

# DIAGNOSTIC REVIEW REPORT FOR GREG MATHIS CHARTER SCHOOL

2872 Azalea Drive  
North Charleston, South Carolina  
29405-8216

**Natrice Henriques**  
Principal

*March 22-23, 2016*



*Copyright ©2016 by Advance Education, Inc. AdvancED® grants to the Institution, which is the subject of the Diagnostic Review Report, and its designees and stakeholders a non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free license and release to reproduce, reprint, and distribute this report in accordance with and as protected by the Copyright Laws of the United States of America and all foreign countries. All other rights not expressly conveyed are reserved by AdvancED.*

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	4
Results.....	7
Teaching and Learning Impact.....	7
Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning.....	9
Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement .....	10
Student Performance Diagnostic .....	10
Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™).....	10
eleot™ Summary Statement.....	11
eleot™ Analysis by Learning Environment .....	12
Findings .....	19
Leadership Capacity .....	21
Standard 1 Purpose and Direction.....	22
Standard 2 Governance and Leadership.....	22
Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic .....	23
Findings.....	24
Resource Utilization .....	30
Standard 4 Resource and Support System.....	31
Conclusion.....	32
Team Roster .....	35
About AdvancED .....	35
References .....	36
Student Performance Data Table.....	38
Stakeholder Plus/Delta .....	40
Diagnostic Review Schedule .....	43

## Introduction

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

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

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

The AdvancED Diagnostic Review Team uses AdvancED Standards, associated Indicators and criteria related to student performance and stakeholder engagement to guide its evaluation. The Standards, Indicators and related criteria are evaluated using Indicator-specific performance levels. The Team rates each Indicator and criterion on a scale of 1 to 4. The final scores assigned to the Indicators and criteria represent the average of the Diagnostic Review Team members' individual ratings.

### **Use of Diagnostic Tools**

A key to examining the institution is the design and use of diagnostic tools that reveal the effectiveness with which an institution creates conditions and implements processes and practices that impact student performance and success. In preparation for the Diagnostic Review, the institution conducted a Self Assessment using the AdvancED Standards and provided evidence to support its conclusions vis-à-vis organizational effectiveness in ensuring acceptable and improving levels of student performance.

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

The Diagnostic Review Team's findings and critical observations are shared in this report through the Indicator ratings, identification of Powerful Practices and Improvement Priorities.

### **Powerful Practices**

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

### **Improvement Priorities**

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

explanation and rationale to give leaders and stakeholders a clear understanding of the conditions, practices, policies, etc., revealed through the Diagnostic Review process. Improvement Priorities are intended to be incorporated into the institution's improvement plan.

### **The Review**

Greg Mathis Charter School hosted a Diagnostic Review on March 22-23, 2016. The on-site review involved a three-member Team who provided their knowledge, skills and expertise for carrying out the Diagnostic Review process and developing this written report of their findings.

The Diagnostic Review Team expresses its appreciation to the staff and stakeholders of Greg Mathis Charter School for the assistance extended to the Team throughout the Diagnostic Review. The school is commended for the preparations made before the visit and the responsiveness made in fulfilling all of the requests during the review. The Team felt welcome throughout the visit.

Prior to the start of the Diagnostic Review, the Team engaged in conference calls and various communications through e-mails to complete the initial intensive study, review, and analysis of various documents provided by the school/district. The Lead Evaluator conducted conference calls with the principal of the school. The school leader planned and conducted the Internal Review. The comprehensive Internal Review engaged a range of stakeholder groups and was completed and submitted for review by the Diagnostic Review Team. Evidence and documentation to support the school, Self Assessment and other diagnostics were well organized and easily accessed by the External Review Team members.

A total of 28 stakeholders were interviewed and 12 classrooms were observed during the Diagnostic Review. Throughout the Diagnostic Review the school leaders, faculty, and staff were forthcoming in their discussion regarding the status and ongoing school improvement efforts at Greg Mathis Charter School.

<b>Stakeholder Interviewed</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Administrators</b>	4
<b>Instructional Staff</b>	3
<b>Support Staff</b>	4
<b>Students</b>	15
<b>Parents/Community/Business Leaders</b>	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	29

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

## Results

### Teaching and Learning Impact

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

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

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

Institutions with strong improvement processes move beyond anxiety about the current reality and focus on priorities and initiatives for the future. Using results, i.e., data and other information, to guide continuous improvement is key to an institution's success. A study conducted by Datnow, Park, and Wohlstetter (2007) from the Center on Educational Governance at the University of Southern California indicated that data can shed light on existing areas of strength and weakness and also guide

improvement strategies in a systematic and strategic manner (Dembosky, J., Pane, J., Barney, H., & Christina, R., 2005). The study also identified six key strategies that performance-driven systems use: (1) building a foundation for data-driven decision making, (2) establishing a culture of data use and continuous improvement, (3) investing in an information management system, (4) selecting the right data, (5) building institutional capacity for data-driven decision making, and (6) analyzing and acting on data to improve performance. Other research studies, though largely without comparison groups, suggested that data-driven decision-making has the potential to increase student performance (Alwin, 2002; Doyle, 2003; Lafee, 2002; McIntire, 2002).

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

**Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning**

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

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Average Team Rating</b>
3.1	The school's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking and life skills that lead to success at the next level.	2.00
3.2	Curriculum, instruction and assessment are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	1.00
3.3	Teachers engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	1.00
3.4	School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	2.00
3.5	Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities to improve instruction and student learning.	1.00
3.6	Teachers implement the school's instructional process in support of student learning.	2.00
3.7	Mentoring, coaching and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the school's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	2.00
3.8	The school engages families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keeps them informed of their children's learning progress.	2.00
3.9	The school has a formal structure whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the school who supports that student's educational experience.	2.33
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	2.00
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	2.00
3.12	The school provides and coordinates learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	1.00

### Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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

Indicator	Description	Average Team Rating
5.1	The school establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	1.00
5.2	Professional and support staff continuously collect, analyze and apply learning from a range of data sources, including comparison and trend data about student learning, instruction, program evaluation and organizational conditions.	2.00
5.3	Professional and support staff are trained in the evaluation, interpretation and use of data.	1.00
5.4	The school engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness and success at the next level.	2.00
5.5	Leadership monitors and communicates comprehensive information about student learning, conditions that support student learning and the achievement of school improvement goals to stakeholders.	1.00

