

April 23–26, 2019



AdvancED® Engagement Review Report



AdvancED® Diagnostic Review

Results for: Pocalla Springs Elementary School

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Introduction

The AdvancED Diagnostic Review is carried out by a team of highly qualified evaluators who examine the institution's adherence and commitment to the research aligned to 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 stakeholders, and observations of instruction, learning, and operations.

Standards help 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 composed of educators from the fields of practice, research and policy. These talented leaders 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.

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 they gathered, the Diagnostic Review Team arrived at a set of findings contained in this report.

As a part of the Diagnostic Review, stakeholders were interviewed by members of the Diagnostic Review Team about their perspectives on topics relevant to the institution's learning environment and organizational effectiveness. The feedback gained through the stakeholder interviews was considered with other evidence and data to support the findings of the Diagnostic Review. The following table lists the numbers of interviewed representatives of various stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder Groups	Number
District-level Administrators	3
Building-level Administrators	3
Professional Support Staff (e.g., Counselor, Media Specialist, Technology Coordinator)	7
Certified Staff	41
Non-certified Staff	16
Students	13
Parents	4
Total	87

AdvancED Standards Diagnostic Results

The AdvancED Performance Standards Diagnostic was used by the Diagnostic Review Team to evaluate the institution's effectiveness based on the AdvancED's Performance Standards identified as essential for realizing growth and sustainable improvement in underperforming schools. The diagnostic consists of three components built around each of the three Domains: **Leadership Capacity**, **Learning Capacity**, and **Resource Capacity**. Point values are established within the diagnostic, and a percentage of the points earned by the institution for each Standard is calculated from the point values for each Standard. Results are reported within four categories: Needs Improvement, Emerging, Meets Expectations, and Exceeds Expectations. The results for the three Domains are presented in the tables that follow.

Leadership Capacity Domain

The capacity of leadership to ensure an institution's progress toward its stated objectives is an essential element of organizational effectiveness. An institution's leadership capacity includes the fidelity and commitment to its 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 implement strategies that improve learner and educator performance.

Leadership Capacity Standards		Rating
1.1	The institution commits to a purpose statement that defines beliefs about teaching and learning, including the expectations for learners.	Needs Improvement
1.3	The institution engages in a continuous improvement process that produces evidence, including measurable results of improving student learning and professional practice.	Needs Improvement
1.6	Leaders implement staff supervision and evaluation processes to improve professional practice and organizational effectiveness.	Needs Improvement
1.7	Leaders implement operational process and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness in support of teaching and learning.	Needs Improvement
1.8	Leaders engage stakeholders to support the achievement of the institution's purpose and direction.	Needs Improvement
1.9	The institution provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness.	Needs Improvement
1.10	Leaders collect and analyze a range of feedback data from multiple stakeholder groups to inform decision-making that results in improvement.	Needs Improvement

Learning Capacity Domain

The impact of teaching and learning on student achievement and success is the primary expectation of every institution. An effective learning culture is characterized by positive and productive teacher/learner relationships; high expectations and standards; a challenging and engaging curriculum; quality instruction and comprehensive support that enable all learners to be successful; and assessment practices (formative and summative) that monitor and measure learner progress and achievement. Moreover, a quality institution evaluates the impact of its learning culture, including all programs and support services, and adjusts accordingly.

Learning Capacity Standards		Rating
2.1	Learners have equitable opportunities to develop skills and achieve the content and learning priorities established by the institution.	Needs Improvement
2.2	The learning culture promotes creativity, innovation and collaborative problem-solving.	Needs Improvement
2.5	Educators implement a curriculum that is based on high expectations and prepares learners for their next levels.	Needs Improvement
2.7	Instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learners' needs and the institution's learning expectations.	Needs Improvement
2.9	The institution implements, evaluates, and monitors processes to identify and address the specialized social, emotional, developmental, and academic needs of students.	Needs Improvement
2.10	Learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated.	Needs Improvement
2.11	Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to demonstrable improvement of student learning.	Needs Improvement
2.12	The institution implements a process to continuously assess its programs and organizational conditions to improve student learning.	Needs Improvement

Resource Capacity Domain

The use and distribution of resources support the stated mission of the institution. Institutions ensure that resources are distributed and utilized equitably so that the needs of all learners are adequately and effectively addressed. The utilization of resources includes support for professional learning for all staff. The institution examines the allocation and use of resources to ensure appropriate levels of funding, sustainability, organizational effectiveness, and increased student learning.

