

DIAGNOSTIC REVIEW REPORT FOR MARY H. WRIGHT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Spartanburg, South Carolina
29306

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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

Mary H. Wright Elementary School hosted a Diagnostic Review on March 28–31, 2016. Prior to the on-site review, the Lead Evaluator and Associate Lead Evaluator engaged in several conference calls to discuss the following topics: 1) student performance data, 2) stakeholder diagnostic results, 3) Team schedule, 4) Team workspace, 5) AdvancED Standards assignments, 6) virtual Team meeting agenda items and 7) documents applicable to South Carolina. Similarly, the Lead Evaluator convened a virtual Diagnostic Review Team meeting on March 17, 2016, to discuss pertinent information regarding the upcoming Review. Prior to the start of the Diagnostic Review, the Team engaged in conference calls and various communications through emails to review and analyze multiple documents that the school provided to the Team. The Lead Evaluator and the Associate Lead Evaluator communicated by telephone and email with the principal prior to the Diagnostic Review. The essential purpose of these contacts was to discuss accessibility to school documents, the interview schedule, principal presentation and Team meeting room location.

The Diagnostic Review Team consisted of a five-member team that showed remarkable instructional acumen throughout this process. The Team provided their knowledge, skills and expertise to this Diagnostic Review process. On Monday, March 28, 2016, the Team convened for its first on-site meeting, where the principal and the administrative team of Mary H. Wright Elementary School presented an overview of the school progress, challenges, achievement data and new targeted instructional goals that were implemented to assist the school in making academic gains. The principal also described the school journey in the last five years. Similarly, the principal discussed the purpose and direction the school has experienced in the last five years using student performance data as his platform to galvanize teachers around embracing new academic improvement initiatives. The comprehensive Internal Review documents engaged a range of stakeholder groups and were completed and submitted to the Diagnostic Review Team for review in a timely manner.

Over the three-day on-site visit, the Diagnostic Review Team conducted interviews with the school leadership team, teachers, principal, support staff, parents, students and district office staff. The feedback acquired through stakeholder interviews was used in conjunction with other evidence and data to support the findings of the Diagnostic Review. The Team also used the *eleot*™ classroom observation tool to observe classroom environments and quantify student engagement, attitudes and dispositions. The Diagnostic Review Team met for four hours on the evening of March 28, 2016, four hours on the evening of March 29, 2016 and four hours on the evening of March 30, 2016, to review indicator ratings, interview data, school documents and classroom observation data in a collective effort to identify improvement priorities and discuss additional evidence and artifacts.

The Diagnostic Review Team expresses its appreciation to the staff and stakeholders of Mary H. Wright Elementary School for the warm and gracious welcome extended to each Team member and the

professionalism demonstrated throughout the visit. The principal is to be commended for his quick response to emails, attention to detail and to the Team's immediate request of varied documents and artifacts. Additionally, the principal is to be commented for the calm and trusting tone and climate he has created in 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 130 stakeholders were interviewed, and 26 classrooms were observed during the Diagnostic Review. Throughout the Diagnostic Review, school/district leaders, teachers and staff members were transparent, self-reflective and candid in discussing their continuous improvement efforts at Mary H. Wright Elementary School.

Stakeholders Interviewed	Number
Administrators	3
Instructional Staff	19
Support Staff	5
Students	97
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	6
TOTAL	130

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.

Indicator	Description	Average Team Rating
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.	2.00
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.	2.20
3.5	Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities to improve instruction and student learning.	2.20
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.	2.20
3.8	The school engages families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keeps them informed of their children's learning progress.	1.40
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.	1.20
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	2.20
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	2.20
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.	2.40
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.	2.00
5.4	The school engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness and success at the next level.	1.80
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

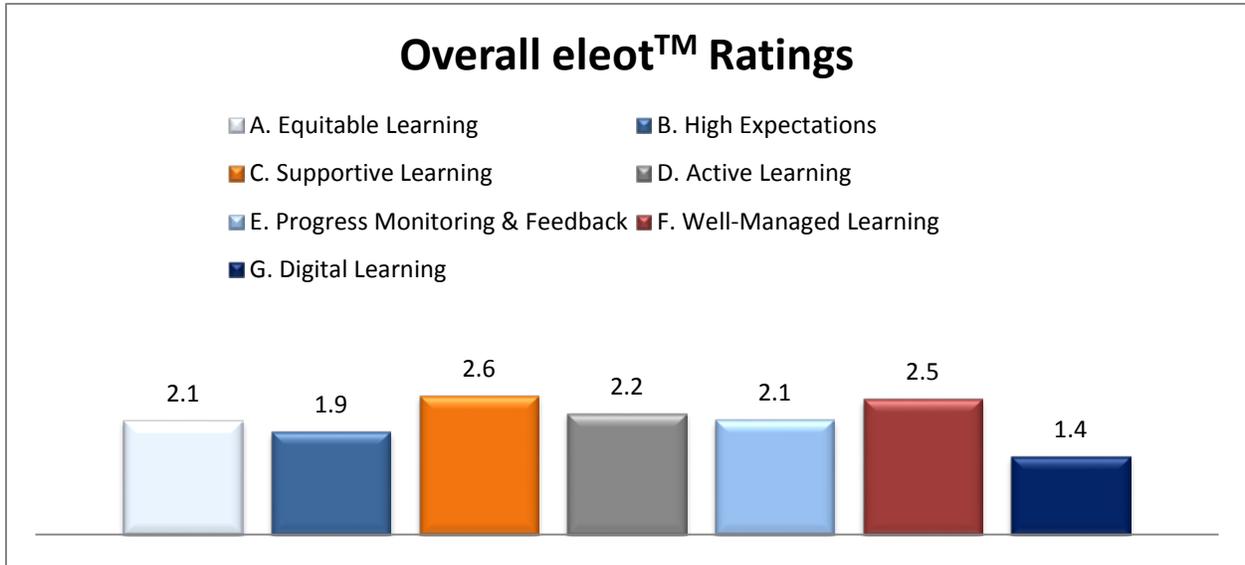
The quality of assessments used to measure student learning, assurance that assessments are administered with procedural fidelity and appropriate accommodations, assessment results that reflect the quality of learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important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

