

# DIAGNOSTIC REVIEW REPORT FOR CARVER-LYON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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## Introduction

The Diagnostic Review is carried out by a team of highly qualified evaluators who examine the institution's adherence and commitment to the research aligned AdvancED Standards. The Diagnostic Review Process is designed to energize and equip the leadership and stakeholders of an institution to achieve higher levels of performance and address those areas that may be hindering efforts to reach desired performance levels. The Diagnostic Review is a rigorous process that includes the in-depth examination of evidence and relevant performance data, interviews with groups, and observations of instruction, learning, and operations.

The Diagnostic Review team used the AdvancED Standards and related criteria to guide its evaluation, looking not only for adherence to standards, but also for how the institution functioned as a whole and embodied the practices and characteristics of quality. Using the evidence at their disposal, the Diagnostic Review Team arrived at a set of findings contained in this report.

Standards help to delineate what matters. They provide a common language through which an education community can engage in conversations about educational improvement, institution 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 Diagnostic Review Team uses AdvancED Standards, associated Indicators and criteria related to student performance and stakeholder engagement to guide its evaluation. 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 Diagnostic Review Team members' individual ratings.

**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 Diagnostic Review, the institution conducted a Self Assessment using the AdvancED Standards and 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 Diagnostic Review Team's findings and critical observations are shared in this report through the Indicator ratings, identification of Powerful Practices and Improvement Priorities.

**Powerful Practices**

A key to continuous improvement is the institution's knowledge of its most effective and impactful practices. Such practices, yielding a performance level of 4, serve as critical leverage points necessary to guide, support and ensure continuous improvement. The Diagnostic Review process is committed to identifying conditions, processes and practices that are having the most significant impact on student performance and institutional effectiveness. The Diagnostic Review Team has captured and defined Powerful Practices which identified as essential to the institution's effort to continue its journey of improvement.

**Improvement Priorities**

The Diagnostic Review Team reviewed, analyzed and deliberated over significant bodies of evidence provided by the institution and gathered by the team during the process. For those instances in which this analysis yielded a Level 1 or Level 2 Indicator rating, an Improvement Priority may be identified by the Team to guide improvement efforts. Improvement Priorities are supported by extensive explanation and rationale to give leaders and stakeholders a clear understanding of the conditions,

practices, policies, etc., revealed through the Diagnostic Review process. Improvement Priorities are intended to be incorporated into the institution's improvement plan.

### **The Review**

Carver-Lyon Elementary School hosted a Diagnostic Review on April 17-20, 2016. Prior to the on-site review, the Lead Evaluator engaged in a virtual meeting with the Diagnostic Review Team on March 17, 2016 to discuss pertinent information regarding the upcoming Review. Similarly, a letter was sent to all Team Members with information regarding a variety of topics, including the Team Workspace, student performance data, stakeholder survey results, Self Assessment, Executive Summary and the South Carolina School Climate Survey results. Further, the Team engaged in conference calls and various communications via emails to review multiple documents provided by the school. Prior to the Diagnostic Review, an introductory conference call with the principal was conducted by the Lead Evaluator to begin the discussion of a variety of details involved in hosting a Diagnostic Review.

The Diagnostic Review Team consisted of a five-member Team who provided technical knowledge, skills and expertise for carrying out the Diagnostic Review process and developed this written report of their findings. On Sunday, April 17, 2016, the Team convened for its first on-site meeting at the hotel. Prior to the principal presentation, the Lead Evaluator along with other Diagnostic Review Lead Evaluators met with Richland School District One Central Office senior level administrators to discuss the priority schools that were hosting a visit the week of April 17-20, 2016. During the meeting, it was shared that priority schools in Richland School District One are referred to as Schools of Promise. The Central Office senior administrators shared a School of Promise Action Plan for Carver-Lyon and other schools hosting a visit.

As part of the first Team meeting, the principal and her administrative team presented an overview of the school's progress, purpose and direction, overview of the school's Self Assessment, challenges and achievement data. The comprehensive Internal Review engaged a range of stakeholder groups and the school submitted all documents to the Team in a timely manner. The Diagnostic Review Team expresses its appreciation to the staff and stakeholders of Carver-Lyon Elementary School for the warm welcome extended to each Team Member and the professionalism demonstrated throughout the visit. Though evidence and documentation to support the school's Self Assessment were sparse, the principal is commended for her quick response to emails and to the Team's request of varied artifacts.

Over the three-day, on-site visit, the Diagnostic Review Team conducted interviews with the school leadership team, teachers, principal, support staff, students, parents and Richland County School District One senior level staff. The feedback acquired through stakeholder interviews was used in conjunction with other evidence and data to verify and substantiate findings in this Diagnostic Review. Additionally, the Team used the eleot™ classroom observation tool to observe classroom environments and quantify student engagement, attitudes and dispositions. The Diagnostic Review Team met each night of April 17-19, 2016, to review and discuss indicator ratings, interview and classroom observation data, artifacts and additional documents and identified improvement priorities for the school.

Data gathered through classroom observations and stakeholder interviews were fully examined along with other evidence to generate the findings of the Diagnostic Review. A total of 109 stakeholders were interviewed, and 18 classrooms were observed during the Review. Throughout the Diagnostic Review, school leaders, faculty and staff were impartial in discussing continuous improvement at Carver-Lyon Elementary School.

<b>Stakeholder Interviewed</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Administrators</b>	4
<b>Instructional Staff</b>	22
<b>Support Staff</b>	14
<b>Students</b>	63
<b>Parents/Community/Business Leaders</b>	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	109

Using the evidence at their disposal, the AdvancED Diagnostic Review Team arrived at a set of findings contained in this report. The report is presented in three sections: Results, Conclusion and Addenda.

## 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 institution has services, practices, and curriculum that ensure teacher effectiveness. Research has shown that an effective teacher is a key factor for learners to achieve to 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 institution 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 institution's curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning across all grades and courses.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Average Team Rating</b>
3.1	The school'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.	1.80
3.2	Curriculum, instruction and assessment are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	1.60
3.3	Teachers engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	1.60
3.4	School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	1.40
3.5	Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities to improve instruction and student learning.	2.00
3.6	Teachers implement the school's instructional process in support of student learning.	1.60
3.7	Mentoring, coaching and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the school's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	1.60
3.8	The school engages families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keeps them informed of their children's learning progress.	2.80
3.9	The school has a formal structure whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the school who supports that student's educational experience.	2.60
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
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	2.00
3.12	The school provides and coordinates learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	2.00

### Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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

Indicator	Description	Average Team Rating
5.1	The school establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	1.80
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.	1.80
5.3	Professional and support staff are trained in the evaluation, interpretation and use of data.	1.80
5.4	The school engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness and success at the next level.	1.60
5.5	Leadership monitors and communicates comprehensive information about student learning, conditions that support student learning and the achievement of school improvement goals to stakeholders.	2.00

