Report of the External Review Team for Quitman County Schools

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AdvancED®

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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

On February 21-24, 2016, a five member Team representing Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina visited Quitman County Schools in Georgetown, Georgia, for its Systems Performance Accreditation External Review. Their professional experiences and educational expertise allowed the Team to assess and evaluate the system's effectiveness in meeting the systemic, systematic and sustainable improvement requirements of accreditation. During the four day review, the team reviewed evidence provided by the system, interviewed 73 stakeholders and observed 22 classes using the Effective Learning Environment Observation Tool (eleot™).

Preparations for the Quitman County School District review began in January, 2016 with a series of phone calls between the Lead Evaluator and the system central office staff. The phone calls served to define the logistics for the review including the review schedule, artifact collection, team meal and lodging arrangements and updates regarding the status of the system's Self Assessment.

Prior to the External Review, Team members participated in a conference call on February 18 and also communicated through emails and phone calls at other times. During the conference call, standards assignments, review logistics, and the review schedule were discussed. The team was provided access to evidence gathered by the system prior to the review. Each team member was assigned a standard and was

asked to prepare a summary of that standard. The summary was presented at the initial team meeting Sunday evening, February 21. The Team developed a master list of questions to ask and evidence to look for throughout the review

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Monday morning's schedule began with an overview of the system by the superintendent followed by an interview, during which she was open about the system's challenges, strengths and direction. The system then provided a brief overview of the 5 standards. Four board members were able to meet with the Team. After lunch, the Team conducted interviews with system and school staff about the standards, parents and community members. During the Team work session that evening, Team members reviewed the master list of questions and shared initial indicator ratings of their assigned standards. Preparations for the next day's school visits were discussed and finalized.

On Tuesday, the five Team members visited the three schools and completed eleots™ in all 22 classrooms in the system.   School leadership teams, teachers, support staff, and students were interviewed. At 5 P.M. the Team convened to review the results of the eleot™, observations from the interviews, and the additional evidence provided by the schools. The discussion provided information as each Team member completed ratings individually. Following a review of the preliminary Index of Education Quality (IEQ) ratings and comparisons of those ratings with AdvancEd Network Averages(AEN), tentative Powerful Practices, Improvement Priorities, and Opportunities for Improvement were drafted with input from all Team members.

The Team returned to the system's central office for the final day of the review. Team members entered indicator ratings into ASSIST. Based on the final IEQ, the Team made final decisions about actions adopted through consensus and members reviewed the exit report and drafted descriptions and rationales for the Powerful Practice, the three Improvement Priorities, and the Opportunities for Improvement. The Lead Evaluator and Associate Lead Evaluator met with the superintendent to review the exit report as well as provide details about the Team's findings. At the conclusions of the review, the Lead Evaluator shared the exit report with the board members during a called board meeting.

The External Review Team expresses its appreciation for the warm and welcoming reception it received from the system's leaders, teachers, staff, and stakeholders. The hospitality was outstanding throughout the review. Hotel and meal arrangements at Lake Point State Park provided the team with every comfort.

The system's accreditation report was completed with appropriate detail and candor. System leaders articulated a clear commitment to continuous improvement and to increasing the system's capacity to serve the students and community. As such, the External Review Team is confident that the review's findings will be used to elevate the level of teaching and learning in all classrooms.

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	4
Administrators	2
Instructional Staff	16
Support Staff	18
Students	24
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	8
Total	**73**

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.	2.00	2.68
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.	2.00	2.50
3.3	Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	2.00	2.55
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	1.80	2.73
3.5	The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.	2.00	2.57
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	1.80	2.48
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	2.00	2.60

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.	3.00	2.92
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.	2.00	2.40
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	2.80	2.53
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	2.00	2.64
3.12	The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	2.00	2.66

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.	2.00	2.66
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.	1.80	2.41
5.3	Throughout the system professional and support staff are trained in the interpretation and use of data.	1.00	2.15
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.	2.00	2.46
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.	1.40	2.72

