

DIAGNOSTIC REVIEW REPORT FOR THE PALMETTO SCHOOL AT THE CHILDREN'S ATTENTION HOME

Rock Hill, South Carolina

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Table of Contents

Introduction 4

Results..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

 Teaching and Learning Impact..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

 Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

 Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

 Student Performance Diagnostic **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

 Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™)..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

 eleot™ Summary Statement..... 11

 Findings 12

 Leadership Capacity 15

 Standard 1 Purpose and Direction 16

 Standard 2 Governance and Leadership..... 16

 Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic 17

 Resource Utilization 18

 Standard 4 Resource and Support System..... 18

Conclusion..... 20

Team Roster 22

About AdvancED 23

References 24

Stakeholder Survey Plus/Delta..... 26

Diagnostic Review Schedule 28

Introduction

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

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

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

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

Use of Diagnostic Tools

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

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

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

Powerful Practices

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

Improvement Priorities

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

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

The Review

The Palmetto School at the Children's Attention Home (The Palmetto School) hosted a Diagnostic Review on May 1-3, 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 The Palmetto School for their hospitality throughout the review visit. The school was well prepared for the review. Interview responses were thoughtful and candid.

Prior to the start of the Diagnostic Review, the Team engaged in a conference call and various communications through emails to complete the initial intensive study, review, and analysis of documents provided by the school. The Lead Evaluator conducted conference calls with the school's principal. The principal coordinated and conducted the Internal Review with candor. The Palmetto School is small (35 students) and students enter and leave the school throughout the year. These factors required some modifications in the Internal Review process. The principal coordinated these steps with the state AdvancED office and the Lead Evaluator to ensure an effective Diagnostic Review.

Evidence and documentation to support the school's Self Assessment and other diagnostics were well organized and made available electronically. Some additional hard copy evidence was provided on-site. All evidence was easily accessible by the Team.

A total of 15 stakeholders were interviewed and three classrooms were observed during the Diagnostic Review. Throughout the Diagnostic Review the school leader, faculty and staff were reflective and candid in discussing their continuous improvement efforts in The Palmetto School.

Stakeholder Interviewed	Number
Administrators	1
Instructional Staff	4
Support Staff	3
Students	3
Board of Directors	4
TOTAL	15

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

Results

Teaching and Learning Impact

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

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning

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

Indicator	Description	Average Team Rating
3.1	The school's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level.	1.33
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.	1.33
3.3	Teachers engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	1.67
3.4	School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	1.67
3.5	Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities to improve instruction and student learning.	1.33
3.6	Teachers implement the school's instructional process in support of student learning.	1.00
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.	1.67
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.	2.67
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.	2.33
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	1.33
3.12	The school provides and coordinates learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	2.33

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.	1.33
5.2	Professional and support staff continuously collect, analyze and apply learning from a range of data sources, including comparison and trend data about student learning, instruction, program evaluation and organizational conditions.	1.00
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.	1.33
5.5	Leadership monitors and communicates comprehensive information about student learning, conditions that support student learning and the achievement of school improvement goals to stakeholders.	2.00

Student Performance Diagnostic

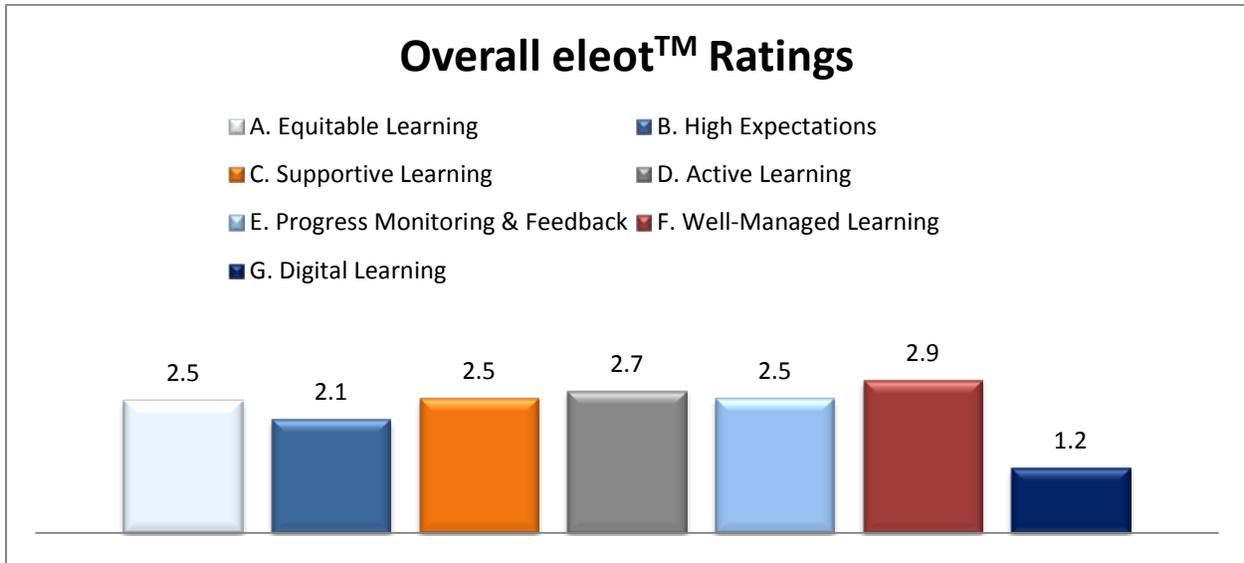
The quality of assessments used to measure student learning, assurance that assessments are administered with procedural fidelity and appropriate accommodations, assessment results that reflect the quality of learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important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