### Student Performance Diagnostic

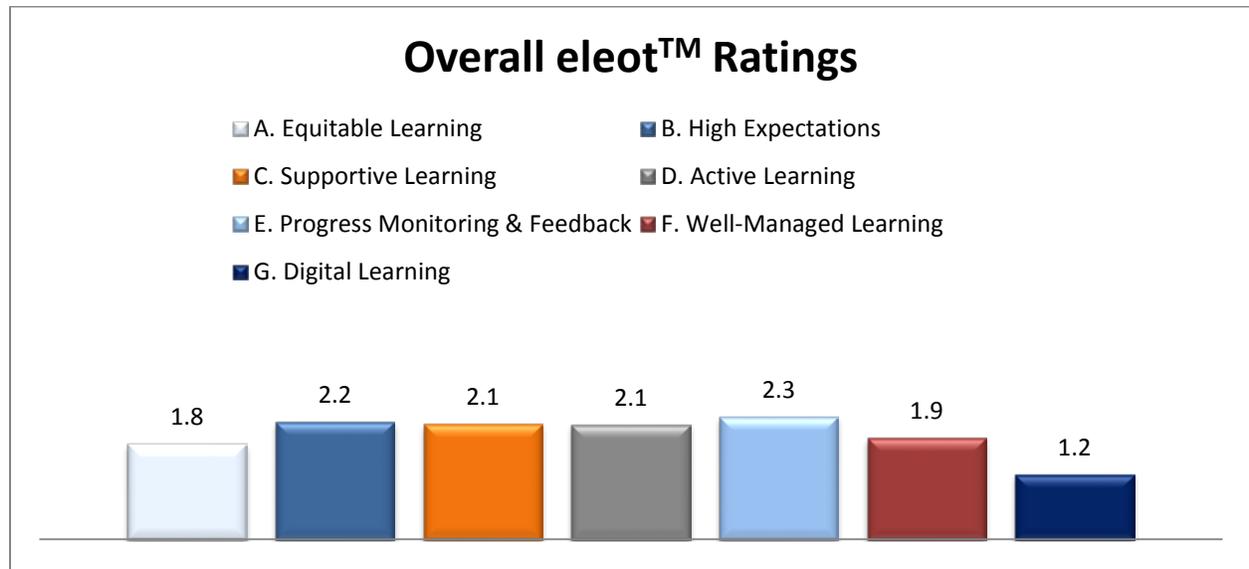
The quality of assessments used to measure student learning, assurance that assessments are administered with procedural fidelity and appropriate accommodations, assessment results that reflect the quality of learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important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

Evaluative Criteria	Average Team Rating
1. Assessment Quality	2.33
2. Test Administration	3.00
3. Quality of Learning	2.00
4. Equity of Learning	2.00

### Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™)

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

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



#### eleot™ Summary Statement

The Diagnostic Review Team conducted 11 classroom observations in all core content classes using the eleot classroom observation tool. Overall eleot ratings ranged from 2.3 to 1.2 on a four-point scale. The highest rated environment was the Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment; the lowest was the Digital Learning Environment. Although the classroom sizes were small, class instruction was mostly teacher-centered or students worked independently with teacher assistance. There was little group work where the teacher checked in with students for understanding. There was also very limited differentiation of instruction taking place. Students were not often on task, and high expectations were not consistently enforced. The Team noted that higher-order critical thinking questions were not typically included in the lessons observed.

## eleot™ Analysis by Learning Environment

A. Equitable Learning Environment						
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
A.1	1.6	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	0%	8%	42%	50%
A.2	2.3	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	0%	33%	67%	0%
A.3	1.9	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	0%	25%	42%	33%
A.4	1.2	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	0%	8%	0%	92%
Overall rating on a four-point scale:		1.8				

**Equitable Learning Environment**

The Equitable Learning Environment received a rating of 1.8 on a four-point scale. This was the second lowest rated learning environment. It was evident/very evident in 33 percent of the classrooms that students had “equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support” (A2), which was the highest rated environment item (2.3 on a four-point scale). It was evident/very evident in only eight percent of classes that students had “differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs” (A1). This was also somewhat evident in 42 percent of classes. It was also evident/very evident in only eight percent of classrooms that a student had “ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other’s backgrounds/cultures/differences” (A4), which was the lowest rated environment item (1.2 average rating). This item (A4) was not observed in 92 percent of the classrooms.

<b>B. High Expectations Environment</b>						
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
B.1	2.1	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	0%	25%	58%	17%
B.2	2.4	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	0%	42%	58%	0%
B.3	1.9	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	0%	42%	8%	50%
B.4	2.3	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	0%	42%	42%	17%
B.5	2.1	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	0%	33%	42%	25%
<b>Overall rating on a four-point scale:</b>		<b>2.2</b>				

### High Expectations Learning Environment

The High Expectations Environment was the second highest-rated environment, receiving an overall rating of 2.2 on a four-point scale. In 42 percent of classrooms it was evident/very evident that students were “tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable” (B2), which was the highest rated environment item at 2.4. It was also 42 percent somewhat evident that this was occurring. It was evident/very evident in 42 percent of classrooms and somewhat evident in 8 percent of other classrooms that students were “provided exemplars of high quality work” (B3); the environment item rated lowest at 1.9 on a four-point scale.

<b>C. Supporting Learning Environment</b>						
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
C.1	2.0	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	0%	42%	17%	42%
C.2	2.0	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	0%	33%	33%	33%
C.3	2.0	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	0%	25%	50%	25%
C.4	2.5	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	0%	58%	33%	8%
C.5	2.1	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	0%	33%	42%	25%
<b>Overall rating on a four-point scale:</b>		<b>2.1</b>				

### **Supportive Learning Environment**

The Supportive Learning Environment received an overall rating of 2.1 on a four-point scale. It was evident/very evident in 58 percent of the classrooms that students were “provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks” (C4). This environment item received the highest rating with an average of 2.5 on a four-point scale. It was evident/very evident 33 percent of the time and somewhat evident 33 percent of the time that students demonstrated “a positive attitude about the classroom and learning” (C2). It was evident/very evident in 42 percent of classrooms and 17 percent somewhat evident that a student “demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive” (C1). It was evident/very evident in 25 percent and somewhat evident in 50 percent of classrooms that students took “risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)” (C3). Environment items C1, C2 and C3 all received ratings of 2.0 on a four-point scale.

<b>D. Active Learning Environment</b>						
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
D.1	<b>2.3</b>	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	0%	25%	75%	0%
D.2	<b>1.9</b>	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	0%	33%	25%	42%
D.3	<b>2.2</b>	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	0%	25%	67%	8%
<b>Overall rating on a four-point scale:</b>		<b>2.1</b>				

### **Active Learning Environment**

The Active Learning Environment mirrored the final score of the Supportive Learning Environment, receiving a rating of 2.1 on a four-point scale. The highest-rated item (2.3 average) where students had “several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students” (D1) was evident/very evident in 25 percent of the observations and 75 percent somewhat evident. It was only evident/very evident in 33 percent of classes that students made “connections from content to real-life experiences” (D3), which was the lowest-rated environment item.