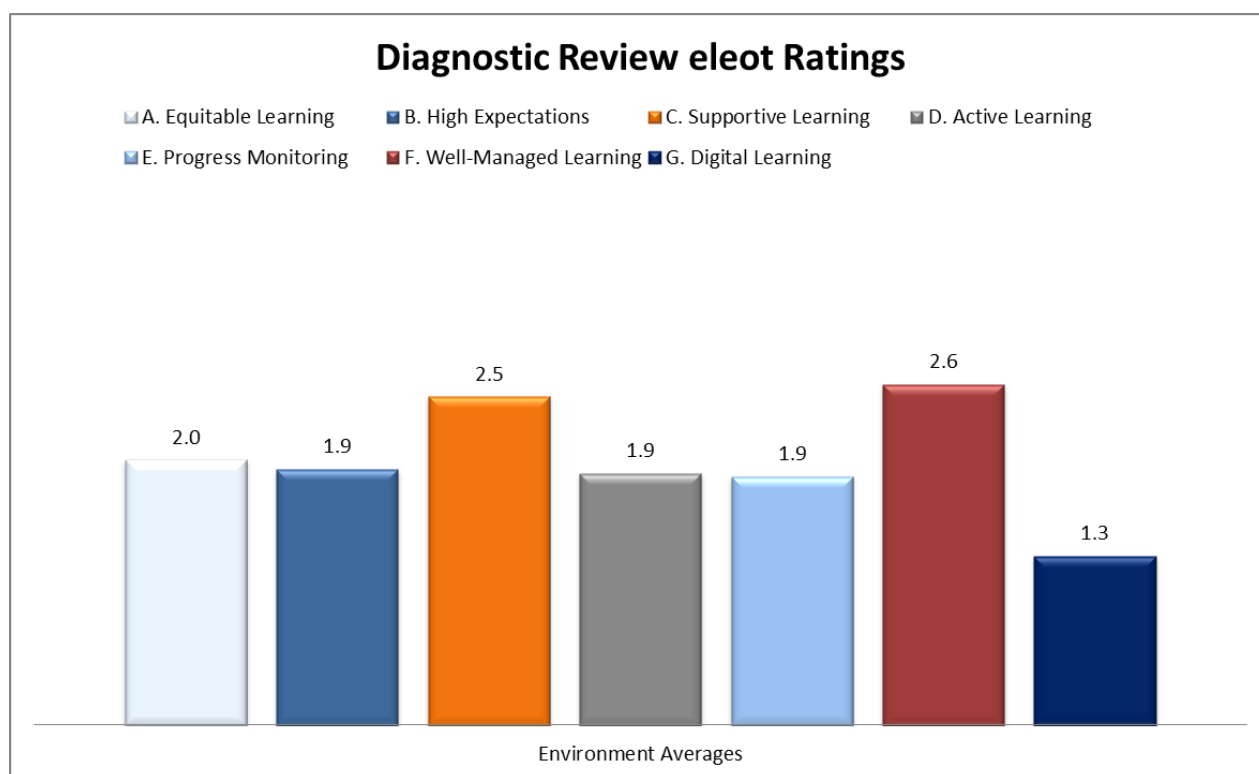
Resource Capacity Standards		Rating
3.1	The institution plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the institution's effectiveness.	Needs Improvement
3.2	The institution's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.	Needs Improvement
3.4	The institution attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the institution's purpose and direction.	Needs Improvement
3.7	The institution demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning and use of resources in support of the institution's purpose and direction.	Needs Improvement
3.8	The institution allocates human, material, and fiscal resources in alignment with the institution's identified needs and priorities to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.	Needs Improvement

Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®)

Results

The eProve™ Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot) is a learner-centric classroom observation tool that comprises 28 items organized in seven environments aligned with the AdvancED Standards. The tool provides useful, relevant, structured, and quantifiable data on the extent to which students are engaged in activities and demonstrate knowledge, attitudes, and dispositions that are conducive to effective learning. Classroom observations are conducted for a minimum of 20 minutes.

Every member of the Diagnostic Review Team was eleot certified and passed a certification exam that established inter-rater reliability. Team members conducted 30 observations during the Diagnostic Review process, including all core content learning environments. The following charts provide aggregate data across multiple observations for each of the seven learning environments.