Evaluative Criteria	Average Team Rating
1. Assessment Quality	3.00
2. Test Administration	3.00
3. Quality of Learning	2.00
4. Equity of Learning	1.00

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 26 classroom observations, which included all core subjects. The overall ratings ranged from 1.4 to 2.6 on a four-point scale. The Supportive Learning Environment was the highest rated, and the lowest rated was the Digital Learning Environment. Though the school has recently purchased iPads for grades 1–5 and has an instructional technology specialist, the team observed minimal classrooms where students were using technology to conduct research, solve problems and work collaboratively. Classroom observation data revealed learning environments with low expectations and a lack of rigorous instruction that paralleled student achievement data results. Instances in which students were asked to respond to higher order thinking questions and rigorous course work were very limited in classrooms. Teachers seldom varied their instructional practices, assigned tasks that varied in learning complexity styles and rarely provided students with meaningful feedback. Also apparent were infrequent formative assessments for learning and a lack of student understanding about how work would be assessed.

eleot™ Analysis by Learning Environment

A. Equitable Learning Environment						
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
A.1	2.0	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	4%	23%	42%	31%
A.2	2.5	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	0%	50%	46%	4%
A.3	2.6	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	0%	69%	23%	8%
A.4	1.4	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	0%	8%	23%	69%
Overall rating on a four-point scale:		2.1				

Equitable Learning Environment

The overall rating for the Equitable Learning Environment was 2.1 on a four-point scale. The extent to which students had “equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology and support” (A.2) was evident/very evident in 50 percent of classrooms. Instances where a student had “differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs” (A1) were evident/very evident in only 27 percent of classrooms. These results underscore the need for school leaders to carefully examine the extent to which students are provided equitable and challenging learning opportunities and experiences that meet their individual learning needs. Of particular concern to the

Team was that in only eight percent of classrooms, observers reported that it was evident/very evident that “students had ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and others backgrounds/cultures/and differences,” (A4) illuminating missed opportunities for students to learn about others background and differences. In pockets of classrooms, students were working in small groups, which increased opportunities for them to learn about and from one another.

B. High Expectations Environment						
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
B.1	2.3	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	0%	38%	58%	4%
B.2	1.8	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	0%	15%	50%	35%
B.3	2.0	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	0%	27%	42%	31%
B.4	1.8	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	0%	19%	42%	38%
B.5	1.6	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	0%	12%	38%	50%
Overall rating on a four-point scale:		1.9				

High Expectations Learning Environment

The High Expectations Learning Environment was rated a 1.9 on a four-point scale, suggesting a need for staff members to implement rigorous instructional strategies and establish high expectations for student learning. It was evident/very evident in 19 percent of the classrooms that students “engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions and/or tasks” (B4). The indicator “is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable” (B2) received a rating of 1.8 on a four-point scale. These data contrast staff survey results, which revealed that 93 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “In our school, challenging curriculum and learning experiences provide equity for all students in the development of learning, thinking, and life skills.” These ambiguous results highlight the need for school leaders to more carefully provide additional professional development opportunities on rigorous instructional practices and monitor classroom instruction to ensure there is a clear understanding of what constitutes rigorous activities and coursework. The extent to which students “know and strive to meet the high expectations established by the teacher” (B1) was evident/very evident in only 15 percent of the classrooms. A review of the school performance data for 2014–2015 revealed that 82.4 percent of students in math were close or needed academic support, and 63.1 percent of students were close or

needed support in reading. These data results confirm that students were infrequently tasked with learning activities that stretched their thinking and actively engaged them in the learning process. Instances where students “asked and responded to questions that required higher order thinking (e.g., applying, investigating, evaluating, synthesizing)” (B5) were evident/very evident in only 12 percent of the classrooms, which suggested that in over 88 percent of the classrooms, students were not asked questions that required them to investigate, analyze, design, evaluate and predict. Teachers could benefit from additional embedded professional development on the use of instructional strategies that require student collaboration, self-reflection and development of critical thinking skills.

C. Supporting Learning Environment						
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
C.1	2.7	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	8%	58%	31%	4%
C.2	2.8	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	4%	77%	15%	4%
C.3	2.7	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	8%	62%	19%	12%
C.4	2.7	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	12%	50%	31%	8%
C.5	2.1	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	0%	31%	46%	23%
Overall rating on a four-point scale:		2.6				

Supportive Learning Environment

With a rating of 2.6 on a four-point scale, the Supportive Learning Environment received the highest rating of all seven environments. Instances where students “demonstrated or expressed that learning experiences are positive” (C1) were evident/very evident in 62 percent of classrooms. The extent to which students were “provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks” (C4) were evident/very evident in 62 percent of the classrooms. Conversely, in student survey data, 95 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement “I know what to do every day in school.” Instances in which students were “provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for his/her needs” (C5) were evident/very evident in 31 percent of the classrooms. These results indicate the need for new Professional Learning Communities discussions on personalized instruction, alternative instructional tasks/activities and the importance of providing students with timely feedback.

D. Active Learning Environment						
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
D.1	2.3	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	4%	38%	38%	19%
D.2	1.8	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	0%	31%	23%	46%
D.3	2.6	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	8%	46%	46%	0%
Overall rating on a four-point scale:		2.2				

Active Learning Environment

The Active Learning Environment received a rating of 2.2 on a four-point scale. It was evident/very evident that students were “actively engaged in the learning activities” (D3) in 52 percent of the classrooms, which is aligned to what the principal stated during his interview, “If teachers provide students with highly engaged learning activities, disruptive behaviors will decrease.” It was evident/very evident that only 42 percent of students had “several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students” (D1). Finally, in 31 percent of the classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students “made connections from content to real-life experiences” (D2). Collectively, ratings in the Active Learning Environment revealed potential areas that could be leveraged to improve student engagement. Allowing students to engage with the material, participate in class discussion and establish a highly collaborative environment, for example, are effective ways to maximize student centered activities and promote a more active learning environment. Finally, these findings underline the fact that students could benefit from exploring and applying key concepts, which is the impetus of propelling positive student engagement. Further, students who are given access in learning how to connect what they are learning to real-life experiences put them on a trajectory to achieving positive learning outcomes.