### Student Performance Diagnostic

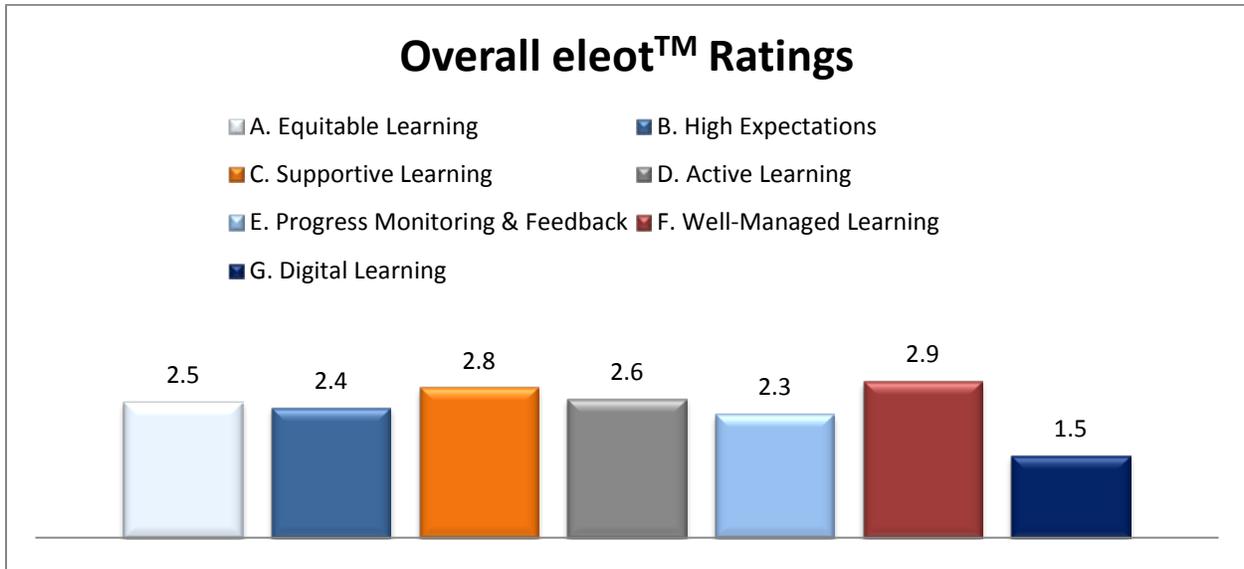
The quality of assessments used to measure student learning, assurance that assessments are administered with procedural fidelity and appropriate accommodations, assessment results that reflect the quality of learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important indicators for evaluating overall student performance.

Evaluative Criteria	Average Team Rating
1. Assessment Quality	3.00
2. Test Administration	2.00
3. Quality of Learning	2.00
4. Equity of Learning	2.00

### 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 Diagnostic Review Team is required to be trained and pass a certification exam that establishes inter-rater reliability. Team members conduct multiple observation during the review process and provide ratings on 30 items based on a four-point scale (4=every 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.



**eleot™ Summary Statement**

The Diagnostic Review Team conducted 18 classroom observations, which included all core classes. The overall eleot™ ratings ranged from 1.5 to 2.9 on a four-point scale. The highest rated was the Well-Managed Learning Environment and the lowest rated was the Digital Learning Environment. Overall, classrooms were well managed with the exception of a few where students did not follow behavioral expectations. In many classrooms, the Team noted a lack of high expectations for student learning and rigorous instruction and coursework. Classroom observation data reflected a heavy reliance on teacher-centered learning environments in which students were not fully engaged in learning activities. Additionally, the Team noted that there was limited access for students to respond to questions that required higher order thinking. Instances in which students were exposed to differentiated learning opportunities and provided exemplars of high quality work occurred infrequently. Further, varied instructional practices where students were provided with rigorous learning tasks and ongoing activities to connect classwork with their own and others' backgrounds and real-life experiences were limited. In many classrooms, it was apparent students did not fully understand how work would be assessed. The prevailing trend from these environments suggested students could benefit from tailored teaching approaches, differentiated learning activities and continuous, ongoing rigorous learning opportunities that yield successful student outcomes and increased student achievement.

### eleot™ Analysis by Learning Environment

A. Equitable Learning Environment						
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
A.1	2.2	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	11%	17%	50%	22%
A.2	3.2	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	39%	44%	11%	6%
A.3	3.1	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	28%	50%	22%	0%
A.4	1.6	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	6%	17%	11%	67%
Overall rating on a four-point scale:		2.5				

#### Equitable Learning Environment

The Equitable Learning Environment was rated a 2.5 on a four-point scale. Instances in which students had “ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other’s backgrounds/cultures/differences” were evident/very evident in 23 percent of classrooms (A4). A leverage point for improvement may be for students to have differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet their needs, which was evident/very evident in only 28 percent of classrooms (A1). Observers detected very few opportunities where students were provided with learning centers or small group activities that were specifically tailored for their unique learning needs, styles and abilities. The majority of classrooms used whole group instruction as the instructional delivery method, and differentiation was infrequently employed. During interviews, a teacher shared that “Teachers stay away from differentiation because it requires a lot of planning.”

<b>B. High Expectations Environment</b>						
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
B.1	2.9	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	17%	56%	28%	0%
B.2	2.3	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	6%	28%	56%	11%
B.3	2.1	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	0%	44%	17%	39%
B.4	2.3	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	11%	17%	61%	11%
B.5	2.4	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	17%	22%	50%	11%
<b>Overall rating on a four-point scale:</b>		<b>2.4</b>				

### High Expectations Learning Environment

The High Expectations Learning Environment was rated a 2.4 on a four-point scale. It was evident/very evident in 28 percent of classrooms that students were “engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks” (B4). Instances where students were “provided exemplars of high quality work” (B3) were evident/very evident in 44 percent of classrooms, suggesting in over half of the classrooms that observers could not confirm this important practice was occurring. It was evident/very evident in 39 percent of classrooms that students were “asked and responded to questions that required higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)” (B5). Of particular concern to the Team was the amount of low level questions posed to students. A review of the school’s performance data for 2014-2015 revealed that the percentage of students meeting the benchmark in English and reading lagged 20.6 and 25.2 points, respectively, behind the state percentage score with no fourth grade students meeting the writing benchmark. These data confirmed that students were not tasked with high level questioning that stretched their thinking and rigorous learning tasks that gave them access to exploration of higher order thinking opportunities. Students “tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable” were evident/very evident in 34 percent of classrooms (B2). Each of these components of the High Expectations Learning Environment represented a leverage point for improvement in instructional practices.

<b>C. Supportive Learning Environment</b>						
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
C.1	3.1	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	22%	61%	17%	0%
C.2	3.0	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	22%	56%	22%	0%
C.3	2.6	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	22%	33%	28%	17%
C.4	3.0	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	22%	56%	22%	0%
C.5	2.1	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	11%	22%	33%	33%
<b>Overall rating on a four-point scale:</b>		<b>2.8</b>				

### Supportive Learning Environment

The Supportive Learning Environment was rated a 2.8 on a four-point scale. While it was evident/very evident in 83 percent of classrooms that students “demonstrated or expressed that learning experiences were positive” (C1), it was evident/very evident in 55 percent of classrooms that students “took risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)” (C3). Instances where students were “provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs” (C5) were evident/very evident in only 33 percent of classrooms. These components of the Supportive Learning Environment could serve as leverage points for improvement through potential professional learning opportunities about monitoring student learning and providing positive feedback, which can assist teachers in making instructional changes and creating a climate of confident and courageous learners. Additionally, it was evident/very evident in 78 percent of classrooms that students demonstrated “positive attitude about the classroom and learning” (C2), and it was evident/very evident in 78 percent of classrooms that students were “provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks” (C4). These results showed areas the school could leverage for improvement by carefully examining alternative instructional tasks/activities, personalized instruction and timely feedback to students.