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

Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™)

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

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



eleot™ Summary Statement

The Diagnostic Review Team conducted three classroom observations using the Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™). Students were assigned to one of three multi-grade classrooms based on their respective assessed grade level. The levels were: Grades K-2, Grades 3-5, and Grades 5-8. This observation data needs to be interpreted cautiously, since there were only three classrooms in the school.

The Learning Environment observations revealed that students were respectful of their peers and adults and demonstrated positive attitudes about their classrooms and learning. Students had equal access to resources, classroom discussions and support to contribute to their learning experiences. Students, were also, provided support during class to assist with understanding the content and coursework. Instruction was mostly individualized, where students could be provided instruction at the appropriate level. While faulty provided a supportive learning environment where students were well-behaved, the Team noted the need for increased expectations for all students and that limited connections were made between classroom lessons and the daily lives of the students. The faculty is encouraged to use more student-centered learning activities and also to provide more opportunities for students to use technology for learning.

Findings

Improvement Priority

Develop and implement training for all staff in the collection, evaluation and interpretation of data to ensure 1) the curriculum is aligned to South Carolina College and Career Ready Standards, 2) the curriculum provides all students challenging learning experiences, 3) data is used to inform and evaluate classroom instructional practices and strategies and 4) appropriate and accurate assessment of individual student progress and performance.

(Primary Indicator 5.3, Secondary Indicators 3.1, 3.2)

Classroom Observation Data

Formal classroom observations using the eleot™ were conducted in three classrooms. Evidence supporting the need to increase curriculum rigor and to use data to inform instructional practices included the following: 1) It was evident/very evident in 33 percent of the classrooms that students were tasked with activities and learning that were challenging but attainable, 2) It was evident/very evident in 33 percent of classrooms that students were provided exemplars of high quality work and 3) It was evident/very evident in 33 percent of classrooms that students were asked to respond to questions that required higher order thinking (e.g. applying, evaluating, synthesizing).

Evidence supporting the need to use data to assess individual student performance included the following: 1) It was evident/very evident in 33 percent of the classrooms that students responded to teacher feedback to improve understanding, 2) It was evident/very evident in zero classrooms that students understood how their work was assessed and 3) It was evident/very evident in zero of the classrooms that students knew and strived to meet the high expectations established by the teacher.

The Diagnostic Review Team observed that classroom instruction was highly individualized. Students entered and exited the school on a continual basis throughout the year. Lengths of stay in the school tended to be short (i.e., average stay = 62 days). At the same time, there were 12 students (current total enrollment was 35 students) enrolled in the school who were local and lived in the surrounding area. The students' lengths of stay were considerably longer than average as this was their permanent school placement. The individualized instruction was determined by pre-assessment testing with the reading and math curriculum products. Students were then provided classroom activities from the commercial curricula that matched their assessed performance level. The use of additional materials and learning activities was not observed.

Stakeholder Feedback Data

There were nine completed staff surveys. In contrast to classroom observation data, the information revealed in staff surveys tended to be more supportive of data use practices. Seventy-five percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "All teachers in our school monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment based on data from student assessments and examination of professional practice." Eighty-eight percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "In our

school, all staff members use student data to address the unique learning needs of all students." All staff (100 percent) agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school leaders monitor data related to student achievement." All staff (100 percent) agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school uses data to monitor student readiness and success at the next level."