<b>E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment</b>						
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
E.1	<b>2.5</b>	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	0%	50%	50%	0%
E.2	<b>2.4</b>	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	0%	50%	42%	8%
E.3	<b>2.3</b>	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	0%	33%	58%	8%
E.4	<b>1.8</b>	Understands how her/his work is assessed	0%	25%	25%	50%
E.5	<b>2.3</b>	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	8%	42%	25%	25%
<b>Overall rating on a four-point scale:</b>		<b>2.3</b>				

### **Progress Monitoring Learning Environment**

The Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment received the highest rating: 2.3 on a four-point scale. Instances when students were “asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning” (E1) were evident/very evident in 50 percent of classrooms and somewhat evident in 50 percent of classrooms (rating 2.5 out of 4). It was evident/very evident that students “had opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback” (E5) in 50 percent of classrooms (which rated 2.3 on a 4-point scale). The lowest rated item was “Understands how her/his work is assessed” (E4) with an average of 1.8. This item was 25 percent evident/very evident and 25 percent somewhat evident in the classrooms.

<b>F. Well-Managed Learning Environment</b>						
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
F.1	<b>2.5</b>	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	0%	50%	50%	0%
F.2	<b>1.9</b>	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	0%	17%	58%	25%
F.3	<b>1.4</b>	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	0%	17%	8%	75%
F.4	<b>1.1</b>	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	0%	0%	8%	92%
F.5	<b>2.4</b>	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	0%	50%	42%	8%
<b>Overall rating on a four-point scale:</b>		<b>1.9</b>				

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

The Well-Managed Learning Environment rated as third lowest learning environment at 1.9 on a four-point scale. It was 50 percent evident/very evident and also 50 percent somewhat evident during the observations that a student “Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers” (F1). This environment item rated the highest at with a 2.5 average on a four-point scale. With a 1.1, the lowest rating was (F4) item “Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities”. This item was rated zero percent evident/very evident and eight percent somewhat evident in the classroom observations.

<b>G. Digital Learning Environment</b>						
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
G.1	<b>1.6</b>	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	0%	17%	25%	58%
G.2	<b>1.0</b>	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	0%	0%	0%	100%
G.3	<b>1.0</b>	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	0%	0%	0%	100%
<b>Overall rating on a four-point scale:</b>		<b>1.2</b>				

### Digital Learning Environment

The Digital Learning Environment received the lowest rating of all learning environments: 1.2 on a four-point scale. It was evident/very evident in 17 percent of the classes and somewhat evident in 25 percent of others that a student “Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning” (G1); this item rated highest at 1.6. A tie with a rating of 1 occurred between “Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning” (G2) and “Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning” (G3). Neither of these environment items was observed in any of the classrooms.

## Findings

### Improvement Priority

Engage all students by devising effective instructional strategies to meet individual student needs based on multiple assessment data sources, both formative and summative.

(Indicators 3.2, 3.3)

### Student Performance Data:

Student Performance data demonstrated that instructional strategies to meet individual student needs were not in place. The school continues to meet academic gains in most areas, but progress is slow. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores increased in Language Arts from the fall to the winter of 2015-2016 by 1.7 percent for ninth graders, 3.4 percent for tenth graders, 3.2 percent for eleventh graders and 3.4 percent for twelve graders. In reading, there was a decline in ninth grade reading of 1.2 percent. But tenth grade reading increased by 2.6 percent, eleventh grade reading by 2.7 percent and twelfth grade reading by 3.8 percent. All areas of math improved, with a 2.7 percent growth for ninth graders, 3.3 percent for tenth graders, and 5.2 percent for eleventh graders and 4.9 percent for twelfth graders. The growth rate for scoring at grade level needs improvement to achieve complete mastery. By the winter of 2015-2016, 58 percent of twelfth graders were at grade level in Language Arts, 54 percent in Reading and 59.2 percent in Mathematics.

### Classroom Observations Data:

In the Equitable Learning Environment, the item "Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs" (A1) was evident/very evident in only eight percent of the observations. The Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment had three items rated 50 percent evident/very evident: "Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning" (E1), "Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding" (E2) and "Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback" (E5). It was evident/very evident that 33 percent of classrooms had students "Demonstrate or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content" (E3), while it was evident/very evident in only 25 percent of the classrooms that students had the opportunity to "Understand how her/his work is assessed" (E4). Placing more emphasis on individual progress monitoring and providing appropriate feedback would ensure that students are directly engaged in the oversight of their learning.

### Stakeholder Survey Data:

Stakeholder surveys suggest that both students and staff believed that instructional sources are not being used to meet the individual needs of students. Only 42 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed that "all of my teachers change their teaching to meet my learning needs." Furthermore, 63 percent of students believed that "all my teachers use a variety of teaching methods and learning activities to help me develop the skills I need to succeed." Likewise, staff voiced that not all teachers devised instructional strategies to meet individual learning needs. Only 67 percent of teachers agreed/strongly agreed "all teachers in our school personalize instructional strategies that require students' collaboration, self-reflection and development of critical thinking skills." Sixty-seven percent of the teachers also agreed/strongly agreed, "all teachers in our school personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs of students." Both these conditions suggested

that a third of the staff did not feel that instructional strategies to meet the individualized needs of students were being implemented. In the 2015 South Carolina School Climate Survey, 43 percent of teachers agreed with the statement, “The school administration communicates clear instructional goals for the school.”

## Leadership Capacity

The capacity of leadership to ensure an institution's progress towards its stated objectives is an essential element of organizational effectiveness. An institution's leadership capacity includes the fidelity and commitment to its institutional purpose and direction, the effectiveness of governance and leadership to enable the institution to realize its stated objectives, the ability to engage and involve stakeholders in meaningful and productive ways and the capacity to enact strategies to improve results of student learning.

Purpose and direction are critical to successful institutions. A study conducted in 2010 by the London-based Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) reported that "in addition to improving performance, the research indicates that having a sense of shared purpose also improves employee engagement" and that "lack of understanding around purpose can lead to demotivation and emotional detachment, which in turn lead to a disengaged and dissatisfied workforce."

AdvancED has found through its evaluation of best practices in 32,000 institutions around the world that a successful institution commits to a shared purpose and direction and establishes expectations for student learning that are aligned with the institutions' vision and supported by internal and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and overall institution effectiveness.