<b>D. Active Learning Environment</b>						
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
D.1	2.7	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	17%	44%	33%	6%
D.2	2.2	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	11%	33%	22%	33%
D.3	2.7	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	17%	39%	44%	0%
<b>Overall rating on a four-point scale:</b>		<b>2.6</b>				

### **Active Learning Environment**

The Active Learning Environment was rated a 2.6 on a four-point scale. It was evident/very evident in 44 percent of classrooms that students made “connections from content to real-life experiences” (D2). Instances where students were “actively engaged in the learning activities” (D3) were evident/very evident in 56 percent of classrooms, suggesting in almost half of the classrooms, observers saw a lack of actively engaged students. Teaching that emphasizes active engagement helps students process and retain information and leads to self-questioning, deeper thinking and problem solving. Additionally, it was evident/very evident in 61 percent of classrooms that students had “several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students” (D1). Collectively, ratings in the Active Learning Environment revealed potential areas that could be leveraged to improve student engagement. Providing relevance and life connections to learning materials and ensuring opportunities for students to engage with the teacher and peers, for example, can be excellent ways to capture the attention of students and promote active learning.

<b>E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment</b>						
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
E.1	2.5	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	11%	39%	39%	11%
E.2	2.6	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	6%	50%	39%	6%
E.3	2.5	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	11%	44%	28%	17%
E.4	1.9	Understands how her/his work is assessed	6%	22%	28%	44%
E.5	1.9	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	11%	11%	33%	44%
<b>Overall rating on a four-point scale:</b>		<b>2.3</b>				

### **Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environment**

The Progress Monitoring Environment was rated a 2.3 on a four-point scale. It was evident/very evident in 22 percent of classrooms that students had “opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback” (E5). Instances where students responded “to teacher feedback to improve understanding” (E2) were evident/very evident in 56 percent of classrooms. These data paralleled staff survey results, which revealed that 66 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “All teachers in our school provide students with specific and timely feedback about their learning,” suggesting an area to leverage by carefully examining the extent to which students are able to verbalize understanding of the content and have opportunities to revise/improve their work based on teacher feedback. It was evident/very evident in only 28 percent of classrooms that students “understood how their work was assessed” (E4). Moreover, in 55 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students demonstrated or verbalized “understanding of the lesson/content” (E3).

<b>F. Well-Managed Learning Environment</b>						
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
F.1	<b>3.2</b>	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	44%	39%	11%	6%
F.2	<b>3.1</b>	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	33%	44%	22%	0%
F.3	<b>2.7</b>	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	28%	39%	6%	28%
F.4	<b>2.3</b>	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	22%	22%	17%	39%
F.5	<b>3.1</b>	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	33%	39%	28%	0%
<b>Overall rating on a four-point scale:</b>		<b>2.9</b>				

### **Well-Managed Learning Environment**

With a rating of 2.9 on a four-point scale, the Well-Managed Learning Environment received the highest rating of all seven environments. It was evident/very evident in 44 percent of classrooms that students “collaborated with other students during student-centered activities” (F4). These data paralleled staff survey results, which showed that 70 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “All teachers in our school regularly use instructional strategies that require student collaboration, self-reflection, and development of critical thinking skills.” Furthermore, it was evident/very evident in 72 percent of classrooms that students knew “classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences” (F5). Instances where students “transitioned smoothly and efficiently to activities” (F3) were evident/very evident in 67 percent of classrooms. Although staff, students, parents and school leaders expressed a deep concern regarding student behavioral problems in the classroom, the Team did not observe massive problems with student behavior during classroom observations. Conversely, student survey results revealed that 62 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “My school is safe and clean,” echoing a concern some students expressed during interviews about bullying and the disruption it causes to their learning.

<b>G. Digital Learning Environment</b>						
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
G.1	1.6	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	6%	11%	22%	61%
G.2	1.6	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	6%	17%	11%	67%
G.3	1.3	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	0%	11%	6%	83%
<b>Overall rating on a four-point scale:</b>		<b>1.5</b>				

### Digital Learning Environment

With a rating of 1.5 on a four-point scale, the Digital Learning Environment received the lowest rating of all seven environments. It was evident/very evident in 11 percent of classrooms that students used “digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning” (G3). Additionally, it was evident/very evident in 23 percent of classrooms that students used “digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning” (G2). Although most grade levels were provided with individual laptops, the Team saw limited use of laptops used to conduct research, solve problems and create charts and graphs. Finally, instances where students were using “digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning” (G1) were evident/very evident in only 17 percent of classrooms.

## Findings

### Improvement Priority

Review and execute schoolwide instructional strategies to ensure that personalized instruction and interventions address individual learning needs of students using highly engaging approaches (e.g., collaborative student activities, self-reflection, use of technology learning tools and resources, development of critical thinking skills, individualized, differentiated instruction). Systematically monitor classroom instruction to ensure improvement in student achievement. (Primary Indicator 3.3, Secondary Indicator 3.4)

### Student Performance Data:

Student performance data, as detailed in the addendum to this report, suggested the school had not consistently provided instruction that ensured achievement of learning expectations. Student performance data indicated that students meeting the benchmark of 'Ready' on ACT Aspire all fell below the state averages in all core subjects. Additionally, the percentage of students met the benchmark in math fell 18.8 points below the state percentage score. Of particular concern to the Diagnostic Review Team was that only 11.4 percent of third graders, zero percent of fourth graders, and seven percent of fifth graders met the benchmark of 'Ready' on the ACT Aspire writing assessment.

### Classroom Observation Data:

Classroom observation data, as detailed in the Teaching and Learning impact section of the report, suggested that teachers were not consistently and effectively addressing individual learning needs of students. For example, classroom observation data indicated that only 33 percent of classrooms provided students with "additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his need." In addition, it was evident/very evident in 28 percent of classrooms that students were "engaged in rigorous coursework discussions, and/or tasks." Instances of students being actively engaged in the learning activities were evident/very evident in 56 percent of classrooms. Although the school's Self-Assessment revealed that all fourth and fifth grade students had access to their own laptop each day, it was evident/very evident in only 17 percent of classrooms that students used "digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning."

### Stakeholder Survey Data:

Stakeholder survey data related to the systematic use of effective instructional practices revealed that systems and processes that supported high levels of student engagement had not been consistently implemented. Seventy percent of staff, for example, indicated that they agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "All teachers in our school regularly use instructional strategies that require student collaboration, self-reflection, and development of critical thinking skills." Also, 63 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement "Challenging curriculum and learning experiences provide equity for all students in the development of learning, thinking and life skills."

Comparatively, the 2015 South Carolina School Climate Survey revealed that 50 percent of teachers agreed with the statement, "Effective instructional strategies are used to meet the needs of low achieving students." Moreover, stakeholder feedback data revealed that 68 percent of staff

agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school leaders regularly evaluate staff members on criteria designed to improve teaching and learning.” Sixty-six percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school leaders ensure all staff members use supervisory feedback to improve student learning.” These results suggested a lack of systematic monitoring of instructional practices to ensure improvement in student achievement.

