

Report of the External Review Team for Jefferson Davis Parish School System

203 E. Plaquemine
Jennings
LA 70546
US

**Mr. Brian LeJeune
Superintendent**

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Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Results	9
Teaching and Learning Impact	9
Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning	10
Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement	11
Student Performance Diagnostic	11
Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™)	13
eleot™ Data Summary	15
Findings	18
Leadership Capacity	19
Standard 1 - Purpose and Direction	20
Standard 2 - Governance and Leadership	20
Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic	21
Findings	21
Resource Utilization	24
Standard 4 - Resources and Support Systems	24
Findings	25
Conclusion	27
Accreditation Recommendation	29
Addenda	30
Individual Institution Results (Self-reported)	30
Team Roster	31
Next Steps	33
About AdvancED	34
References	35

Introduction

The External Review is an integral component of AdvancED Performance Accreditation and provides the institution with a comprehensive evaluation guided by the results of diagnostic instruments, in-depth review of data and documentation, and the professional judgment of a team of qualified and highly trained evaluators. A series of diagnostic instruments examines the impact of teaching and learning on student performance, the capacity of leadership to effect continuous improvement, and the degree to which the institution optimizes its use of available resources to facilitate and support student success. The results of this evaluation are represented in the Index of Education Quality (IEQ™) and through critical observations, namely, Powerful Practices, Opportunities for Improvement, and Improvement Priorities.

Accreditation is a voluntary method of quality assurance developed more than 100 years ago by American universities and secondary schools and designed primarily to distinguish schools adhering to a set of educational standards. Today the accreditation process is used at all levels of education and is recognized for its ability to effectively drive student performance and continuous improvement in education.

Institutions seeking to gain or retain accreditation must meet AdvancED Standards specific to their institution type, demonstrate acceptable levels of student performance and the continuous improvement of student performance, and provide evidence of stakeholder engagement and satisfaction. The power of AdvancED Performance Accreditation lies in the connections and linkages between and among the conditions, processes, and practices within a system that impact student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Standards help to delineate what matters. They provide a common language through which an education community can engage in conversations about educational improvement, system 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 External Review Team uses AdvancED Standards, associated indicators and criteria related to student performance and stakeholder engagement to guide its evaluation. The Team examines adherence to standards as well as how the institution functions as a whole and embodies the practices and characteristics expected of an accredited institution. 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 External Review Team members' individual ratings.

The External Review is the hallmark of AdvancED Performance Accreditation. It energizes and equips the institution's leadership and stakeholders to achieve higher levels of performance and address those areas that

may be hindering efforts to reach desired performance levels. External Review is a rigorous process that includes the in-depth examination of evidence and relevant data, interviews with all stakeholder groups, and extensive observations of learning, instruction, and operations.

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 External Review the institution conducted a Self Assessment that applied the standards and criteria for accreditation. The institution 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 External Review Team's findings and critical observations are shared in this report through the IEQ™ results as well as through the identification of Powerful Practices, Opportunities for Improvement, and Improvement Priorities.

Index of Education Quality

In the past, accreditation reviews resulted in an accreditation recommendation on status. Labels such as advised, warned, probation, or all clear were used to describe the status of a school relative to the AdvancED Standards and other evaluative criteria. Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, AdvancED introduced a new framework to describe the results of an accreditation review. Consistent with the modern focus of accreditation on continuous improvement with an emphasis on student success, AdvancED introduced an innovative and state-of-the-art framework for diagnosing and revealing institutional performance called the Index of Education Quality (IEQ™). The IEQ™ comprises three domains of performance: 1) the impact of teaching and learning on student performance; 2) the capacity of leadership to guide the institution toward the achievement of its

vision and strategic priorities; and 3) use of resources to support and optimize learning. Therefore, your institution will no longer receive an accreditation status. Instead, your institution will be accredited with an IEQ™ score. In the case where an institution is failing to meet established criteria, the accreditation will be under review thereby requiring frequent monitoring and demonstrated improvement.

The three domains of performance are derived from the AdvancED Standards and associated indicators, the analysis of student performance, and the engagement and feedback of stakeholders. Within each domain institutions can connect to the individual performance levels that are applied in support of the AdvancED Standards and evaluative criteria. Within the performance levels are detailed descriptors that serve as a valuable source of guidance for continuous improvement. Upon review of the findings in this report and building on their Powerful Practices, institutional leaders should work with their staff to review and understand the evidence and rationale for each Opportunity for Improvement and Improvement Priority as well as the corresponding pathway to improvement described in the performance levels of the selected indicator(s).

The IEQ™ provides a new framework that recognizes and supports the journey of continuous improvement. An institution's IEQ™ is the starting point for continuous improvement. Subsequent actions for improvement and evidence that these have had a positive impact will raise the institution's IEQ™ score.

Benchmark Data

Throughout this report, AdvancED provides benchmark data for each indicator and for each component of the evaluative criteria. These benchmark data represent the overall averages across the entire AdvancED Network for your institution type. Thus, the AdvancED Network average provides an extraordinary opportunity for institutions to understand their context on a global scale rather than simply compared to a state, region, or country.