A. Equitable Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
A1	1.5	Learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs.	63%	27%	10%	0%
A2	2.4	Learners have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support.	0%	57%	43%	0%
A3	2.8	Learners are treated in a fair, clear, and consistent manner.	0%	30%	63%	7%
A4	1.4	Learners demonstrate and/or have opportunities to develop empathy/respect/appreciation for differences in abilities, aptitudes, backgrounds, cultures, and/or other human characteristics, conditions and dispositions.	70%	20%	10%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			2.0			

B. High Expectations Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
B1	2.1	Learners strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher.	13%	63%	23%	0%
B2	2.1	Learners engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable.	7%	80%	13%	0%
B3	1.6	Learners demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work.	40%	57%	3%	0%
B4	1.7	Learners engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing).	43%	47%	10%	0%
B5	2.3	Learners take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning.	7%	60%	33%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			1.9			

C. Supportive Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
C1	2.5	Learners demonstrate a sense of community that is positive, cohesive, engaged, and purposeful.	17%	23%	53%	7%
C2	2.5	Learners take risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback).	10%	33%	53%	3%
C3	2.4	Learners are supported by the teacher, their peers, and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks.	7%	53%	37%	3%
C4	2.6	Learners demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher.	7%	27%	63%	3%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			2.5			

D. Active Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
D1	2.1	Learners' discussions/dialogues/exchanges with each other and teacher predominate.	13%	60%	27%	0%
D2	1.7	Learners make connections from content to real-life experiences.	50%	37%	10%	3%
D3	2.3	Learners are actively engaged in the learning activities.	17%	40%	43%	0%
D4	1.6	Learners collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments.	47%	47%	7%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			1.9			

E. Progress Monitoring & Feedback Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
E1	1.8	Learners monitor their own progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored.	27%	70%	3%	0%
E2	2.2	Learners receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work.	17%	53%	23%	7%
E3	2.0	Learners demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content.	23%	53%	23%	0%
E4	1.6	Learners understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed.	53%	33%	13%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			1.9			

F. Well-Managed Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
F1	2.9	Learners speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other.	0%	20%	67%	13%
F2	2.7	Learners demonstrate knowledge of and/or follow classroom rules and behavioral expectations and work well with others.	7%	27%	57%	10%
F3	2.2	Learners transition smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another.	20%	43%	30%	7%
F4	2.5	Learners use class time purposefully with minimal wasted time or disruptions.	7%	43%	43%	7%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			2.6			

G. Digital Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
G1	1.5	Learners use digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning.	67%	17%	17%	0%
G2	1.2	Learners use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning.	87%	10%	3%	0%
G3	1.2	Learners use digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning.	87%	7%	7%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:		1.3				

eleot Narrative

The Diagnostic Review Team for Pocalla Springs Elementary School conducted 30 classroom observations in core content classes, which provided sufficient insight into instructional practices and student learning across the school. Of the seven learning environments, the Well-Managed Learning Environment received the highest overall average rating of 2.6 on a four-point scale. The Digital Learning Environment had the lowest overall average rating of 1.3. The next lowest rated were the High Expectations, Active Learning, and Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environments, which each rated 1.9.

The classroom observation data revealed one strength, which was related to the respectful nature generally exhibited by staff and students. Instances of students who “speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other” (F1) were evident/very evident in 80 percent of classrooms. The team also identified two relative strengths also related to interactions among students and staff members, as it was evident/very evident in 70 percent of classrooms that students “are treated in a fair, clear, and consistent manner” (A3), and instances of students who “demonstrate knowledge of and/or follow classroom rules and behavioral expectations and work well with others” (F2) were evident/very evident in 67 percent of classrooms.

The three lowest-rated items emerged in the High Expectations, Progress Monitoring and Feedback, and Digital Learning Environments. Instances of students who “demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work” (B3), “monitor their own progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning is monitored” (E1), and “use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning” (G2) were evident/very evident in three percent of classrooms. The Diagnostic Review Team identified items needing improvement in all seven Learning Environments. The classroom observation data showed that instances of students who “engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing)” (B4) were evident/very evident in 10 percent of classrooms. Additionally, the observation data revealed that students who “engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable” (B2) were evident/very evident in 13 percent of classrooms. In 10 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students “engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs” (A1).