Governance and leadership are key factors in raising institutional quality. Leaders, both local administrators and governing boards/authorities, are responsible for ensuring all learners achieve while also managing many other facets of an institution. Institutions that function effectively do so without tension between the governing board/authority, administrators and educators and have established relationships of mutual respect and a shared vision (Feuerstein & Opfer, 1998). In a meta-analysis of educational institution leadership research, Leithwood and Sun (2012) found that leaders (school and governing boards/authority) can significantly "influence school conditions through their achievement of a shared vision and agreed-on goals for the organization, their high expectations and support of organizational members, and their practices that strengthen school culture and foster collaboration within the organization." With the increasing demands of accountability placed on institutional leaders, leaders who empower others need considerable autonomy and have to involve their communities to attain continuous improvement goals. Leaders who engage in such practices experience a greater level of success (Fink & Brayman, 2006). Similarly, governing boards/authorities that focus on policy-making are more likely to allow institutional leaders the autonomy to make decisions that impact teachers and students and are less responsive to politicization than boards/authorities that respond to vocal citizens (Greene, 1992).

AdvancED's experience gained through evaluation of best practices has indicated that a successful institution has leaders who are advocates for the institution's vision and improvement efforts. The

leaders provide direction and allocate resources to implement curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders encourage collaboration and shared responsibility for school improvement among stakeholders. The institution's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation.

### Standard 1 Purpose and Direction

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

Indicator	Description	Average Team Rating
1.1	The school engages in a systematic, inclusive and comprehensive process to review, revise and communicate a school purpose for student success.	1.00
1.2	The school's leadership and staff commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking and life skills.	1.00
1.3	The school's leadership implements a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	2.00

### Standard 2 Governance and Leadership

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

Indicator	Description	Average Team Rating
2.1	The governing body establishes policies and support practices that ensure effective administration of the school.	1.00
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	1.00
2.3	The governing body ensures that the school leadership has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.	1.00
2.4	Leadership and staff foster a culture consistent with the school's purpose and direction.	2.00
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the school's purpose and direction.	1.00
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice and student success.	2.00

**Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic**

The AdvancED surveys (student, parent and staff) are directly correlated to the AdvancED Standards and Indicators. They provide not only direct information about stakeholder satisfaction but also become a source of data for triangulation by the Diagnostic Review Team as it evaluates indicators.

Institutions are asked to collect and analyze stakeholder feedback data, then submit the data and the analyses to the Diagnostic Review Team for review. The Diagnostic Review Team evaluates the quality of the administration of the surveys by institution and the degree to which the institution analyzed and acted on the results. Results of that evaluation are reported below.

<b>Evaluative Criteria</b>	<b>Average Team Rating</b>
1. Questionnaire Administration	1.00
2. Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	2.00

## Findings

### Improvement Priority

Develop and communicate a shared culture of values and beliefs that support challenging learning experiences for all students through a comprehensive improvement process that is reviewed and revised on a regular basis.

(Indicators 1.1, 1.2)

### Student Performance Data:

Student performance data, as detailed in the addendum of this report, suggested that the school has not been effective in making improvements across academic areas. Evidence dating back to the 2007-2008 State Report Card disclosed that the school has been At Risk, with academic growth rated below state averages. Data further suggested that the academic rigor and pacing, which would be associated with the communication of a shared culture of school improvement, was inadequate due to the low percentages of students passing the state End of Course Tests in 2014-2015. Only 30 percent of students passed Algebra I, compared to the state average of 85.7 percent, and only 13.3 percent of students passed Biology I where the state average is 77.8 percent. Similarly, 30.8 percent of students passed English I compared to the state average of 75.1 percent, and only 29.4 percent of students passed US History compared to the state average of 69.1 percent.

### Classroom Observation Data:

Classroom observation data, as referenced in the Teaching and Learning Impact section of this report, suggested that in the vast majority of classrooms, the school improvement culture did not include student engagement at a rigorous level. During 25 percent of classroom observations, it was evident/very evident a student “knows and strives to meet high expectations established by the teacher” (B1). It was evident/very evident in 42 percent of classrooms that students were “tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable” (B2). In 33 percent of classrooms it was evident/very evident that students were “asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking” (B5). It was evident/very evident in 33 percent of classrooms that students were “provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for his/her needs” (C5). In 25 percent of classrooms it was evident/very evident that students were “actively engaged in the learning activities” (D3). These results underscore the need to carefully examine the extent to which classroom instruction is consistently engaging students through a shared culture of school improvement for increased student achievement.

### Stakeholder Survey Data:

Stakeholder survey results revealed limited agreement that the school has developed and communicated a shared culture of school improvement. Only 40 percent of the staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school’s purpose statement is formally reviewed and revised with involvement from our stakeholders.” In addition, 60 percent of the staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “Our school’s purpose statement is supported by the policies and practices adopted by the school board or governing body.” Seventy percent of staff believed, “Our school's leaders hold all students to high academic standards.” When it comes to students, 62 percent agreed/strongly agreed

with the statement, “In my school, the purpose and expectations are clearly explained to me and my family.” Similarly, 60 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “In my school, a high-quality education is offered.” These survey results reflected that there is a need for developing a shared culture of school improvement to increase academic rigor and achievement.

**Stakeholder Interviews:**

In interviews, teachers, staff and administrators indicated that there was no formal review process for revising the school’s purpose statement with involvement from stakeholders. Staff indicated that students were not always held accountable for their learning. For example, students could attend a Saturday school for four hours and then receive credit for two full days of school. However, staff noted that students didn’t consistently take advantage of this opportunity. Teachers also felt that some initiatives were started, but lacked follow through from administration to ensure success. For example, by November all teachers were to begin using Class Dojo, a tool that helps improve classroom behavior and encourages engagement by rewarding students with prizes for obtaining certain points. However, teachers claim that students had yet to receive any prizes from school administration for positive behavior.

**Documents and Artifacts:**

A review of the faculty and student handbook did not include evidence of shared goals and action plans focused on school improvement. Based on the review of the student council binder, it was evident that the school had a student council, but there was no evidence to show what role it played in the school or how student voice was included to develop ownership of school improvement goals and action plans. The school board binder provided agendas from meetings, but no information in the minutes focused on specific school improvement discussions, goals or action plans. The school provided a teacher’s professional development binder with important documents, some of which outlined professional development experiences, as well as agendas and memorandums. But no formal professional development plan was provided to show a systematic approach to formalizing professional development based on school improvement needs. School administration and the school board chair spoke about strategic planning and budget planning, but there was no formal documentation of any such planning discussions. A review of a recent financial audit revealed a significant shortfall in the budget, in excess of \$131,000, which highlighted the need for planning systems that support and sustain school improvement. Furthermore, a review of the school board documents revealed that a position of CEO was created, to which the principal reports, but the Team was not provided any documentation outlining how each position supports or oversees school improvement.