It is important to understand that the AdvancED Network averages are provided primarily to serve as a tool for continuous improvement and not as a measure of quality in and of itself. Benchmark data, when wisely employed, have a unique capacity to help institutions identify and leverage their strengths and areas of improvement to significantly impact student learning.

Powerful Practices

A key to continuous improvement is the institution's ability to learn from and build upon its most effective and impactful practices. Such practices serve as critical leverage points necessary to guide, support and ensure continuous improvement. A hallmark of the accreditation process is its commitment to identifying with evidence, the conditions, processes and practices that are having the most significant impact on student performance and institutional effectiveness. Throughout this report, the External Review Team has captured and defined Powerful Practices. These noteworthy practices are essential to the institution's effort to continue its journey of improvement.

Opportunities for Improvement

Every institution can and must improve no matter what levels of performance it has achieved in its past. During the process of the review, the External Review Team identified areas of improvement where the institution is meeting the expectations for accreditation but in the professional judgment of the Team these are Opportunities for Improvement that should be considered by the institution. Using the criteria described in the corresponding rubric(s) to the Opportunity for Improvement, the institution can identify what elements of practice must be addressed to guide the improvement.

Improvement Priorities

The expectations for accreditation are clearly defined in a series of the rubric-based AdvancED Standards, indicators and evaluative criteria focused on the impact of teaching and learning on student performance, the capacity of the institution to be guided by effective leadership, and the allocation and use of resources to support student learning. As such, the External Review Team reviewed, analyzed and deliberated over significant bodies of evidence provided by the institution and gathered by the Team during the process. In the professional judgment of the Team as well as the results of the diagnostic process, the Team defined, with rationale, Improvement Priorities. The priorities must be addressed in a timely manner by the institution to retain and improve their accreditation performance as represented by the IEQ™. Improvement Priorities serve as the basis for the follow-up and monitoring process that will begin upon conclusion of the External Review. The institution must complete and submit an Accreditation Progress Report within two years of the External Review. The report must include actions taken by the institution to address the Improvement Priorities along with the corresponding evidence and results. The IEQ™ will be recalculated by AdvancED upon review of the evidence and results associated with the Improvement Priorities.

The Review

The six person AdvancED External Review Team arrived in Jennings Louisiana, on Sunday, January 11th for the Jefferson Davis Parish system accreditation review. Three team members were from the states of Montana, Alabama and Texas, and three team members were from Louisiana.

The team began their work at 4 p.m. at a hotel conference room in Jennings on Sunday afternoon. During this meeting, preliminary work was completed which included discussions as to what was currently known about the district, and review of artifacts and evidence provided through a central web link. At 6:30 p.m., the school administration treated the team for a great dinner featuring local home-cooked Louisiana cuisine. This was attended by over 50 school personnel including the superintendent, assistant superintendent, principals and other school improvement team members. The team would like to express their deepest appreciation for the hospitality shown during this event, and the food was outstanding.

Work was concluded at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 14th after an exit report to the school board, administration and other school personnel

In preparation for this review, several documents were placed in the workspace for the team to review. These

documents included the system and individual school accreditation reports, the link to artifacts and evidence, and the necessary standard and indicator workbooks. Approximately two weeks prior to the review, the team held a conference call that oriented team members to the tasks they would be responsible for during the review. All team members came well prepared for the review and performed their assigned tasks in a highly efficient manner.

During the review, the team engaged in discussions regarding the presentations made by district officials as well as data they had collected during school visits. On Tuesday, the team divided into three teams of two. During interviews with the superintendent, eight board members, administrative team, principals and several teachers, during site visits, the team found a sense of pride about their school and the system and the education students were receiving. In interviews with parents and community stakeholders, an overwhelming sense of confidence was expressed about the quality of education children were receiving as well as the caring manner that teachers interacted with students. Parents also expressed that they were kept well informed of initiatives the school was involved in. The system was well prepared for the review and had done a thorough job preparing their accreditation reports and providing evidence and artifacts.

The AdvancED External Review Team would like to thank the Jefferson Davis Parish school board, administration, teachers and parents for the hospitality during the review and commend them for the forward thinking manner they are approaching the academics. They are commended for their systemic thinking prevalent throughout the district and their can do attitude towards challenges they face as future economic development brings more students to the system. In preparation for the review, the system conducted surveys, conducted a thorough and thoughtful Internal Review, created comprehensive Accreditation Reports, and supplied ample evidence and artifacts through a central web link.