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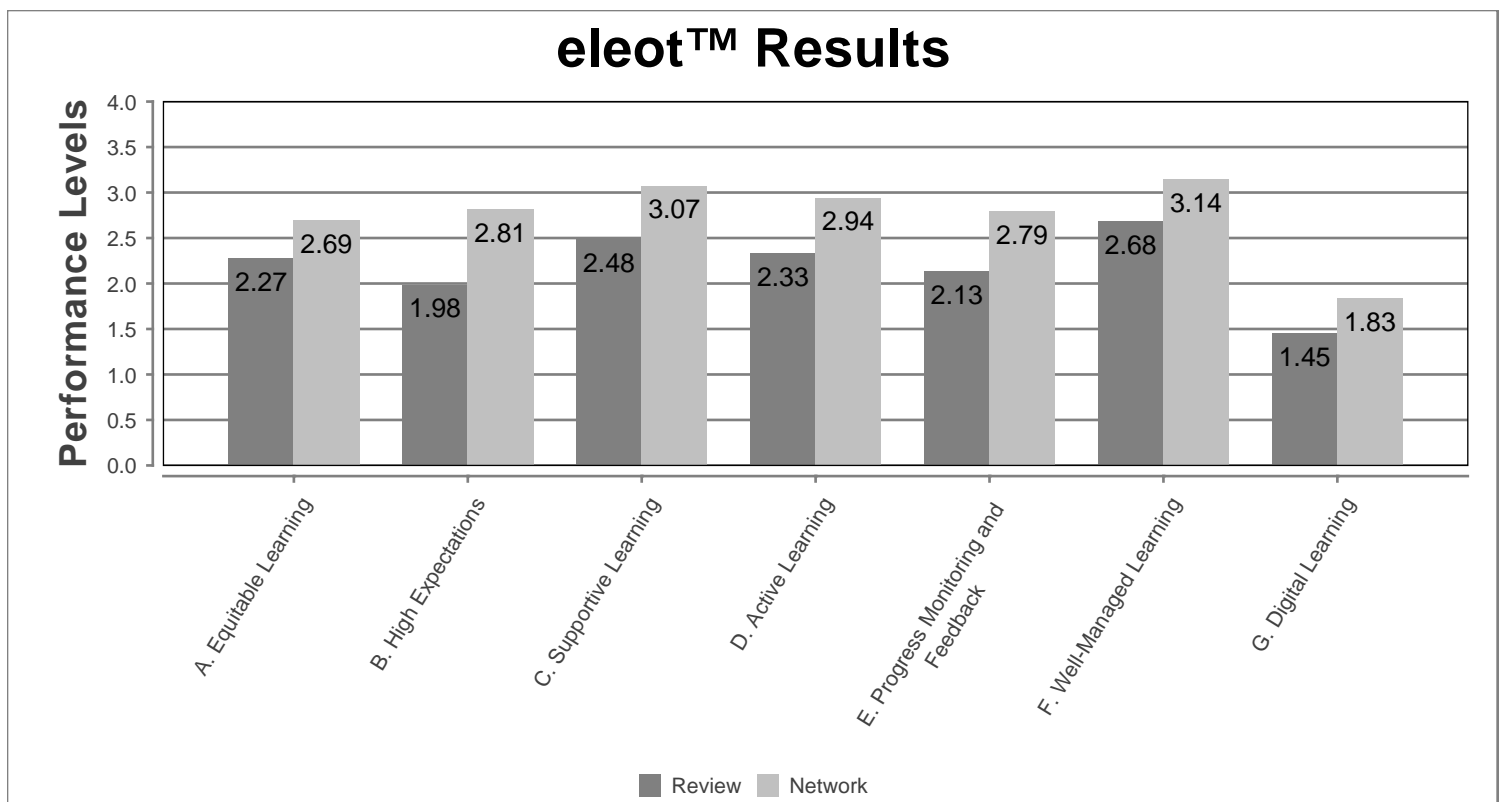
learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important indicators for evaluating overall student performance.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Assessment Quality	3.60	3.28
Test Administration	3.80	3.50
Equity of Learning	2.20	2.44
Quality of Learning	2.00	2.97

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.

eleot™ Results

Bar chart titled "eleot™ Results" showing Performance Levels (0.0 to 4.0) for seven learning environments, comparing Review and Network scores:

Learning Environment	Review	Network
A. Equitable Learning	2.27	2.69
B. High Expectations	1.98	2.81
C. Supportive Learning	2.48	3.07
D. Active Learning	2.33	2.94
E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback	2.13	2.79
F. Well-Managed Learning	2.68	3.14
G. Digital Learning	1.45	1.83