While the Sumter School District invested significant financial resources implementing a one-to-one digital initiative for students, the devices at Pocalla Springs Elementary School were used primarily to access programs and take assessments. Instances of students who “use digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning” (G3) were evident/very evident in seven percent of classrooms. The low scores for all three items in the Digital Learning Environment provide an opportunity to improve student use of technology as a leverage point for school improvement.

In conclusion, the classroom observation data revealed that students were rarely exposed to differentiated learning opportunities, high expectations, or rigorous coursework. Students had few differentiated tasks and ongoing activities to connect classwork with their own and other’s backgrounds and real-life experiences. Additionally, few opportunities existed for students to understand how their learning connected to the realities of their lives. The data revealed a lack of student understanding about how work was assessed. The use of higher-order questioning and quality exemplars were uncommon practices in classrooms.

Findings

Improvement Priorities

Improvement priorities are developed to enhance the capacity of the institution to reach a higher level of performance and reflect the areas identified by the Diagnostic Review Team to have the greatest impact on improving student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Improvement Priority #1

Engage all Pocalla Springs Elementary School stakeholder groups in a systematic process to develop, monitor, and build a commitment to a mission, vision, and set of belief statements about teaching and learning that are anchored in high expectations for student learning and success. (Standards 1.1)

Evidence:

Student Performance Data:

The student performance data, as indicated in an addendum to this report, showed that students at Pocalla Springs Elementary School met or exceeded the 2017-2018 South Carolina College-and Career-Ready Assessment (SC READY) benchmark at a significantly lower rate than the state average in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. The percent of fifth-grade students who achieved the benchmark in ELA was 15.3 percent compared to the state average of 38.9 percent and in mathematics was 21 percent compared to 45.2 percent. The percent of fourth-grade students who achieved the benchmark in ELA was 20 percent compared to the state average of 43.9 percent and in mathematics was 24.3 percent compared to 48.1 percent. The data also showed that students did not meet student performance goals in 2015-2016, 2016-2017, or 2017-2018. The Diagnostic Review Team was concerned with a significant decrease in performance over the past three years, as the percentage of students who met or exceeded benchmarks in ELA and math decreased as students moved from third to fifth grade. In ELA, the rate decreased from 30.1 percent of students who met or exceeded benchmark in 2015-2016 to 22.2 percent in 2016-2017 to 15.3 percent in 2017-2018. In math, the rate decreased from 42.8 percent in 2015-2016 to 29.9 percent in 2016-2017 to 21.0 percent in 2017-2018. The team was concerned with the quality of instruction found in student performance and the classroom observation data in grades four and five.

Stakeholder Interview Data:

The stakeholder interview data indicated that while the school had a mission, vision, and set of belief statements, they were not anchored in high expectations for student learning and success and were not determined through a collaborative process that included input from a variety of stakeholder groups. The interview data revealed that staff members were unable to articulate the purpose and direction of the school. Several staff members and parents expressed concern that community input was not welcomed by the school administration over the past nine years. Many staff members shared that communication was a major issue at the school. One staff member said, "It is like pulling teeth to get an answer" from the administration, which summed up the statements of most interviewees.

When asked about continuous improvement and stakeholder feedback and participation, many staff members indicated that there was no continuous improvement process at the school. Staff members shared their desire for clear communication and to be included. Stakeholders across multiple groups reported that they received minimal communication from the administration. They shared that most communication happened at the last minute, which caused them to question whether decisions were made without reflection. The interview data further revealed that parents did not feel welcomed and that the school administration did not have an open-door policy

when it came to parents and the community-at-large. A review of the school's website revealed that the "Report to Parents" for the school year 2017-2018 was a duplicate report from the previous year.

Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

The stakeholder survey data showed that while 78 percent of staff members at Pocalla Springs Elementary School agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school's purpose statement is clearly focused on student success" (C1), 58 percent agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school's purpose statement is formally reviewed and revised with involvement from stakeholders" (C2). Parent survey data revealed that 24 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school's purpose statement is formally reviewed and revised with involvement from parents" (C2). Parent survey data further showed that 44 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school has established goals and a plan for improving student learning" (C3). Furthermore, 64 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school's purpose statement is clearly focused on student success" (C1).

Documents and Artifacts:

A review of documents and artifacts revealed that while the current mission and vision statements were visible throughout the school, present on the school's website, and printed on school documents, there was no systematic process to review, communicate, monitor, and build commitment around them.

