

April 28–May 1, 2019



AdvancED® Engagement Review Report



AdvancED® Diagnostic Review

Results for: Sneed Middle 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	1
Building-level Administrators	4
Professional Support Staff (e.g., Counselor, Media Specialist, Technology Coordinator)	5
Certified Staff	21
Non-certified Staff	3
Students	35
Parents	8
Total	77

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.

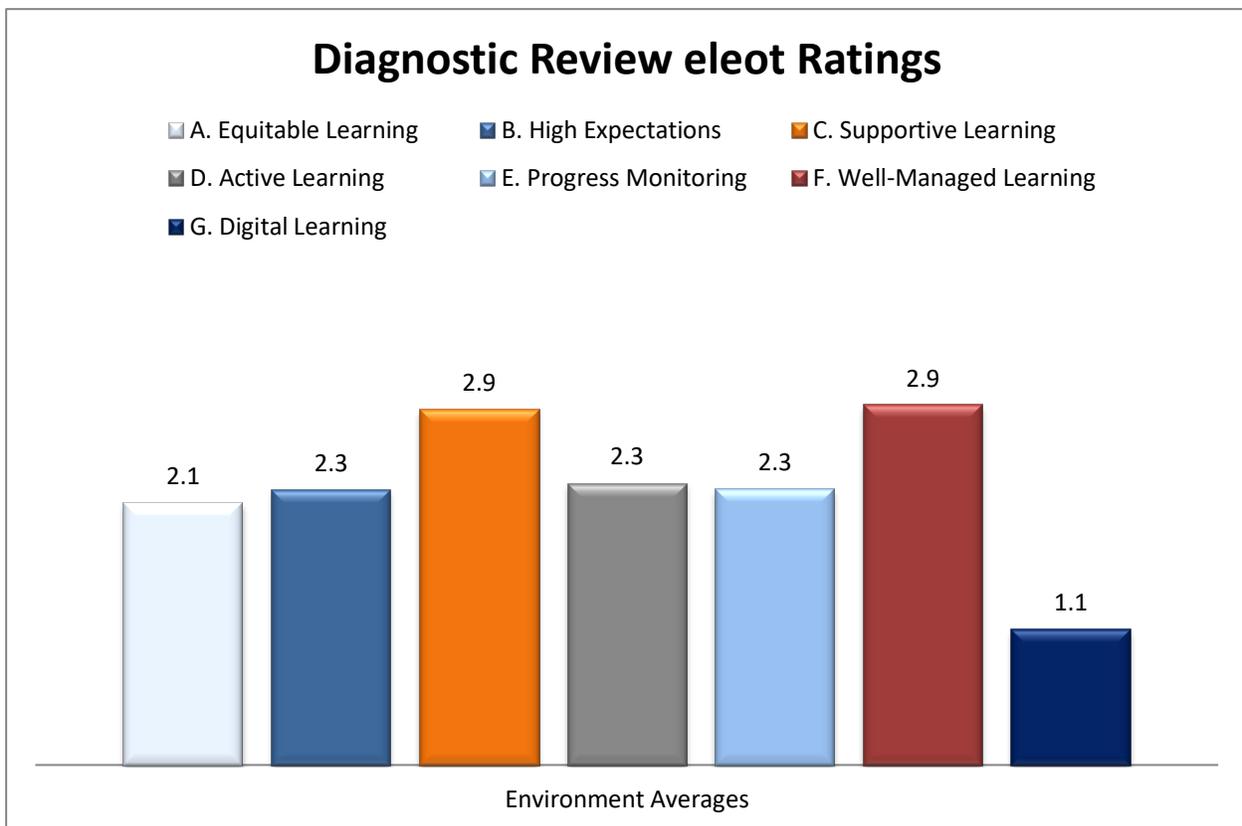
Resource Capacity Standards		Rating
3.1	The institution plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the institution’s effectiveness.	Needs Improvement
3.2	The institution’s professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration 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 32 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	1.4	Learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs.	72%	19%	9%	0%
A2	2.8	Learners have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support.	6%	28%	50%	16%
A3	3.0	Learners are treated in a fair, clear, and consistent manner.	6%	13%	59%	22%
A4	1.5	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.	66%	22%	13%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			2.1			