Sixty-three percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school has a systematic process for collecting, analyzing, and using data." Sixty-three percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school ensures all staff members are trained in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data." Seventy-five percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "Our school leaders monitor data related to school continuous improvement goals."

As discussed in the Classroom Observation section above, the primary curriculum materials tended to be specific commercial products for reading and math. Pre- and post- assessments using these curriculum materials were administered to measure student progress. These assessments were the basis for teacher survey ratings indicating data use. This criterion-referenced assessment practice yielded useful results for demonstrating student learning. It did not, however, ensure curriculum rigor nor high expectations for student learning. It also did not provide teachers feedback information on the effectiveness of instructional strategies and practices.

There were 12 elementary student survey respondents. Three of the questions support the need for this Improvement Priority. Sixty-four percent (eight students) of the students indicated "I agree" to the statement, "My principal and teachers ask me what I think about school." Ninety-one percent (11 students) of the students indicated "I agree" to the statements, "My principal and teachers tell children when they do a good job" and, "My principal and teachers help me to be ready for the next grade."

There were 13 middle school and high school student survey respondents. Ninety-two percent (12 students) of the students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "My school gives me multiple assessments to check my understanding of what was taught." Forty-six percent of students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "All of my teachers change their teaching to meet my learning needs." Seventy-four percent of students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "All of my teachers use tests, projects, presentations, and portfolios to check my understanding of what was taught."

Stakeholder Interview Data

Interviews supported that the primary data collection system was from the reading and math curriculum materials. The principal stated he was "trying to figure out how to take the data and show (student) progress." When asked if "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, and program evaluation and organizational conditions," a staff member answered, "No." When asked if members of the support staff "were trained in the evaluation, integration, and use of data," a staff member answered, "No."

Several staff expressed a desire for expanded curriculum options. They indicated that there was a program in place for math and reading, but not a curriculum that would allow teachers to move beyond use as a skills assessment/leveling tool. Several staff indicated there were no school-wide instructional strategies in place. One staff member commented, "Our lesson plans are not reviewed." Most acknowledged there were infrequent peer to peer walk-throughs and administrative observations. There also was no organized professional development regarding instructional strategies/practices that lead to immediate/effective changes within the classroom.

When asked about using data to monitor student performance, one teacher stated, "Moving with Math and ADAMS are two programs used to monitor student achievement in math skills." She explained further that the program "tracks performance for them." There was no additional monitoring nor adjustment of instructional strategies. Teacher interviews also revealed the use of a Level Literacy Intervention (LLI) program for reading. The LLI was used to determine students' reading levels and also was used as a progress assessment instrument. There were no additional assessments of reading skill development.

Documents and Artifacts

There was no evidence of a written curriculum or curriculum plan. The Rock Hill School District Curriculum Map for Math was included in the provided artifacts, however, it was not used to guide curriculum. A review of the Peer to Peer Evaluation form revealed that it did not prompt the observer to look for instructional strategies nor did it verify implementation. There was no evidence that lesson plans were submitted or reviewed. A review of student progress reports revealed initial performance data using the LLI and ADAMS K-7 materials, however, there was no evidence of linking the data to any actions.

Leadership Capacity

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

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 1 Purpose and Direction

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

Indicator	Description	Average Team Rating
1.1	The school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	2.00
1.2	The school leadership and staff commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking and life skills.	2.00
1.3	The school's leadership implements a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	1.33

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.	3.33
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	2.67
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.	3.33
2.4	Leadership and staff foster a culture consistent with the school's purpose and direction.	2.67
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the school's purpose and direction.	2.33
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.

Evaluative Criteria	Average Team Rating
1. Questionnaire Administration	3.67
2. Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	3.67

Resource Utilization

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

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

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

Standard 4 Resource and Support System

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

Indicator	Description	Average Team Rating
4.1	Qualified professional and support staff are sufficient in number to fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school's purpose, direction and the educational program.	2.33
4.2	Instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the school.	2.33
4.3	The school maintains facilities, services and equipment to provide a safe, clean and healthy environment for all students and staff.	3.00
4.4	Students and school personnel use a range of media and information resources to support the school's educational programs.	2.33

4.5	The technology infrastructure supports the school's teaching, learning and operational needs.	1.67
4.6	The school provides support services to meet the physical, social and emotional needs of the student population being served.	2.67
4.7	The school provides services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational and career planning needs of all students.	2.33

Conclusion

The Palmetto School at the Children's Attention Home was originally developed in 2004 as a charter school for children who had been removed from their homes by the Department of Social Services for reasons of abuse, abandonment, or neglect and who resided temporarily at the on-campus shelter. The school also serves students who reside at other local shelters in the area. At the time of the Diagnostic Review, 12 students resided in local shelters. This combination of students who were both short-term residential and longer-term community residents presented significant instructional challenges for the school.