Improvement Priority #2

Establish, implement, monitor, and communicate a systematic continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support and impact instruction and student learning. Ensure the process includes the following: (1) a communication plan to inform all stakeholders, (2) procedures for analyzing and disaggregating data to identify academic and non-academic needs, (3) assessment of high-yield instructional strategies that are evidence-based and lead to best practice instruction, and (4) systematic use of formal standard operating procedures based on research and best practices. (Standards 1.3)

Evidence:**Student Performance Data:**

The student performance data, as detailed in an addendum to this report, indicated the absence of a data-driven and collaborative process for continuous improvement. The student performance data previously described were considered by the Diagnostic Review Team in identifying Improvement Priority #2.

Stakeholder Interview Data:

The stakeholder interview data revealed that teachers and administrators could not define or explain the continuous improvement process followed at Pocalla Springs Elementary School. Additionally, the interview data showed that not all teachers and administrators were able to communicate the school's purpose or identify beliefs about teaching and student learning expectations. The data showed that parents were not involved in the continuous improvement process. Many staff members expressed concern that lack of communication and follow-through caused confusion and inconsistency when implementing processes at the school. Additionally, staff members were concerned with the lack of next steps when programs or initiatives were established.

The stakeholder interview data also revealed that staff members indicated that while a School Improvement Team was established this year for the first time, the meetings were principal-led with little input from members. Although a team was in place with 10 school-wide members to oversee the "Leader in Me" training, staff members were concerned that the principal did not attend the meetings.

The interview data provided no evidence of clear communication or direction for staff members as it pertained to interventions. Some staff members indicated that they depended on one another, as evidenced by the comment, "We find each other on our own to figure things out." Many staff members indicated that the climate and culture of the school was "unwelcoming." Moreover, many staff members indicated that they were not supported, as captured in the comment, "We are working hard but lack support from administrators." Another comment echoed by many was "I am scared to try new things in my classrooms, because they get changed so often."

Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

The stakeholder survey data showed that 55 percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school has a systematic process for collecting, analyzing, and using data" (G3). Additionally, 69 percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school has a continuous improvement process based on data, goals, actions, and measures of growth" (C5). The survey data revealed that 33 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school ensures that all staff members monitor and report the achievement of school goals" (G1). Thirty-six percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school communicates effectively about the school's goals and activities" (D5). Survey data further showed that 44 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school has established goals and a plan for improving student learning" (C3).

Documents and Artifacts:

A review of several documents and artifacts (e.g., Title 1 Plan, leadership team meeting notes, Title 1 Parent Survey) revealed the absence of a data-driven, collaborative continuous improvement process that engages internal stakeholders.

Improvement Priority #3

Develop, implement, and monitor a process to gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data to improve learning for individual and collective groups of students. Provide professional development opportunities for teachers on data analysis. Provide teachers with time to reflect, analyze, and monitor student performance data and ensure that teachers are modifying instruction to address data results. (Standard 2.11)

Evidence:**Student Performance Data:**

Student performance data, as detailed in an addendum to this report, indicated that educators were not engaged in processes that use formative and summative data to improve learning for individual and collective groups of students. The performance data previously described were considered by the Diagnostic Review Team in identifying Improvement Priority #3.

Stakeholder Interview Data:

The stakeholder interview data revealed a need for a systematic progress monitoring process that uses both formative and summative assessment data. During interviews, staff members only discussed Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment data when asked how they used data. The interview data further showed that although time existed in the master schedule for grade-level common planning, teachers indicated they seldom looked at student performance data and that common assessments were rarely used. Additionally, staff members indicated that MAP data were examined to determine intervention groups based on target goals; however, MAP assessments were only administered three times annually, suggesting that teachers used no other assessments to address the diversity of student performance. The student interview data revealed that students received information about their learning progress via report cards and interim progress reports, which were shared once every nine weeks. Additionally, staff members shared that when they met with students regarding goal setting and MAP, the student goals were already predetermined. The stakeholder interview data also revealed that school administration held “Data Days” three times per year and conversation focused solely on MAP assessment data. Although the principal presented the information to the staff members during “Data Days,” no clear direction was provided about how to use data to drive instruction. Some external stakeholders indicated that children who graduated from Pocalla Springs Elementary School were prepared for middle school.

Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

The stakeholder survey data revealed that 55 percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed with the statements, “Our school employs consistent assessment measures across classrooms and courses” (G2) and “Our school ensures all staff members are trained in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data” (G4). Forty-five percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed that “All teachers in our school monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment based on data from student assessments and examination of professional practice” (E1). Survey data further revealed that 53 percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “All teachers in our school use multiple types of assessments to modify instruction and to revise curriculum” (E7). Fifty-eight percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed that “In our school, all staff members use student data to address the unique learning needs of all students” (E14). Parent survey data showed that 55 percent agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “My child is given multiple assessments to measure his/her understanding of what was taught” (E12).

Documents and Artifacts:

A review of documents and artifacts (e.g., an agenda for “Data Days” held on March 25–27, 2019, a district document listing grading expectations) revealed the absence of a school-wide process to gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data to improve student learning.

Insights from the Review

The Diagnostic Review Team engaged in professional discussions and deliberations about the processes, programs, and practices within the institution to arrive at the findings of the team. These findings are organized around themes guided by the evidence, examples of programs, and practices and provide direction for the institution's continuous improvement efforts. The insights from the Review narrative should provide contextualized information from the team deliberations and provide information about the team's analysis of the practices, processes, and programs of the institution within the Levels of Impact of Engagement, Implementation, Results, Sustainability, and Embeddedness.

Engagement is the level of involvement and frequency with which stakeholders are engaged in the desired practices, processes, or programs within the institution. Implementation is the degree to which the desired practices, processes, or programs are monitored and adjusted for quality and fidelity of implementation. Results represent the collection, analysis, and use of data and evidence to demonstrate attaining the desired result(s). Sustainability is results achieved consistently to demonstrate growth and improvement over time (minimum of three years). Embeddedness is the degree to which the desired practices, processes, or programs are deeply ingrained in the culture and operation of the institution.

Strengths:

The leadership team and staff members of Pocalla Springs Elementary School demonstrated they cared about their students. The Diagnostic Review Team observed a well-maintained facility. The facility and grounds provided a clean environment for student learning. Students were well-behaved in the classrooms and hallways. Classroom procedures were in place and followed by most students. Many staff members had roles specifically designed to support students. The majority of staff members had positive relationships with their students. The master schedule provided time for daily intervention and daily common planning for grade-level teachers. The school had a plethora of materials and resources available to teachers and students (e.g., Chromebooks, online instructional programs, SMART Boards, Next Steps, Guided Reading materials).

Continuous Improvement Process:

Stakeholder interview and survey data and a review of documents and artifacts validated the need for a comprehensive process whereby teachers could routinely reflect, revise, and evaluate their classroom practices in order to increase student achievement.

Classroom observation and stakeholder interview data and a review of documents suggested that the school did not successfully establish effective, results-driven continuous improvement planning processes. Although staff members understood the need for using data, systems to gather formative and progress monitoring data were absent. The Diagnostic Review Team found little evidence that the school engaged stakeholders in a systematic continuous improvement process. In addition, systems were not established to monitor improvement efforts and communicate the results to stakeholders.

The Diagnostic Review Team found that the school did not routinely use data to evaluate program effectiveness, monitor the impact of specific strategies in goal areas, or determine the attainment of improvement goals. The Diagnostic Review Team suggests the school establish and commit to a clear set of performance benchmarks and measures that monitor and determine its ability to meet future improvement goals.

Addressing instruction and assessment practices are critical. The classroom observation data revealed a lack of consistency in implementing research-based, rigorous instruction. The team seldom observed students engaging in high-quality work, teachers using high-yield instructional strategies, or teachers providing meaningful feedback to

students. Although the school integrated common planning into the master schedule, teachers rarely used the allotted time to collaborate on vertical and horizontal articulation, analyze data, examine student work, or engage in professional development opportunities. The Diagnostic Review Team encourages the school to actively engage teachers in ongoing, structured collaboration and professional development related to curriculum alignment, assessment development, data use, differentiated instruction, high-yield instructional strategies, and student learning tasks.

For sustainable school improvement to occur, staff members need coaching and mentoring to maximize the implementation of high-yield instructional practices. Classroom observation and interview data confirmed that students had few opportunities to engage in personalized or differentiated learning tasks. Classroom teachers need additional support to effectively differentiate instruction, use exemplars to promote student understanding of high-quality work, and create a culture and climate conducive to learning. Although the school employed an instructional coach and a reading coach, the interview data revealed the absence of a process to tier teachers and provide support through coaching cycles.