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment						
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
E.1	2.1	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	0%	35%	42%	23%
E.2	2.3	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	0%	38%	54%	8%
E.3	2.5	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	0%	50%	46%	4%
E.4	1.7	Understands how her/his work is assessed	0%	12%	50%	38%
E.5	2.0	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	4%	19%	54%	23%
Overall rating on a four-point scale:		2.1				

Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environment

The Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environment received a rating of 2.1 on a four-point scale. Instances in which students “had opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback” (E5) were evident/very evident in 23 percent of the classrooms, suggesting that observers infrequently detected teachers effectively using rubrics or feedback to help students improve their work. It was evident/very evident in 38 percent of the classrooms that students “responded to teacher feedback to improve understanding” (E2). The prevailing trend from this environment suggests that teachers should initiate substantive interactions with students during seat-work and group-work monitoring and help work through problems with students rather than wait for students to ask for help. Instances in which students “understood how her/his work is assessed” (E4) were evident/very evident in 12 percent of the classrooms. These results underscore the need for school leaders to observe classroom practices and provide additional professional learning opportunities on assessing and monitoring student work, which can increase teachers’ awareness of making instructional changes as a result of progress monitoring and feedback.

F. Well-Managed Learning Environment						
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
F.1	2.8	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	15%	50%	35%	0%
F.2	2.7	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	12%	50%	31%	8%
F.3	2.5	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	8%	42%	38%	12%
F.4	1.8	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	0%	35%	8%	58%
F.5	2.9	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	8%	77%	12%	4%
Overall rating on a four-point scale:		2.5				

Well-Managed Learning Environment

The Well-Managed Learning Environment received a rating of 2.5 on a four-point scale. Instances in which students “collaborated with other students during student-centered activities” (F4) were evident/very evident in 35 percent of classrooms suggesting a possible leverage point for improvement in student-centered activities of shared collaboration among students. It was evident/very evident in 65 percent of classrooms that students “spoke and interacted respectfully with teacher(s) and peers” (F1) and “followed classroom rules and worked well with others” in 62 percent of the classrooms (F2). Finally, it was evident/very evident in 50 percent of classrooms that students “transitioned smoothly and efficiently to activities” (F3) suggesting a need for teachers to assist students with classroom routines and transitions between class activities. These reminders will help teachers maximize instructional time.

G. Digital Learning Environment						
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
G.1	1.7	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	0%	23%	23%	54%
G.2	1.3	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	0%	8%	19%	73%
G.3	1.3	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	0%	8%	15%	77%
Overall rating on a four-point scale:		1.4				

Digital Learning Environment

Of the seven Learning Environments, the Digital Learning Environment received the lowest average rating with 1.4 on a four-point scale. Instances in which students used “digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning” (G3) were not observed in 92 percent of classrooms. Moreover, students using “digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning” (G2) were evident/very evident in just eight percent of the classrooms. An interview with the instructional technology specialist revealed that teachers had recently begun to use student iPads to do classroom projects and conduct research, which could serve as a conduit for helping students explore, evaluate, solve problems and authentically engage in their learning. Data collected in this environment strongly suggested the lack of digital tools being used to enhance the teaching and learning process.

Findings

Improvement Priority

Refine curriculum alignment and develop strategies that will ensure all teachers consistently provide students with equitable and challenging learning opportunities. This refinement and development should include aligning the curriculum vertically and horizontally, providing targeted professional development about state standards, using common planning time to create grade-level common assessments and offering instructional support to all staff on high leverage teaching strategies to ensure students demonstrate growth and develop learning, thinking and life skills. **(Indicator 3.1)**

Student Performance Data:

Student performance data, as detailed in the attachment of this report, indicate that learning opportunities have not challenged and prepared students to be successful at the next grade level. Moreover, the school state assessment results show stagnation or decline between 2013 and 2015 across grade levels with the exception of a slight increase at fourth grade in writing, math and social studies. ASPIRE data showed that the school did not meet any of its academic goals in 2014 and trails the state by 31% in English, 29.3% in reading, 29.1% in math and 18.2% in writing. These data suggest a lack of structures in place to ensure the school is aligning the curriculum, offering job-embedded instructional support and assisting teachers in understanding content standards in an effort to offer challenging and equitable learning opportunities for students.

Classroom Observation Data:

Classroom observation data, as detailed in the Teaching and Learning Impact section of this report, reveal that teachers are not consistently and effectively using challenging learning opportunities to ensure students have learning, thinking and life skills that lead to positive academic outcomes. It was evident/very evident in 27 percent of classrooms that students had “differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet his or her need.” Instances in which students “strive to meet the high expectations established by the teacher” were evident/very evident in 38 percent of classrooms. Finally, in only 15 percent of classrooms were students “tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable,” and 19 percent of the students were “engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions and/or tasks.”

Stakeholder Survey Data:

Survey data highlighted ambiguous assertions among stakeholders about whether teachers provided students with equitable and challenging learning opportunities. Ninety-two percent of students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “My teachers help me learn things I will need in the future;” however, the South Carolina Priority Schools survey data revealed only 32 percent of teachers agreed with the statement, “Students at my school are motivated and interested in learning.” Ninety-three percent of students agreed/strongly agreed that “My teachers use different activities to help me learn.” Conversely, 21 percent of teachers agreed, “Parents at my school understand the school instructional programs.” Ninety-two percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that “all of my child’s teachers give work that challenges my child” and “all of my child’s teacher meet his/her learning needs by

individualizing instruction.” However, the 2015 South Carolina School Climate survey data unveiled that 48 percent of teachers agreed with the statement, “My school provides challenging instructional programs for students.”

Stakeholder Interviews:

In interviews, teachers and administrators indicated that all teachers participated in professional development opportunities with a laser focus on reading and writing during the fall and math during the spring. Additionally, teachers indicated that during Professional Learning Communities, they worked on strengthening math, writing and reading strategies and aligning the curriculum to meet the diverse academic needs of students. However, the Team noted that these content strategies were not consistently applied throughout the school, and vertical and horizontal curriculum articulation were scarcely referenced by teachers during interviews. Further, during student interviews, some students divulged that they did not feel challenged in the classroom and thought some of the learning activities were content they had learned in the previous grade. The principal indicated in his interview that the school had “a long way to go” in its efforts to provide challenging learning opportunities for students, but “teachers are definitely working this year” to ensure activities and learning are challenging but attainable.