**Improvement Priority**

Establish policies and support practices for effective administration by the governing body.

(Indicator 2.1)

**Stakeholder Survey Data:**

Forty percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school's governing body or school board complies with all policies, procedures, laws and regulations," suggesting that a significant percentage of staff, more than half, disagreed or were ambivalent to the existence of this effective practice. Similarly, 40 percent of staff indicated, "Our school's governing body or school board maintains a distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of school leadership." Fifty-seven percent of students indicated that they agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "My school provides me with challenging curricula and learning experiences," suggesting that a little less than half could not confirm that effective practices were in place for them.

**Stakeholder Interviews:**

In interviews, teachers and administrators consistently were unable to explain the hierarchy of the school administration and provide clarity on the roles of the CEO and the interim principal. The School Board Chair reported that three board members resigned in May 2015 and the remaining three board members released the former principal from her duties due in part to the school's significant debt. The board's attorney informed these board members that established by-laws stated they could not remove anyone without a full board in place. Additionally, it was revealed in interviews that the previous board members were also accountable for the school's debt, which existed for many years. When new board members were elected, they re-hired the former principal in the role of CEO to help the board better understand the operations of the school and to assist with the school finances. The new board members felt that the previous board had not properly informed the former principal of her fiscal responsibilities before releasing her. The CEO signed a contract that outlined her myriad duties; however, interviews with school leadership indicated that one of her key responsibilities would be to work with the board on financial matters to help reduce the school's debt.

The interim principal has been serving in the role for nine months. She interviewed for the principal position but the board has not yet hired anyone and plans to repost the position opening. A school district liaison reported that the district began the process of withdrawing the charter, so the school appealed. The liaison suggested that the charter be renegotiated so the school would not be under the same academic requirements as other schools. He also suggested that the district partner with the school to help the rewrite the school's charter and place district members on the board to provide school operational experience and stability.

**Documents and artifacts:**

A review of the Charter School Annual Report, CEO employment contract letter, board meeting minutes, and other documents did not reveal that there were active policies in place that govern the administration of the school. But according to the CEO employment contract letter, the CEO responsibilities include: ensuring quality evaluation of principal, faculty, and staff; supporting the board

on team building efforts with administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, students, and community stakeholders; identifying and administering professional development of the board and school; assisting with implementing strategies for the future of the school; leading the school accreditation efforts; serving as a liaison between the school and the board; advising board members on fiduciary matters and assisting in representing the organization for civic and professional association activities. There was little evidence that this was all being carried out. There was no clearly defined statement of purpose or direction for improving student performance to meet high expectations. Some evidence suggested that improvement plans might be forthcoming after a Strategic Planning Session was held in January of this year. The development and implementation of policies that govern school operation, such as instruction and assessment monitoring, directing professional growth of staff and providing clear requirements for fiscal management and resource allocation, will ensure effective administration of the school.

**Improvement Priority**

Supervise and monitor on a frequent, regular basis an evaluative process that supports continuous improvement of instructional practices to ensure that teachers actively engage all students in their learning for increased academic achievement.

(Indicators 2.6, 3.4)

**Student Performance Data:**

Although evidence indicated that school leadership collected documentation of failing students on a regular basis, student performance data, as detailed in the addendum of this report, did not suggest that improvement of instructional practices was being supervised or monitored. End of Course Tests at the school were below the state averages. In 2014-2015, the End of Course Tests passage rate for all subjects was 25.5 percent compared to 77.3 percent for the state. This was down from 28.3 percent in 2013-2014.

**Classroom Observations Data:**

The Team observed that supervision and evaluations were not being conducted to improve instructional practices that ensure student success. In only 25 percent of classrooms was it evident/very evident that students had "several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students" (D1) and were "actively engaged in the learning activities" (D3), as described in the Active Learning Environment section of this report. The High Expectations Environment had an important item that was evident/very evident in only 25 percent of the classrooms: "Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher" (B1).

**Stakeholder Survey Data:**

Teachers gave leadership high ratings on survey statements regarding the supervisory and evaluative process. One hundred percent of the staff agreed/strongly agreed "Our school leaders hold all staff members accountable for student learning." Ninety percent agreed/strongly agreed on the following two items: "Our school leaders regularly evaluate staff members on criteria designed to improve teaching and learning" and "Our school's leaders ensure all staff members use supervisory feedback to improve student learning." The Diagnostic Review Team felt that since there was an evaluation process and resulting test data was monitored, staff believed that they were being held accountable for their performance, although the Team did not think the process was at a level that would improve instructional practices to ensure all students' success.

**Stakeholder Interviews:**

During interviews, the school leadership confirmed that teachers were supervised and monitored. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) reported that she left most of the supervision to the interim principal. However, interim principal stated that with her many assigned duties and small staff, she had limited time for observations. In addition, a teacher confirmed that the principal is rarely in his/her room.

**Documents and Artifacts:**

As evidence that an evaluation process was in place at the school, the Team was given a schedule for observations to be made by the CEO and interim principal, an example of a Classroom Observation Tool

(COT) and a few samples of completed evaluations. Documentation explaining a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), which is a data-based problem solving system to integrate academics and behavioral instruction with interventions and supports, was also included as evidence. The interim principal participated in the district MTSS training and brought back ideas including collaboration, types of assessments and data analysis. Information gathered from the interim principal's weekly staff meetings did not include detailed collaborative or data analysis activities for improved instructional practices. A teaching mentor, who came in weekly to work with teachers, wrote notes in a teacher's lesson plans that provided detailed methods and activities to improve instruction to engage students, but there was no documentation of follow up by the school leadership ensuring the teacher incorporated these suggestions in the actual teaching of the lesson.

## Resource Utilization

The use and distribution of resources must be aligned and supportive of the needs of an institution and the students served. Institutions must ensure that resources are aligned with the stated mission and are distributed equitably so that the needs of students are adequately and effectively addressed. The utilization of resources includes an examination of the allocation and use of resources; the equity of resource distribution to need; the ability of the institution to ensure appropriate levels of funding and sustainability of resources; as well as evidence of long-range capital and resource planning effectiveness.

Institutions, regardless of their size, need access to sufficient resources and systems of support to be able to engage in sustained and meaningful efforts that result in a continuous improvement cycle. Indeed, a study conducted by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (Pan, D., Rudo, Z., Schneider, C., & Smith- Hansen, L., 2003) "demonstrated a strong relationship between resources and student success ... both the level of resources and their explicit allocation seem to affect educational outcomes."