Many of the students arrived at the school significantly behind their peers (i.e., academically). Students entered and left continuously throughout the year and for two-thirds of the school population their lengths of stay were relatively short. The school has developed an individualized instructional approach as the basis for its academic programming. The emphasis was on reading and math and the school used purchased curriculum materials in both areas. Each program included pre- and post- assessment measures so that students were placed in the appropriate level of the curriculum, and so that individual progress was measured and recorded. This individualized approach served the transient population well, however, longer-term students needed more varied learning opportunities. In addition to individualized instruction in reading and math, the school "integrates the arts to help students improve learning and heal from their life's trauma and situation."

The school has a principal, two full-time and two part-time teachers. Funding is an ongoing issue for the school. The school is small (enrollment cap of 35 students as determined by the local fire marshal). Public funds account for approximately 40 percent of its annual operating expenses; therefore, it has dependent on grants, gifts and private fundraising for a majority of its budget. Volunteer instructors are used for music, drama and visual arts classes.

The school's many strengths included the staff's passion, commitment and dedication to improving the lives of its students. It has developed an individualized academic program for reading and math. It integrated the arts into instruction and provided the students numerous experiential activities. Although the school staff was limited in number, the school made extensive use of volunteers with expertise in their fields. The governing board was very active in the school and very supportive of the administration.

Challenges included physical space needs and adequate annual funding. Additional challenges included development of a curriculum that was rigorous and aligned to South Carolina College and Career Ready Standards. The school also needed a process to gather and analyze data to inform and support curriculum implementation, effective instructional practices, and to demonstrate student progress.

The current data use practices primarily involved pre- and post- assessment measures in reading and math. This criterion-referenced process provided individual student data on performance using two curriculum products. There was no data-driven process nor practice for supervising and evaluating teachers observed that could provide useful feedback related to either curriculum implementation or

effective classroom instructional strategies. There was no data-driven process observed to ensure curriculum rigor or alignment.

The student population included 12 students residing in nearby shelters and who considered The Palmetto School as their school of choice. This presents a unique challenge to the school in terms of serving both a short-term and longer-term population. The need for data-supported practices will necessarily have to address both student populations. Improved data use will allow the administration to better support its funding needs. It will also allow the school to assess its curriculum rigor and alignment. It will provide teachers useful feedback on instructional practices. Finally, student progress will be monitored and reported in both a formative and summative manner.

The Team identified the following Improvement Priority for the school:

Develop and implement training for all staff in the collection, evaluation and interpretation of data to ensure 1) the curriculum is aligned to South Carolina College and Career Ready Standards, 2) the curriculum provides all students challenging learning experiences, 3) data is used to inform and evaluate classroom instructional practices and strategies and 4) appropriate and accurate assessment of individual student progress and performance.

(Primary Indicator 5.3, Secondary Indicators 3.1, 3.2)

Team Roster

Lead Evaluator	Brief Biography
<p>Dr. George Griffin North Carolina</p>	<p>Dr. Griffin holds B.A. and M.Ed. degrees from Duke University. He received his Ph.D.in Special Education from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Primary areas of concentration included the education of students with learning disabilities and/or behavior problems, and educational administration. During his 40-year education career Griffin has been a special education teacher, high school principal, central office program director, state department program director, and university professor. He has extensive experience in alternative school programming; having served as a school director and statewide program director for services for violent and assaultive youth in North Carolina. Griffin has served as the Department Chair in the Department of Educational Leadership, Research, and Technology at North Carolina Central University. He has also served as a Special Education Due Process Hearing Officer in North Carolina. Griffin is the author of several entries in the Encyclopedia of Educational Leadership and Administration as well as a contributor to several special education textbooks and professional journals. Dr. Griffin is an independent educational consultant. He serves as a Lead Evaluator with AdvancED and has lead reviews in numerous schools and school districts throughout the United States and in the Middle East. He was the keynote speaker and a session presenter at the first AdvancED International Learning Disabilities Conference (May, 2013) in Beirut, Lebanon. He has also presented interactive training sessions at AdvancED Global Education Conferences in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.</p>
Team Members	
<p>Kayla Audette South Carolina</p>	<p>Prior to joining the School Choice and Innovation team at the South Carolina Department of Education, Mrs. Audette taught middle school English and Math. Mrs. Audette’s work at the South Carolina Department of Education entails working with charter schools in South Carolina in a variety of capacities.</p>
<p>Scott Gibson South Carolina</p>	<p>Scott is the head of school of Lowcountry Preparatory School in Pawleys Island, South Carolina, following service elsewhere as head of school. He began his formal career in education in 2004 following retirement at the grade of colonel (O-6) after 22 years of commissioned service in the US Air Force with command and staff assignments stateside and overseas in locations to include Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Scott was the valedictorian at Boys’ Latin School, the first honor graduate at The Citadel, and the Outstanding MBA Graduate at Spring Hill College, the Jesuit College of the South. He also earned graduate degrees from the US Army Command & General Staff College and Georgetown University. He completed a one-year applied research fellowship at the RAND Corporation.</p>