Documents and Artifacts:

A review of lesson plans, unit plans and PLC agendas revealed a lack of instructional design and assessment practices that would yield equitable and challenging learning experiences for all students. The executive summary document disclosed that teachers were receiving grade-level coaching and shown model lessons to improve instruction; however, data collected during classroom observation unveiled inconsistencies throughout the building regarding effective instructional practices. Although teachers stated that unit plans and curriculum guides were created or available, some documents and artifacts exist but many were not presented to support how teachers have refined curriculum alignment and developed strategies that would ensure students are receiving high leverage teaching strategies from one grade level to the next.

Improvement Priority

Create, use and monitor a formal school-wide instructional process (e.g., specific and immediate feedback to students, exemplars to guide students, use of multiple measures) that clearly supports student learning and requires teachers to use high-yield instructional strategies. These Instructional strategies should include student collaboration, differentiation, self-reflection and development of critical thinking skills that result in achievement of learning expectations. **(Indicators 3.3 and 3.6)**

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.3

Secondary Indicator

Indicator 3.6

Student Performance Data:

Student performance data, as detailed in an attachment to this report, showed a school-wide downward trend in overall academic performance, which suggested that the school has not been consistently effective in meeting the learning needs of students through the use of high-yield instructional strategies and the effective use of a school-wide instructional process. ACT 2015 ASPIRE data indicated that in grades 3–5, in Reading, 7.9 percent of students read on grade level, as compared to 37.2 percent statewide. In writing, 6.2 percent of students were writing on grade level, as compared to 24.4 percent statewide. In mathematics, 17.6 percent of students performed at grade level, as compared to 46.7 percent statewide. While the school winter MAP assessment shows some progress, challenges continue to exist for the school to improve student outcomes.

Classroom Observation Data:

Classroom observation data, as detailed in the Teaching and Learning Impact section of this report, did not reveal evidence that the school is implementing high-yield instructional strategies across content areas and grade levels that require students to self-reflect, collaborate and engage in rigorous coursework. It was evident/very evident in 12 percent of classrooms that students were “asked and responded to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing).” Instances in which students were “engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions and/or tasks” were evident/very evident in 19 percent of the classrooms. Additionally, 15 percent of students were “tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable.” Instances in which students were “provided exemplars of high-quality work” were evident/very evident in only 12 percent of classrooms. Further, 54 percent of students were “actively engaged in the learning activities,” and 31 percent of students were “provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for student needs.”

Stakeholder Survey Data:

Stakeholder survey data revealed ambivalent results related to the use of varied instructional practices to engage students in higher-level thinking activities and practices. Ninety-one percent of students agreed/strongly agreed that “Teachers make them think,” and 93 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed that, “My teachers use different activities to help me learn.” However, data from the 2015 South

Carolina School Climate survey results revealed that 60 percent of teachers agreed, “Effective instructional strategies are used to meet the needs of low achieving students.” Additionally, 95 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “My school has computers to help me learn,” and 98 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that, “All teachers in our school use a variety of technologies as instructional resources.” Conversely, classroom observations unveiled that eight percent of students used “digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems and/or create original works for learning.” Further, data from the SCPS survey asserted that 40 percent of teachers agreed, “Computers are used effectively for instruction at my school.” Results from the SCPS survey indicated that 68 percent of teachers that “Student assessment information is effectively used by teachers to plan instruction,” and 38 percent of teachers agreed, “Student assessment information is used to set goals and plan programs for my school.” The data revealed an instructional process where pockets of rigor and high-yield instructional strategies were limited.

Stakeholder Interviews:

Principal and staff interviews divulged that professional development emphasis this school year has focused on data analysis, writing, math and reading strategies, structures and programs. Teachers participate in weekly and monthly professional development in addition to using PD360, an on-line district-wide professional development program. Professional learning topics have focused on reading, writing and mathematics. In addition, the district math coach provides professional development bi-monthly. However, a small number of support staff revealed that no professional development had been provided to them on the use of instructional strategies. Additionally, during interviews, many of the teachers could not articulate the instructional process used in their classroom in support of student learning, thus vacillating in their responses. For example, one teacher stated, “We basically start with each kid; we start off with our intervention; we are big on math and writing.” Another teacher stated, “We use IXL Math to get in touch with questions to help students at the end of the year.”

When asked how staff members personalized instructional strategies and interventions to address individualized learning needs, staff suggested strategies such as “We are data-driven,” and “We look at assessments to make it personal and relate it to students’ interests.” Achievement data affirmed teachers’ lack of clear understanding of the instructional process and highly effective instructional strategies that yield successful student outcomes and learning.

Documents and Artifacts:

Several documents and artifacts were presented and reviewed and included the following: anchor charts, writing outline, number talk lesson suggestions, writing prompts, professional learning community (PLC) schedules, mathematics curriculum guide, principal letters, Six Traits Writing Rubrics, common assessment analysis form, Learning Support Services artifacts and media center schedule. A thorough review of the documents and artifacts revealed scant evidence on the use of instructional strategies such as differentiation, critical thinking, student collaboration and self-reflection. Rigor and alignment to state standards were also absent from the documents. For example, “the number talk lesson suggestions” provided little more than a stand-alone list of unconnected ideas and were not intentionally aligned with or embedded in the math curriculum guide. The writing outline document was

a generic document, which outlined the components of a paragraph. The format provided a structure but lacked evidence of critical thinking or differentiation. Another document, the common assessment analysis form, listed basic information about a student's profile, but lacked in-depth reflection.

A review of lesson plans revealed limited use of different instructional strategies; lesson plans also lacked rigor, often relying on very traditional methods of instruction and, overall, plans lacked vertical or horizontal articulation attached to all-school standards. The student work (i.e., student writing) revealed inconsistent results; rubrics were unevenly applied or unclear and the range of work indicated that grade-level standards were not being met. The professional learning community schedules contained lists of dates and were not content driven. The fourth-grade PLC observed revealed little reflection on next steps in data analysis and did not tie conversation to standards.