**Stakeholder Interviews:**

Stakeholder interview data revealed teachers, administrators and support staff focused on interventions and differentiation, but the Team rarely observed full implementation of those practices. While administrators and teachers referenced an instructional framework (e.g., opening, launch, whole group, small group, closure) that focused on personalized learning for all students, this was not consistently observed by the Team. School administrators revealed that monitoring the impact of professional development regarding instructional strategies occurred, to some extent, through professional learning communities. However, the Team noted that transference from discussions about instructional strategies during professional learning communities to teachers using these practices in the classroom were minimal. In addition, teacher interviews showed that the principal rarely provided feedback from classroom observations.

Further, during interviews, students reported that disruptive behaviors in some classrooms prevented them from participating in instructional tasks and learning. One student stated, “Students in the back row play and talk to others, curse and talk back.” When asked by the Team, “How can you make your school better,” a student stated that “the school needed more well-behaved students and needed to make kids behave.” One student stated that she “wished her peers would be nice to the teachers.”

**Documents and Artifacts:**

A review of meeting agendas, meeting sign-in sheets, lesson plan previews and assessment analysis reflections sheets verified that Professional Learning Communities and professional development sessions occurred; however, these documents did not reveal the existence of a consistent focus on the integration of instructional strategies (e.g., the use of technology as a learning tool, integrating content and skills from other disciplines, personalized instruction, student groupings). In addition, the Richland One instructional pacing guide for literacy suggested inquiry based standards were the foundation of instructional practices, yet classroom observations revealed it was evident/very evident in only 39 percent of classrooms that students responded to “questions that required higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing).”

**Improvement Priority**

Establish, implement and monitor a systematic process with procedures to collect and analyze data from a variety of sources (e.g., comparison, trend, program evaluation, student behavior) and apply findings to improve instructional practices. Use findings from data analysis to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, behavior, instruction and success at the next level. (Primary Indicator 5.2, Secondary Indicator 5.4)

**Student Performance Data:**

Student performance data, as detailed in the addendum of this report, suggested the school had not established successful systems and processes for the systematic collection, analysis and use of data to improve student performance and outcomes. The 2014-15 ACT Aspire (Grades three through eight) results indicated that students meeting the benchmark of “Ready” on ACT Aspire all fell below both the state and schools that were similar to Carver-Lyon Elementary in all core subjects. The percentage of students meeting the benchmark in Reading fell 25.2 points below the state percentage score, and no students met the writing benchmark at the fourth grade level. Additionally, the percentage of students meeting the benchmark in math fell 18.8 points below the state percentage score, and the percentage of students meeting the benchmark in writing lagged 18.1 points behind state average scores.

**Classroom Observation Data:**

Classroom observation data, as detailed in the Teaching and Learning Impact section of this report, indicated “differentiated learning opportunities and activities that met his/her needs” were evident/very evident in only 28 percent of classrooms, suggesting that formative assessment data were not used consistently to plan and differentiate instruction. Moreover, it was evident/very evident in 72 percent of classrooms that students knew “classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences,” revealing that some students were not clear about the behavioral expectations in the school-wide discipline program based on four guiding principles: being personally accountable, accepting responsibility, working hard and showing respect (PAWS). Furthermore, students “asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning” were evident/very evident in 28 percent of the classrooms. Similarly, it was evident/very evident in 55 percent of classrooms that students “demonstrated or verbalized understanding of the lesson/content.” These results revealed limited analysis of data to inform instruction and determine verifiable improvement in student learning.

**Stakeholder Survey Data:**

Stakeholder survey data revealed mixed results about analyzing and applying data to improve instructional practices. For example, 85 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school uses multiple assessment measures to determine student learning and school performance,” and 77 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school employs consistent assessment measures across classrooms and courses.” Conversely, 64 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school ensures all staff members are trained in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data.”

Additionally, the 2015 South Carolina School Climate Survey revealed that 77 percent of staff agreed with the statement, "Student assessment information is effectively used by teachers to plan instruction," and 50 percent of teachers agreed with the statement, "Student assessment information is used to set goal and plan programs for my school." Forty-three percent of teachers agreed with the statement, "Students at my school behave well in the hallways, in the lunchroom and on school grounds."

**Stakeholder Interviews:**

Interview data revealed that while staff members consistently collected data, they were provided limited instruction or feedback on how to use findings from data analysis to make changes in classroom practices and improve student outcomes. One teacher stated, "Data are collected, but I don't usually understand the results to help me change my instruction." Similarly, another staff member stated, "Behavior and discipline are challenges. I do not feel supported by the principal as a teacher." When asked about the biggest challenges in the classroom and at school, another staff member stated, "Selection for math interventions is not done by Response to Intervention (RTI) data but by teacher recommendations."

Additionally, staff interviews asserted that many of the professional development sessions failed to provide information about using data to make effective instructional decisions. Moreover, some staff members were concerned about the monitoring procedures for collecting data, including discipline data, and the absence of administrators in monitoring data programs to ensure its effectiveness. Most reported that they did not feel supported in understanding data analysis. The principal revealed that some members of her staff did not know how to use Mastery Connect, which can be used to generate formative assessments.

As for behavioral issues, some students indicated a problem or concern with other students disrespecting teachers, misbehaving, fighting, hitting people and disrupting the classroom to the point that many students had a difficult time learning. Several of the students mentioned not feeling safe at school.

**Documents and Artifacts:**

A review of professional learning community (PLC) documents revealed that teachers collected data, but the data were not being used to make changes in classroom instruction or curriculum. Although the school's Self Assessment cited the following documents as evidence: Academic Improvement Measurement System based on the Web (AIMSweb), teacher-created assessments, Mastery Connect data, Children's Progress Academic Assessment (CPAA) data and professional development events/agendas conducted by outside professional development consultants as evidence in the Self Assessment, limited documentation was found by the Team. Further, the school did not provide actual examples of how these documents were used, thus appearing somewhat generic in nature. The Team, however, did see the detailed professional development action plan provided by District Office staff for Carver-Lyon but none of the teachers acknowledge the document existed. There were limited meeting agendas and notes of formal PLC meetings as well as support staff attendance at staff development

trainings. The Assessment Analysis documents submitted included a note attached from the principal stating, "This helps teachers to formulate their small groups; Benchmark assessments are also used."

The Positive Action with Students (PAWS) data information submitted by the school did not reveal the effectiveness of the newly implemented behavioral program at the school. Out of the 28 elementary schools in Richland One School District, Carver-Lyon Elementary had the fifth highest total of students placed in in-school Suspension (ISS) (75) and out of school suspension (OSS) (106) actions (181 total) as of March 31, 2016. In addition, Carver-Lyon Elementary had the eighth highest total of Hearing Office Referrals as of March 31, 2016.