The Team, all of whom were trained and certified in eleot™, completed 22 eleots™ observations In two schools, using the ratings of Very Evident, Evident, Somewhat Evident and Not Observed, based on what occurred during the 20 minute observation. Of the seven Learning Environments, the system did not score higher than the AdvancEd Network Averages (AEN) in any environment, although some subgroups had higher scores. The "Well-Managed Learning Environment" received the highest rating of 2.68 compared to the AEN

average of 3.13. Sub-categories with high scores involved students knowing routines, following classroom rules, speaking respectfully with the teacher and peers, and having a positive attitude about learning. Although students in the high school were observed using digital devices, little evidence of student engagement with digital technology was observed in the middle and elementary grades. Sub-categories receiving low scores included differentiated instruction (1.59), questioning that requires higher order thinking skills (1.64), understands how work is assessed (1.55) and collaborates with other students (1.77.)

The weakest environment for classroom observations involved Digital Learning with score of 1.45. Team members did not observe system-wide student engagement in the use of technology to gather information, conduct research, or collaborate for original work. In the elementary and middle grades the Team observed no students engaged in digital learning. Observations in the high school revealed students using digital devices to conduct research and gather information. The "High Expectations Environment" received the second lowest rating of 1.98. The Team observed limited questioning of students that required higher order thinking skills. The use of exemplars was not evident in most classes. When interviewed, teachers indicated that exemplars are used when new assignments are given or at the beginning of a unit of instruction. These classroom observations support the Improvement Priorities for 3.11 and 3.1, stressing the need to implement and monitor instructional practices requiring higher order thinking skills and curriculum alignment,

The highest ratings of 2.68 were in the "Well Managed Classroom Environment" and 2.48 for Supportive Learning were based on observations at all schools. Students in the high school were well-behaved and knew classroom routines. The Team noticed inconsistencies in the quality of student behavior and in instructional practice from school to school, as well as class to class. Team members saw little differentiated learning opportunities and activities during the 20-minute observations. In the elementary grades, students were observed working in groups, however it was not evident how the groups were formed or how the work was assessed. When a Team member questioned a student about how the work was assessed, he stated, "I don't know. She didn't tell us." These observations support the Improvement Priority related to Indicators 3.11, 3.1, 3.4, and 1.3.

The 22 classroom observations revealed limited individualized instruction at all levels. Student engagement was observed more frequently at the high school level than in the middle or elementary levels. Whole group instruction was observed in many classes. Transitions from one activity to another were not observed as smooth in all schools. The teachers appeared to have a good rapport with students and interactions between students and teachers were respectful.   Students appeared to interact well their with peers. Elementary students were observed working in groups, but the groups were all engaged in the same activity. Critical questioning and rigorous assignments were not observed in the system.

eleot™ Data Summary

A. Equitable Learning				%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**		**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	1.59	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs		4.55%	4.55%	36.36%	54.55%
2.	3.09	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support		27.27%	54.55%	18.18%	0.00%
3.	3.00	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied		27.27%	45.45%	27.27%	0.00%
4.	1.41	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences		9.09%	0.00%	13.64%	77.27%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.27							

B. High Expectations				%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**		**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	2.50	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher		18.18%	27.27%	40.91%	13.64%
2.	2.36	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable		13.64%	36.36%	22.73%	27.27%
3.	1.41	Is provided exemplars of high quality work		0.00%	18.18%	4.55%	77.27%
4.	2.00	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks		4.55%	22.73%	40.91%	31.82%
5.	1.64	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)		0.00%	18.18%	27.27%	54.55%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 1.98							

C. Supportive Learning			%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**	**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	2.59	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	13.64%	40.91%	36.36%	9.09%
2.	2.73	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	13.64%	45.45%	40.91%	0.00%
3.	2.36	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	4.55%	45.45%	31.82%	18.18%
4.	2.50	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	4.55%	50.00%	36.36%	9.09%
5.	2.23	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	0.00%	40.91%	40.91%	18.18%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.48						

D. Active Learning			%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**	**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	2.82	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	22.73%	40.91%	31.82%	4.55%
2.	1.59	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	0.00%	13.64%	31.82%	54.55%
3.	2.59	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	9.09%	45.45%	40.91%	4.55%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.33						

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback				%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**		**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	2.18	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning		4.55%	40.91%	22.73%	31.82%
2.	2.41	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding		4.55%	45.45%	36.36%	13.64%
3.	2.36	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content		0.00%	50.00%	36.36%	13.64%
4.	1.55	Understands how her/his work is assessed		0.00%	9.09%	36.36%	54.55%
5.	2.14	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback		4.55%	31.82%	36.36%	27.27%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.13							