Overall, effective, results-driven continuous improvement planning processes with systems, programs, and practices were not established or used to monitor and communicate the results to stakeholders. Furthermore, the school did not routinely use data to evaluate program effectiveness, monitor the impact of specific strategies, or determine attainment of goals. The school could benefit from establishing and committing to a clear set of performance benchmarks and measures and using those to monitor and determine its ability to meet improvement goals.

The Diagnostic Review Team suggests that the school leadership team embrace and consistently implement a schedule of daily, informal observations and use a research-based instructional walkthrough tool. Furthermore, the team recommends that the school leadership team give teachers authentic feedback that is focused on high-yield instructional strategies for improving instructional practices after each walkthrough visit. The Diagnostic Review Team further recommends that school leaders implement and follow systematic processes that ensure the efficacy of the following: implementing initiatives; monitoring instructions; evaluating programs; and coaching, mentoring, and supporting all staff members. School leaders should also become adept at providing and participating in opportunities to share and build on the strengths of staff members. Documenting, formalizing, and consistently communicating such processes will be beneficial for staff and students at Pocalla Springs Elementary School.

Next Steps

The results of the Diagnostic Review provide the next step for guiding the improvement journey of the institution with their efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities for all learners. The findings are aligned to research-based criteria designed to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness. The feedback provided in the Diagnostic Review Report will assist the institution in reflecting on current improvement efforts and adapting and adjusting their plans to continuously strive for improvement.

Upon receiving the Diagnostic Review Report, the institution is encouraged to implement the following steps:

- Review and share the findings with stakeholders.
- Develop plans to address the Improvement Priorities identified by the Diagnostic Review Team.
- Use the findings and data from the report to guide and strengthen the institution's continuous improvement efforts.
- Celebrate the successes noted in the report.

Team Roster

Diagnostic Review Teams comprise professionals with varied backgrounds and professional experiences. All Lead Evaluators and Diagnostic Review Team members complete AdvancED training and eleot® certification to provide knowledge and understanding of the AdvancED tools and processes. The following professionals served on the Diagnostic Review Team:

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Milagros Fornell	Milagros Fornell is an educator who has had a powerful impact on her community, students, parents, and peers since her first day as a mathematics teacher in 1978. Throughout her 36-year career with Miami-Dade County Public Schools, she has served as school-site administrator, regional curriculum director, regional superintendent, associate superintendent/chief academic officer, and chief of staff. During her six years as chief academic officer, the district eliminated all F-rated high schools, student performance increased on both state and national measures, participation in and performance on Advanced Placement exams increased, graduation rates improved, and the district was awarded the Broad prize. Ms. Fornell earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics education and a master's degree in mathematics education from Florida International University.
Tygère Charles	Tygère Charles is a Transformation Coach for the South Carolina Department of Education. She has a bachelor's degree in English, a master's degree in teaching, and an educational specialist degree in supervision and leadership administration, with elementary principal certification. Her expertise extends from early childhood classrooms, working with district levels and superintendents, to publication in the Journal of National Association for Professional Development Schools. She was selected as one of three in the nation to present at the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) in Washington Congressional Briefings regarding Title II funding and teacher preparation programs. For over 20 years, she served in leadership capacities mentoring teachers, delivering professional development, supporting public schools and districts, leading organizational change, and advocating for quality education for all students. Her other experiences in educational policy and advocacy include organizing and coordinating professional development for nine states in the Southeast region and serving as the Director of the Richland County Education Association.
Tina Jamison	Tina Jamison is an Education Associate on the School Improvement Team in the Office of School Transformation at the South Carolina Department of Education. Tina has over 23 years of experience in education, including nine years as a high school and middle school English teacher. Tina has served in the role of the SC High Schools that Work and Making Middle Grades Work State Director. She is currently the co-director for the SC Schools to Watch program and is on the Board of the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform.
Ashton Jones	Ashton Jones is an educator who puts the well-being of students at the center of who she is as a school leader. She earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Columbia College. After completing her undergraduate degree, she continued her education earning a master's degree in secondary education. While completing her master's, Ashton began her education career teaching anatomy and physiology at a community college. Her public education career began in the high school setting. She taught several science courses and became the director of biomedical science. She continued her teaching career in the middle school setting as the science department chair. During her middle school experience, she earned her educational specialist degree in educational leadership and administration. She currently holds the position of assistant principal at an elementary school.

