholders, many spoke to the caring and dedication of the superintendent and many of the district level staff. School staff reflected a sense of appreciation, citing the responsiveness and service orientation of many district leaders. Parents and students cited the teachers as the heart of the schools. Teachers discussed the many examples where their school administrators had found resources to support programs and services for students. One staff member is quoted as saying, “I feel our administrators have a ‘can do’ spirit and go above and beyond to provide students with positive support. They leave no rock unturned to help students, whether that is academic or in their personal lives.”

The superintendent was reported to have an open-door policy seeking input through two-way communication with his "listening sessions" in the schools for teachers and students. He has conducted many community forums for parents and businesses as well as summits for the discussion of issues with the community.

There was a strong sense of community in the Suwannee school-based programs. Staff members were proud of the fact that they were able to provide services to struggling students and plan advanced coursework for highly able students and career and technical options for students seeking industry certificates and preparation for the world of work.

When the caring and rapport among staff are highly valued and promoted, the culture and climate of trust between the district and the schools will more effectively support student learning.

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	2.87
4.2	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, educational programs, and system operations.	3.40	2.87
4.3	The system maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	3.80	3.06
4.4	The system demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning in support of the purpose and direction of the system.	4.00	2.76

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Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
4.5	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of information resources and related personnel to support educational programs throughout the system.	2.00	2.73
4.6	The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	3.00	2.72
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	2.58
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	2.60

Findings

Improvement Priority

Design and implement a comprehensive program evaluation protocol to determine whether implemented programs and services are effective in meeting the needs of teachers and students for continuous improvement.

(Indicator 4.5, Indicator 4.7, Indicator 4.8)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 4.5

Evidence and Rationale

There was lack of evidence that any formal program evaluation plan had been instituted when new programs were implemented in the schools. In interviews, it was not clear what goals and objectives were to be accomplished by the PLC's or the new iReady assessment program. It was shared that there was a strong emphasis on professional development and teacher networking, but no assessment criteria were available to assess their effectiveness in meeting goals. In like manner, the new reading program and assessments were implemented without clear, written goals based upon needs assessment data. There was no program evaluation form or timeline to determine program effectiveness either through test data or through staff surveys. The board and superintendent reported that they had not required an evaluation strategy for new programs and could not tell whether the district was headed in the right direction.

When teachers and administrators have a chance to work together to select new programming and have a clear sense of what is expected, there will be more likelihood that objectives will be met and evidence cited to support either higher student achievement or more efficient organizational support for student learning.

Powerful Practice

Suwannee County School District has created a comprehensive, district-wide strategic plan.

(Indicator 1.4, Indicator 4.4)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 4.4

Evidence and Rationale

In interviews it was reported that the district has created a robust strategic plan incorporating a new purpose and direction and four overarching goals for the system. The strategic plan also included a timeline, monitoring strategies and benchmark data points to chart progress.

The system Accreditation Report indicated that the district mission and vision had not been reviewed or revised in the past several years. Interviews revealed that the district leadership, including the school board, had formed a 12-member steering committee including school administrators, parents, students and business partners. An outside consultant assisted the steering committee to complete a needs assessment and created not only goals for the district, but also a detailed action plan with key performance indicators. The strategic plan entitled "Expect Excellence" was reviewed by the AdvancED External Review Team and it was noted that in-depth thought and planning had led the system to create a five-year improvement plan.

A long-range strategic plan can bring a sense of commitment between the local communities and all of its schools to support continuous improvement and student learning over time.

Powerful Practice

There is an outstanding level of pride displayed and reflected in the facilities of the Suwannee schools.
(Indicator 4.2, Indicator 4.4)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 4.4

Evidence and Rationale

The AdvancED Team observed well-maintained buildings and equipment that clearly supported student learning. Although many buildings were aging and needed some infrastructure with replacements of roofs, the appearance of the district office and school buildings reflected a sense of pride and caring. Suwannee High School had an attractive interior landscaping design supporting the idea that students will take care of the learning spaces if their surrounding are clean and attractive. Branford Elementary is also well maintained, with clean and attractive learning spaces. Each hall had a welcoming climate with student work prominently displayed.