## 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 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 school maintains and communicates a purpose and direction that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

Indicator	Description	Average Team Rating
1.1	The school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	1.60
1.2	The school leadership and staff 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.	1.40
1.3	The school's leadership implements a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	1.40

### Standard 2 Governance and Leadership

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

Indicator	Description	Average Team Rating
2.1	The governing body establishes policies and support practices that ensure effective administration of the school.	2.40
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	2.80
2.3	The governing body ensures that the school leadership has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.	2.60
2.4	Leadership and staff foster a culture consistent with the school's purpose and direction.	1.80
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the school's purpose and direction.	1.60
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice and student success.	1.60

**Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic**

The AdvancED surveys (student, parent, and staff) 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 Diagnostic 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 Diagnostic Review Team for review. The Diagnostic Review Team evaluates the quality of the administration of the surveys by institution and the degree to which the institution analyzed and acted on the results. Results of that evaluation are reported below.

<b>Evaluative Criteria</b>	<b>Average Team Rating</b>
1. Questionnaire Administration	4.00
2. Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	2.00

## Findings

### Improvement Priority

Review, revise and monitor the systematic continuous improvement process to improve student learning through challenging educational programs and equitable learning experiences that ensure all students are provided engaging and rigorous instruction to achieve the learning, thinking and life skills necessary for success. This continuous improvement process should include 1) a comprehensive analysis of existing school and student performance data, 2) goals for the improvement of achievement and instruction that are aligned with the school's purpose, 3) measurable performance targets/goals, 4) identified objectives, strategies, activities, resources and timelines for achieving improvement goals, 5) mechanisms by which school personnel will hold one another accountable for the implementation of strategies, 6) a process for monitoring and evaluation of the continuous improvement process and 7) a structure to involve all stakeholder groups in the development and communication of this process. (Primary Indicator 1.3, Secondary Indicator 1.2)

### Student Performance Data:

Student performance data, as detailed in addenda to this report, showed on the 2014-2015 ACT Aspire, student meeting the benchmark of "Ready" fell below the state in all core subjects. The percentage of students meeting the benchmark in English lagged 20.6 points behind the state averages, while those meeting the benchmark in reading fell 25.2 points below the state percentage score. Of particular concern to the Team, in the 2014-15 school year, the school had no students meeting the writing benchmark at the fourth grade level. The percentage of students meeting the benchmark in math fell 18.8 points below the state percentage score, as those meeting the benchmark in writing lagged 18.1 points behind as well.

Meanwhile, similar results in terms of meeting grade level standards on the South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SCPASS) were noted. The overall fourth grade scores in writing for students meeting grade level standards decreased by 14.5 percentage points from 2012-2013 to 2013-2014 (74.1 to 59.6 percent). Additionally, the overall fourth grade scores for students meeting grade level standards in ELA, math and science fell during the 2013-2014 school year. Finally, the percentage of fourth grade students meeting grade level standards in writing fell by 14.5 percentage points from 2013-2014.

### Classroom Observation Data:

Classroom observation data, as detailed in the Teaching and Learning Impact section of this report, revealed that students tasked with "activities and learning that are challenging but attainable" were evident/very evident in only 34 percent of classrooms. On a related note, it was evident/very evident in 33 percent of the classrooms that students were "provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs." It was evident/very evident in 28 percent of classrooms that students had "differentiated learning opportunities and activities that met their needs."

**Stakeholder Survey Data:**

Stakeholder survey data revealed that only 57 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school has a continuous improvement process that is based on data, goals, actions and measure of growth," while only 64 percent agreed/strongly agreed, "In our school, challenging curriculum and learning experiences provide equity for all students in the development of learning, thinking and life skills." Moreover, 61 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school's purpose statement is based on shared values and beliefs that guide decision-making," and 68 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school's purpose statement is supported by the policies and practices adopted by the school board or governing body." Finally, 68 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school has a systematic process for collecting, analyzing and using data." Overall, survey data suggested both the continuous improvement process and the school's purpose provided areas to leverage for school improvement.

Complementary data were revealed in the 2015 South Carolina School Climate Survey. For example, 63 percent of teachers agreed, "The school administration sets high standards for students," and only 52 percent agreed, "The faculty and staff at my school have a shared vision." Meanwhile, only 53 percent of teachers agreed, "I feel supported by administrators at my school," while only 52 percent agreed, "The school administration arranges for collaborative planning and decision making."

**Stakeholder Interviews:**

Stakeholder interview data revealed a lack of familiarity among teachers regarding the school's continuous improvement planning process. When asked to describe the improvement planning process, one teacher responded, "I wouldn't know. They don't include teachers on that." In terms of the continuous improvement planning process resulting in actual improvement of student performance, staff members were equally negative. One staff member noted, "In looking at our benchmark, we have made minimal progress." Another noted, "This year, children seem not to have improved as much; Children seem to have lost the drive to learn. Laptops distributed to third through fifth graders have been used for games, not study."

Of equal concern to the Team was commentary regarding the involvement of various stakeholder groups in the decision making process. When asked about shared ownership of the school's purpose and direction, as well as involvement in decision-making, one teacher stated, "No, the principal makes all the decisions, and we are told to follow them." The teacher subsequently added, "Behavior and discipline are challenges. I do not feel supported by the principal as a teacher."

**Improvement Priority**

Analyze, monitor and consistently implement supervision and evaluation processes and practices to ensure they improve teacher practice and maximize student success. Engage all school personnel in systematic mentoring and coaching programs and practices that have high expectations for student learning and are consistently aligned with the school's values and beliefs about teaching and learning. Develop and include valid and reliable measures of performance. (Primary Indicator 2.6, Secondary Indicator 3.7)

**Student Performance Data:**

Student performance data, as detailed in the addenda of this report, showed that state assessment results had consistently been below the state average for the past three years. In 2014-15 students meeting the benchmark of "Ready" on ACT Aspire fell below the state in all core subjects. The percentage of students meeting the benchmark in English and reading was below state averages at 20.6 and 25.2 points, respectively, behind the state percentage score with no fourth grade students meeting the writing benchmark. Students fell 18.8 points below the state percentage score in math. The 2014 school report card indicates overall fourth grades scores in writing for students meeting grade level standards decreased by 14.5 percentage points from 2012-2013 to 2013-14. The overall fourth grade scores for students meeting grade level standards in ELA, math and science fell during the 2013-2014 school year. The percentage of fourth grade students meeting grade level standards in writing fell by 14.5 percentage points from 2013 to 2014.

**Classroom Observation Data:**

Classroom observation data, as detailed in the Teaching and Learning Impact section of this report, revealed limited use of professional practices that yield high expectations for student learning. It was evident/very evident in 28 percent of classrooms that students were "engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks," and "had differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs." Instances where student were "provided exemplars of high quality work" evident/very evident in 44 percent of classrooms. It was evident/very evident in 39 percent of classrooms that students were asked to respond to questions requiring higher order thinking levels.

**Stakeholder Survey Data:**

Stakeholder survey data indicated 68 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school's leaders regularly evaluate staff members on criteria designed to improve teaching and learning." Sixty-six percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school's leaders ensure all staff members use supervisory feedback to improve student learning." Fifty-one percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed that leaders support an innovative and collaborative culture. Only 64 percent agreed/strongly agreed that all staff members participate in continuous professional learning based on needs.

In addition, the 2015 South Carolina Department of Education School Climate Survey data indicated that 52 percent of teachers stated that “school administration arranges for collaborative planning and decision-making.” Regarding classroom instructional feedback, 60 percent of the staff agreed that “school administrators visit the classrooms to observe.” Fifty percent of teachers agreed that “the school administration provides effective instructional leadership,” and only 47 percent agreed that “there are relevant professional development opportunities offered to teachers at my school.”