Improvement Priority

Develop and monitor school-wide systemic processes and systems for professional and support staff to collect, analyze and apply learning from a range of data sources (e.g., comparison and trend data, use of data to inform instruction, program evaluation and interpretation of data) to help make informed decisions about student learning and readiness level. Use these data findings to determine verifiable improvement in student learning and academic outcomes. **(Indicators 5.2 and 5.4)**

Primary Indicator

Indicator 5.2

Secondary Indicator

Indicator 5.4

Student Performance Data:

Student performance data do not suggest that the school has established successful systems and processes for the systematic collection, analysis and use of data to improve student performance and outcomes. The 2013–2014 and 2014–2015 school years showed negative trends in reading, math, English, science and social studies. ASPIRE testing, MAP testing, PASS testing, Dominic testing data, and Fountas and Pinnell testing data all consistently show that between the years of 2011 and 2015, between 60 percent and 80 percent of students were not considered on grade level in math and reading.

Stakeholder Survey Data:

The 2015 South Carolina School Climate survey data results indicated that 29 percent of teachers agreed with the statement, “I am satisfied with the learning environment in my school.” Twenty-nine percent of teachers agreed with the statement, “Teacher evaluation at my school focuses on instructional improvement.” Though 97 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that, “Our school uses data to monitor student readiness and success at the next grade level,” the school performance data revealed the need for additional professional development in the use and analysis of data to make informed decisions about instruction. Additionally, 36 percent of teachers agreed with the statement, “There are relevant professional development opportunities offered to teachers at my school,” and 20 percent of teachers responded that, “The school administration sets high standards for students.” Further, 37 percent of teachers agreed with the statement, “Student assessment information is used to set goals and plan programs for my school.” Finally, 29 percent of teachers agreed with the statement, “The school administration provides effective instructional leadership.”

Stakeholder Interviews:

Interviews with staff, teachers and administrators revealed that teachers and administrators consistently meet in Professional Learning Communities and use data to make informed decisions about student learning. Yet there is limited evidence to support that this practice has consistently yielded positive learning outcomes. Additionally, during the principal’s interview, information was shared relative to using data to inform instruction and determine best interventions programs for students.

Conversely, during interviews, teachers could not articulate a clearly defined process on how to use a range of data sources to inform and make changes in instructional practices.

Documents and Artifacts:

A review of the school Challenge to Achieve Plan included a school goal that stated, “Teachers use applications to gather data and analyze in order to improve instruction.” However, this goal has not resulted in verifiable improvements in student learning. Moreover, the Principal Overview for Diagnostic Review contained a plethora of student achievement data analysis from the last five years.

A review of PLC agenda revealed that teachers discussed the analysis of intervention data; however, the documents contained limited evidence to support that this practice has yield positive learning outcomes. Sample common assessment analysis forms listed basic information including students’ names, content area, date of assessment, scores and percentages, but lacked reflection and drill-down analysis about how these deficit areas will be addressed.

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.	2.00
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.	2.00
1.3	The school's leadership implements a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	2.20

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.	2.60
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	2.60
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.	2.80
2.4	Leadership and staff foster a culture consistent with the school's purpose and direction.	3.00
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the school's purpose and direction.	2.40
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice and student success.	2.40

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.

Evaluative Criteria	Average Team Rating
1. Questionnaire Administration	3.00
2. Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	4.00

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.	3.00
4.2	Instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the school.	2.80
4.3	The school maintains facilities, services and equipment to provide a safe, clean and healthy environment for all students and staff.	3.00
4.4	Students and school personnel use a range of media and information resources to support the school's educational programs.	3.00

4.5	The technology infrastructure supports the school's teaching, learning and operational needs.	2.80
4.6	The school provides support services to meet the physical, social and emotional needs of the student population being served.	1.60
4.7	The school provides services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational and career planning needs of all students.	2.00

Findings

Improvement Priority

Review and integrate school-wide support services and programs to ensure the physical, social and emotional needs of every student are addressed by creating a student support team with select staff members to evaluate and improve student services, adopting a school-wide behavioral program and allocating time and resources to train all staff, creating a database of all referrals to track and inform interventions with set goals, and strengthening student leadership and input. Integrate these services and programs into the fabric of the school and ensure each student is supported and has one adult advocate in the school. **(Indicators 4.6 and 3.9)**

Primary Indicator

Indicator 4.6

Secondary Indicator

Indicator 3.9

Student Performance Data:

Student performance data, as detailed in an attachment of this report, revealed that performance in all major subject areas fell well below state averages over the past three years. Further, between 2013 and 2014, fewer students in the fifth grade met grade-level standards in all content areas. For example, the percentage of fifth grade students meeting grade-level standards in ELA declined 22.9 percent from 2013 to 2014. The percentage of fifth grade students meeting grade-level standards in math declined 17.9 percent in that same year. The correlation between the physical, social and emotions needs of the students and their academic success is clear and incontrovertible. The Diagnostic Review Team is particularly concerned that this decline culminates in the final year of elementary school, a time when the healthy physical, social and emotional development of the students should support their academic growth. Additional student performance data that reinforced the Diagnostic Team's concerns: The percentage of readiness between fourth and fifth grades in the areas of English, math and writing fell between 5 percent and 13 percent on ASPIRE Test between 2013 and 2014.

Classroom Observation Data:

Classroom observation data, as detailed in the Teaching and Learning Impact section of this report, highlighted that some teachers struggled to effectively manage the classroom, and as a result, opportunities for students to learn more about their own and other's backgrounds or form collaborative, effective learning groups were limited. In 55 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students "speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and peers." Further, in 62 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students "follow classroom rules and work well with others." Finally, in 50 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that "students transition smoothly and efficiently to activities." As a result, in only 35 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students "collaborate with other students during student-centered activities," and in only eight percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students "have on going opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences."

Observers noted with regularity that certain students were consistently off-task during instructional time and demanded a disproportionate amount of the teacher's attention. In a few instances, student behavior issues interfered with the planned instruction for the entire class. The Team noted that teachers posted behavior expectations in some classrooms, but not in others. Generally speaking, the Team observed the lack of a uniform, consistently applied set of expectations for students whereby the physical, social and emotional needs of every student was met.