A source of pride in learning can come from the appeal of clean and attractive spaces for learning. Positive community perceptions and a sense of caring and pride in schools can be greatly enhanced with well-maintained buildings.

Conclusion

The Suwannee County School District consists of nine schools with three early learning sites for preschool classes. The system includes two high schools including an alternative school named Opportunity School in both the Suwannee High School and Branford High School. The cities of Live Oak and Branford are both close knit communities that each supports the schools in many ways. In like manner, the schools have cooperative partnerships which enhance the schools and the communities. Through interviews, a review of evidence, observations and deliberations, the External Review Team identified several pervasive themes that emerged during the time spent in the school system. During interviews and on-site visits, the schools exhibited a welcoming culture in each building where dedication to students was evident throughout the schools. There was sincere praise for the teachers and school staff by the students, parents and community members. The Team found students' responses in classrooms were sincere and unrehearsed.

One outstanding theme throughout the schools which the Team observed was a host of partnerships offered to meet students' and their families' needs in the Suwannee County schools. There were many programs and services to enhance the lives of students and their parents in Live Oak and in Branford.

The system has created a rigorous comprehensive strategic plan with action steps and monitoring strategies to hold themselves accountable for continuous improvement in the district and all of the schools. The Team noted the four system-wide goals of increasing levels of student achievement; of ensuring safe, secure and supportive environments for staff and students; of maximizing access and use of technology as a tool for classroom management; and of using digital tools for learning as well as providing increased programs for college, career and life readiness for all students. It was noted that the system budget was aligned with the four goals. These action steps and monitoring strategies were robust and evidence-based.

Another example of outstanding effort and dedication was the implementation of professional learning communities (PLCs) in the schools where teacher-led meetings were the basis for effective professional development activities to initiate and implement research-based best classroom practices. The External Review Team observed teachers using effective techniques for student engagement in learning in most classrooms and many examples of differentiated lessons where students were working in cooperative groups, learning concepts with different materials and methods. It was obvious that students knew the classroom rules and were well managed in learning activities with few interruptions to the lessons or the school day.

The Suwannee County administrative office and schools were observed to be well maintained and attractive in appearance which elicited a sense of pride in the facilities demonstrated by both students and staff. There was a clear sense of order in the schools and staff members were proud to show the learning spaces which were well-equipped with abundant supplies. The budget and fund balances appeared to be adequate to support staff and students based upon the needs of the schools and classroom teachers. The school board is to be commended for well managed and fiscally prudent distribution of resources according to need. The school board members were recognized by the Team as Master Board certified and were seeking additional training to understand their roles and responsibilities as community representatives.

In the Early Learning Review, one of the Powerful Practices observed was the positive school culture, where staff and leadership personnel were committed to a safe, secure and healthy environment with ten out of ten criteria met in all three facilities of Branford Elementary, Suwannee Primary and RIVEROAK Technical College. In interviews, it was clear that the early learning school leadership team members had the autonomy to meet the goals for student achievement and instruction, as well as the capacity to manage the day-to-day operations in each site. It was observed that instructional practices were consistently monitored to ensure that developmentally appropriate activities were used with young learners. These instructional strategies were based upon best practices and supported with mentoring and coaching.

The included Opportunity for Improvement and the Improvement Priority were identified by the External Review Team from evidence, interviews, and observations during the External Review. As the school system plans for continuous improvement in the next five years, it is clear that there is a commitment to the strategic plan and the four system goals with steps to implement the improvement strategies with timelines and clear direction for the central office staff and for school staff. While implementing the system Strategic Plan, system and school leaders will want to consider the following Opportunity for Improvement:

-Create and deploy a marketing plan to advertise the many examples of outstanding programs as well as student, staff and school successes.

