



Dawson Springs Independent School District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 20, 2019

The results of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) audit completed back in February have been released to the district. The audits themselves are designed to show both things we are doing well and also things we need to work on. Although we do not agree with many of the findings, several of the issues listed have already been in the process of being worked on and addressed. We have plans to address the remaining items and will be implementing support and solutions designed to improve in these areas.

Several issues mentioned in the audit we have been working on since our two KDE education recovery specialists came to the district back at the beginning of November. Many of the curriculum and instructional improvement pieces to the puzzle we had already been working on for several months when we specifically brought on a curriculum and instruction specialist in November of 2017 to focus on and help us especially in our elementary school.

While our district size is a major benefit to our students and families, it also creates challenges when it comes to maximizing resources in certain areas. We continue our efforts to maximize our resources and our recent focus is showing results and improving academics in our Elementary School. Our Junior/Senior High School continues to show very positive results. As the elementary school shows sustainable progress we will expand our targeted interventions to a more unified districtwide approach.

Over the coming weeks we will use the audit results and areas already identified to develop plans, which will help us focus more on areas that need improvement. At the beginning of this school year, our elementary began implementing research-based programs in reading and math. Over the last several months, students have been showing significant progress in many areas.

Moving forward, our district will focus on addressing the 3 specific areas identified in the audit. Those areas are:

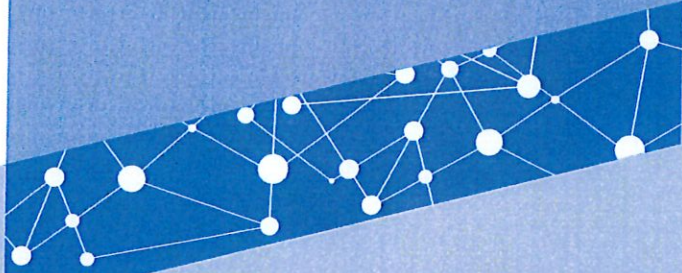
- *Engage multiple stakeholder groups in the creation of a clear and concise purpose (e.g., mission, vision, beliefs, goals, expectations). The review and revision of a mission statement has already begun with stakeholders.
- *Establish and implement a districtwide, systematic continuous improvement process that increases student learning through high-quality instructional practices. (We have been working on this for several months at our elementary and will be working to expand targeted interventions district-wide)
- *Design and implement a process for district and school leaders to systematically monitor and adjust curriculum

Our main focus continues to be meeting the needs of students while working on improving our practices and improving instruction, and addressing the areas identified in the audit reports. Please contact Superintendent Whalen for questions related to our continuous school improvement efforts.

February 4–7, 2019



AdvancED®
Engagement
Review Report



AdvancED® Diagnostic Review

Results for: Dawson Springs Independent School District

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Introduction

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

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

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

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

Stakeholder Groups	Number
District-level Administrators	8
Building-level Administrators	3
Professional Support Staff (e.g., Counselor, Media Specialist, Technology Coordinator)	5
Certified Staff	14
Non-certified Staff	13
Students	31
Parents	5
Community Members/Partners	1
Board Members	5
Total	85

AdvancED Standards Diagnostic Results

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

Leadership Capacity Domain

The capacity of leadership to ensure an institution’s progress toward its stated objectives is an essential element of organizational effectiveness. An institution’s leadership capacity includes the fidelity and commitment to its purpose and direction, the effectiveness of governance and leadership to enable the institution to realize its stated objectives, the ability to engage and involve stakeholders in meaningful and productive ways, and the capacity to implement strategies that improve learner and educator performance.