AdvancED has found through its own evaluation of best practices in the 32,000 institutions in the AdvancED network that a successful institution has sufficient human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables students to achieve expectations for student learning, meets special needs, and complies with applicable regulations. The institution employs and allocates staff members who are well qualified for their assignments. The institution provides a safe learning environment for students and staff. The institution provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff members to improve their effectiveness. The institution ensures compliance with applicable governmental regulations.

**Standard 4 Resource and Support System**

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

Indicator	Description	Average Team Rating
4.1	Qualified professional and support staff are sufficient in number to fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school's purpose, direction and the educational program.	1.00
4.2	Instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the school.	2.00
4.3	The school maintains facilities, services and equipment to provide a safe, clean and healthy environment for all students and staff.	2.00
4.4	Students and school personnel use a range of media and information resources to support the school's educational programs.	1.33
4.5	The technology infrastructure supports the school's teaching, learning and operational needs.	1.00
4.6	The school provides support services to meet the physical, social and emotional needs of the student population being served.	2.33
4.7	The school provides services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational and career planning needs of all students.	3.00

## Conclusion

The biggest strength of the school was the passion that all the stakeholder groups felt for the success of the school and students. The open-ended survey comments from the students were similar to their very vocal comments during interviews. They related to the school because of the small class sizes and the supportive teachers and counselors. Saturday classes and summer school are offered to make up work and complete classes to ensure on-time graduation. Opportunities for students to take classes through the Edgenuity Cyber Curriculum were offered. Students could monitor their progress and see results in obtaining credits. Students also expressed that everyone got along and there was no fighting. They had fewer distractions in completing their work.

The parents were very appreciative of the school. They felt the teachers and leadership really cared about the students. Parents reported that school staff would call if there were any concerns or problems, gave parents their personal phone numbers to discuss student progress and may call parents up to three times a month. Parents also indicated that there was less stress on the students and less bullying as compared to the previous schools their child(ren) attended. The small school size allowed the students to focus on their education. The parents stated that they didn't know what they would do if the school wasn't there as an option for their students.

Teachers expressed that they tried to get more students to understand what they needed to do to pass classes. If students gave up, they failed. Once students began to earn credit, they could see setting a goal to graduate. Teachers spent extra time with their students to help them be successful. They met weekly with the interim principal to discuss grades, students and learning and discipline issues to make the best decisions for students with academic and behavior problems.

The counselors knew the students well. If someone missed school, they tracked and found the student to make sure that the student did not miss learning opportunities. In addition, documentation proved that the school could account for the whereabouts of students upon their withdrawal. The counselors reported that they knew the students well and by name. Counselors worked to meet the many emotional and mental needs of students; they expressed that they were able to sit and work through individual student issues. The counselors were also able to get many of the parents involved in the development of their children's guidance plans and to discuss graduation and post-secondary goals. The school created a partnership with a local food bank to provide students with work experience. Scholarship information was provided, and students were assisted with planning and applying to college. Throughout the Review, parents and students were observed receiving services from the counselors and the interim principal.

The school leadership all shared the passion for the success of the school and students. The interim principal, CEO and board chair discussed providing services to students in need with little resources. The new board was seeking more community partnerships to service students and to promote the school within the community. Communications with service providers helped to resolve outstanding bill payments. Leadership spent time reducing debt, renegotiating the charter, receiving board training and

participating in strategic planning to better organize the board. The activity of the current board members and school administration seemed to be headed in the right direction and will need to focus on establishing policies and practices to ensure effective administration of the school.

A school district representative confirmed that the school had no glaring climate and culture issues. Major behavioral issues had significantly declined and it was evident that staff and leadership cared about students. The interim principal was in her second year at the school.

The school leadership showed commitment to improving the school. They expressed that the culture of the school was to re-teach behavior. The first priority was to make sure the school was safe. The environment needed to be nurturing and compassionate to help students who have failed in the past achieve. Emphasis was placed on academic progress, where students completed the MAP three times a year. Students set their own benchmarks that must be three or more points higher each time they took the assessments. Data walls throughout the school promoted student achievement. Each classroom had the school's improvement goals posted to show growth in Reading and Math MAP assessments and to show growth in the state test and the American College Test (ACT) Work Keys. A teaching coach came in weekly to assist teachers in lesson planning for students who are hard to reach. This could be a very helpful resource in engaging all students with effective instructional strategies to meet individual student needs. Also, disciplinary referrals decreased by 10 percent.

The steps taken to improve the school by developing a school culture, emphasizing academic progress, sharing testing data and improving teaching strategies can be leveraged to further a culture of school improvement with a communicated, formalized process that sets the school's purpose, creates goals and action steps and includes all stakeholders in the pursuit of increased student achievement.

The support of the school and students along with the actions taken by the leadership and staff have enabled some students to graduate that otherwise might not of had the opportunity to do so. In 2015, the school had a graduation rate for the four-year adjusted cohort of 29.5 percent and a graduation rate for the five-year adjusted cohort of 29.8 percent. The school has fashioned a niche for some students, many encountering school success for the first time. Leadership and staff reported that some students came back to visit to share their post-secondary updates; graduates have gone on to enroll in college and participate in the workforce. The State Report Card acknowledged 26.3 percent of students from the 2014 graduating class were enrolled in a two-or four-year college or technical college in the fall of 2014.

Although some students have successfully graduated and gone on to pursue post-secondary goals, the school leadership needs to plan for the success of all students. The school leaders must enhance the culture for the achievement of learning through a school improvement process that is reviewed, revised and communicated to all stakeholders on a regular basis. The process must be documented and formalized regularly with participation by representatives from all stakeholder groups. The purpose statement must focus on student success. Leadership and staff will need to commit to a culture that is based on documented shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning that drives decision-

making. Evidence must indicate a commitment to instructional practices that include active student engagement, a focus on depth of understanding and the application of knowledge and skills. School leadership and staff need to share high expectations of professional practice.

In a continued commitment to improve the school and support the school's purpose and direction, governance must be established for the productive operation of the school. This includes monitoring for effective instruction, developing assessment procedures for equitable and challenging learning for all students, enacting policies for professional growth of staff, and establishing requirements for direction and oversight of fiscal management.

Supervision and evaluation to improve professional practice to increase student success requires regularly implemented processes that are used to monitor and adjust professional practices, engaging students in the oversight of their learning. As part of their professional practices, teachers must plan on using instructional strategies that require student collaboration, self-reflection and the development of critical thinking skills with personalized strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs based on data from multiple assessment sources. A variety of formative and summative assessments need to be included as data sources to guide and adjust instruction. By monitoring instruction, formative and summative assessment practices, school leaders can ensure the ongoing modification of engaging student instruction.

### **Improvement Priorities**

Engage all students by devising effective instructional strategies to meet individual student needs based on multiple assessment data sources, both formative and summative.