Stakeholder Survey Data:

Stakeholder survey data revealed mixed results related to the support services in place to ensure the physical, social and emotional needs of every student are met, suggesting that while the personnel and human resources are in place to provide such support, limited evidence exists that they are effectively coordinated or integrated. For example, while 97 percent of parents agree/strongly agree that the school offers excellent support services as highlighted in AdvancED Survey Analysis Data Table, the stakeholder feedback summary diagnostic identified as an area of improvement the need to ensure every student has an advocate. Furthermore, and perhaps most pointedly, the self-assessment report revealed that the school scored themselves a level "1" in the areas of child advocacy and parent outreach (Indicators 3.8 and 3.9). Additionally, in the 2015 South Carolina Priority School Climate survey, teachers revealed that students' physical, social and emotional needs were not being adequately met with only 24 percent of the teachers agreeing with the statement, "I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my school." Moreover, 16 percent of those same teachers surveyed agreed with the statement, "Students behave well in the classroom." Finally, 20 percent of teachers agreed with the statement, "Students at my school behave well in the hallways, in the lunchroom and on school grounds." In the final analysis, the Team noted with some concern that all stakeholder surveys still identified the area of whole-child support as lacking.

Stakeholder Interviews:

Stakeholder interview data revealed that administrators, teachers, students and parents consistently articulated a concern in and around the broadly applied term, "behavior." Administrators noted both in the formal principal presentation and individual interviews the need to address the physical, social and emotional needs of every student. Leadership identified ROAR and The Time to Teach as potential programs to pursue; additionally, the International Baccalaureate Organization Primary Years Programme (PYP) has recently been investigated as yet another program to explore with the expressed goal of improving behavior, student support and classroom management. Regardless of what program is selected, the perception that classroom management and student behavior as a school-wide challenge lingers. In addition to the issue of supporting the student's physical and emotional needs, the related concern of parent outreach and involvement was echoed throughout all stakeholder interviews. While parents noted that the school has improved communication, there was "still a need to be heard and involved." Teachers noted consistently their struggles with classroom management, some of whom have attended various trainings; however, the professional development and integration has been sporadic. One student said, "I do not like when someone is yelling and throwing chairs." While the latter is an

extreme example and one not observed, it does underscore the need to identify and incorporate a policy to ensure that all students' needs are met throughout the school.

Documents and Artifacts:

While the review of the Behavioral code, the South Carolina School Transformation recommendations, learning support processes, job descriptions, mission and vision Statements, School Improvement Council minutes, Parent Policy and Planning Team agenda verified that there were pockets of student support, these documents did not reveal the existence of a consistently applied system or program to ensure that the physical, emotional and social needs of every student is consistently being met. Like the various programs, initiatives and trainings that the school has already pursued, the documents and artifacts reveal a fractured effort, one that needs to be streamlined, more centrally structured and eventually integrated school-wide.

Conclusion

Dr. Zachary has served at the helm of Mary H. Wright as principal for almost one year and has worked to cast a new vision for the school. In the last five years, the school has experienced a plethora of leadership changes, challenges, district restructuring and declining student achievement outcomes. With student enrollment vacillating from 358 in 2010 to current enrollment of 510 students, the school has also experienced student behavioral issues, teacher retention, lack of parental involvement and low teacher moral. Currently, the school has about 28 homeroom teachers with 13 in their first or second year of teaching. The Executive Summary divulged that over 70 percent of students at the school are not reading on grade level.

The principal and his administrative team have made a concerted effort to lead instructional and academic initiatives that they are hopeful will yield positive student outcomes. Though the Team applauds the principal in his efforts to aggressively make instructional improvements, the Team is a bit concerned that too many initiatives may spread out scarce resources in such a manner that it has a negative effect on the school overall improvement efforts. Germane to the success of these new initiatives is that the principal has the buy in from teachers, parents, students and community stakeholders.

It is the vision of the principal that instructional initiatives, programs, professional development, supports and interventions such as Time to Teach, Fountas, Pinnell, Accelerated Reader, reading coach, reading interventionists, instructional technology specialist, intervention blocks and Lucy Calkins workshops, to name a few, place the school on a trajectory for improvement in student achievement. Further, the school has expressed an interest in International Baccalaureate (IB) as a catalyst to increase student outcomes and motivate students to be well-rounded citizens. It is evident that the principal has created a climate that is hospitable to improving instruction, which enables teachers to teach at their best and students to learn at their utmost. During the principal's interview, he revealed that discipline has been a concern at the school as well. This year, the school implemented a behavior system called ROAR, which is a school-wide positive behavior program that reinforces actions that show good character. In some instances, the principal expressed that students missed out on classroom instruction due to their removal from the classroom for behavioral outbursts. During classroom observation, the Team noted some behavioral issues teachers had to address.

As the instructional leader, Dr. Zachary is aware that leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning, thus his pivotal role and focus this year has been to improve reading and math instruction, analyze multiple data to improve instruction and implementing programs, policies and practices that address student discipline, change teacher mindsets, create a climate of high expectations and address classroom rigor and high expectations. Germane to instruction is implementing intervention periods during the school day to address the differentiated learning needs of the diverse population of students. Although school leadership has made a collaborative effort to leverage improvements around academics and instruction this school year with a laser focus on improving teaching and learning, classroom observation data unveiled classrooms with low student engagement, absence of differentiated learning opportunities, limited rigorous learning tasks and low

expectations.

The Team agreed that if the principal continues to help teachers burnish their classroom skills and understand that the strategies and instructional practices they use are the primary movers of student achievement, these efforts will put the school on a trajectory of continuous improvement and change the outcome of student learning. Notwithstanding, the leadership team must consistently monitor and provide feedback to teachers around high expectations for student learning, lack of recursive practice in writing, differentiated learning support, using multiple data sources and results to drive instruction and meet the social, emotional, and physical needs of students, which will ultimately yield positive student outcomes. Equivalently, recruiting and involving parents in meaningful ways in their children's education will assist the school in meeting its academic goals as well. An interview with the Deputy Superintendent of the district revealed that the district has confidence in Dr. Zachary's leadership and believes he has the vision, relentless unyielding commitment, instructional astuteness, organizational skills and calm personality to lead the turnaround efforts at the school.