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

Learning Capacity Domain

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

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

Resource Capacity Domain

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

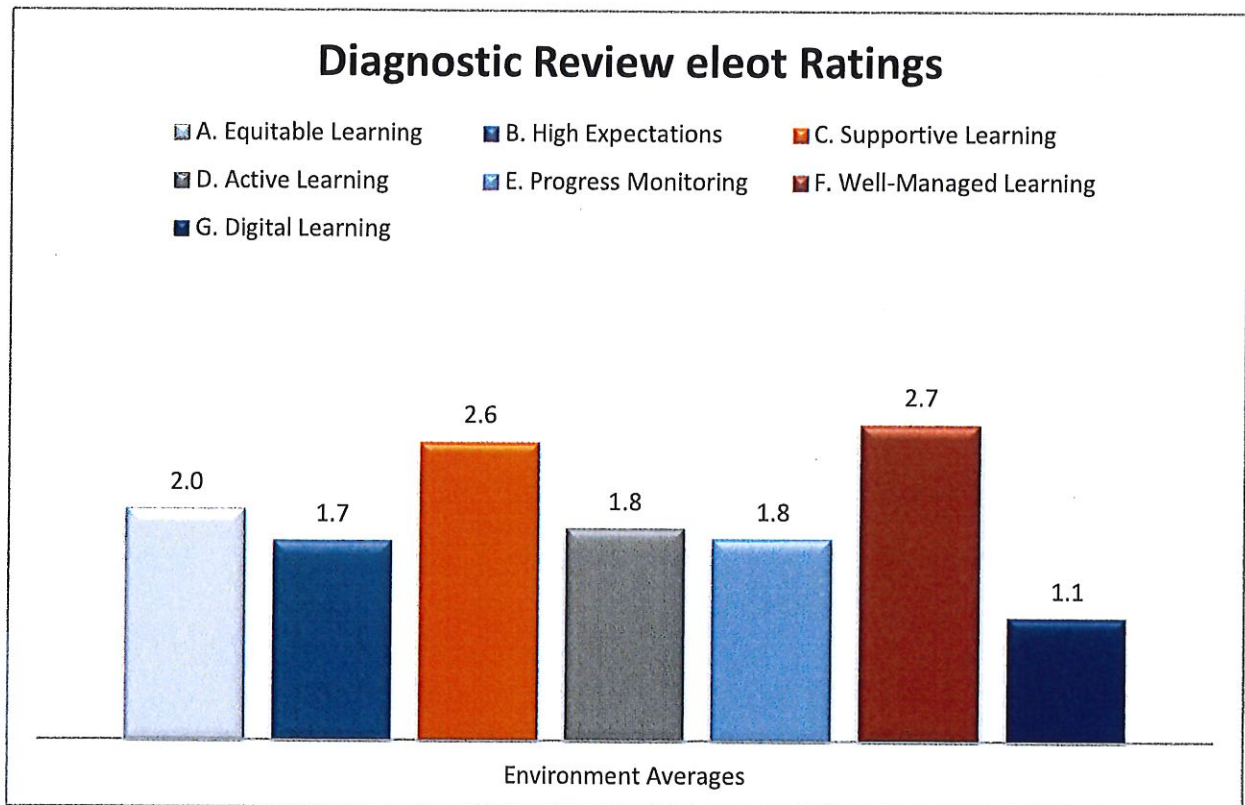
Resource Capacity Standards		Rating
3.1	The system plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the system's effectiveness.	Needs Improvement
3.2	The system's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality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

Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®)

Results

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

Every member of the Diagnostic Review Team was eleot certified and passed a certification exam that established inter-rater reliability. School Team members conducted 14 observations during the Diagnostic Review process, including all core content learning environments. The following charts provide aggregate data across multiple observations for each of the seven learning environments.



A. Equitable Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
A1	1.2	Learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs.	79%	21%	0%	0%
A2	2.4	Learners have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support.	7%	50%	43%	0%
A3	2.9	Learners are treated in a fair, clear, and consistent manner.	0%	14%	86%	0%
A4	1.6	Learners demonstrate and/or have opportunities to develop empathy/respect/appreciation for differences in abilities, aptitudes, backgrounds, cultures, and/or other human characteristics, conditions and dispositions.	50%	43%	7%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			2.0			

B. High Expectations Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
B1	1.6	Learners strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher.	43%	57%	0%	0%
B2	2.1	Learners engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable.	14%	57%	29%	0%
B3	1.3	Learners demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work.	71%	29%	0%	0%
B4	1.8	Learners engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing).	29%	64%	7%	0%
B5	1.9	Learners take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning.	43%	29%	29%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			1.7			

C. Supportive Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
C1	2.4	Learners demonstrate a sense of community that is positive, cohesive, engaged, and purposeful.	7%	43%	50%	0%
C2	2.4	Learners take risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback).	0%	57%	43%	0%
C3	2.7	Learners are supported by the teacher, their peers, and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks.	0%	29%	71%	0%
C4	2.8	Learners demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher.	0%	21%	79%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			2.6			