F. Well-Managed Learning				%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**		**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	3.32	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers		45.45%	40.91%	13.64%	0.00%
2.	3.09	Follows classroom rules and works well with others		40.91%	27.27%	31.82%	0.00%
3.	2.23	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities		13.64%	31.82%	18.18%	36.36%
4.	1.77	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities		4.55%	18.18%	27.27%	50.00%
5.	3.00	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences		31.82%	36.36%	31.82%	0.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.68							

G. Digital Learning				%			
Item	**Average**	**Description**	**Very Evident**	**Evident**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Not Observed**
1.	1.41	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	4.55%	9.09%	9.09%	77.27%
2.	1.41	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	4.55%	9.09%	9.09%	77.27%
3.	1.55	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	9.09%	9.09%	9.09%	72.73%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 1.45							

Findings

Improvement Priority

Develop, implement and evaluate a systematic process for monitoring instructional practices to ensure the K-12 curriculum is aligned to the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) and Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), instructional practices are focused on student learning and on the results of formal and informal evaluations to improve student achievement and to determine staff professional needs.
(Indicator 2.4, Indicator 3.4, Indicator 3.6)

Primary Indicator
Indicator 3.4

Evidence and Rationale

Review of artifacts, interviews and observations found limited evidence of systemic protocols for monitoring the alignment of instructional practices and improvement plans based on student achievement results. Although interviews with school leaders and staff revealed the implementation of the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System, no other evaluation of instructional practice was found. Regular walk-through observations by system and school leadership did not occur. The Team found limited evidence to determine how professional development was determined. Observations and interviews with teachers indicate that system expectations regarding instructional practice have not been clearly communicated by system or school leadership. The Team did not find curriculum maps or pacing guides other than the Georgia Standards Frameworks. A calendar recording the date on which a given subject was taught at the high school level was reviewed. There was no evidence of how formal and informal assessments guided instructional practice or professional learning. Results from the eleot™ observations indicate differentiated learning opportunities and activities

received a rating of 1.59 with the practice not observed in 54.55% of classes. The eleot™ results indicated that the statement "students are asked and respond to questions that require higher order thinking" received at rating of 1.64.

Consistency in the monitoring of the evaluation of all staff with clearly defined supervision processes utilizing systematic procedures would ensure instructional practices are focused on student learning and continuous improvement. In addition, system-wide of monitoring instruction would enable system and school leaders to continually assess the alignment of instruction to the curriculum.

Improvement Priority

Establish, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of a comprehensive data analysis process and to regularly train all staff members in how to use data to inform curriculum and instructional decisions to provide all students with equitable and challenging learning experiences.

(Indicator 5.2, Indicator 5.3, SF2. Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis, SP2. Test Administration, SP4. Equity of Learning)

Primary Indicator
Indicator 5.3

Evidence and Rationale
The Team found limited evidence of a comprehensive data analysis process. Artifacts, interviews and observations revealed that although data from state summative assessments are reviewed by system leadership and some teachers, a systematic process to use the data to make decisions had not been developed. The Team reviewed student achievement data from many sources, including the Georgia Milestones Assessments, STAR Reading, Star Math. College and Career Readiness Performance Index and DIBELS. The data available to the system were prevalent, but the manner in which it was used varied from teacher to teacher. The team observed a data room in the school which contained recent and longitudinal data, however evidence that the data had been thoroughly reviewed and consistently used was not evident. Comparison and trend data that provided a comprehensive and thorough picture of student learning were not provided to the Team. The resources of the Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) to which the district belongs had not been fully utilized regarding the use and interpretation of data. On the AdvancEd Stakeholder Survey, the staff rated their ability in the use and interpretation of data low.

Analysis of the data available to the school will enable system leaders to design programs that will meet the learning needs of the students and provide the staff with instructional strategies to provide challenging and equitable learning experiences for all students.

Improvement Priority

Establish, implement and monitor a systematic process for continuous professional learning focused on using data, effective instructional practices requiring higher order thinking, curriculum alignment and classroom management to increase student academic achievement.