(Indicators 3.2, 3.3)

Develop and communicate a shared culture of values and beliefs that support challenging learning experiences for all students through a comprehensive improvement process that is reviewed and revised on a regular basis.

(Indicators 1.1, 1.2)

Establish policies and support practices for effective administration by the governing body.

(Indicator 2.1)

Supervise and monitor on a frequent, regular basis an evaluative process that supports continuous improvement of instructional practices to ensure that teachers actively engage all students in their learning for increased academic achievement.

(Indicators 2.6, 3.4)

## Team Roster

Lead Evaluator	Brief Biography
<b>Ann Nelson</b> Nevada	Ms. Nelson is a retired administrator and teacher for the Clark County School District. Currently, she serves as an AdvancED External Review Lead Evaluator and works part time in Human Resources for the Clark County School District.
<b>Team Members</b>	
<b>Sean Bishton</b> South Carolina	Mr. Bishton currently serves as the principal of Muller Road Middle School. He has teaching experience at K-8 levels in two countries. Mr. Bishton's administrative experience includes serving as Principal of an elementary school, Assistant Principal of an elementary and primary school, Curriculum Specialist of a middle school, and a middle school Math Coach.
<b>Barbara Turner</b> South Carolina	Ms. Turner has 15 years of experience in education. Eight of those years were spent at the South Carolina Department of Education as a Teacher Recruitment and Recognition Coordinator, a Teacher Certification Analyst, and currently as a state-wide representative of School Choice. She has worked as an English teacher and school counselor at the middle and high school levels.

## About AdvancED

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

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

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

## References

- Alwin, L. (2002). The will and the way of data use. *School Administrator*, 59(11), 11.
- Baumert, J., Kunter, M., Blum, W., Brunner, M., Voxx, T., Jordan, A., Klusmann, U., Krauss, S., Nuebrand, M., & Tsai, Y. (2010). Teachers' mathematical knowledge, cognitive activation in the classroom, and student progress. *American Educational Research Journal*, 47(1), 133-180.
- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. (2012). *Shared purpose: the golden thread?* London: CIPD.
- Colbert, J., Brown, R., Choi, S., & Thomas, S. (2008). An investigation of the impacts of teacher-driven professional development. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 35(2), 134-154.
- Conley, D.T. (2007). *Redefining college readiness (Vol. 3)*. Eugene, OR: Educational Policy Improvement Center.
- Datnow, A., Park, V., & Wohlstetter, P. (2007). *Achieving with data: How high-performing school systems use data to improve instruction for elementary students*. Los Angeles, CA: Center on Educational Governance, USC.
- Dembosky, J., Pane, J., Barney, H., & Christina, R. (2005). *Data driven decision making in Southwestern Pennsylvania school districts*. Working paper. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Ding, C. & Sherman, H. (2006). Teaching effectiveness and student achievement: Examining the relationship. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 29 (4), 40-51.
- Doyle, D. P. (2003). Data-driven decision making: Is it the mantra of the month or does it have staying power? *T.H.E. Journal*, 30(10), 19-21.
- Feuerstein, A., & Opfer, V. D. (1998). School board chairmen and school superintendents: An analysis of perceptions concerning special interest groups and educational governance. *Journal of School Leadership*, 8, 373-398.
- Fink, D., & Brayman, C. (2006). School leadership succession and the challenges of change. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 42 (62), 61-89.
- Greene, K. (1992). Models of school-board policy-making. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 28 (2), 220-236.
- Hornig, E., Klasik, D., & Loeb, S. (2010). Principal time-use and school effectiveness. *American Journal of Education* 116, (4) 492-523.
- Lafee, S. (2002). Data-driven districts. *School Administrator*, 59(11), 6-7, 9-10, 12, 14-15.
- Leithwood, K., & Sun, J. (2012). The Nature and effects of transformational school leadership: A meta-analytic review of unpublished research. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48 (387). 388-423.

Marks, H., Louis, K.S., & Printy, S. (2002). The capacity for organizational learning: Implications for pedagogy and student achievement. In K. Leithwood (Ed.), *Organizational learning and school improvement* (p. 239-266). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

McIntire, T. (2002). The administrator's guide to data-driven decision making. *Technology and Learning*, 22(11), 18-33.

Pan, D., Rudo, Z., Schneider, C., & Smith-Hansen, L. (2003). Examination of resource allocation in education: connecting spending to student performance. Austin, TX: SEDL.

## Student Performance Data Table

Percentages of Students Scoring at 70 or above on the End-of-Course Assessments at the School and in the State (2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015)

Content Area	% School (14-15)	% State (14-15)	% School (13-14)	% State (13-14)	% School (12-13)	% State (12-13)
Algebra I	30.0	85.7	34.6	NA	18.8	NA
English I	30.8	75.1	25.0	NA	16.7	NA
Biology	13.3	77.8	22.2	NA	21.7	NA
U.S. History	29.4	69.1	23.5	NA	5.3	NA
All	25.5	77.3	28.3	NA	15.7	NA

### Plus

- Steady increases in U.S. History and English 1

### Delta

- Fluctuations in Algebra 1, Biology 1 and general EOC passage rate.
- Largest performance gap between GMCHS and the State average is in Biology with a percentile difference of 64.5%

Percentage of Students Meeting Benchmarks on ACT, Grade 11, at the School and in the State (2014-2015)

Content Area	Percentage School (14-15)	Percentage State (14-15)
Composite	12.3	17.9
English	9.4	16.5
Math	14.4	18.1
Reading	12.5	18.3
Science	12.4	18.2
Writing	8.6	13.9

### Plus

- Highest performance was in the area of Math on the ACT. Inconsistent with Work Keys performance.

### Delta

- Generally low student performance at both school and state levels. GMCHS was below state level in all tested areas for ACT.
- Lowest performance area was English with a performance gap between GMCHS and the State of 7.1%.

**Percentage of Students Meeting Platinum, Gold or Silver Threshold on ACT Work Keys at School and in the State (2014-2015)**

	Percentage School 2014-15	Percentage State 2014-15
Applied Mathematics	26.7	71.2
Reading for Information	75.0	93.2
Locating Information	62.5	87.7

Plus

- Over 50% of students met platinum, gold or silver threshold in Work Keys Assessment in the areas of Reading for Information and Locating Information.
- Reading for Information recorded the smallest performance gap between GMCHS students and the state average with a percentile difference of 18.2%.

Delta

- Below state average in all three areas.
- Greatest performance gap is recorded in Math with a percentile difference of 44.5%.