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Denise McMillan	Denise McMillan currently serves as a specialist with the AdvancED/Measured Progress Improvement Services team. She has 30 years of experience and background knowledge in the areas of early childhood, elementary, special education, and educational leadership/administration. Prior to working with AdvancED/Measured Progress, Denise served as the early childhood supervisor for Wilson County Schools in Lebanon, Tennessee. During her tenure, the early childhood and extended schools programs were awarded the first Tennessee Governor's Award for Excellence in Early Foundations in March 2016. Over the past 15 years, through the AdvancED organization, Ms. McMillan has participated as a Lead Evaluator and team member for school, district, early learning, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) reviews as well as professional development presenter. Ms. McMillan holds a bachelor's degree in elementary and special education from the University of Tennessee Knoxville; a master's degree in curriculum from Cumberland University, Lebanon, Tennessee; and an educational specialist degree in administration from Middle Tennessee University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee.
Dr. Amy Nail	Dr. Amy Nail comes to the Transformation Coach position with the South Carolina Department of Education after 28 years of service in public schools in North Carolina (NC). She earned a bachelor's degree in middle grades education from High Point University, a master's degree in school administration from Appalachian State University, and a doctorate in educational leadership from High Point University. Dr. Nail earned her elementary licensure from Winston-Salem State University. She began her career in Stokes County and served as an elementary and middle school teacher, an assistant principal, principal, director, and instructional superintendent in both rural and urban settings. In these roles, Nail has worked with Title 1, academically gifted, AdvancED accreditation, special education, curriculum writing, the transition to the new Common Core and NC Essential Standards, the development and delivery of professional development, and school board committees. Most recently, Nail served as an instructional superintendent for Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools.

Addenda

Student Performance Data

Section I: Percentage of Students Meeting Benchmark of “Meets and Exceeds” on South Carolina College-and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) by grade level (2017-2018, 2016-2017, 2015-2016)

	2017-2018				2016-2017				2015-2016			
Grade	ELA School	ELA State	Math School	Math State	ELA School	ELA State	Math School	Math State	ELA School	ELA State	Math School	Math State
3	34.6	45.2	43.3	55.7	20.8	42.1	42.5	52.5	30.1	43.7	42.8	53.6
4	20.0	43.9	24.3	48.1	22.2	40.9	29.9	46.4	10.6	43.4	11.5	46.7
5	15.3	38.9	21.0	45.2	5.4	38.3	16.2	40.0	21.5	41.2	39.6	44.3

Section II: Percentages of Students Meeting Grade Level Standards at the School on the South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SCPASS) by grade level (2017-2018, 2016-2017, 2015-2016)

	Grade 4			Grade 5		
	2018	2017	2016	2018	2017	2016
Science	28.7	40.5	27.4			
State Avg. Science	49.8	48.4	65.0		46.7	65.7
Social Studies		69.3	57.5	46.5	40.5	56.5
State Avg. Social Studies		80.8	81.3	69.9	70.9	71.5

Schedule

Tuesday, April 23, 2019

Time	Event	Where	Who
4:00 p.m.	Brief Team Meeting	Hotel Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members
4:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.	Principal/Superintendent Presentation	Hotel Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members
5:15 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #1	Hotel Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Wednesday, April 24, 2019

Time	Event	Where	Who
7:00 a.m.	Team arrives at Pocalla Springs Elementary School	School Office	Diagnostic Review Team Members
7:40 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Interviews / Classroom Observations / Stakeholder Interviews / Artifact Review	School	Diagnostic Review Team Members
3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Team returns to hotel		
5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #2	Hotel Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Thursday, April 25, 2019

Time	Event	Where	Who
7:30 a.m.	Team arrives at Pocalla Springs Elementary School	School	Diagnostic Review Team Members
7:45 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Interviews / Classroom Observations / Stakeholder Interviews / Artifact Review	School	Diagnostic Review Team Members
3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Team returns to hotel		
5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #3	Hotel Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Friday, April 26, 2019

Time	Event	Where	Who
8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Final Team Work Session	School	Diagnostic Review Team Members



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About AdvancED

AdvancED is a non-profit, non-partisan organization serving the largest community of education professionals in the world. Founded on more than 100 years of work in continuous improvement, AdvancED combines the knowledge and expertise of a research institute, the skills of a management consulting firm and the passion of a grassroots movement for educational change to empower Pre-K-12 schools and school systems to ensure that all learners realize their full potential.

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