(Indicator 3.1, Indicator 3.11)

Primary Indicator
Indicator 3.11

Evidence and Rationale
The Team's review of artifacts, interviews ad observations revealed little evidence regarding a systematic process to review data to inform instruction and curriculum. Data from the Georgia Milestones Assessment, STAR Reading, STAR Math, College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPL) and DIBELS(Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) are reviewed at the system and school level, however, interviews with teachers and administrators indicated there is not a process in place to ensure the data are analyzed and interpreted to drive curriculum and instructional decisions. Professional learning opportunities are provided for staff, but a formalized plan that is based on analysis of data and results of instructional supervision had not been designed. One example of professional learning supported by the system is the partnership with Apple which conducts regularly scheduled training in the use of technology to support instruction. The Team found limited vertical or horizontal alignment of the curriculum. Interviews with teacher revealed that a K-12 curriculum, with a spiraling scope and sequence, did not exist. Although both the elementary and secondary schools are located on the same campus with a common administration, the Team noted little evidence of collaboration among the faculties to align the curriculum. Results from the eleot™ observations indicated limited questioning using high order thinking skills. The "High Expectations Environment" on the eleot™ scored a 1.98 which is significantly lower than the AdvancEd network average of 2.81. Classrooms at the high school level were observed as being well managed, however middle school and elementary classrooms were not observed as consistently well managed.

A continuous and systematic professional development plan would enable the system to intentionally target the alignment of the curriculum, provide training in instructional practices focused on rigorous higher order thinking skills and use data to inform all decisions impacting student achievement.

Opportunity For Improvement

Design and implement a systemic program of mentoring, coaching and new teacher induction that is consistent with the district's vision and mission.
(Indicator 3.7)

Primary Indicator
Indicator 3.7

Evidence and Rationale
Review of artifacts, observations and interviews indicate that a formalized program for new teacher induction, mentoring and coaching had not been developed. There was no evidence to indicate that new teachers participate in a formalized induction program. Interviews with stakeholders suggested this has been identified as a need for the system. There was an instructional coach at the high school who is supported by School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds, but the position only provides coaching for the eight teachers in the high

school.

An induction program for new teachers and a mentoring plan for experienced teachers would provide support and guidance that is consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning,

Opportunity For Improvement

Develop, implement and monitor protocols and procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of all programs and services and to ensure personnel are appropriately assigned to meet the unique academic, social, emotional, and career planning needs of all students.
(Indicator 3.12, Indicator 4.7, Indicator 4.8)

Primary Indicator
Indicator 3.12

Evidence and Rationale
Review of artifacts, interviews and observations revealed no procedures or protocols for evaluating the effectiveness of programs supporting the unique needs of all students. The new superintendent, in collaboration with the school board, has begun to implement a "First 100 Days" plan in which she will evaluate the roles and responsibilities of all system and school leadership to determine if job responsibilities are effectively aligned to support the needs of students. The superintendent stated said, "the pieces of the puzzle are there, but they have not been put together yet." A plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs and services which support student learning, social and emotional needs had not been designed. A comprehensive evaluation of the system's initiatives had begun, but it had not been formalized. In interviews with students, parents and community members, concern was expressed about the lack of a rigorous program to meet the needs of the gifted and talented students in the system, indicating the need to identify and design programs to meet all the unique learning needs of students. The Response to Intervention (RtI) program is in the developmental state.

Establishing procedures and protocols to continually monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all programs designed to meet student needs and to assess the roles and responsibilities of staff assigned to meet these needs will provide the system with data to make informed decisions about the programs and to guide future improvement initiatives.

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.	2.20	2.62
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.	1.80	2.63
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.	2.00	2.89
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.	2.00	2.61

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.	2.00	2.95
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	2.20	2.92
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.	3.00	3.12
2.4	Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction.	2.00	2.97
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	1.80	2.67

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.	2.00	2.76

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	3.36
Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	4.00	3.04

Findings

Opportunity For Improvement

Create, implement and review a process to communicate with and engage all stakeholders in reviewing and revising the system' purpose and achievement of system and school improvement goals.
(Indicator 1.1, Indicator 5.5)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 1.1

Evidence and Rationale

The Team found limited evidence of stakeholder involvement in the development of the system purpose. Interviews with stakeholders revealed that communication is often one way with the school sending out information, but not soliciting information from them. The stakeholder survey indicated a high level of satisfaction with the purpose and direction of the system, but interviews suggested they would like a greater voice in the process of developing these statements. The Strategic Plan provided to the Georgia Department of Education for the strategic waiver status was developed with no input from stakeholder groups. Stakeholder involvement in the development of the purpose and vision of the system and well as in strategic

planning will allow for input by all groups who have a vested interest in the continuous improvement efforts of the system.