B. High Expectations Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
B1	2.3	Learners strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher.	19%	44%	25%	13%
B2	2.3	Learners engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable.	13%	56%	19%	13%
B3	2.1	Learners demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work.	25%	56%	6%	13%
B4	2.3	Learners engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing).	13%	56%	22%	9%
B5	2.3	Learners take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning.	22%	38%	31%	9%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			2.3			

C. Supportive Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
C1	2.7	Learners demonstrate a sense of community that is positive, cohesive, engaged, and purposeful.	13%	31%	31%	25%
C2	2.8	Learners take risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback).	9%	22%	47%	22%
C3	2.8	Learners are supported by the teacher, their peers, and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks.	3%	31%	44%	22%
C4	3.3	Learners demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher.	0%	16%	41%	44%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:		2.9				

D. Active Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
D1	2.6	Learners' discussions/dialogues/exchanges with each other and teacher predominate.	22%	16%	44%	19%
D2	2.0	Learners make connections from content to real-life experiences.	34%	34%	28%	3%
D3	2.6	Learners are actively engaged in the learning activities.	9%	34%	47%	9%
D4	2.1	Learners collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments.	38%	28%	25%	9%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:		2.3				

E. Progress Monitoring & Feedback Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
E1	2.0	Learners monitor their own progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored.	34%	41%	19%	6%
E2	2.5	Learners receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work.	13%	28%	56%	3%
E3	2.6	Learners demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content.	16%	25%	47%	13%
E4	2.0	Learners understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed.	41%	25%	28%	6%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			2.3			

F. Well-Managed Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
F1	3.3	Learners speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other.	0%	19%	31%	50%
F2	3.2	Learners demonstrate knowledge of and/or follow classroom rules and behavioral expectations and work well with others.	3%	22%	31%	44%
F3	2.7	Learners transition smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another.	16%	34%	19%	31%
F4	2.7	Learners use class time purposefully with minimal wasted time or disruptions.	13%	41%	16%	31%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			2.9			

G. Digital Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
G1	1.2	Learners use digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning.	84%	9%	6%	0%
G2	1.0	Learners use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning.	100%	0%	0%	0%
G3	1.1	Learners use digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning.	94%	3%	3%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:		1.1				

eleot Narrative

The Diagnostic Review Team for Sneed Middle School conducted 32 classroom observations in core academic classrooms, which provided sufficient information about classroom learning environments. Two of the seven learning environments, the Well-Managed Learning Environment and the Supportive Learning Environment, earned the highest overall ratings of 2.9 on a four-point scale, while the Digital Learning Environment received the lowest overall rating of 1.1.

The team identified three strengths that were related to positive interactions among teachers and students. First, it was evident/very evident in 85 percent of classrooms that learners “demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher” (C4). Additionally, it was evident/very evident in 81 percent of classrooms that learners “speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other” (F1) and “are treated in a fair, clear and consistent manner” (A3).

While the Diagnostic Review Team identified items needing improvement in all seven learning environments, three of the lowest-rated individual items emerged in the Digital Learning Environment. It was evident/very evident in zero percent of classrooms that students “use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning” (G2). Instances of students who “use digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning” (G3) were evident/very evident in three percent of classrooms. In six percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students “use digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate and/or use information for learning” (G1). These low ratings provide an opportunity for student use of technology to be a leverage point for school improvement.

The Diagnostic Review Team also identified items minimally observed in classrooms that provide additional areas of leverage to increase student learning. Several items concerned the Diagnostic Review Team in the Equitable, High Expectations, and Progress Monitoring and Feedback learning environments that related to opportunities for students to be engaged in rigorous and effective learning tasks. Within the Equitable Learning Environment, it was evident/very evident that students “engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs” (A1) in nine percent of classrooms. The survey results indicated that while 61 percent of teachers agreed/strongly agreed with the statement “All teachers in our school personalize instructional strategies and

interventions to address individual learning needs of students” (E2), 20 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed that “All of my teachers change their teaching to meet my learning needs” (E9). Additionally, it was evident/very evident that students “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” (A4) in 13 percent of classrooms.