Stakeholders were interviewed by members of the External Review Team to gain their perspectives on topics relevant to the institution's effectiveness and student performance. The feedback gained through the stakeholder interviews was considered with other evidences and data to support the findings of the External Review. The following chart depicts the numbers of persons interviewed representative of various stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder Interviewed	Number
Superintendents	1
Board Members	8
Administrators	36
Instructional Staff	36
Students	20
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	54
Total	155

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
3.1	The system'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.	3.00	2.69
3.2	Curriculum, instruction, and assessment throughout the system are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	3.00	2.55
3.3	Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	3.17	2.54
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	3.67	2.70
3.5	The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.	3.33	2.57
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	2.67	2.48
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	3.00	2.67

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
3.8	The system and all of its schools engage families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keep them informed of their children's learning progress.	3.83	2.97
3.9	The system designs and evaluates structures in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the student's school who supports that student's educational experience.	3.00	2.46
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.	3.00	2.57
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	3.67	2.60
3.12	The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	3.17	2.63

Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
5.1	The system establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	3.00	2.67
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 that support learning.	2.83	2.48
5.3	Throughout the system professional and support staff are trained in the interpretation and use of data.	2.33	2.14
5.4	The school system engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	2.83	2.45
5.5	System and school leaders monitor and communicate comprehensive information about student learning, school performance, and the achievement of system and school improvement goals to stakeholders.	3.00	2.85

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

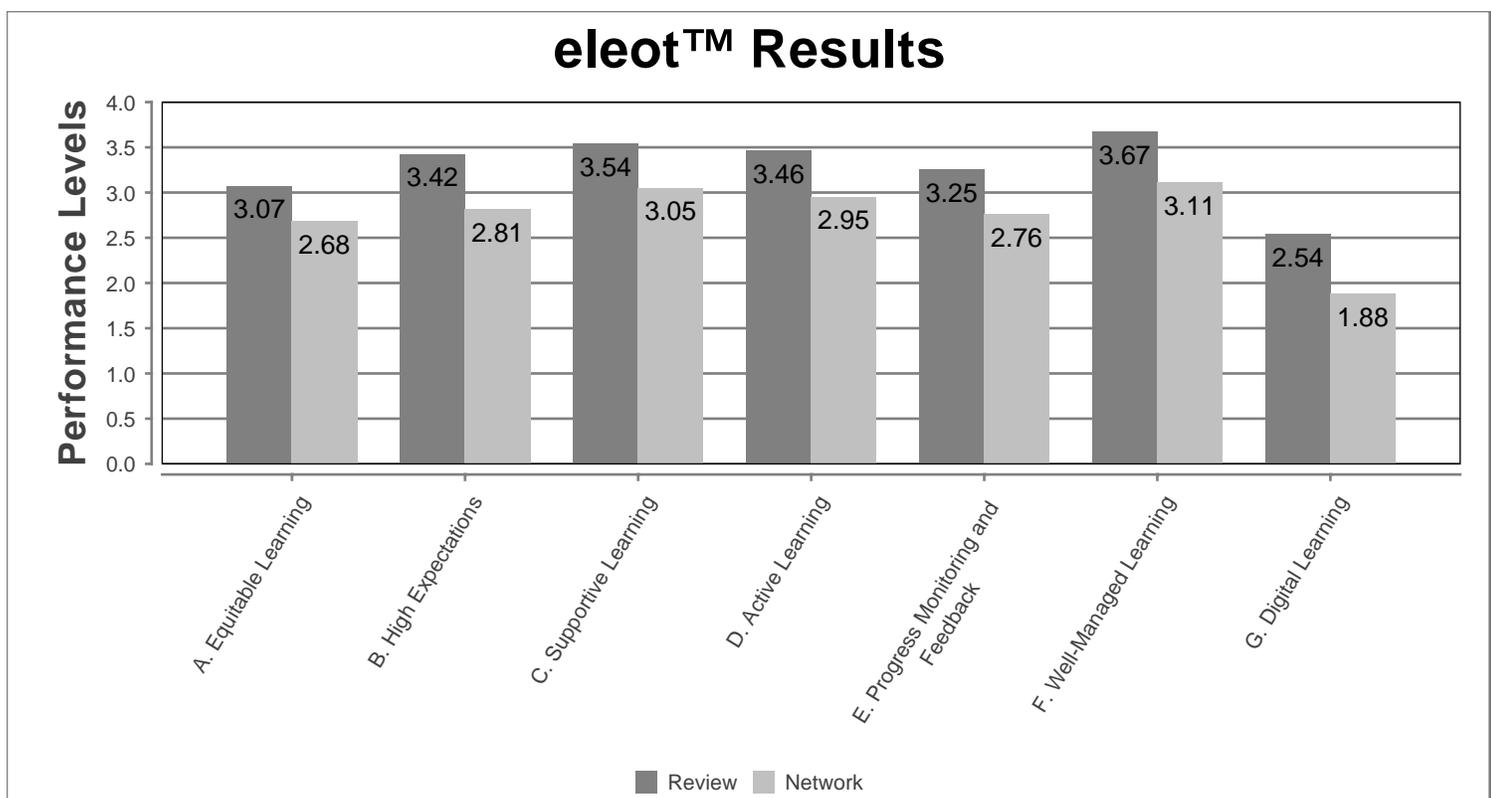
learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important indicators for evaluating overall student performance.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Assessment Quality	3.00	3.32
Test Administration	3.00	3.62
Equity of Learning	2.00	2.52
Quality of Learning	3.83	3.06

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 External 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=very 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™ as well as benchmark results across the AdvancED Network.