D. Active Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
D1	2.0	Learners' discussions/dialogues/exchanges with each other and teacher predominate.	21%	57%	21%	0%
D2	1.5	Learners make connections from content to real-life experiences.	50%	50%	0%	0%
D3	2.4	Learners are actively engaged in the learning activities.	7%	50%	43%	0%
D4	1.5	Learners collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments.	57%	36%	7%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			1.8			

E. Progress Monitoring Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
E1	1.6	Learners monitor their own progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored.	57%	29%	14%	0%
E2	2.3	Learners receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work.	7%	57%	36%	0%
E3	1.6	Learners demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content.	43%	57%	0%	0%
E4	1.6	Learners understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed.	50%	43%	7%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			1.8			

F. Well-Managed Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
F1	2.9	Learners speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other.	0%	14%	79%	7%
F2	2.9	Learners demonstrate knowledge of and/or follow classroom rules and behavioral expectations and work well with others.	0%	14%	79%	7%
F3	2.5	Learners transition smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another.	21%	14%	57%	7%
F4	2.6	Learners use class time purposefully with minimal wasted time or disruptions.	7%	21%	71%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:			2.7			

G. Digital Learning Environment						
Indicators	Average	Description	Not Observed	Somewhat Evident	Evident	Very Evident
G1	1.0	Learners use digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning.	100%	0%	0%	0%
G2	1.2	Learners use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning.	86%	7%	7%	0%
G3	1.0	Learners use digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning.	100%	0%	0%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:		1.1				

eleot Narrative

The Dawson Springs Elementary School Diagnostic Review Team conducted 14 classroom observations, including all core content classes, using the eleot observation tool. These observations provided information about teaching and learning across the school.

Strengths were identified in several professional practices. The most significant strengths were found in the Well-Managed Learning Environment, which was rated 2.7 on a four-point scale. Students were generally compliant, respectful, and obedient in their behaviors. For example, students who “speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other” (F1) and “demonstrate knowledge of and/or follow classroom rules and behavioral expectations and work well with others” (F2) were evident/very evident in 86 percent of classrooms. Also, the Diagnostic Review Team noted that teachers were equitable in their dealings with students. Instances of students who were “treated in a fair, clear, and consistent manner” (A3), for example, were evident/very evident in 86 percent of classrooms and who “demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher” (C4) were evident/very evident in 79 percent of classrooms. Collectively, these data indicated students were well-behaved and respectful to adults and each other.

Conversely, the School Diagnostic Review Team found a lack of academic rigor in most classrooms. It was evident/very evident in zero percent of classrooms that “Learners demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work” (B3) and that “Learners strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher” (B1). In 29 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that “Learners engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable” (B2).

Differentiated instruction was another area that concerned the team. Classroom instruction typically was whole-group and teacher-directed with few instances of differentiation. In zero percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that “Learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs” (A1). In many cases, learners could not articulate to team members what constituted proficient work, as it was evident/very evident that “Learners understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed” (E4) in seven percent of classrooms. Also, in zero percent of classrooms, learners able to “demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content” (E3) were evident/very evident.

Finally, the Digital Learning Environment earned the lowest overall average rating of 1.1 on the four-point scale. Students rarely used digital tools or technology for learning. For example, it was evident/very evident that learners used technology to “gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning” (G1) or “communicate and work collaboratively for learning” (G3) in zero percent of classrooms. In addition, instances of learners who used technology to “conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning” (G2) were evident/very evident in seven percent of classrooms.

Collectively, these findings could serve as levers for the district to use to assist the school in increasing instructional capacity through improved leadership capacity districtwide. District leaders are encouraged to carefully review these findings to identify additional areas to leverage to improve student learning at Dawson Springs Elementary School and to increase district capacity.