This report is pending final approval by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission.

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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.	2.00	2.92
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.	2.00	2.93
4.3	The system maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	2.00	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	2.63

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.	2.20	2.74
4.6	The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	3.00	2.54
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.	2.00	2.66
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.	1.80	2.60

Findings
Opportunity For Improvement

Review and revise the strategic plan to address professional and support staff needs, resource management for educational programs, facility and long range purpose and direction planning for the school system. (Indicator 4.1, Indicator 4.2, Indicator 4.4)

Primary Indicator
Indicator 4.4

Evidence and Rationale
Although the system had submitted a strategic plan for the Strategic Plan Waiver status with the Georgia Department of Education, a comprehensive strategic plan to guide the system, set goals, developed in collaboration with stakeholders, system leadership, school board and school leadership had not been developed. Interviews with system leadership and the board indicated plans for the development of a strategic plan which establishes goals, identifies areas of focus and targets strategies to improve student achievement had been discussed, but not formalized. Review of artifacts did not reveal evidence of a current comprehensive plan with a laser focus on student learning, system effectiveness and continuous improvement. A strategic plan, developed with input from all stakeholder groups,a that includes the areas of budget, technology, professional development, monitoring of instruction and other strategic system components will guide all decisions regarding student learning and system effectiveness.

Powerful Practice
Quitman County Schools provides a fully functional technology infrastructure to support the teaching and operational needs of the system.
(Indicator 4.6)

Primary Indicator
Indicator 4.6

Evidence and Rationale
Review of artifacts, interviews and observations indicated that in anticipation of the full roll-out of the one to one initiative, the system allocated the financial resources to fully support and implement an infrastructure system to meet the technology demands of the system. The system has partnered with Apple to ensure the infrastructure will be sufficient to support all the student and teacher devices. In addition, Apple has provided technical support, professional learning for staff, instruction for students, and guidance for the total integration of technology into instruction. Apple televisions have been installed in all classrooms. The system has hired technical support personnel to assist with technology.   ERATE funds were used to ensure the infrastructure was in place when the introduction of the one to one devices occurred. The collaboration with Apple helped guide the system leadership's decisions concerning the bandwidth to ensure it was sufficient to support the technology needs for both the present and the future.   The one to one roll-out of IPads began at the high school and will be expanded to the elementary and middle grades at the end of February 2016. The Technology Plan is comprehensive, monitored, reviewed and updated as needed. The Team found internet access fast and reliable throughout the review.

The forward thinking of the school board and system leadership in providing the infrastructure prior to the full implementation of the one to one initiative lends support for the integration of technology and instruction. The partnership with Apple ensures the quality of the professional learning and student instruction in the use of devices is current, research based and specifically designed to meet the unique needs of the system.

Conclusion

Although the school system has faced many challenges in recent years with a part-time superintendent, the Team heard from all stakeholder groups that the new full time superintendent has had a positive impact on the system. The supportive board, dedicated school and system leadership, and community commitment to the success of the system has created a system culture dedicated to continuous improvement. The new superintendent, in collaboration with the board, has implemented new initiatives which foster communication within the system. Examples of these new initiatives include the establishment of a superintendent's cabinet which includes representatives from all departments, a superintendent's student council to give voice to student needs and concerns and a faculty council to provide input from teachers. These groups will enable the new system leadership to engage all stakeholders in the improvement efforts of the system. Interviews with parents and community members suggested the pride in the community about the system is long-standing. The schools have traditionally been the focus of community activities and a shared sense of ownership in the entire system was evident in the community. High school students attended school in a neighboring system until 2009, when the county leadership committed to bringing the students to the new Quitman County High School. This move has brought a renewed determination in the county to provide students with a quality K-12 education. The community has embraced the move and the consensus among all stakeholders interviewed by the Team was that the Quitman County Schools were a "diamond in the rough." The mission of the system is to maximize the potential in everyone, everyday. An aligned K-12 curriculum, analysis of data to inform instruction focused on meeting the individual needs of all students and a robust, continuous and comprehensive professional learning plan to guide the initiatives of the system leadership will help ensure the vision becomes a reality.