**Stakeholder Interviews:**

Stakeholder interview data disclosed that supervision and evaluation processes were implemented at minimal levels. During interviews, teachers often noted that observations were rare and little feedback was provided. While the school employed instructional support staff, teachers could not provide specific details of how support staff members assisted teachers with daily classroom instruction. However, teachers expressed confidence in the consultants who assisted them with instructional needs, but stated that their visits had been sporadic over the past year. Administrators and teachers shared that lesson plans were submitted weekly on Thursdays at 5:00 pm; however, teachers indicated they rarely received feedback on submitted lesson plans. One teacher commented, “If I just go through the motion of sending an email by 5:00 p.m. with plans attached or not, then I don’t hear anything. If I send plans at 5:30 p.m., then I get an email back telling me next time I need to submit them on time.” In addition, support staff indicated that they were not invited to meetings or offered professional development opportunities. Both teachers and administrators referenced professional learning communities (PLC’s). Some teachers, however, expressed frustration that PLCs were implemented mid-year with little training. Support at the school level for new teachers was minimal.

**Documents and Artifacts:**

A review of Richland School District One’s website revealed that the district provided an induction program for teachers new to the profession and to the district. New teachers attended a summer orientation and participated in monthly training sessions. Although a review of the literacy teacher’s job description stated that an essential job function was to “conduct demonstration lessons” and “conduct comprehensive balanced literacy professional development for teachers,” teachers generally could not articulate the roles of the literacy support staff. Furthermore, teachers often reported the model lessons had not been shared. PLC meeting agendas and notes were included in the artifacts, but some lacked details from the meeting.

## 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 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. The institution ensures compliance with applicable governmental regulations.

**Standard 4 Resource and Support System**

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

Indicator	Description	Average Team Rating
4.1	Qualified professional and support staff are sufficient in number to fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school's purpose, direction and the educational program.	2.80
4.2	Instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the school.	3.20
4.3	The school maintains facilities, services and equipment to provide a safe, clean and healthy environment for all students and staff.	2.40
4.4	Students and school personnel use a range of media and information resources to support the school's educational programs.	2.60
4.5	The technology infrastructure supports the school's teaching, learning and operational needs.	2.00
4.6	The school provides support services to meet the physical, social and emotional needs of the student population being served.	2.40
4.7	The school provides services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational and career planning needs of all students.	2.40

## Conclusion

Carver-Lyon Elementary School is an urban Title I school nestled in the historic Waverly Community in Columbia, South Carolina. The school, with a total of 355 students from preschool to fifth grade, was a well-managed school with clean, safe hallways and grounds. The school was adorned with beautiful murals on the interior walls, which created a welcoming environment for stakeholders and visitors. The Team observed efficient and friendly arrival and departure protocols for students and transitioning and moving throughout the building.

The principal was in her second year. During her presentation, she articulated some of the changes and improvements the school was working to refine. The school was experiencing some turbulent times as student achievement and student enrollment were declining, and the principal shared that she would like to change the trajectory of the school. Parallel to the academic turbulence at the school, one of the large housing areas in the school community was being revitalized, causing over 100 Carver-Lyon's students to be misplaced and relocated to other schools within and outside the Richland County School District One. The leader of the school also expressed a desire to increase parental involvement, decrease student discipline infractions, increase student achievement, boost formative assessments, improve student attendance, nurture a positive school climate and improve lesson planning and implementation.

The principal was aware that leadership was second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning. She further revealed that while the school's professional learning this year had focused on questioning as the appropriate depth of knowledge levels, student-centered learning, integration of technology, math and reading content areas and math read-a-louds, the Team saw limited examples of transference from professional learning to classroom practices. The school could leverage improvements around personalizing instructional strategies for teachers and interventions to meet the unique learning needs of students. Moreover, the Team noted teachers rarely used data to make changes in instructional decisions. Staff survey data showed that the school did not have a systematic process for collecting, analyzing and using data. Additionally, classroom observation data uncovered limited instances where students were asked to respond to questions that required higher order thinking.

During interviews, the principal revealed that discipline continued to be a concern at the school. This year, Carver-Lyon implemented a school-wide discipline program based on four guiding principles: being personally accountable, accepting responsibility, working hard and showing respect (PAWS). PAWS Up for Success Charts were posted throughout the school and in classrooms. Conversely, teachers expressed concern about the inconsistencies in the consequences students received for misbehaviors. Teachers frequently shared their concern regarding whether all teachers were implementing the PAWS program with fidelity. The school could benefit from implementing a behavioral uniform, consistent behavior system executed with precision.

The school engaged in programs that developed leadership in students and created a caring and nurturing environment for students. For example, programs such as Gentle Lion's Mentoring Group,

Young Men of Distinction, Blossoms, Weekly Character Cubs, and Morning News Show were impactful and embraced by the students at Carver-Lyon. Character Education and school announcements were embedded in the student-led, live morning news show. These leadership roles created a fun, happy and creative learning environment where all students recited the Carver-Lyon pledge, which was aligned to the school's purpose and vision. Student survey data revealed that 100 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed that "My teacher wants me to learn." Similarly, parent survey data affirmed that 85 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that "My child has at least one adult advocate in the school."

Team Members concurred that the school had an abundance of resources and staff to meet the diverse needs of students. The student/teacher ratio in classrooms was well below the state average, and the school had numerous instructional aides, consultants, interventionists, part-time Spanish teachers, a reading coach and assistant administrator. The use of this robust support system was not reflected in student achievement. An interview with District Office staff indicated the existence of a focused action plan for Carver-Lyon with a laser focus on lesson planning, professional development that emphasized sequences of instructional strategies in math and reading and the proper use of data and formative assessment as part of the instructional process. Yet, the Team did not observe most teachers implementing these practices in the classroom. Observers noted, with regularity, a lack of utilizing differentiation and effective intervention strategies in classrooms. Personalization of classroom instruction was rarely observed, and student rarely used the laptops bought specifically for students to use. Monitoring teacher utilization of effective instructional practices and providing teachers with authentic feedback could be a possible leverage point for improvement.

Finally, staff and administrators noted the low morale at the school and its effect on the purpose and direction of the school. Some staff members expressed concern that the principal had favorites, thus affecting teacher morale and collaboration.