The Executive Summary denoted that the most notable achievement of the school over the past three years has been community involvement. The school has developed impressive partnerships with Boys and Girls Club, McDonald's, Mr. Gattis, BMW, local colleges/universities and churches in the community. These partnerships have forged relationships that allow students to engage in fun afterschool activities. With Boys and Girls Club after school program, students receive free snacks and dinner.

Finally, strengths noted by the Team were a school with a nurturing climate, safe environment, pleasant staff, and caring and friendly arrival and departure protocols. The Team noted the visible leadership of the principal who greeted every student and parent each morning as he opened the car door for each student with a smile. The instructional leader portrayed a calm and trusting demeanor that is embraced by all stakeholders. He availed himself to students, teachers and parents alike to hear collective concerns and engaged in meaningful conversations. The office staff was welcoming to parents, students and visitors. The physical layout of the school was clean and very well maintained where student work and beautiful artwork were displayed in the hallway. Classrooms were well resourced with technology hardware, books and curriculum boxes. The entrance of the building was nestled by portraits of past principals.

Improvement Priorities:

1. Refine curriculum alignment and develop strategies that will ensure all teachers consistently provide students with equitable and challenging learning opportunities. This refinement and development should include aligning the curriculum vertically and horizontally, providing targeted professional development about state standards, using common planning time to create grade-level common assessments and offering instructional support to all staff on high leverage teaching strategies to ensure students demonstrate growth and develop learning, thinking and life skills.
2. Create, use and monitor a formal school-wide instructional process (e.g., specific and immediate

feedback to students, exemplars to guide students, use of multiple measures) that clearly supports student learning and requires teachers to use high yield instructional strategies. These instructional strategies should include student collaboration, differentiation, self-reflection and development of critical thinking skills that result in achievement of learning expectations.

3. Develop and monitor school-wide systemic processes and systems for professional and support staff to collect, analyze and apply learning from a range of data sources (e.g., comparison and trend data, use of data to inform instruction, program evaluation and interpretation of data) to help make informed decisions about student learning and readiness level. Use these data findings to determine verifiable improvement in student learning and academic outcomes.

4. Review and integrate school-wide support services and programs to ensure the physical, social and emotional needs of every student are addressed by creating a student support team with select staff members to evaluate and improve student services, adopting a school-wide behavioral program and allocating time and resources to train all staff, creating a database of all referrals to track and inform interventions with set goals and strengthening student leadership and input. Integrate these services and programs into the fabric of the school and ensure each student is supported and has one adult advocate in the school.

Team Roster

Lead Evaluator	Brief Biography
Dr. Margaret Gilmore Georgia	<p>Before her relocation 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 consisted of 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 district-wide 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 32 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 on 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 Bachelor of Science degree in K-8 Education and Special Education from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, Arkansas.</p>
Team Members	
David Swartwout, Associate Lead Evaluator Texas	<p>David started his teaching career at the Ethical Culture Fieldston School in New York, NY. A member of the history department, David designed many upper level electives, played a key role in developing interdisciplinary learning programs and worked hard to establish student centered classrooms. MUN Director, Department Chair and later Dean, David spent nearly 12 years in New York. His international teaching experience includes time at the International School of Geneva, College du Leman and the International School of Panama where he was a principal in the high school division. David now works as an</p>

	<p>educational consultant for various organizations in the US, as well as the International Baccalaureate Organization in The Hague. He is passionate about effective, student-centered teaching and all school systems that support authentic learning.</p>
<p>Dr. Carla Daniels South Carolina</p>	<p>Dr. Carla Daniels earned an Ed.D in Curriculum and Instruction. She also achieved National Board Certification in the area of library media services. Dr. Daniels retired at the end of the 2015 school year from her position as a library media specialist in Richland School District One. Dr. Daniels has also been employed as a reading, middle school language arts and English teacher. She has also written curriculum and assessments, and provided professional development for various schools and at the district level. She has also served on various district committees and presented at state conferences. Dr. Daniels has extensive experience in elementary, middle and high school settings. She has been involved with AdvancED for several years and served two terms on the South Carolina state SACS board. She has served on district teams and as lead evaluator on numerous school quality assurance review teams. Additionally, Dr. Daniels has written and co-written grant proposals that have been awarded in excess of 2.5 million dollars.</p>
<p>Cindy Oxford South Carolina</p>	<p>Cindy Oxford is Program Manager for Focus Schools in the Office of School Transformation at the South Carolina Department of Education. As the past ELA Coordinator and Director of Elementary and Early Childhood Programs in Anderson School District Five, she was the lead ELA editor of the Anderson Five Approved Curriculum. This curriculum was used in over 35 school districts in South Carolina. She has created and led professional development courses/classes in the areas of reading and math, specializing in small group instruction. Cindy's areas of interest include school improvement, school turnaround, reading and literacy and data-driven decision-making. In addition, she is a certified K-12 teacher, superintendent, elementary principal, elementary supervisor, and special education with emphasis in EMD and EH, and a SAFE-T/TEAM/ADEPT evaluator. She holds an endorsement in Gifted and Talented. Cindy earned an Ed.S in School Leadership from South Carolina State University, a M. Ed from Clemson University and Auburn University.</p>
<p>Dr. Machell Sprauve South Carolina</p>	<p>Dr. Sprauve is a certified math teacher in Florence, S.C. During her professional teaching career, she has taught a variety of secondary mathematics courses. She began teaching at Britton's Neck High School (one year), then Darlington High School (9 years), and is currently at Wilson High School (9+ years). She has many responsibilities that include teaching and monitoring students in and out of the classroom, assisting the principal and the assistant principals in teacher leadership roles pertaining to curriculum and instruction and student academic interventions. She received her AS in Computer Technology from Horry-</p>

	Georgetown Technical College, BS in Mathematics from Francis Marion University, MS in Curriculum and Instruction from Capella University, and PhD in Educational Leadership from Capella University.
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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 Table

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	20.8	49.2	44.2	36.9	67.9
Reading	4.2	8.5	11.3	7.9	37.2
Math	16.7	25.4	11.3	17.6	46.7
Writing	1.6	14.3	3.3	6.2	24.4
ACT Readiness	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A

Plus

- The percentage of 4th grade readiness indicates a near 50% readiness in English.