The team conducted a total 65 observations using the eleot™ in six schools. Ratings from the observations ranged from a mean score of 3.67 on Well Managed Learning Environment to a low of 2.54 on Digital Learning Environment. All of the system scores were considerably higher than the AdvancED Network (AEN) average scores with the greatest discrepancy being Digital Learning Environment.

The system mean scores in relation to the AEN mean scores (including the variance in the third parentheses) are as follows:

Equitable Learning Environment (System 3.07) (AEN 2.68) (+.39)
High Expectations Environment (System 3.42) (AEN 2.81) (+.61)
Supportive Learning Environment (System 3.54) (AEN 3.05) (+.49)
Active Learning Environment (System 3.46) (AEN 2.95) (+.51)
Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment (System 3.28) (AEN 2.76) (+.52)
Well-Managed Learning Environment (System 3.67) (AEN 3.11) (+.56)
Digital Learning Environment (System 2.54) (AEN 1.88) (+.66)

Students were actively engaged in lessons and in several classes used technology via student use of Promethean Board and iPads. Students in several classes were seen leading class discussions. In one second grade class, students were conducting research and drawing bar graphs on the Promethean Board to present to the class. Leadership committees expressed pride and passion for schools. There was evidence of cooperative learning, as many lessons observed were taught by student group leaders.

School personnel validated support is received from the district office although some school personnel expressed concern about the future, because they are growing so fast. Teacher leaders commented the system leadership was supportive, fair and showed compassion towards challenges at the building level. District and community support was evident at several schools, although challenges include differentiation to address student levels of learning, mandated changes from the state and in some cases lack of student motivation. It was apparent in all schools visited there is consistency from the system message right down to the schools, and a spirit of cooperation was evidenced in all school visits.

Overall, there was a positive culture throughout the site visits and even though some of the facilities were older, the quality of teaching and student engagement was outstanding.

The External Review Team appreciated the enthusiasm of teachers in the majority of classrooms and found students were attentive, well behaved, polite, and engaged in the lessons. The system has ranked high in student achievement in relation to other Louisiana schools for several years. The system is commended for their work to ensure every student has an adult advocate to assist them with their challenges.

eleot™ Data Summary

A. Equitable Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.82	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	44.62%	18.46%	10.77%	26.15%
2.	3.72	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	75.38%	21.54%	3.08%	0.00%
3.	3.58	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	64.62%	30.77%	3.08%	1.54%
4.	2.17	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	15.38%	29.23%	12.31%	43.08%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.07						

B. High Expectations			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.74	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	78.46%	16.92%	4.62%	0.00%
2.	3.65	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	70.77%	23.08%	6.15%	0.00%
3.	2.88	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	44.62%	21.54%	10.77%	23.08%
4.	3.48	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	61.54%	26.15%	10.77%	1.54%
5.	3.37	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	50.77%	38.46%	7.69%	3.08%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.42						

C. Supportive Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.65	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	73.85%	18.46%	6.15%	1.54%
2.	3.69	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	75.38%	18.46%	6.15%	0.00%
3.	3.51	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	63.08%	26.15%	9.23%	1.54%
4.	3.71	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	73.85%	23.08%	3.08%	0.00%
5.	3.17	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	50.77%	27.69%	9.23%	12.31%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.54						

D. Active Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.60	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	67.69%	26.15%	4.62%	1.54%
2.	3.06	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	41.54%	30.77%	20.00%	7.69%
3.	3.71	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	76.92%	16.92%	6.15%	0.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.46						

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.15	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	46.15%	32.31%	12.31%	9.23%
2.	3.52	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	69.23%	18.46%	7.69%	4.62%
3.	3.45	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	56.92%	30.77%	12.31%	0.00%
4.	2.82	Understands how her/his work is assessed	32.31%	32.31%	20.00%	15.38%
5.	3.32	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	50.77%	35.38%	9.23%	4.62%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.25						

F. Well-Managed Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.82	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	86.15%	9.23%	4.62%	0.00%
2.	3.74	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	75.38%	23.08%	1.54%	0.00%
3.	3.60	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	67.69%	26.15%	4.62%	1.54%
4.	3.46	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	66.15%	21.54%	4.62%	7.69%
5.	3.74	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	78.46%	16.92%	4.62%	0.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.67						

G. Digital Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.58	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	36.92%	21.54%	4.62%	36.92%
2.	2.43	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	32.31%	21.54%	3.08%	43.08%
3.	2.60	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	44.62%	10.77%	4.62%	40.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.54						

Findings

Powerful Practice

All levels of the system leadership and staff are committed to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and support challenging and equitable educational programs for all students.