### **Improvement Priorities**

Review and execute schoolwide instructional strategies to ensure that personalized instruction and interventions address individual learning needs of students using highly engaging approaches (e.g., collaborative student activities, self-reflection, use of technology learning tools and resources, development of critical thinking skills, individualized, differentiated instruction). Systematically monitor classroom instruction to ensure improvement in student achievement. (Primary Indicator 3.3, Secondary Indicator 3.4)

Utilize and monitor systematic processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing and applying learning from a wide range of documented data sources to be used consistently by professional and support staff. Data should include comparison and trend, program evaluation and student behavior, all of which can be examined and used to improve instructional practices. Use findings from data analysis to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, behavior, instruction and success at the next level. (Primary Indicator 5.2, Secondary Indicator 5.4)

Review, revise and monitor the systematic continuous improvement process to improve student learning through challenging educational programs and equitable learning experiences that ensure all students are provided engaging, challenging, rigorous instruction to achieve the learning, thinking and life skills necessary for success. This continuous improvement process should include 1) a comprehensive analysis of existing school and student performance data, 2) goals for the improvement of achievement and instruction that are aligned with the school's purpose, 3) measurable performance targets/goals, 4) identified objectives, strategies, activities, resources and timelines for achieving improvement goals, 5) mechanisms by which school personnel will hold one another accountable for the implementation of strategies, 6) a process for monitoring and evaluation of the continuous improvement process and 7) a structure to involve all stakeholder groups in the development and communication of this process. (Primary Indicator 1.3, Secondary Indicator 1.2)

Analyze, monitor and consistently implement supervision and evaluation processes and practices to ensure they improve teacher practice and maximize student success. Engage all school personnel in systematic mentoring and coaching programs and practices that have high expectations for student learning and are consistently aligned with the school's values and beliefs about teaching and learning. Develop and include valid and reliable measures of performance. (Primary Indicator 2.6, Secondary Indicator 3.7)

## Team Roster

Lead Evaluator	Brief Biography
Dr. Margaret Gilmore Georgia	<p>Before her relocation with her husband to Atlanta, Georgia, Dr. Margaret Gilmore served as the Assistant Chief Academic Officer for Shelby County Schools in Memphis, Tennessee. In this role, her primary responsibilities included working side-by-side with the CAO in overseeing the training and support of three assistant superintendents, ten Instructional Leadership Directors (principal supervisors), and 200 principals. She also assisted in the development of districtwide multi-year planning and strategy for academics and instruction. She provided leadership with the implementation models of technical assistance for schools with low student achievement and models of continuous improvement for schools with high to average student achievement. Additionally, she organized and planned professional development for principals and assistant principals, and provided leadership in policy and program development to optimize and improve instructional quality across all grades. Dr. Gilmore has over 33 years of experience in education and has worked as an elementary and middle school teacher, special education teacher, District Office Instructional Supervisor/Manager for K-12 schools, and Assistant Chief Academic Officer at the district level. She has experience in working in urban, suburban, and rural settings. She served on the Tennessee AdvancED Council Board from 2012-2015, and received the 2013 Excellence in Education Award. She currently serves as a Lead Evaluator for Diagnostic Reviews and Accreditation for AdvancED and in 2011 successfully led Shelby County Schools in obtaining its first District Accreditation status. While serving as a district office administrator, Dr. Gilmore was honored with the West Tennessee Grand Division Supervisor of the Year Award. Also, she was honored with the University of Memphis Leadership Award. She received her Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policies Studies from University of Memphis, Administration licensure in Educational Leadership from University of Memphis, Master's Degree in Special Education, and BS degree in K-8 education and special education from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, Arkansas.</p>
Team Members	
Colonel Scott Gibson South Carolina	<p>Scott is the head of school of Lowcountry Preparatory School in Pawleys Island, South Carolina, following service elsewhere as head of school. He began his formal career in education in 2004 following retirement at the grade of colonel (O-6) after 22 years of commissioned service in the US Air Force with command and staff assignments stateside and overseas in locations to include Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Scott was the valedictorian at Boys' Latin School, the first honor graduate at The Citadel, and the Outstanding MBA Graduate at Spring Hill College, the Jesuit College of the South. He also earned graduate degrees from the US Army Command &amp; General Staff College and Georgetown University. He completed a one-year applied research fellowship at the RAND Corporation.</p>
Leslie Hightower South Carolina	<p>Over the last fourteen years, Mrs. Hightower has served as a principal of an elementary school, an intermediate school, and a high school. She is currently the principal of Sandhills Primary School, a public Montessori choice school in Lexington School District Four. Prior to being a principal, Mrs. Hightower was a</p>

	<p>teacher for five years and served as an assistant principal. All of her years of experience in education have been working with students in high poverty schools. She is a graduate of the University of South Carolina, where she holds an education specialist degree in K-12 administration. She has South Carolina certifications in the elementary and secondary principalship, Spanish, and the Superintendency.</p>
<p>Stephen Holderness South Carolina</p>	<p>Stephen W. Holderness III has been a school psychologist with the Colleton County School District for more than 12 years. His duties include, but are not limited to, running IEP meetings, psycho-educational testing, observations, counseling (small groups and individual), writing FBA's and BIP's, 504 meetings, manifestation meetings, transfer in meetings, special reviews, parent education, and the Rtl process of interventions/data collection both educationally and behaviorally. Mr. Holderness is also currently the mental health consultant for the East Coast Migrate Head Start program at the Colleton Center. Recently, he co-founded the company Wise Educational Solutions, LLC serving as an educational consultant for schools, school districts, educational professionals, parents and students.</p>
<p>Tina Jamison South Carolina</p>	<p>Tina Jamison currently works at the South Carolina Department of Education in the role of External Review Team Coordinator. Prior to this position, she served as the Program Manager for State Priority Schools, the state coordinator for High Schools that Work and Making Middle Grades Work improvement frameworks, and a high school English teacher. She is also co-director for South Carolina's Schools to Watch program through the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades.</p>

## 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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## Student Performance Data Tables

### Percentage of Students Meeting Benchmark of “Ready” on ACT Aspire (Grades 3-8) at the School and in the State (2014-2015)

Content Area by Grade Level	% Ready Grade 3	% Ready Grade 4	% Ready Grade 5	Total School	% Ready State
English	43.7	51.3	47.7	47.3	67.9
Reading	14.6	12.2	9.1	12.0	37.2
Math	27.1	19.5	36.3	27.9	46.7
Writing	11.4	0.0	7.0	6.3	24.4
ACT Readiness	N/A	N/A	N/A	76.0	N/A

#### Plus

- The percentage of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students meeting the benchmark indicates over 50% readiness in English. (51.3)

#### Delta

- Student averages meeting the benchmark of “Ready” on ACT Aspire all fell below the state in all core subjects.
- The percentage of students meeting the benchmark of “READY” on ACT Aspire in Reading was 12.0 %.
- The percentage of students meeting the benchmark of “READY” on ACT Aspire in Writing was 6.3 %.
- The percentage of students meeting the benchmark in English lagged 20.6 points behind the state percentage score.
- The percentage of students meeting the benchmark in Reading fell 25.2 points below the state percentage score.
- In the 2014-15 school year, the school had no students to meet the writing benchmark at the fourth grade level.
- The percentage of students meeting the benchmark in Math fell 18.8 points below the state percentage score.
- The percentage of students meeting the benchmark in Writing lagged 18.1 points behind the state percentage scores.