A couple of items emerged in the High Expectations Learning Environment that could be leveraged for increased student achievement. It was evident/very evident that students “demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work” (B3) in 19 percent of classrooms. In addition, it was evident/very evident that students “engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing)” (B4) in 31 percent of classrooms. Instances of students who “engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable” (B2) were evident/very evident in 32 percent of classrooms.

Finally, the Diagnostic Review Team was concerned by results in the Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environment. It was evident/very evident that students “monitor their own learning progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress” was monitored (E1) in 25 percent of classrooms and “understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed” (E4) in 34 percent of classrooms. The team rarely observed students using rubrics or checklists to monitor their progress or to understand criteria by which their work would be assessed. Interview data revealed that most teachers were unable to clearly articulate how formative assessment strategies were used to drive instructional choices. By examining classroom observation data in all seven of the learning environments, school leaders can identify and prioritize areas to leverage for improving professional practices and student learning.

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

Develop, implement, and monitor a continuous improvement process that seamlessly integrates and includes ongoing revisions to school improvement plans (e.g., specific goals, strategies, activities), initiatives, programs, and services. Use multiple sources of data (e.g., student achievement, non-cognitive, perception, experience, organizational) to measure incremental progress and adjust accordingly. (Standard 1.3)

Evidence:

Student Performance Data:

Student performance data, as detailed in an addendum to this report, revealed that the percentage of students at Sneed Middle School who scored at 70 or above on the South Carolina End-of-Course (EOC) assessments decreased from 93.1 percent in 2016-2017 to 91.5 in 2017-2018 in Algebra 1, and increased from 98.2 percent to 100 in English 1.

In addition, the percentage of eighth-grade students who met or exceed the 2017-2018 South Carolina College-and Career-Ready (SC READY) benchmark was slightly higher than the state average in English language arts (ELA) with 39.7 percent compared to 39.2 percent, but was significantly lower in mathematics with 29.5 percent compared to 36.6 percent. The percentage of seventh-grade students was significantly lower than the state average in ELA with 32.3 percent compared to 40.1 percent, and mathematics with 22.9 percent compared to 34.9 percent. The student performance data also revealed that students did not meet performance goals for all areas, except seventh-grade mathematics in 2016-2017 and eighth-grade ELA in 2015-2016.

The percentages of students who met grade-level standards on the South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SCPASS) in science and social studies in 2017-2018 were significantly higher than the state averages. In eighth-grade science, 60.1 percent of students met the standards, which was significantly higher than the state average of 48.7. In social studies, seventh-grade students were significantly higher at 75.9 percent compared to the state average of 66.4. Finally, the SCPASS science and social studies student performance data also revealed higher results of students at Sneed Middle School who met student performance goals in 2015-2016 or 2016-2017, with the exception of eighth-grade social studies in 2016-2017.

Stakeholder Interview Data:

The stakeholder interview data indicated that a core group of teachers and administrators recently developed the School Improvement Plan. Most teachers who were interviewed could not articulate the components of the plan. Some teachers stated that they provided support to the School Improvement Team by serving as team members on various committees. The interview data showed the school recently began professional learning community (PLC) meetings. Also, interview data showed that Linkit was used to measure student progress. Interviews indicated that data were collected from various formative and summative assessments and other sources. However, the Diagnostic Review Team found that while some teachers and administrators collected data, data were not analyzed to inform next instructional steps.

The interview data indicated that students wanted increased use of technology, and some students noted the need for a more rigorous curriculum. Many students indicated they would like Sneed Middle School to have one-to-one technology. The data showed most students reported that instruction was not always at their level. Finally, the data showed that many stakeholders reported differentiated instruction was a potential area for growth.

Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

The interview data indicated that the school did not have a systematic process for collecting data. Rather, teachers within departments collected and analyzed their data and determined next steps based on findings. The stakeholder survey data revealed 57 percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed that “Our school has a systematic process for collecting, analyzing, and using data” (G3), suggesting that over 40 percent of staff members could not confirm this practice occurred. During interviews, staff members reported that school leaders monitored data related to continuous improvement goals; however, survey data showed 67 percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school leaders monitor data related to school continuous improvement goals” (G7). Some staff members expressed a desire to be a part of the process of data monitoring and student growth goal-setting.