(Indicators 1.3, 3.11, 5.4)

Evidence and Rationale

The External Review Team heard evidence of the commitment to shared values and beliefs during interviews from board members, central office administrators/supervisors, school administrators, and teachers. It was evident a unified message not only exists, but in fact permeates the culture of the district as stated by a teacher: “We are all on the same page, and we put our students first.” Other evidences validating their support of challenging programs and student achievement include the communication plan, professional learning community sessions, Jump Start program, AP courses, CLEP tests, ACT Mastery Boot Camp, etc. Systems can best meet the challenge of providing an optimal educational experience for its students if all stakeholders shared common values and beliefs.

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 more than 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 system maintains and communicates at all levels of the organization a purpose and direction for continuous improvement that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
1.1	The system engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a system-wide purpose for student success.	3.50	2.67
1.2	The system ensures that each school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	3.67	2.69
1.3	The school leadership and staff at all levels of the system 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.	4.00	2.87
1.4	Leadership at all levels of the system implement a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	3.67	2.64

Standard 2 - Governance and Leadership

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
2.1	The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the system and its schools.	3.83	2.96
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	4.00	2.99
2.3	The governing body ensures that the leadership at all levels has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.	4.00	3.20
2.4	Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction.	3.67	3.00
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	3.50	2.69

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice in all areas of the system and improved student success.	3.33	2.78

Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic

Stakeholder Feedback is the third of three primary areas of evaluation in AdvancED's Performance Accreditation model. The AdvancED surveys (student, parent, and teacher) 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 External 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 External Review Team for review. The External Review Team evaluates the quality of the administration of the surveys by institution, survey results, and the degree to which the institution analyzed and acted on the results.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Questionnaire Administration	4.00	3.43
Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	4.00	3.12

Findings

Powerful Practice

All levels of the system leadership and staff are committed to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and support challenging and equitable educational programs for all students.

(Indicators 1.3, 3.11, 5.4)

Evidence and Rationale

The External Review Team heard evidence of the commitment to shared values and beliefs during interviews from board members, central office administrators/supervisors, school administrators, and teachers. It was evident a unified message not only exists, but in fact permeates the culture of the district as stated by a teacher: "We are all on the same page, and we put our students first." Other evidences validating their support of challenging programs and student achievement include the communication plan, professional learning community sessions, Jump Start program, AP courses, CLEP tests, ACT Mastery Boot Camp, etc. Systems can best meet the challenge of providing an optimal educational experience for its students if all stakeholders shared common values and beliefs.

Powerful Practice

The governing body establishes policies and practices supporting effective administration of the system and its schools, ensures leadership at all levels as the autonomy to effectively meet the goals for achievement and instruction, and operates responsibly and functions effectively as a cohesive unit for the benefit of the system's operations and student learning.

(Indicators 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)

Evidence and Rationale

Evidence reviewed revealed the governing body established policies and practices clearly supporting the effective operation of the system and its schools. The district policy manual is reviewed annually to reflect current laws. Legal representation provides annual updates for board members to stay informed of pertinent issues and concerns. One specific policy validating mechanisms in support of student learning is the Pupil Progression Plan. The braiding of various funds to support various initiatives such as professional development, district improvement plan, and school improvement plans also validate effective operation of the district. Student and staff handbooks, district operations manuals, and professional development plans further validate efforts for effective operation of the district and its schools. Current and comprehensive policies and practices provide the guidance and direction for effective system administration.

The board protects, supports, and respects clearly defined roles and responsibilities of leadership at the system and school level as evidenced by interviews with Board members. All Board members attend Administrative Academy Training provided by the District. Roles and responsibilities of district personnel and school leadership are clearly defined in a district organizational chart. The board members expressed their support of the District Improvement Plan and individual School Improvement Plans. School policies and personnel handbooks provide evidence of clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Stakeholder surveys and evaluation instruments on school effectiveness confirm the governing body ensures autonomy for the system and schools to meet the goals for achievement.

The governing body has also implemented a process to evaluate its decisions and actions to ensure they are in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities, as evidenced by interviews with district personnel and board members which revealed a systematic chain of command with defined roles ultimately leading to support for the entire district. Policies exist on roles and responsibilities as well as non-conflict of interest. In addition, the governing body is required to attend annual training on a binding code of ethics for the district. The professional development curriculum ensures conflict resolution, decision-making, supervision and evaluation, and fiscal responsibility is addressed regularly. This is evidenced by Jefferson Davis Parish providing "Administrative Academy" trainings for board members, administrators, and teachers. This training is also open to the public. Jefferson Davis Parish retains legal counsel to advise on legal issues in accordance with the law. Supervisors communicate ongoing activities at both board and staff meetings to share and ensure supervision and evaluation practices are acknowledged and shared. Staffing responsibilities are given and posted on the district website to share decision making processes. Audit results from Historical Compliance Data, Program-Based Management (PBM), Safety, and Health and Food Services, are readily available as to support fiscal responsibility. Finally, members of the governing body function as a cohesive unit for the benefit of effective system operations to enhance student learning as evidenced by minutes of staffing, board, and principal

meetings. All decisions are data driven and used for the ultimate benefit of the students' learning and success. Responsible governing bodies promote a chain of command which allows administrative staff and teachers to complete their tasks more effectively.