**Percentages of Students Meeting Grade Level Standards at the School on the SCPASS by Grade Level (2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015)**

	Grade 4			Grade 5		
	2015	2014	2013	2015	2014	2013
<b>Writing</b>	N/A	59.6	74.1	N/A	89.7	55.9
<b>ELA</b>	N/A	52.1	69.2	N/A	76.7	62.9
<b>Math</b>	N/A	41.7	57.7	N/A	73.3	42.9
<b>Science</b>	34.1	52.1	53.8	68.2	53.3	47.1
<b>Social Studies</b>	85.4	77.1	65.4	75.0	86.7	27.8

**Plus**

- The percentage of students meeting grade level standards in 5<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies was 86.7 during the 2013-2014 school year.
- The percentage of students meeting grade level standards in 5<sup>th</sup> grade Writing was 89.7 during the 2013-2014 school year.
- The percentage of fifth grade students meeting grade level standards in Science increased 14.9 percentage points from the 2013-2014 school year to the 2014-2015 school year.
- The percentage of fourth grade students meeting grade level standards in Social Studies increased 8.3 percentage points from the 2013-2014 school year to the 2014-2015 school year.
- The percentage of fifth grade students meeting grade level standards in Writing increased 33.8 percentage points from the 2012-2013 school year to the 2013-2014 school year.

**Delta**

- The overall 4<sup>th</sup> grade scores in writing for students meeting grade level standards decreased by 14.5 percentage points from 2012-2013 to 2013-2014. (74.1 to 59.6)
- The overall 4<sup>th</sup> grade scores for students meeting grade level standards in ELA, Math and Science fell during the 2013-2014 school year.
- The percentage of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students meeting grade level standards in Writing fell by 14.5 percentage points from 2013 to 2014.

## Stakeholder Survey Plus/Delta

The Survey Plus/Delta is the team's brief analysis all stakeholder survey data which is intended to highlight areas of strength (+) that were identified through the survey process as well as leverage points for improvement ( $\Delta$ ).

### Teaching and Learning Impact

(Standards 3 and 5)

**+ Plus:** (minimum of 75 percent strongly agree/agree)

1. 90 percent of parents agree/strongly agree with the statement, "My child knows the expectations for learning in all classes."
2. 95 percent of students agree/strongly agree with the statement, "My teachers us different activities to help me learn."
3. 85 percent of staff agree/strongly agree with the statement, "Our school uses multiple assessment measures to determine student learning and school performance."

**$\Delta$  Delta:**

1. 64 percent of staff agree/strongly agree with the statement, "In our school, challenging curriculum and learning experiences provide equity for all students in the development of learning, think, and life skills."
2. 68 percent of staff agree/strongly agree with the statement, "All teachers in our school personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs of students."
3. 54 percent of students agree/strongly agree with the statement, "My teachers ask my family to come to school activities."
4. 64 percent of staff agree/strongly agree with the statement, "In our school, all staff members participate in continuous professional learning based on identified needs of the school."

### Leadership Capacity

(Standards 1 and 2)

**+ Plus:** (minimum of 75 percent strongly agree/agree)

1. 88 percent of parents agree/strongly agree with the statement, "Our school has high expectations for students in all classes."
2. 95 percent of students agree/strongly agree with the statement, "In my school my principal and teachers want every student to learn."
3. 84 percent of parents agree/strongly agree with the statement, "Our school's governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively."

**$\Delta$  Delta:**

1. 57 percent of staff agree/strongly agree with the statement, "Our school has a continuous improvement process based on data, goals, actions, and measures of growth."
2. 42 percent of students agree/strongly agree with the statement, "In my school students treat adults with respect."

3. 62 percent of staff agree/strongly agree with the statement, "Our school's leaders engage effectively with all stakeholders about the school's purpose and direction."
4. 66 percent of agree/strongly agree with the statement, "Our school's leaders ensure all staff members use supervisory feedback to improve student learning."
5. 68 percent of agree/strongly agree with the statement, "In our school, all stakeholders are informed of policies, processes, and procedures related to grading and reporting."

### Resource Utilization

(Standard 4)

**+ Plus:** (minimum of 75 percent strongly agree/agree)

1. 89 percent of staff agree/strongly agree with the statement, "Our school provides qualified staff members to support student learning."
2. 94 percent of parents agree/strongly agree with the statement, "Our school provides safe learning environment."
3. 94 percent of students agree/strongly agree with the statement, "My school has computers to help me learn."
4. 91 percent of parents agree/strongly agree with the statement, "Our school ensures that the facilities support student learning."

**Δ Delta:**

1. 53 percent of staff agree/strongly agree with the statement, "Our school provides opportunities for students to participate in activities that interest them."
2. 62 percent of staff agree/strongly agree with the statement, "Our school provides high quality student support services (e.g., counseling, referrals, educational, and career planning)."
3. 62 percent of students agree/strongly agree with the statement, "My school is safe and clean."

## Diagnostic Review Schedule

**Sunday, April 17, 2016**

Time	Event	Where	Who
3:00 p.m.	Hotel Check-in	Embassy Suites Hotel	
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	Team Work Session #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions &amp; Orientation</li> <li>• Review and discuss initial ratings</li> <li>• Review and discuss performance data</li> <li>• Discuss stakeholder survey data</li> <li>• Discuss other diagnostics in ASSIST- documents and artifacts provided by the school</li> </ul>	Hotel Conference Room	Team Members
6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	Principal's Overview Presentation	Hotel Conference Room	Team Members & Principal
7:45 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine interview questions</li> <li>• Review Monday's schedule</li> <li>• Discuss overview of eleot™</li> <li>• Discuss &amp; review Self Assessment, Executive Summary,</li> <li>• Discuss summary overview of assigned standard</li> </ul>	Hotel Conference Room	Team Members

**Monday, April 18, 2016**

Time	Event	Where	Who
	Breakfast	Hotel	
7:15 a.m.	Team arrives at school	School office	Team Members
7:55 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Classroom observations & Stakeholder Interviews	Classrooms & Conference Room	Team Members
11:30 a.m.-12:00 noon	Lunch & Team Meeting	Team Workroom	Team Members
12:05 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Classroom observations & Stakeholder Interviews	Classrooms & Conference Room	Team Members
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Team returns to hotel and has dinner on his/her own		Team Members
5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Team Evening Work Session #2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tabulate &amp; discuss classroom observation data</li> <li>• Determine individual second ratings for all indicators</li> <li>• Discuss &amp; Draft potential Powerful Practices and Improvement Priorities/Share with the team</li> <li>• Prepare for Day 3</li> </ul>	Hotel conference room	Team Members

**Tuesday, April 19, 2016**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>Who</b>
	Breakfast	Hotel	
7:15 a.m.	Team arrives at school	Office	Team Members
7:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Review of documents and artifacts Classroom observations as needed Additional stakeholder interviews Common area observations	Team Workroom	Team Members
11:30 a.m.- 12:05 p.m.	Lunch and Team meeting		Team Members
12:05 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Continue review of documents and artifacts Common area observations PLC Observation		Team Members
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Team returns to hotel and has dinner on his/her own		
5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflections</li> <li>• Review final eleot™ Learning Environment ratings</li> <li>• Determine and review individual final ratings for all indicators</li> <li>• Examine and reach consensus on Improvement Priorities</li> <li>• Write Improvement Priority narratives with supporting data points</li> <li>• Discuss Leadership Assessment</li> </ul>	Hotel Conference Room	Team Members

**Wednesday, April 20, 2016**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>Who</b>
7:00 a.m.	Breakfast/Check out of hotel and departure for school	Hotel	
7:35 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Final Team Work Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of documents and artifacts</li> <li>• Write, review and edit evidence for Improvement Priorities &amp; Strengths</li> <li>• Write, review and edit learning environment summaries</li> </ul>	Team Workroom	