This Opportunity for Improvement has the potential to improve the system's communication to internal and external stakeholders. Within the many partnerships, the college and career support programs, and the well-maintained facilities, the Team observed a culture of trust and pride, but parents and community members were not aware of the many successful programs and services in the schools to support students. In the Suwannee Accreditation Report, in the Superintendent's Overview and in some of the schools' Accreditation Reports, communication was cited as an area of challenge. The AdvancED Team found just the opposite. Staff had many communication avenues through their website, social media, an often used parent portal for checking grades and attendance, the superintendent community forums, summits and Listening Tours in the schools. School staff even reported that they felt their voices were heard in most schools, although there were some schools where new principals were not as open to feedback for change.

The Florida state tests have changed over the past four years and it was shared that student achievement was not at the level of expectation for students with diverse backgrounds. It was reported in interviews that although poverty and isolation of many families is endemic in the two close knit communities of Live Oak and Branford, many parents and community members have a need to know the many opportunities for students to prepare for college and careers. It was noted that the system was not very good at celebrating their successes and letting their public know "what is great" about Suwannee County School District. In the Early Learning sites, one Opportunity for Improvement was the ambiguity in their professional learning communities. It was noted that the expectations and outcomes for the work in the PLCs was not clearly defined for each participating staff member.

The Improvement Priority identified for the school system is to offer guidance in order to target continuous improvement for future planning.

-Design and implement a comprehensive program evaluation protocol to determine whether newly implemented programs and services are effective in meeting the needs of teachers and students for continuous improvement.

This Improvement Priority is intended to bring teaching and learning into the 21st Century with even higher expectations for the system to achieve "...excellence, ensuring all students are prepared for personal success" as reflected in the school district's vision for student learning.

In no way should this Improvement Priority divert the energy of the system and the schools for reaching toward higher levels of student achievement. On the contrary, the schools are encouraged to continue with the effective programs and services that are offered by the system and incorporate this Improvement Priority as they proceed in the continuous improvement processes put into place since the last Quality Assurance Review in 2011 and use it as a blueprint to assist the schools to even higher student performance in the next five-year cycle.

Improvement Priorities

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

- Design and implement a comprehensive program evaluation protocol to determine whether implemented programs and services are effective in meeting the needs of teachers and students for continuous improvement.

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	285.37	278.94
Teaching and Learning Impact	268.57	268.48
Leadership Capacity	310.00	293.71
Resource Utilization	292.50	286.27

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
Branford Elementary School	290.48	363.64	400.00	330.77
Branford High School	319.05	309.09	314.29	315.38
RIVEROAK Technical College	352.38	354.55	228.57	330.77
Suwannee Elementary School	261.90	309.09	314.29	284.62
Suwannee High School	300.00	309.09	314.29	305.13
Suwannee Intermediate School	242.86	254.55	300.00	256.41
Suwannee Middle School	276.19	263.64	242.86	266.67
Suwannee Primary School	300.00	281.82	300.00	294.87
Suwannee Virtual School	309.52	292.31	385.71	317.07