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 more than 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 and ensures compliance with applicable governmental regulations.

Standard 4 - Resources and Support Systems

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
4.1	The system engages in a systematic process to recruit, employ, and retain a sufficient number of qualified professional and support staff to fulfill their roles and responsibilities and support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, and educational programs.	3.67	2.98
4.2	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, educational programs, and system operations.	3.33	2.98
4.3	The system maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	2.67	3.05
4.4	The system demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning in support of the purpose and direction of the system.	2.00	2.67

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
4.5	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of information resources and related personnel to support educational programs throughout the system.	3.00	2.82
4.6	The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	3.00	2.64
4.7	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of support systems to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.	2.67	2.65
4.8	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students.	3.50	2.64

Findings

Improvement Priority

Develop, implement and assess a long-range strategic management plan aligned to the system’s purpose and direction that identifies goals and objectives critical for continuous improvement, and includes all system operations (e.g., fiscal, capital, instructional, professional development).

(Indicators 4.4)

Evidence and Rationale

Based on a review of documentation and information derived from stakeholder interviews, and district documentation, the External Review Team concluded that the Jefferson Davis Parish School System has yet to develop a comprehensive strategic resource management plan that contains long-range goals and objectives, staffing, professional development and funding sources to meet these goals. District planning documents that address technology, professional development, and capital improvement needs were identified and reviewed but it did not appear to the team they were aligned to ensure district-wide continuity and consistency. Furthermore, district administrators acknowledged the need for a master planning document that represents the collective aspirations of district stakeholders and is based on systems thinking that can be used effectively as a blueprint for their journey into the future. The development and implementation of a long-range plan could be a significant grounding step in this process.

Opportunity for Improvement

Incorporate in long term planning issues related to providing a safe, clean and healthy environment for all students and staff.

(Indicators 4.3)

Evidence and Rationale

Based on review of documentation and information provided from stakeholder interviews and documentation, the system lacked a long term strategic resource management plan with goals and objectives to ensure

maintenance of facilities, services and equipment. This continued analysis will promote safety, cleanliness and an overall healthy environment for all students and staff. Systems focusing on long term planning are more able to react proactively to future challenges.

Powerful Practice

The Jefferson Davis Parish School System provides its schools with a clear referral process for Individual Education Plans (IEP), as well as a comprehensive budget for counseling, assessment, referrals and educational and career planning.

(Indicators 4.8)

Evidence and Rationale

As a result of interviews and review of artifacts and evidence, the team found that Jefferson Davis Parish has developed a comprehensive referral program to meet the unique needs of students through the Individual Education Planning Process, (IEP). In addition, they have developed a well detailed budget to counsel students in future career planning. One example of this commitment to career planning is the implementation of Dual Enrollment program which offers college credit opportunities for their students with McNeese State University, and has continued to expand opportunities with Sowela Technical College. There is also notable development with the Jump Start Initiative to ensure that students have numerous opportunities towards Industry Based Certifications.

Systems that provide assistance to students in unique placement needs as well as long term career planning provide solid foundations for lifetime student success.

Conclusion

The Jefferson Davis Parish far exceeded the AdvancED Network (AEN) mean scores of the Index of Educational Quality in all areas with the highest being Leadership Capacity with a score of 376.39 (80.31 higher than the AEN score). The Overall Score of 325.4 was 42.41 higher than the AEN score.

In the Teaching and Learning Impact Domain, as a result of interviews and artifact review, the team found all levels of the system leadership and staff committed to a culture based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and support challenging and equitable educational programs for all students. A systemic commitment to shared values and beliefs was evident from interviews from board members, central office administrators/supervisors, school administrators and teachers. A unified message not only exists, but in fact permeates the culture of the district as stated by a teacher; "We are all on the same page, and we put our students first."

In the Leadership Capacity Domain, the team found that the governing body of Jefferson Davis Parish exhibited strength in three areas: the establishment of policies and practices supporting effective administration of the system and its schools, the responsibility in which they function as a cohesive unit, and the manner in which they ensure leadership at all levels has the autonomy to effectively meet the goals for achievement and instruction in addition to daily operations. Legal representation provides annual updates for board members to keep them informed of pertinent issues and concerns. One specific policy validating mechanisms in support of student learning is the Pupil Progression Plan. The braiding of various funds to support various initiatives such as professional development, district improvement plan, and school improvement plans also validate effective operation of the district.

The governing body has established policies and practices clearly supporting the effective operation of the system and its schools. The district policy manual is reviewed annually to reflect current laws. Legal representation provides annual updates for board members to keep them informed of pertinent issues and concerns.

The governing body has also implemented a process to evaluate its decisions and actions to ensure they are in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities, as evidenced by interviews with district personnel and board members which revealed a systematic chain of command with defined roles ultimately leading to support for the entire district. Policies exist on roles and responsibilities as well as non-conflict of interest. In addition, the governing body is required to attend annual training on a binding code of ethics for the district.