Findings

Improvement Priorities

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

Improvement Priority #1

Engage multiple stakeholder groups in the creation of a clear and concise purpose (e.g., mission, vision, beliefs, goals, expectations) that encompasses high expectations for teaching and learning. Specifically, within the district's purpose statement(s), communicate district expectations for the delivery of grade-level appropriate curriculum through high-quality teaching practices. Develop a plan to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the district's purpose based on measurable results of student achievement. (Standard 1.1)

Evidence:

Student Performance Data:

The Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP) student performance data, as detailed in an addendum to this report, revealed the school performed below the state averages in the percent of students who reached Proficient/Distinguished in all content areas (reading, math, science, social studies, and writing) for two consecutive years.

The percentage of students who scored Proficient/Distinguished in third-grade reading decreased from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018. The percentage of students who scored Proficient/Distinguished in third-grade and fifth-grade math also decreased from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018. In addition, the student growth index in reading was 5.1 points below the state index, and math was 2.8 points below the state index. The overall student growth indicator was 2.5 points below the state indicator.

The percentage of economically disadvantaged students scoring Proficient/Distinguished was 2.3 percentage points lower in math than all students. Also, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students scoring Proficient/Distinguished was 3.1 percent lower in reading than all students.

Classroom Observation Data:

The classroom observation data, as previously discussed, indicated that most instruction was whole group with little differentiation to meet the needs of students. Students, for example, who "engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs" (A1) were evident/very evident in zero percent of classrooms. In addition, students who "engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable" (B2) were evident/very evident in 29 percent of classrooms. In the Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environment, instances of students who "demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content" (E3) were evident/very evident in zero percent of classrooms. Also, students who "engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking" (B4) were evident/very evident in seven percent of classrooms. Finally, students who "demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work" (B3) were evident/very evident in zero percent of classrooms.

Stakeholder Interview Data:

The interview data revealed some recurring themes. While the district recently purchased Reading Mastery to provide reading curriculum in the elementary school, the interview data revealed that no common curriculum existed across grade levels in core content areas. In addition, stakeholders reported that no common classroom expectations existed to guide teaching and learning in all content areas and at all grade levels. Also, data from interviews and the superintendent's presentation to the team suggested that the mission, vision, and core beliefs had not been revised or adjusted in several years. Interview data revealed a lack of processes used by the district for evaluating the effectiveness of programs, including teaching practices in schools.

The interview data revealed the district had not historically analyzed student achievement data in a consistent manner to inform instructional decisions. A disconnect existed between student performance in grades seven through 12 and student performance in kindergarten through grade six. Student performance in kindergarten through grade six was low compared to the high school. Stakeholders frequently reported the difference was building-level academic expectations. In addition, stakeholders could not articulate district expectations for teaching and learning. The district had the mission and vision statements posted in the boardroom and listed in the employee handbook. However, stakeholders did not reference the mission and vision statements or discuss how they were used for making decisions.

Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

The survey data indicated mixed agreement about districtwide academic expectations, as evidenced by 65 percent of staff members who agreed/strongly agreed that "All teachers in our school use multiple types of assessments to modify instruction and to revise the curriculum" (E7). Also, 59 percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, "All teachers in our school provide students with specific and timely feedback about their learning" (E6).

Documents and Artifacts:

The Diagnostic Review Team found no artifacts or documents to indicate that the district reviewed or had recently revised the district mission and vision or core belief statements. The district used the mission and vision statements that were created several years ago, but the team found no evidence indicating how the mission and vision were used to make decisions related to continuous improvement. Finally, the team found no evidence that the district communicated, developed, or implemented districtwide instructional expectations.

Improvement Priority #2

Establish and implement a districtwide, systematic continuous improvement process that increases student learning through high-quality instructional practices. Define action steps within the process and determine a timeline for completion. Develop a method for ongoing collection and use of multiple sources of data to measure the effectiveness of instructional practices on student achievement. Use consistent and timely analysis to monitor and revise the continuous improvement process. Regularly communicate with all stakeholders (i.e., at the onset and throughout) about the continuous implementation process. (Primary Standard 1.3, Secondary Standard 1.10)

Evidence:**Student Performance Data:**

The student performance data, as detailed in an addendum to this report, indicated instructional systems had not been developed, implemented, or monitored to improve student achievement at all levels. Student performance data, summarized under Improvement Priority #1 of this report, were also considered by the Diagnostic Review Team to identify Improvement Priority #2.