The board members have more than sixty years of total experience. Interviews with internal and external stakeholders revealed a sense of trust in the board as decisions are made regarding the future of the system. Several stakeholders described the board as "being passionate about the students in the county." The decision to employ a full time superintendent reflects the commitment to providing a stable leadership which can direct the initiatives of the system and design, implement and monitor new strategies targeted at improving student learning. Observations of the Team found limited monitoring of instructional practice. Neither school nor systems leaders conduct regular classroom observations with a focus on monitoring and evaluating instructional practices that encourage rigor, require higher order thinking skills and provide differentiated learning opportunities for students. The eleot™ observation results suggest high expectations in the classroom, while occurring in some classes, is not widespread. The curriculum is based on the Georgia Standards Frameworks, and although work has begun on the development of pacing guides and curriculum maps, this has not been completed. Collaboration among K-12 teachers about the alignment of the curriculum has not been formalized. With a small K-12 faculty on one campus with a single administration, the Team concluded after interviewing all staff, the vertical alignment of the curriculum could be accomplished with an intentional focus provided by the new system leadership.

The Team found little evidence of a systematic plan for professional learning. The Apple one to one initiative has provided training in use of technology as an instructional tool, but professional learning based on the

analysis of student performance data has not been designed. The Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) of which the system is a part provides professional learning opportunities for teachers and some teachers in the system report they participate in them. The professional learning plan is not continuous or comprehensive. Interviews with system and school leadership reveal they recognize the need to develop a professional learning plan designed to meet the unique needs of the system guided by the system mission and vision and based on careful analysis of student achievement data.

A comprehensive plan to analyze summative achievement data along with other data sources, such as attendance, discipline and academic performance was not evident. Teachers use the results of the Georgia Milestones to assess overall achievement, but the Team found limited use of summative or formative data to inform instruction. The Response to Intervention (RtI) program is in the developmental stage. Interviews with teachers and administrators suggest they acknowledge the need to design and implement a RtI process with clearly defined interventions to meet the learning needs of all students.

The board made a commitment to providing a technology infrastructure to support the one to one program for all students. The planning by the board and system leadership and collaboration with Apple in the implementation of the iPAD initiatives ensures the total roll-out of the program will have the technological capacity needed to use the devices in the instructional program. Apple's continued professional learning for all instructional staff will instruct them in effective use of technology for instructional purposes. The system's goal is to transform classrooms to provide deeper exploration and creativity with the use of technology. The leadership endeavors to have graduates who have superior working knowledge in the use of technology. The system's facilities are safe and well maintained. Although some maintenance issues needed to be addressed, including leaks in the roof and water fountains that do not function, the overall condition of the facilities is good. Awareness of the issues in need of repair was expressed in interviews and in the system's Self Assessment.

The Quitman County Schools testing program adheres to the protocols established by the Georgia Department of Education regarding test administration and training. The system also provides teachers additional, supplemental online programs, including USA Testprep, PLATO, and Treasure Island, to assess student learning. However, there was little evidence that locally administered benchmark assessments were being used to inform instruction. The data analysis and interpretation as it relates to student ability grouping and targeting individual student achievement gaps during intervention opportunities was limited. The School Improvement Grant(SIG) from the Georgia Department of Education provided resources to extend the school day thirty minutes for additional, targeted instruction for all students. Student interviews revealed the time is not consistently used for remediation or enrichment. Evidence that the system proactively communicates the results of summative data with all stakeholder was limited. Some discussions have taken place using student achievement data with comparisons to other systems in the region, state, and nation, but interviews with teachers revealed the comparative data were not analyzed. Comparison data are available from the RESA, the state of Georgia, and from districts with demographics similar to Quitman County. The data had not been consistently utilized to make informed decisions about future improvement efforts.

The rural location of Quitman County presents challenges as dual enrollment and expanded opportunities for

students to pursue their career interests are limited. The improved technology support and iPAD program will expand the educational offerings for all students The small enrollment of the system is both a challenge and a strength. While the number of students significantly limits the number of elective courses offered to students because of a small faculty, small classes afford teachers the opportunity to provide individualized instruction to meet student needs. The vision of the new system leadership is focused on carefully reviewing the job responsibilities of all staff members to maximize the talents and time of a small staff. In addition, the intentional focus on aligning curriculum, instruction, resources, analysis of data and professional learning to improve student learning was evident through interviews with all stakeholders and observations of new programs. The goal of providing opportunities for all students to achieve their potential is realistic when coupled with a targeted, lock-step plan to implement programs, develop protocols and procedures to ensure new iniatives meet student and system needs, an intentional focus on the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of all programs and designing a comprehensive professional development plan to give all staff the direction and training needed to implement improvement plans with fidelity. The board, superintendent, faculty, staff, students and community stakeholders expressed a commitment to this shared vision of excellence.