A leadership professional development curriculum ensures conflict resolution, decision-making, supervision and evaluation, and fiscal responsibility is which is addressed regularly, as evidenced by the "Administrative Academy" trainings for board members, administrators, and teachers (also open to the public). In addition, school policies and personnel handbooks provide evidence of clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

In the Resource Utilization Domain, the team found the system provides its schools with an exemplary referral and IEP process, including a budget for counseling, assessment, referrals and educational and career

planning. For the past six years, the Jefferson Davis Parish School System has implemented an exemplary Dual Enrollment program which offers college credit opportunities for their students with McNeese State University and continued expansion with Sowela Technical College. Notable development with the Jump Start Initiative ensures students have numerous opportunities towards Industry Based Certifications.

As an area for recommended improvement, comprehensive planning was lacking in the area of providing a safe, clean and healthy environment for all students and staff. The External Review Team concluded the system needs to incorporate in their long term strategic resource management plan, goals and objectives to ensure maintenance of facilities, services and equipment. This continued analysis will promote safety, cleanliness and an overall healthy environment from all students and staff.

Finally the system was provided with one Improvement Priority to develop, implement, and assess a long-range strategic management plan aligned to the system's purpose and direction that identifies goals and objectives critical for continuous improvement, and includes all system operations. This would include a fiscal plan as well as a professional development plan. District planning documents that address technology, professional development, and capital improvement needs were identified and reviewed but it did not appear to the team they were aligned to ensure system-wide continuity and consistency. Furthermore, system level administrators acknowledged the need for a master planning document representing the collective aspirations of system-wide stakeholders and is based on systems thinking that can be used effectively as a blueprint for their journey into the future.

Improvement Priorities

The institution should use the findings from this review to guide the continuous improvement process. The institution must address the Improvement Priorities listed below:

- Develop, implement and assess a long-range strategic management plan aligned to the system's purpose and direction that identifies goals and objectives critical for continuous improvement, and includes all system operations (e.g., fiscal, capital, instructional, professional development).

Accreditation Recommendation

Index of Education Quality

The Index of Education Quality (IEQ™) provides a holistic measure of overall performance based on a comprehensive set of indicators and evaluative criteria. A formative tool for improvement, it identifies areas of success as well as areas in need of focus.

The IEQ™ comprises three domains: 1) the impact of teaching and learning on student performance; 2) the leadership capacity to govern; and 3) the use of resources and data to support and optimize learning.

The overall and domain scores can range from 100-400. The domain scores are derived from: the AdvancED Standards and indicators ratings; results of the Analysis of Student Performance; and data from Stakeholder Feedback Surveys (students, parents, and staff).

	External Review IEQ Score	AdvancED Network Average
Overall Score	325.20	282.79
Teaching and Learning Impact	306.35	274.14
Leadership Capacity	376.39	296.08
Resource Utilization	297.92	286.32

The IEQ™ results include information about how the institution is performing compared to expected criteria as well as to other institutions in the AdvancED Network. The institution should use the information in this report, including the corresponding performance rubrics, to identify specific areas of improvement.

Consequently, the External Review Team recommends to the AdvancED Accreditation Commission that the institution earn the distinction of accreditation for a five-year term. AdvancED will review the results of the External Review to make a final determination including the appropriate next steps for the institution in response to these findings.

Addenda

Individual Institution Results (Self-reported)

Institution Name	Teaching and Learning Impact	Leadership Capacity	Resource Utilization	Overall IEQ Score
Elton Elementary School	319.05	363.64	300.00	328.21
Elton High School	323.81	345.45	314.29	328.21
Fenton Elementary School	323.81	354.55	314.29	330.77
Hathaway High School	295.24	345.45	328.57	315.38
James Ward Elementary School	338.10	336.36	314.29	333.33
Jennings Elementary School	323.81	345.45	314.29	328.21
Jennings High School	323.81	363.64	342.86	338.46
Lacassine High School	238.10	300.00	228.57	253.85
Lake Arthur Elementary School	328.57	363.64	328.57	338.46
Lake Arthur High School	314.29	336.36	314.29	320.51
Welsh Elementary School	314.29	372.73	342.86	335.90
Welsh High School	290.48	354.55	300.00	310.26
Welsh Roanoke Jr. High School	276.19	309.09	300.00	289.74