Stakeholder Interview Data:

The interview data indicated that district leadership seldom communicated specific instructional non-negotiables and academic expectations to principals, teachers, and other staff members. Although interview data showed that regular administrator meetings occurred every other Friday, these meetings typically focused on managerial items and rarely included instructional discussions or the review of academic data. Most stakeholders indicated that district leaders had few expectations about the development and implementation of a process using multiple data points to improve student learning. While professional learning community (PLC) meetings were scheduled at the school level, most interviewees stated that the process had been informal with little direction or purpose from district leadership. The team found no evidence that classroom instructional practices were systematically monitored or that methods existed to support those teachers who needed assistance to increase the effectiveness of their instruction.

Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

The survey data indicated that 67 percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed that “Our school’s purpose statement is formally reviewed and revised with involvement from stakeholders” (C2). Also, 60 percent of staff members agreed/strongly 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)” (E10). The elementary school survey data indicated that 64 percent of students agreed with the statement, “My principal and teachers ask me what I think about school” (G1). The parent survey data indicated that 70 percent agreed/strongly agreed that “Our school provides opportunities for stakeholders to be involved in the school” (D6).

Documents and Artifacts:

A review of the 2019 state-mandated Comprehensive District Improvement Plan (CDIP) revealed multiple ongoing activities in the document that were not current. Dates listed for the onset of many activities had passed by three or more years. The Diagnostic Review Team was not provided evidence of processes that formally guide PLCs in using survey data for continuous improvement. Also, the district PLC meeting agendas and notes showed an absence of leadership team engagement and lack of a collaborative data-driven process for continuous improvement.

Improvement Priority #3

Design and implement a process for district and school leaders to systematically monitor and adjust curriculum implementation (e.g., standards, high expectations, rigorous delivery of instruction, a balanced assessment system). Use multiple methods (e.g., classroom observations; data analysis from assessments and programs; curriculum planning, monitoring, and feedback; intentional coaching and modeling; personalized professional learning experiences) for district and school leaders to collaboratively monitor the quality and fidelity of and the degree to which instructional practices meet student needs and learning expectations. (Primary Standard 2.7, Secondary Standard 2.5)

Evidence:**Student Performance Data:**

Student performance data, as detailed in an addendum to this report, indicated instructional processes were not developed, implemented, or monitored to support student learning and improve student achievement at all levels. Student performance data were among the data considered by the Diagnostic Review Team to identify Improvement Priority #3.

Classroom Observation Data:

The classroom observation data, as previously discussed, revealed that students who “engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs” (A1) were evident/very evident in zero percent of classrooms. Also, the Diagnostic Review Team observed low levels of academic rigor in most classrooms, as evidenced by students who “engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable” (B2) being evident/very evident in 29 percent of classrooms.

In addition, the classroom observation data showed that students who were “supported by the teacher, their peers and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks” (C3) were evident/very evident in 71 percent of classrooms and who “monitor their own learning progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored” (E1) were evident/very evident in 14 percent of classrooms. Similarly, in the Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environment, the team noted that students who “receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work” (E2) were evident/very evident in 36 percent of classrooms. The observation data indicated that learners who “demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content” (E3) were evident/very evident in zero percent of classrooms. Also, students who “understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed” (E4) were evident/very evident in seven percent of classrooms.

Stakeholder Interview Data:

The stakeholder interview data showed that while the district had mission, vision, and belief statements, most staff members were unaware of district academic expectations. At Dawson Springs Elementary School, the interview data showed the existence of school-level expectations for instruction, but stakeholders generally reported a lack of monitoring and follow-through from both school and district instructional leaders.

Most staff members stated that professional learning was offered to support specific programs, in particular Reading Mastery. Other than training for these programs, most staff members reported they sought their own professional learning opportunities. Professional learning activities presented by the district primarily were delivered in a whole-group setting and not tailored to the specific learning needs of teachers.

Some interview data reflected that Board members did not regularly inquire about or review processes and procedures related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment. According to stakeholders, data were presented but not analyzed as a way to monitor student needs and measure academic progress.

The stakeholder interview data revealed that data conversations had only recently commenced and become part of discussions at professional learning community (PLC) and district leadership meetings. The interview data indicated that student data were shared but not regularly monitored to determine and address the needs of students and teachers or to determine growth. Finally, the interview data showed that during most data-related conversations, student achievement results from only a few sources were discussed.