Although 61 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school has established goals and a plan for improving student learning” (C3), the interview data suggested that parents believed that Sneed Middle School was making progress. Additionally, while 61 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that “Our school communicates effectively about its goals and activities” (D5), the data indicated the school kept parents and students informed through multiple means (e.g., PowerSchool, Remind App, email, Facebook, notes, telephone calls). Fifty-four percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that “Our school ensures that all staff members monitor and report the achievement of school goals” (G1).

The student surveys revealed that 56 percent agreed/strongly agreed that “In my school, the purpose and expectations are clearly explained to students and family” (C2). Twenty percent of students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement “All of my teachers change their teaching to meet my learning needs” (E9).

Documents and Artifacts:

The Diagnostic Review Team found minimal evidence that the school developed and implemented a continuous improvement process to produce measurable results for improving student learning and professional practice. However, the team found evidence of limited professional development for technology-related software. Additionally, while data sets were provided to staff members, data were not analyzed or used to group and regroup students, monitor student progress or attainment toward student goals, or identify the content or skills that needed to be retaught.

Improvement Priority #2

Develop, implement, and monitor instructional practices to ensure high-quality instruction meets individual student needs. Collect and analyze data and use findings to identify needed improvements in student learning and to adjust instructional practices to meet student academic needs. (Standard 2.7)

Evidence:**Student Performance Data:**

The student performance data, as detailed in an addendum to this report, indicated the absence of consistent and deliberate high-yield instructional practices. The performance data previously described were considered by the Diagnostic Review Team in identifying Improvement Priority #2.

Classroom Observation Data:

The classroom observation data, as previously discussed, showed that instruction was rarely rigorous or designed to meet the individual learning needs of students or groups of students. Instances of students who “engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs” (A1) were evident/very evident in nine percent of classrooms. It was evident/very evident in 32 percent of classrooms that students “engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable” (B2). In 66 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students “are supported by the teacher, their peers, and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks” (C3). In 25 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students “monitor their own learning progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored” (E1).

Stakeholder Interview Data:

The interview data indicated staff members reported that the recently designated time for professional learning community (PLC) meetings was a positive step. The PLC process, however, was not established for teachers in all content areas. Social studies and science teachers met monthly to collaborate, and English language arts (ELA) and mathematics teachers met once a week to discuss data and make instructional decisions. Although content area teachers met, teachers rarely met by grade level to discuss the progress of students they had in common. Many teachers expressed that they would like more collaborative meeting time within their grade levels. Interview data also suggested that expectations were minimal for non-core content area teachers to support improving student achievement in core content classes. Some staff members reported that they felt isolated. One teacher, who summed up the perception of many said, “The only reason I know our test scores (SC READY and SCPASS) is because I researched them myself.” While the interview data suggested that teachers provided students with verbal feedback and used assessment data to adjust instruction, some teachers were unable to articulate clear systems where they tracked data to see continuous improvement.

ELA teachers used Linkit data to target academic gaps. One teacher said, “When I reviewed the Linkit data, I could see that my students weren’t doing well in a particular genre so I went back and retaught that section to my students.” Linkit was new to the school, and some teachers stated that they did not have enough training to fully use the information in order to assist students. Some teachers reported that Linkit was not aligned to South Carolina standards and that some content (e.g., geometry, number sense) was not addressed in Linkit. The interview data indicated that some staff members reported that Linkit was more of an assessment of specific courses (e.g., Algebra 1) and that it was difficult to use in general courses such as seventh- and eighth-grade math.

Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

The staff survey data indicated that 65 percent of staff members 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” (E1). The interview data showed that core area teachers met to discuss Linkit scores, common assessments, and the district scope and sequence curriculum document to adjust their lesson plans. Additionally, interview data suggested that non-core content area teachers did not engage in those same types of discussions. Sixty-one percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “All teachers in our school personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs of students” (E2). The classroom observation data showed that most instruction was whole group with limited activities or instruction occurring in small groups. Fifty-nine percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed that “All teachers in our school use multiple types of assessments to modify instruction and to revise the curriculum” (E7). While the school had implemented several electronic assessments (e.g., Linkit, Freckle) to collect data, the interview data indicated that staff members were uncomfortable using the collected data to improve instruction. While the school provided time in the master schedule for teachers to collaborate, 50 percent of teachers agreed/strongly agreed that “All teachers in our school have been trained to implement a formal process that promotes discussion about student learning (e.g., action research, examination of student work, reflection, study teams, and peer coaching)” (E10).

The survey data indicated that 50 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that “All of my child's teachers use a variety of teaching strategies and learning activities” (E3). Forty-six percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that “All of my child's teachers meet his/her learning needs by individualizing instruction” (E4). Additionally, 67 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “My child is given multiple assessments to measure his/her understanding of what was taught” (E12).

The student survey data indicated that students were not being challenged, as evidenced by 58 percent of students who agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “My school provides me with challenging curriculum and learning experiences” (E2). Forty percent of students agreed/strongly agreed that “My school provides learning services for me according to my needs” (E7). Finally, 20 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed that “All of my teachers change their teaching to meet my learning needs” (E9).

Documents and Artifacts:

A review of lesson plans and various data binders showed that data were collected and reviewed; however, there was minimal evidence that these data were used by teachers to meet the individual needs of learners or to inform instruction in order to promote higher levels of learning.

Improvement Priority #3

Develop and monitor professional learning activities that are planned and delivered based on data-driven needs assessments, including data collected from supervision and evaluation processes. Develop processes to monitor professional development activities in order to determine their impact on learning and organizational effectiveness. (Standard 3.1)

Evidence:**Stakeholder Interview Data:**

While the school was in the beginning stages of implementing professional learning community (PLC) meetings, desired outcomes were not evident in data from a review of documents or stakeholder interviews. Moreover, the interview data indicated that administrators supported collaboration throughout the school but lacked a formal plan to foster it. The data revealed that core content teachers connected professionally through PLC meetings and appreciated the structured time to discuss data, assessments, and collaborative lesson designs. However, the interview data showed that teachers who taught courses other than core content (e.g., support staff, non-core content area teachers) were left out of the PLC design and collaborative professional development. The Diagnostic Review Team found no evidence of a research-based PLC structure and limited evidence that staff members possessed a deep understanding of the purpose of PLC meetings.

The interview data indicated that some stakeholders did not attend external professional development activities this year. Administrators and staff reported that they attended in-house professional development for several new programs and initiatives, such as LinkIt, Freckle, Mastery Connect, and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). During administrator and staff interviews, it was evident that school leaders recognized the need for individualized professional development, but the district supported the level of professional development already implemented at Sneed Middle School.

Although in-house professional development was offered to core teachers, they were frustrated with the amount of change and the lack of time to implement new practices. Capturing the sentiment of several, one teacher said, "In theory, PBIS works to decrease discipline but it is still not being implemented with consistency throughout every classroom in the school." Another stakeholder reported, "It [PBIS] is not giving the results that they expected it to produce." The team found no evidence that teachers provided input into professional development offerings or that teacher evaluation data or student data were used to design and plan professional development. The teacher interview data and review of documents and artifacts indicated that some professional development occurred at the beginning of the year to analyze standardized testing data, but the team found little evidence that any follow-up professional development was provided.

The interview data revealed that professional growth or development for individual teachers or groups of teachers was not a priority for the school. One teacher said, "I want to grow as a teacher, but I'm not growing here." Another stated, "Sneed has provided no useful PD for me. Sadly, if I see something worth attending, such as a conference or workshop, I pay for it myself." The interview data revealed that teachers in one department created a peer-evaluation system with an embedded process for providing feedback within their department.

Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

Fifty-nine percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school's leaders support an innovative and collaborative culture" (D3). There was a lack of evidence that administrators at any level of the district or school provided ongoing and purposeful data-driven professional development. Sixty-three percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed that "In our school, a formal process is in place to support new staff

members in their professional practice” (E16). Fifty-four percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed that “All staff members participate in continuous professional learning based on identified needs of the school” (E17). Multiple stakeholder groups reported that the district issued a directive that external professional learning opportunities could not be attended. Plus, there was a lack of evidence that the school attempted to use internal resources or bring in meaningful outside professional development. The interview data revealed little evidence that professional learning was driven by teacher input or need, and many teachers either did not participate in or funded their own professional development. Forty-four percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed that “In our school, a professional learning program is designed to build capacity among all professional and support staff members” (E18). The team was unable to find evidence that most teachers worked together to analyze student data or that data analysis drove professional development plans. While some teachers were able to explain how they analyzed student data, others were unable to articulate how they collaborated with each other or explain the formal processes they used to improve student learning. The student survey data also confirmed these findings, as 43 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed that “In my school, teachers work together to improve student learning” (C5).

Documents and Artifacts:

The Diagnostic Review Team found minimal evidence of a professional learning plan based on data-driven needs assessments for both teachers and students that would provide sufficient and quality opportunities to apply intended learning and result in improved student learning and organizational effectiveness.

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 Sneed Middle School community experienced many changes during 2018-2019 with the arrival of a new superintendent and new principal. The principal served as the assistant principal primarily in charge of discipline at Sneed Middle School before taking the new position. The principal's prior experience with the school and community provided familiarity during the transition of new leadership. Numerous new programs and initiatives were implemented to improve student achievement, including Mastery Connect, Freckle, Linkit, PBIS, PLC meetings, and Coach Digital. The interview data indicated that while these were rolled out to the staff, the school did not conduct a professional learning needs assessment to identify needs and assist teachers in effectively using new programs. The master schedule was designed to provide time for collaboration for core content area teachers; however, the interview data indicated that non-core content area teachers were not engaged in the collaboration process.

Continuous Improvement Process:

The team found limited evidence that all stakeholders were included in the school's improvement planning process. Additionally, the team found parents and students had limited understanding of the improvement goals, objectives, strategies, activities, measures of success, progress monitoring, and funding needed to accomplish the plan. The interview and survey data and review of documents and artifacts indicated the lack of comprehensive structures and processes for engaging all stakeholder groups in a continuous improvement process to produce measurable improvements in student learning, professional practices, and organizational capacity. The Diagnostic Review Team did not find an ongoing and effective use of data from a variety of sources to drive decision-making by teachers and leaders. The interview data showed the school adopted new programs and initiatives (e.g., Mastery Connect, Freckle, Linkit, PBIS, PLCs, Coach Digital) without sufficient time and professional learning for effective implementation.

Although the school established times for PLC meetings, research-based structures for staff and students to learn and plan collaboratively were not evident. Data were not used consistently to inform instructional decisions throughout all grade levels.

The Diagnostic Review Team suggests that leadership assist teachers in developing and analyzing rubrics and exemplars to guide student learning and the completion of learning tasks. The classroom observation and interview data confirmed that students had few opportunities to engage in personalized or differentiated learning tasks. Finally, a refined walkthrough process focused on high-yield instructional strategies could be leveraged to provide actionable feedback to teachers for improving instructional practices and student learning.

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
Dr. Anna D. Diaz	Dr. Anna D. Diaz is the Chief Executive Officer of Disability Expert Solutions, a company dedicated to helping families and teachers navigate the special education system. She also works with K-12 educational leaders to increase academic achievement for all student populations. Her educational experiences span over 30 years. She has served as a teacher, dean, high school assistant principal, middle school principal, high school principal, executive area director, associate superintendent for exceptional education, and area superintendent. As area superintendent of up to 38 K-12 schools, she implemented and monitored systems, coupled with intense support, that continue to result in high levels of academic achievement. Dr. Diaz earned degrees from the University of South Florida and the University of Central Florida. She is a mentor, graduate faculty scholar, and member of a national faculty for the National Urban Special Education Leadership Institute at the University of Central Florida.
Karen Fiery	Karen Fiery serves as Instructional Technology and Professional Development Specialist for Allendale County Schools in Allendale, South Carolina. She has 11 years of experience serving the public schools of South Carolina. She works directly with administrators, teachers, students, and parents to develop strong implementation practices for instructional programs and provides relevant and purposeful professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators throughout the district. Previously, she served Lexington School District Four, Williston-Elko School District 29, Aiken County School District, and Clemson University through the Tall Pines Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Academy. Ms. Fiery is an alumna of Columbia College, South Carolina State University, and Western Governors University.
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 as State Director of the South Carolina (SC) High Schools that Work and Making Middle Grades Work. She is current Co-Director for the SC Schools to Watch program and is on the Board of the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform.
Dr. Carol Miner	Dr. Carol Miner is a Transformation Coach for the South Carolina Department of Education. In her role, she works with identified Comprehensive Support and Intervention (CSI) schools to assist them with data management through PowerSchool (student identification system used in South Carolina) in order to make sure the data are accurate. She also assists with building data walls in schools to facilitate teachers' use of data to inform instruction. Dr. Miner has over 25 years of educational experiences. She has served as a teacher, instructional coach, assistant principal, administrator, director, assistant superintendent, and interim superintendent. Dr. Miner holds a doctorate in K-12 educational administration from Capella University and has an educational specialist degree in educational leadership and a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from National-Louis University.