**Graduation Rates for the school and State (2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015)**

	School 2015	State 2015	School 2014	State 2014	School 2013	State 2013
Graduation Rate (for 4-year adjusted cohort)	29.5	80.3	18.2	NA	2.7	NA
Graduation Rate (for 5-year adjusted cohort)	29.8	82.0	16.2	NA	10.3	NA

Plus

- Steady increase in both four-year and five-year cohorts over the stated three-year period.

Delta

- Graduation rates for four-year and five-year cohorts for the last three years fall below the state average for 2015. No comparative state data is available for 2013 and 2014.
- Lowest performance of the five year adjusted cohort is 2013 with a graduation rate of 10.3. Five-year graduation rate for 2015 shows an increase of 19.5 %. Lowest graduation rate for the four-year cohort was recorded in 2013 at 2.7%. The 2015 four-year graduation rate shows an increase of 26.8%.

## Stakeholder Survey Plus/Delta

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

Please note that one parent completed the AdvancED Parent Stakeholder Feedback Survey and six parents completed the South Carolina state mandated survey in March 2015.

### Teaching and Learning Impact

(Standards 3 and 5)

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

1. 100 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school's leaders hold all staff members accountable for student learning."
2. 100 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "In our school, all staff members participate in continuous professional learning based on identified needs of the school."
3. 90 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school's leaders regularly evaluate staff members on criteria designed to improve teaching and learning."
4. 90 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school's leaders ensure all staff members use supervisory feedback to improve student learning."

**$\Delta$  Delta:**

1. 42 percent of students strongly agree/agree with the statement, "All of my teachers change their teaching to meet my learning needs."
2. 42 percent of students strongly agree/agree with the statement, "My school offers opportunities for my family to become involved in school activities and my learning."
3. 43 percent of students strongly agree/agree with the statement, "All of my teachers keep my family informed of my academic progress."
4. 56 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "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)."
5. 57 percent of students strongly agree/agree with the statement, "My school gives me multiple assessments to check my understanding of what was taught."
6. 58 percent of students strongly agree/agree with the statement, "All of my teachers explain their expectations for learning and behavior so I can be successful."

### Leadership Capacity

(Standards 1 and 2)

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

1. 100 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school's leaders hold all staff members accountable for student learning."
2. 90 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school's leaders hold themselves accountable for student learning."
3. 90 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school's leaders regularly evaluate staff members on criteria designed to improve teaching and learning."
4. 90 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school's leaders ensure all staff members use supervisory feedback to improve student learning."

**Δ Delta:**

1. 40 percent of staff agree/agree with the statement, "Our school's governing body or school board complies with all policies, procedures, laws, and regulations."
2. 40 percent of staff agree/agree with the statement, "Our school's governing body or school board maintains a distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of school leadership."
3. 40 percent of staff agree/agree with the statement, "Our school's purpose statement is formally reviewed and revised with involvement from stakeholders."
4. 50 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school's leaders engage effectively with all stakeholders about the school's purpose and direction."
5. 57 percent of students strong agree/agree with the statement, "My school provides me with challenging curriculum and learning experiences."

### Resource Utilization

(Standard 4)

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

1. 89 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school provides qualified staff members to support student learning."
2. 89 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school provides instructional time and resources to support our school's goals and priorities."
3. 89 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school provides protected instructional time."
4. 89 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school provides qualified staff members to support student learning."
5. 89 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school provides a plan for the acquisition and support of technology to support student learning."
6. 89 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, "Our school provides high quality student support services (e.g., counseling, referrals, educational, and career planning)."

**Δ Delta:**

1. 22 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, “Our school provides opportunities for students to participate in activities that interest them.”
2. 44 percent of staff strongly agree/agree with the statement, “Our school maintains facilities that contribute to a safe environment.”
3. 35 percent of students strongly agree/agree with the statement, “In my school, the building and grounds are safe, clean, and provide a healthy place for learning.”
4. 53 percent of students strongly agree/agree with the statement, “In my school, I can participate in activities that interest me.”
5. 44 percent of students strongly agree/agree with the statement, “Our school provides sufficient material resources to meet student needs.”

## Diagnostic Review Schedule

### Tuesday – March 22, 2016

Time	Event	Where	Who
	Breakfast	Hotel	
7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a. m.	Team arrives at school- Team Work Session #1 Set the tone, review schedule and interview questions, overview of eleot™, discuss logistics of the review	School office	Diagnostic Review Team Members
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Principal's Overview		Diagnostic Review Team Members
9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Classroom observations and stakeholder interviews		Diagnostic Review Team Members
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Lunch – Team Members eat when it can fit into their individual schedule		
11:45 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Continued Classroom Observations/Review Artifacts/Diagnostics in ASSIST/Student Performance Data/Stakeholder Surveys  Individual interviews: 1. all administrators 2. 25% of professional staff (representing a cross-section of the faculty) 3. school leadership team Small groups (3-5 persons) interviews should be scheduled for 1. parent leaders 2. students 3. support staff		Diagnostic Review Team Members (working in pairs or as individuals)
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Team returns to hotel and has dinner on their own		
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #2 (Agenda provided by Lead Evaluator) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tabulate classroom observation data</li> <li>• Team Members determine individual ratings for all indicators</li> <li>• Discuss potential Powerful Practices and Improvement Priorities and strengths</li> <li>• Team Members draft Improvement Priorities or Powerful Practices that are then shared with the Team. Team Members and Lead Evaluator provide feedback.</li> <li>• Prepare for Day 2</li> </ul>	Hotel conference room	Diagnostic Review Team Members

**Wednesday – March 23, 2016**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>Who</b>
7:30 a.m.	Breakfast/Check out of hotel and departure for school	Hotel	
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Continue interviews and artifact review, conduct classroom observations that were not done on Day #1		
11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Working Lunch		
12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p. m.	<p>Team Work Session #3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review findings from Tuesday</li> <li>• Tabulate and review final eleot™ Learning Environment ratings</li> <li>• Team Members determine individual final ratings for all indicators</li> </ul> <p>The Team should examine and reach consensus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powerful Practices (indicators rated at 4)</li> <li>• Improvement Priorities (indicators rated at 1 or 2)</li> <li>• Summary overview for each standard</li> <li>• Learning Environment narrative</li> <li>• (Optional) Identification of Promising Practices, which may or may not be linked to a specific indicator. These can be emerging or newly initiated processes, approaches or practices that, when fully implemented, have the potential to significantly improve the indicator rating, student performance, or the effectiveness of the school/district.</li> </ul> <p>The Lead Evaluator should thank the principal and remind them that the results of the Diagnostic Review and the report will be provided to them by the Department of Education.</p>		Diagnostic Review Team/Lead Evaluator
Written Report	The Team’s written report will be provided to the school or DOE within 30 days following the on-site Diagnostic Review.		