Both school and district personnel acknowledged the need for rigorous and high-level instruction. According to the interview data, staff members need additional and effective training to learn to analyze data and use findings for instructional decision-making.

Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

The stakeholder survey data revealed mixed agreement about instruction meeting the needs of students. Parent survey data showed 79 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that “All of my child's teachers meet his/her learning needs by individualizing instruction” (E4). The data also indicated that 82 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “All of my child's teachers use a variety of teaching strategies and learning activities” (E3). Elementary student survey data also supported parent data. Eighty-eight percent of students in grades three through five agreed that “My teachers use different activities to help me learn” (E2).

Conversely, the staff member survey data were less favorable, as evidenced by 46 percent of staff members who agreed/strongly agreed that “All teachers in our school personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs of students” (E2). The classroom observation data supported the teacher survey data, as students who engaged in differentiated learning activities were evident/very evident in zero percent of classrooms. The survey data also showed that 65 percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed that “All teachers in our school use multiple types of assessments to modify instruction and to revise the curriculum” (E7).

The Diagnostic Review Team found minimal evidence showing the district had established a process to monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment. However, 60 percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “All teachers in our school monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment based on data from student assessments and an examination of professional practice” (E1).

Documents and Artifacts:

A review of the Comprehensive District Improvement Plan and other documents presented to the team showed no evidence to demonstrate that the district systematically relied on the plan to promote instructional improvement, build organizational capacity, or increase student learning. The team found a lack of evidence supporting curriculum, instruction, and assessment planning. Additionally, the team found no process for collecting and using data to monitor the effectiveness of the district curriculum, instructional practices, and assessments.

Insights from the Review

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

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

Strengths:

Parents, teachers, support staff, and the administrative team at Dawson Springs Independent Schools demonstrated a sense of pride for their school and community. Staff members were committed to and deeply cared about their students. The district collaborates with the local health department to provide an on-site clinic to assist in meeting the medical needs of students. The district has established a strong Family Resource and Youth Services Center (FRYSC) program to meet the nonacademic needs of students. The program included several community partnerships that provided additional support and resources for students and families. Interview and observation data indicated the district had established clear student behavior expectations that included monitoring and communicating expectations.

Other areas the Diagnostic Review Team identified as strengths included the district hiring of an additional curriculum support person for the elementary school in November of 2017 and the technology department creating short- and long-range plans to support instruction at all schools. In addition, students performed well at the high school level on the ACT assessment and in On-Demand Writing.

Continuous Improvement Process:

The classroom observation, survey, and stakeholder interview data and a review of documents suggested the district had not successfully established effective, results-driven continuous improvement planning processes. Lack of artifacts and documents point to several areas of concern. The district had not clarified expectations for all staff members through protocols for improvement (professional learning and evaluation). The team found no evidence of a common curriculum based on required standards. No pacing guides or implementation procedures were available for teachers to use when planning instruction. In addition, the district lacked a vision that supported high expectations for teaching and learning at the elementary school. The team also found little follow-through on ideas generated at the administrative/principal's meetings. In addition, the district did not use data to routinely evaluate program effectiveness, monitor the impact of specific strategies, or determine attainment of improvement goals.

The Diagnostic Review Team suggests that the district establish and commit to a clear set of performance benchmarks and measures in order to monitor and determine its ability to meet future improvement goals as a way to leverage school and district improvement. Having a common message about the district's mission and vision is crucial to successfully implementing a continuous improvement plan. Classroom observation data revealed a lack of consistency in implementing research-based, rigorous instruction. Furthermore, students engaging in high-quality work and teachers providing meaningful feedback were rarely observed. The team recommends that the district find ways to actively engage teachers in ongoing, structured collaboration focused on curriculum alignment, assessment development, data use, and differentiated instruction. Also, the district is encouraged to provide focused professional learning activities designed to meet the identified needs of teachers. To continue growth toward proficiency and provide opportunities to leverage for improvement, school staff members need coaching and mentoring to maximize the implementation of high-yield instructional practices. Classroom teachers need additional support to effectively differentiate instruction, use exemplars to promote student understanding of high-quality work, and create a culture and climate conducive to learning.