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Dr. Sharmayne Rutledge	Dr. Sharmayne Rutledge is an Executive Director for School Leadership and Technology Integration for the East Baton Rouge Parish School System. Her educational experiences span over 16 years. She has served as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, and district executive. Currently, she coordinates and supports the integration efforts for 89 K-12 schools in the district, special projects, and the district's Chilean Exchange Program. Dr. Rutledge holds a doctorate in educational leadership and research from Louisiana State University. She earned an educational specialist degree from Northcentral University. She also earned her master's degree in educational administration and supervision and a bachelor's degree in English liberal arts from Southern University Agricultural and Mechanical College.

Addenda

Student Performance Data

Section I: Percentages of Students Scoring at 70 or Above on the End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) (2015-2016, 2016-2017, 2017-2018)

Content Area	% School (17-18)	% State (17-18)	% School (16-17)	% State (16-17)	% School (15-16)	% State (15-16)
Algebra I	91.5	60.5	93.1	75.1	97.2	82.4
English I	100	53.9	98.2	77.0	100.0	78.9
Biology	N/A	59.5	N/A	73.8	N/A	75.9
U.S. History	N/a	48.9	N/A	67.9	N/A	71.2

Section II: Percentages 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)

Grade	2017-2018				2016-2017				2015-2016			
	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		45.2		55.7		42.1		52.5		43.7		53.6
4		43.9		48.1		40.9		46.4		43.4		46.7
5		38.9		45.2		38.3		40.0		41.2		44.3
6		39.9		42.6		39.7		41.5		41.0		39.5
7	32.3	40.1	22.9	34.9	36.3	36.4	34.1	33.3	39.9	40.7	29.4	34.7
8	39.7	39.2	29.5	36.6	36.3	40.1	24.8	34.5	47.9	44.7	24.3	32.4

Section III: 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			Grade 6			Grade 7			Grade 8		
	2018	2017	2016	2018	2017	2016	2018	2017	2016	2018	2017	2016	2018	2017	2016
Science											51.1	76.0	60.1	51.2	77.6
State Avg. Science	49.8	48.4	65.0		46.7	65.7	47.7	48.0	62.1		46.5	70.6	48.7	49.5	66.2
Social Studies										75.9	76.1	75.7		65.4	76.0
State Avg. Social Studies		80.8	81.3	69.9	70.9	71.5		73.3	76.3	66.4	63.5	68.4		67.7	69.5

Schedule

Sunday, April 28, 2019

Time	Event	Where	Who
4:00 p.m.	Brief Team Meeting	Conference Center	Diagnostic Review Team Members
4:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.	Principal Presentation	Conference Center	Diagnostic Review Team Members
5:15 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #1	Conference Center	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Monday, April 29, 2019

Time	Event	Where	Who
7:30 a.m.	Team arrives at Sneed Middle School	School	Diagnostic Review Team Members
7:40 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Interviews / Classroom Observations / Stakeholder Interviews / Artifact Review	School	Diagnostic Review Team Members
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Team returns to hotel		
5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #2	Conference Center	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Tuesday, April 30, 2019

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

Wednesday, May 1, 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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