Team Roster

Member	Brief Biography
Dr. Vicki L DeMao	Dr. Vicki DeMao is a Lead Evaluator for AdvancED and has worked in more than twelve different states in the Midwest and in the South, leading teams of educators in more than 30 different school districts and Educational Service Agencies. Her current responsibilities include consultant and administrator for Centerville-Abington Community Schools and Field Consultant for Indiana NCA/AdvancED schools identified for school improvement under Title I guidelines. Her past educational experiences include: Assistant Professor at University of the Pacific in Stockton, California; Director of Elementary and Secondary Education for Richmond Community School in Indiana; and, Field Coach for Gifted Education in the state of Indiana. Vicki started her career as a teacher and has been a principal of two different K-6 elementary schools, supervisor for Pre-K to grade 12, curriculum director, grant writer, and federal programs coordinator. Vicki has been a presenter at state and national conferences and works with schools and school districts in Indiana to implement the state laws governing gifted education identification, service options, and program evaluation. As a community volunteer, Vicki has been a First Tee Charter Board Member, Chamber of Commerce subcommittee member, original grant writer for Birth to Five, Inc., university advisor for Indiana University East, trained reviewer of federal grants, adjunct professor at Earlham College, and grant writer for public and private organizations.
Dr. Jean Olson	Dr. Olson retired in 2012 as an Elementary School Principal, having served previously as an Assistant Principal, High School Assistant for Curriculum, Chemistry Teacher for both IB and AP and a Science Department Chair. Adjunct Instructor positions were held at Gulf Coast Community College and the University of West Florida. A B.S. in Biology and M.S in School Psychology were earned at the University of Wisconsin, Superior. Ph.D studies were completed at Florida State University in Science Education. Over thirty presentations were made at various conferences for both science and curriculum. She served as the president of the Florida Association of Science Teachers as well as other positions on the board. Dr. Olson began serving on review teams in the late 1980's and has served on several System and School visits. She is a Lead Evaluator for Florida and a Florida Trainer for Advanc-Ed.
Mr. Antonio Rafael Cejas	<p>As an elementary school teacher in Miami, Florida, Principal Cejas was nominated and selected as Teacher of the Year in 1996, 1998, 1999 and 2001. As a middle school assistant principal, he led the transformation of two low-performing inner city Catholic schools, into award winning high performance schools. Both schools were recognized as vibrant and efficient, with local acclaims of academic success.</p> <p>Prior to accepting the role of principal at LCPA, Cejas maintained a position as a recognized bilingual educational speaker and consultant. Principal Cejas is a well-known speaker for transforming the attitudes of at-risk schools in many schools districts across the United States and countries in Central America and the Caribbean. As versatile speaker, he regularly conducts conference keynote addresses, professional development workshops, parental engagement seminars and workshops in transformational Leadership. In addition, Mr. Cejas is an adjunct professor at several colleges in South Florida that include: The School of Education, at Miami Dade College and "Sistema Universitario Ana G. Mendez".</p>

Member	Brief Biography
Dr. Felicia Coleman	Dr. Felicia Coleman is an educator with 25+ years of experience. She began her career teaching in the elementary arena, and then served as a district-level technology facilitator and grant writer. Her extensive background in curriculum, instruction, and assessment served as the foundation for her move to the middle school arena, and was utilized in both assistant principal and principal positions. During her middle school years, Felicia pursued a PhD from the University of New Orleans, completing her research and dissertation on instructional leadership in Baldrige award-winning middle schools. A three-tiered research investigation, collecting data from district superintendents, middle school principals, and classroom teachers, was utilized to identify performance excellence criteria. Currently, Dr. Coleman serves as the school administrator at Positive Connections: ABC, an elementary alternative school setting that serves K-5 students with academic, behavioral, and mental-health challenges. She leads day-to-day operations, community outreach, and weekly professional development activities for all instructional staff members. Dr. Coleman has participated on school and district AdvancED accreditation teams in the states of Louisiana, Florida, Tennessee, and North Carolina.
Mrs. Sharwonda Peek	I am a native Floridian. A graduate of Jacksonville University with a Bachelor's degree in Marketing. Having worked in the insurance industry for ten year, education is a second career. I obtained two Master's degrees from the University of North Florida in Human Resource Management and Educational Leadership. I am currently a doctoral student at Grand Canyon University. My current position is principal of James Weldon Johnson College Preparatory Middle School. Married 23 years, mother of 3, and 1 grandchild.
Mrs. Toni Irene Wiersma	Mrs. Toni Wiersma is currently serving as the Director of Student Services of the Okeechobee County School system. Mrs. Wiersma earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics with a minor in Education from Florida Southern College. She earned a Masters in Guidance and Counseling and a EdS. degree in Educational Leadership from Florida Atlantic University. She has previously served as High School Principal for twelve years, Assistant Principal, Guidance Counselor, Drop Out Prevention Teacher, and Mathematics teacher. She has served on several AdvancEd school accreditation teams.

Next Steps

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

About AdvancED

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

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

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

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