District leadership is encouraged to consistently implement systematic processes to ensure the efficacy of implementing initiatives, monitoring instruction, evaluating programs, coaching, mentoring, supporting all staff members, and providing and participating in opportunities to share and build on the strengths of the staff.

Next Steps

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

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

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

Team Roster

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

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Dr. Karen Barron	<p>Dr. Karen Barron currently serves as an independent consultant and coach to teachers, schools, and districts. As a consultant and teacher, she has experience in all levels, K-12. She has taught both graduate and undergraduate courses at Tennessee State University and Vanderbilt University. She has extensive experience working with low-performing schools and in school turnaround. Dr. Barron's administrative experience includes principalship in both elementary and middle schools for 20 years in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools. Other administrative experience includes program specialist at Edvantia (non-profit now called McRel), school improvement specialist in Tennessee, Research and Development Specialist at Appalachian Regional Resource Center at Edvantia, program manager and coach in Race to the Top District grant. Dr. Barron holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education from the University of Tennessee. She also has a master's degree, an educational specialist degree, and a doctorate degree in curriculum and instruction from Peabody College of Vanderbilt University.</p>
Tim Godbey	<p>Mr. Godbey has been a Kentucky educator for the past 22 years, serving as classroom teacher, athletic coach, assistant principal, and head principal. During his tenure as high school principal, Tim successfully transformed one of Kentucky's persistently low-achieving schools into a school of distinction. This effort led to his current role with the Kentucky Department of Education as Education Recovery Director, where he oversees school turnaround work in various parts of the state. Mr. Godbey earned a bachelor's degree in middle school education and a master's degree in instructional leadership from Eastern Kentucky University.</p>
Charlotte Jones	<p>Charlotte Jones has 21 years of experience in education. Currently, she is working with the Kentucky Department of Education as an Education Recovery Specialist, serving schools that are identified as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement school. Prior to this position, Charlotte was a high school social studies teacher at Montgomery County High School in Mount Sterling, Kentucky. She also served as the gifted and talented coordinator, building assessment coordinator, and site-based decision-making vice-chair. Ms. Jones also has volunteered for various student support organizations and events. She has a bachelor's degree in history, a master's in school administration, a Rank 1 in instructional supervision, and certificates for gifted and talented education and director of pupil personnel.</p>

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Kelli Bush	<p>Mrs. Kelli S. Bush has over 25 years of experience as a teacher and administrator. She is currently the assistant superintendent for student learning for Elizabethtown Independent Schools in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. In that position, she coordinates all local, state, and federal programs dealing with instruction and curriculum implementation and the professional development activities for three elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, one alternative center, and one state residential home for teen females. Mrs. Bush holds certifications in educational administration for both superintendent and principal from Western Kentucky University. She also has her master's degree and bachelor's degree in elementary education and was recently accepted and inducted as a member of the Kentucky Women in Educational Leadership professional group. Mrs. Bush has experience as an elementary principal and an elementary teacher in both the primary and intermediate grades.</p>

Addenda

Student Performance Data

Section I: School and Student Proficiency and Separate Academic Indicator Results

Content Area	%P/D School (16-17) "All Student Group"	%P/D State (16-17)	%P/D School (17-18) "All Student Group"	%P/D State (17-18)
Reading 3 rd	40.0	55.8	36.7	52.3
Reading 4 th	29.2	49.9	40.5	53.7
Reading 5 th	24.3	57.3	38.3	57.8
Math 3 rd	33.3	50.9	28.6	47.3
Math 4 th	25.0	47.9	42.9	47.2
Math 5 th	35.1	48.9	17.0	52.0
Science 4 th	NA	N/A	14.3	30.8
Social Studies 5 th	37.8	60.0	31.9	53.0
Writing 5 th	16.2	45.9	25.5	40.5
Reading 6 th	34.0	58.9	18.4	59.7
Math 6 th	38.0	49.1	31.6	47.5

Plus

- The percentage of students scoring Proficient/Distinguished in fourth-grade reading increased from 29.2 in 2016-2017 to 40.5 in 2017-2018.
- The percentage of students scoring Proficient/Distinguished in fourth-grade math increased from 25 in 2016-2017 to 42.9 in 2017-2018.