Team Roster

Member	Brief Biography
Dr. Daniel Sybrant	<p>Dr. Sybrant has served as an educator for 33 years. During this time, he served as a public school teacher, elementary principal, high school principal and 19 years as a public school superintendent. He currently holds the position of Director of Public School System Accreditation for AdvancED and also serves as the Montana Director for AdvancED/NWAC. He obtained a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Nebraska Omaha in 1980, a Masters of Education degree from Montana State University in 1986 and Doctorate of Education from Montana State University in 2012.</p>
Dr. Peggy Wheelis	<p>Dr. Peggy Wheelis is in her 37th year in education with the Ouachita Parish School System. Her current position as Title I Supervisor allows her to focus on the district's lowest performing schools. Past classroom teaching experience includes first grade, second grade, sixth grade, seventh and eighth grade math, in addition to elementary and high school librarian. After completing her Doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction, she taught Reading and Library Science classes for seven years as an adjunct professor at The University of Louisiana at Monroe.</p> <p>Since 2005, Dr. Wheelis has coordinated Ouachita Parish School System's focus to achieve and maintain District Accreditation through AdvancED. Their next review will be scheduled during the 2015-2016 school year.</p>
Dr. Nancy L Bolz	<p>Dr. Nancy Bolz served in school systems in Kansas for 19 years and with AdvancED Kansas for thirteen years. She taught physical education, health, and sex education in Wellington, Dodge City, and Derby; served as the School Improvement and Staff Development Coordinator for Newton; and was the principal of Abilene High School. She is currently the director of AdvancED Kansas and Oklahoma and an adjunct professor for Wichita State University in Educational Leadership. Nancy is currently serving as the past chair and webmaster of the Kansas Learning First Alliance, an adjunct to the QPA Advisory Board, and a member of the Oklahoma Private School Accreditation Commission. She is greatly committed to the holistic continuous improvement process focused on student achievement.</p>
Tracy Bock	<p>Tracy Bock currently serves as Turnaround Coordinator in Rapides Parish. She is tasked with the duty of supporting low achieving schools in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and administration in order to be a proficient vessel (as defined as having a "C" or better School Performance Score by the state). Tracy is well versed in several fields with degrees held in in General Studies – Mass Communications/Criminal Justice with a minor in Spanish, as well as a Master's degree in Educational Technology and a Specialist in Ed Leadership. Tracy has worked for Pearson as a teacher candidate external portfolio reviewer outside her district, in addition to holding various positions within the district. These positions included DIBELS Coordinator, RTI Coordinator, Elementary Supervisor, Scantron District Representative, Discovery Education Coordinator, and Compass Odyssey District Representative. Tracy co-chaired the last AdvancED accreditation for her district which resulted in full accreditation. She also has written and published her dissertation based upon PBIS within the school setting, and has presented her findings at numerous venues across the state. She is also a trainer of trainers for The Data Teams Process for the LLC (Leadership and Learning Center) as well as Common Formative Assessments.</p>

Member	Brief Biography
Mr. Thaddeus Sam	Thaddeus has been employed with the East Baton Rouge Parish School System for 15 years. During his tenure he has been employed as a High School Agriscience Teacher for 7 years. The past 8 years he has served as a Coordinator of Title I. He holds an undergraduate degree in Secondary Education and a Master's Degree in Educational Administration & Supervision from Southern University & A&M College with certifications in General Science, Parish/City School Supervisor of Instruction, Provisional Principal, Provisional Secondary School Principal, Supervisor of Student Teaching and Vocational Agriculture.
Dr. Alice Thompson	Dr. Alice Thompson is the President/CEO of Thompson Educational Consulting, Inc. Thompson Educational Consulting, Inc. has been providing support and technical assistance to public and charter schools for the last 18 years. She has over 30 years in education, as a Federal Program Director, Middle school principal, Adjunct college professor, Texas Education Education Compliance Monitor and general and special education classroom teacher. She has a PhD in Educational Administration, Master's in Special Education and Bachelor's in Vocational Home Economics Education.
Dr. Jeff Wooten	Jeff Wooten is currently the Alabama Director for AdvancED. He began this position on August 5, 2013 after retiring from Muscle Shoals City Schools, where he served eleven years as superintendent. Before this, he served as a high school principal, PK-9 grade principal, assistant principal, and teacher. He earned his undergraduate degree from Jacksonville State University, Master's from Alabama A&M University, and Doctorate from Nova Southeastern University.

Next Steps

1. Review and discuss the findings from this report with stakeholders.
2. Ensure that plans are in place to embed and sustain the strengths noted in the Powerful Practices section to maximize their impact on the institution.
3. Consider the Opportunities for Improvement identified throughout the report that are provided by the team in the spirit of continuous improvement and the institution's commitment to improving its capacity to improve student learning.
4. Develop action plans to address the Improvement Priorities identified by the team. Include methods for monitoring progress toward addressing the Improvement Priorities.
5. Use the report to guide and strengthen the institution's efforts to improve student performance and system effectiveness.
6. Following the External Review, submit the Accreditation Progress Report detailing progress made toward addressing the Improvement Priorities. Institutions are required to respond to all Improvement Priorities. The report will be reviewed at the appropriate state, national, and/or international levels to monitor and ensure that the system has implemented the necessary actions to address the Improvement Priorities. The accreditation status will be reviewed and acted upon based on the responses to the Improvement Priorities and the resulting improvement.
7. Continue to meet the AdvancED Standards, submit required reports, engage in continuous improvement, and document results.

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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