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 evaluate a systematic process for monitoring instructional practices to ensure the K-12 curriculum is aligned to the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) and Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), instructional practices are focused on student learning and on the results of formal and informal evaluations to improve student achievement and to determine staff professional needs.
-   Establish, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of a comprehensive data analysis process and to regularly train all staff members in how to use data to inform curriculum and instructional decisions to provide all students with equitable and challenging learning experiences.

-   Establish, implement and monitor a systematic process for continuous professional learning focused on using data, effective instructional practices requiring higher order thinking, curriculum alignment and classroom management to increase student academic achievement.

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	222.44	278.34
Teaching and Learning Impact	215.24	268.94
Leadership Capacity	241.67	292.64
Resource Utilization	212.50	283.23

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

Other System Institutions

The following institutions did not utilize ASSIST to complete the Accreditation Report for this External Review. Therefore self-reported results are not included as part of this report. Some institutions appearing below may have been required to submit the Accreditation Report outside of ASSIST.

Institution	Institution
New Quitman County Elementary School	Quitman County High School

Team Roster

Member	Brief Biography
Mrs. Holly Wingard	Holly Wingard has worked in both a large metropolitan school district and in a small rural district in South Carolina. After 34 years, she has retired from the school system. She has taught, served as a guidance counselor, senior counselor, testing coordinator, administrative team member, and Advanced Placement coordinator. She has served on SACS/Advanc-Ed review teams for over 25 years, serving as a school lead evaluator in South Carolina and on External Review Teams in other states. She serves as a consultant to districts preparing for AdvancEd reviews. Mrs. Wingard has an undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia and an M.ED from the University of South Carolina.
Mr. Rodney Green	Rodney Green currently serves as the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning in Lowndes County Schools (Georgia). He has served as a math classroom teacher, a middle school and high school administrator, a testing coordinator and curriculum director at the system level, and a program manager in the School Improvement Division at the Georgia Department of Education. He has served on a number of External Review Teams. He is currently a member of the Georgia's AdvancED State Council.
Mrs. Karen S Flora	Ms. Flora is a retired Indiana educator with a 39 year tenure at the middle and high school level. Her experience includes serving as her district coordinator for school improvement where she assisted seven schools in the corporation. She served on the Sterling Quality Council in Florida for three years (2000-2003) and was named senior examiner for the National Malcolm Baldrige Award of Excellence for six years (2002-2008). Undergraduate work was completed at Huntington University, she earned her masters degree from St. Francis University and completed requirements for her administrative license at Indiana-Purdue Fort Wayne. Upon retirement in 2008, Ms. Flora became fully involved with AdvancED accreditation reviews. She is a lead evaluator for systems, Indiana schools and digital learning environments throughout the United States. She also has serves as Field Consultant for AdvancED Indiana.
Mrs. Joan Belle-McGlockton	Biographical Sketch of Joan Belle-McGlockton

Mrs. Belle-McGlockton is a native of Tallahassee, Florida. She is a graduate of Amos P. Godby Senior High School and Florida A&M University.

Mrs. Belle-McGlockton began her teaching career in the state of Tennessee, with classroom teaching experiences in first through eighth grades and Exceptional Student Education. Further educational experiences include working as a curriculum coordinator and District ESE Itinerant Specialist. Mrs. Belle-McGlockton furthered her educational training by receiving dual master's degrees from Vanderbilt and David Lipscomb Universities' respectively. Further training in Educational Leadership was completed at the University of North Carolina; Chapel Hill, North Carolina in the Principal's Executive Program.

Her previous administrative experiences include assistant principal-ships at the elementary and middle school levels. Additional administrative experiences include: Principal appointments in Ohio and Florida. Currently, Mrs. Belle-McGlockton is the principal of Florida A&M University High School.

Certifications
ELEOT(Active) |

Member	Brief Biography
Dr. David Mims	Currently serving as the Superintendent of Schools in Crisp County, Georgia. Twenty-eight years as an educator serving in the capacities of Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent, Middle and High School Principal, Athletic Director, teacher, and coach.
Mr. Michael Williams	He began teaching in 1994. Michael has served as a teacher, coach, athletic director, assistant principal and principal. He has taught at the middle school level and at the high school level. Michael served as principal of an elementary school for 4 years. He currently is the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction in Madison County Georgia.

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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