Delta

- Students performed below the state averages in all state content areas (i.e., reading, math, science, social studies, writing) and at all grade levels for two consecutive years.
- The percentage of students who scored Proficient/Distinguished in third-grade reading decreased from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018.
- The percentage of students who scored Proficient/Distinguished in third-grade and fifth-grade math decreased from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018.
- The percentage of students who scored Proficient/Distinguished in social studies decreased by 5.9 percentage points from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018.

- The percentage of students who scored Proficient/Distinguished in sixth-grade reading decreased 15.6 percentage points from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018.

Section II: Student Growth Index (2017-2018)

Content Area	Index	State Index
Reading	14.6	19.7
Math	11.7	14.5
EL	N/A	31.9
Growth Indicator	14.6	17.1

Plus
Delta

- Student performance data indicated the student growth index in reading was 5.1 points below the state index.
- Student performance data indicated student growth index in math was 2.8 points below the state index.
- Student performance data indicated the overall student growth indicator was 2.5 points below the state indicator.

Section III: 2017-18 %PD by Level

Gap Group	Reading %P/D	Math %P/D	Science %P/D	Social Studies %P/D	Writing %P/D
All Students	38.4	29.0	14.3	31.9	25.5
Female	45.3	31.3	9.1	26.7	30.0
Male	32.4	27.0	16.1	41.2	17.6
White					
African American					
Hispanic					
Asian					
American Indian or Alaska Native					
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander					
Two or more races					
Title I	38.4	29.0	14.3	31.9	25.5
Migrant					

Homeless					
Foster					
Military					
English Learner (EL)					
English Learner plus Monitored					
Economically Disadvantaged	35.3	26.7	14.3	29.4	26.5
Gifted/Talented					
Disability-With IEP (Total)	25.0	8.3			
Disability-With IEP (No Alt)					
Disability (no ALT) with Accommodation					
Consolidated Student Group					

Plus

- The percentage of economically disadvantaged students who scored Proficient/Distinguished was 3.1 percentage points lower in reading than the percentage for all students.
- The percentage of economically disadvantaged students who scored Proficient/Distinguished was 2.3 percentage points lower in math than the percentage for all students.

Delta

- The percentage of students with disability with IEP who scored Proficient/Distinguished was 20.7 percentage points lower in math than the percentage for all students.
- Data indicated that male students outperformed female students in both science and social studies, but female students outperformed male students in reading, math, and writing.

Schedule

Monday, February 4, 2019

Time	Event	Where	Who
4:00 p.m.	Brief Team Meeting	Holiday Inn	Diagnostic Review Team Members
4:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.	Superintendent Presentation	Holiday Inn Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members
5:10 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #1	Holiday Inn Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Tuesday, February 5, 2019

Time	Event	Where	Who
7:30 a.m.	Team arrives at Dawson Springs School District	District office	Diagnostic Review Team Members
8:15 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Superintendent's Interview	District office	Diagnostic Review Team Members
9:15 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Stakeholder interviews	District office	Diagnostic Review Team Members
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Board members interviews		Diagnostic Review Team Members
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #2	Holiday Inn	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Wednesday, February 6, 2019

Time	Event	Where	Who
7:30 a.m.	Team arrives at Dawson Springs School District	District	Diagnostic Review Team Members
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Continue interviews and artifact review and visit school site	School/District	Diagnostic Review Team Members
5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #3	Holiday Inn	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Thursday, January 7, 2019

Time	Event	Where	Who
8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Final Team Work Session	School	Diagnostic Review Team Members



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About AdvancED

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

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District Diagnostic Review Summary Report

Dawson Springs Independent

School District

02/04/2019 – 02/07/2019

The members of the Dawson Springs Independent Diagnostic Review Team are grateful to the district leadership, staff, students, families and community for the cooperation and hospitality extended to us during the assessment process.

Following its review of extensive evidence and in consideration of the factors outlined in 703 KAR 5:280, Section 5, the Diagnostic Review Team submitted the following assessment regarding the district's capacity to the Commissioner of Education:

District Capacity:

The district does not have the capacity to manage the intervention in the school identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement.

The Commissioner of Education adopts the assessment of district capacity by the Diagnostic Review Team.

Wendy D. Frazier Date: 3/13/2019
Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

I have received the diagnostic review report for Dawson Springs Independent School District.
[Signature] Date: 3/19/19
Superintendent, Dawson Springs Independent