About AdvancED

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

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

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

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Stakeholder Survey Plus/Delta

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

Teaching and Learning Impact

(Standards 3 and 5)

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

1. 91 percent of students agreed with the statement, "My teachers use different activities to help me learn."
2. 88 percent of staff strongly agreed/agreed with the statement, "All teachers in our school personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs of students."

Δ Delta:

1. 63 percent of staff strongly agreed/agreed with the statement, "All teachers in my school participate in collaborative learning communities that meet both informally and formally across grade levels and content areas."
2. 50 percent of staff strongly agreed/agreed 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)."

Leadership Capacity

(Standards 1 and 2)

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

1. 89 percent of staff strongly agreed/agreed with the statement, "Our school's purpose statement is supported by the policies and practices adopted by the governing board."
2. 100 percent of staff strongly agreed/agreed with the statement, "Our school's governing body or school board complies with all policies, procedures, laws and regulations."

Δ Delta:

1. 44 percent of staff strongly agreed/agreed with the statement, "Our school's leaders regularly evaluate staff members on criteria designed to improve teaching and learning."
2. 67 percent of staff strongly agreed/agreed with the statement, "Our school's leaders ensure all staff members use supervisory feedback to improve student learning."

Resource Utilization

(Standard 4)

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

1. 88 percent of staff strongly agreed/agreed with the statement, "Our school provides qualified staff members to support student learning."
2. 88 percent of staff strongly agreed/agreed with the statement, "Our school provides instructional time and resources to support our school's goal and priorities."

Δ Delta:

1. 50 percent of staff strongly agreed/agreed with the statement, "Our school provides protected instructional time."
2. 63 percent of staff strongly agreed/agreed with the statement, "Our school maintains facilities that support student learning."

Diagnostic Review Schedule

Sunday – May 1, 2016

Time	Event	Where	Who
3:00 p.m.	Hotel Check-in	Hotel	
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Team Work Session #1 Review and discuss performance data, stakeholder survey data, Self Assessment, Executive Summary, other diagnostics in ASSIST, documents and artifacts provided by the school, to determine initial ratings for all indicators. Determine interview questions, review Monday's schedule, overview of eleot™, and discuss review logistics	Hotel Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Monday – May 2, 2016

Time	Event	Where	Who
	Breakfast	Hotel	
7:45 a.m.	Team arrives at school	School office	Diagnostic Review Team Members
8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Principal's Interview/Presentation/Tour		Diagnostic Review Team Members
9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Classroom observations (See Classroom Schedules)		Diagnostic Review Team Members
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Lunch – Team Members eat when it can fit into their individual schedule		
12:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Continued Classroom Observations 12:30-1:30- Teachers 1:30-2:00- Support Staff 2:00-2:30- Board of Directors 2:30-3:00- Students		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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tabulate classroom observation data from Day #1 • Team Members determine individual second ratings for all indicators • Discuss potential Powerful Practices and Improvement Priorities • Team Members draft Improvement Priorities or Powerful Practices that are then shared with the Team. Team Members and Lead Evaluator provide feedback. • Prepare for Day 2 	Hotel conference room	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Tuesday – May 3, 2016

Time	Event	Where	Who
7:30 a.m.	Breakfast/Check out of hotel and departure for school	Hotel	
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon	Final Team Work Session Team Members review all components of the Diagnostic Review team's findings including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final ratings for standards and indicators • Coherency and accuracy of the Improvement Priority • Detailed evidence for all of the findings • eleot™ summary statements and narrative by learning environment 	School	Diagnostic Review Team Members