Delta

- The percentage of readiness between 4th and 5th grades in the areas of English, Math and Writing fell by between 5% and 13%.
- All areas of content fell below the average percentage of state readiness.
- Student averages meeting the benchmark of “Ready” on ACT Aspire all fell below the state, district and similar elementary schools in all core subjects.
- In terms of students meeting the readiness benchmark, all content areas are lagging significantly behind state 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
Writing	N/A	53.7	51.8	N/A	53.0	56.7
ELA	N/A	46.4	51.8	N/A	42.6	65.5
Math	N/A	53.6	48.2	N/A	33.8	51.7
Science	33.9	42.0	25.0	22.6	14.7	46.7
Social Studies	55.9	63.8	49.1	32.3	32.4	17.2

Plus

- 4th grade Math, Social Studies and Science between 2013 and 2014 reveal an upward trend by 5% or more in each subject.
- In 2014-2015 school year, 50% or more of 4th grade students were meeting grade level standards in Social studies (63.8), Writing (53.7), ELA (46.4) and Math (53.6).
- The percentage of fourth grade students meeting grade level standards in social studies increased 14.7 percentage points from the 2013 school year to the 2014 school year.
- The percentage of fourth grade students meeting grade level standards in science increased 17 percentage points from the 2013 school year to the 2014 school year.

Delta

- Between 2013 and 2014 fewer students in the 5th grades met grade level standards in all content areas.
- The percentage of 5th grade students meeting grade level standards in ELA declined 22.9 percentage points from 2013 to 2014.
- The percentage of 5th grade students meeting grade level standards in Math declined 17.9 percentage points from 2013 to 2014.

Student Performance Diagnostic – written by school

- Aspire, MAP, PASS, Dominie, Fountas and Pinnell testing results consistently showed between 2011-2015 that 60-80 percent of Mary H. Wright students were not considered on grade level in math and reading.

Stakeholder Survey Data Analysis – Plus/Delta

The Survey Plus/Delta is a synopsis of all stakeholder survey data analysis. Its intent is to highlight areas of strength (pluses) that were identified through the survey process as well as leverage points for improvement (deltas).

Teaching and Learning Impact

(Standards 3 and 5)

+ Plus: (minimum of 75 percent agreed/strongly agreed)

1. 94 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “All my child’s teachers provide an equitable curriculum that meets his/her learning needs.”
2. 90 percent of staff agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, “All teachers in our school monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment based on data from student assessments and examination of professional practice.”
3. 93 percent of students agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, “My teachers use different activities to help me learn.”
4. 94 percent of parents agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, “My child has up-to-date computers and other technology to learn.”
5. 95 percent of staff agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school’s leaders expect staff members to hold all students to high academic standards.”

Δ Delta:

1. 64 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.”
2. 69 percent of staff agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school’s leaders support an innovative and collaborative culture.”

Leadership Capacity

(Standards 1 and 2)

+ Plus: (minimum of 75 percent agreed/strongly agreed)

1. 94 percent of students agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, “In our school my principal and teachers want every student to learn.”
2. 92 percent of parents agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school communicates effectively about the school’s goals and activities.”
3. 95 percent of staff agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school’s leaders expect staff members to hold students to high academic standards.”
4. 97 percent of parents agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, “My child has administrators and teachers that monitor and inform me of his/her learning progress.”

Δ Delta:

1. 69 percent of staff agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school’s leaders support an innovative and collaborative culture.”

2. 64 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."
3. 43 percent of students agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, "In my school students treat adults with respect."
4. 70 percent of students agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, "My principal and teachers ask me what I think about school."

Resource Utilization

(Standard 4)

+ Plus: (minimum of 75 percent agreed/strongly agreed)

1. 97 percent of parents agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school provides an adequate supply of learning resources that are current and in good condition."
2. 90 percent of staff agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school provides instructional time and resources to support our school's goals and priorities."
3. 95 percent of students agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, "My school has computers to help me learn."

Δ Delta:

1. 52 percent of students agreed /strongly agreed with the statement, "My school is safe and clean."

Diagnostic Review Schedule

Monday, March 28, 2016

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

Tuesday, March 29, 2016

Time	Event	Where	Who
	Breakfast	Hotel	
7:15 a.m.	Team arrives at school	School office	Diagnostic Review Team Members
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Classroom observations & Stakeholder Interviews	Classrooms & Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members
12:00-12:30 p.m.	Lunch & Team Meeting	Team Workroom	Diagnostic Review Team Members

12:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Classroom observations & Stakeholder Interviews	Classrooms & Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members
3:15 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.	Team returns to hotel and has dinner on his/her own		Diagnostic Review Team Members
5:15 p.m. – 9:15 p.m.	Team Evening Work Session #2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tabulate & discuss classroom observation data • Determine individual second ratings for all indicators • Discuss & Draft potential Powerful Practices and Improvement Priorities/Share with the team • Prepare for Day 3 	Hotel conference room	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Wednesday, March 30, 2016

Time	Event	Where	Who
	Breakfast	Hotel	
7:15 a.m.	Team arrives at school	Office	Diagnostic Review 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	Diagnostic Review Team Members
11:30 a.m.- 12:05 p.m.	Lunch		Diagnostic Review Team Members
12:05 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Continue review of documents and artifacts Common area observations PLC Observation		Diagnostic Review Team Members
3:15 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.	Team returns to hotel and has dinner on his/her own		

<p>5:15 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Team Work Session #3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections • Review final eleot™ Learning Environment ratings • Determine & review individual final ratings for all indicators • Examine and reach consensus on Improvement Priorities • Write Improvement Priority narratives with supporting data points • Write Learning Environment narratives with supporting evidence 	<p>Hotel Conference Room</p>	<p>Diagnostic Review Team Members</p>
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Thursday, March 31, 2016

Time	Event	Where	Who
7:00 a.m.	Breakfast/Check out of hotel and departure for school	Hotel	
7:35 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<p>Final Team Work Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of documents and artifacts • Write, review and edit evidence for Improvement Priorities • Write, review and edit learning environment summaries • Complete written report 	Team Workroom	
11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon	Working Lunch	Team Workroom	
12:00 noon	Principal’s Exit Meeting	Principal’s Office	Lead Evaluator