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April 4, 2019

Colquitt County School System  
P.O. Box 2708  
710 28th Avenue  
Moultrie, Georgia 31776-2708

Dear Administrator:

Colquitt County School System has been awarded accreditation by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI). The three listed regional agencies provide your institution with a highly regarded accreditation that is recognized throughout the world. Congratulations on this significant recognition.

The accreditation action was ratified by the AdvancED Global Commission at its meeting on March 29, 2019. A certificate that indicates the term of your institution's accreditation is enclosed. Throughout this term of accreditation, Colquitt County School System must continue to engage in the responsibilities required of all institutions to maintain accredited status as outlined in the *AdvancED Accreditation and Certification Policies and Procedures* available on our website at [www.advanc-ed.org/services/policies-and-procedures](http://www.advanc-ed.org/services/policies-and-procedures)

As an accredited institution, you are part of the AdvancED global network of over 34,000 schools and systems in more than 70 countries that are committed to continuous improvement through accreditation. Our state, national, and global offices offer a wide range of products and services dedicated to institutional improvement and accreditation: state-of-the-art technology solutions including learning environment observations, surveys, and diagnostic applications; targeted improvement services; workshops and conferences. Please check the Improvement Services and Professional Learning sections at [www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org) for a full list of services and upcoming events.

Finally, promoting your accreditation is one of the easiest things that you can do to raise awareness of the importance of continuous improvement of education in your community. To help you celebrate your accreditation, we are providing you with a press release that you may share with your local media. You can access the press release by visiting [www.advanc-ed.org/communicationskit](http://www.advanc-ed.org/communicationskit). In the kit, you also will find brochures, accreditation seals, and other promotional items to display your pride in your institution's accreditation.

If you have questions regarding the enclosed certificate, e-mail us at [accreditation-certificates@advanc-ed.org](mailto:accreditation-certificates@advanc-ed.org). Our AdvancED Accreditation Office is available to answer any questions you may have as well and can be reached at 888.41 EDNOW (1.888.413.3669) or +1.678.392.2285. We look forward to serving you now and in the future.

Sincerely,

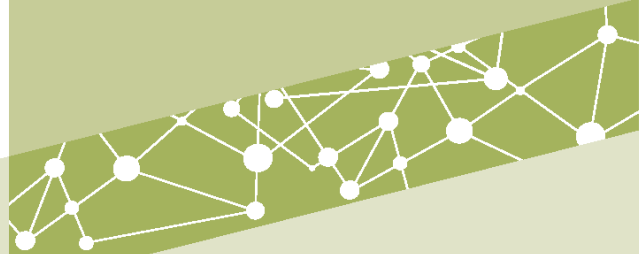
Annette Bohling, J.D.  
AdvancED Chief Accreditation Officer

January 27 - 30, 2019

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# AdvancED® Engagement Review Report



## AdvancED® Performance Accreditation

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» **Results for:**  
**Colquitt County School System**  
710 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Moultrie, Georgia 31776

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## Introduction

### AdvancED Performance Accreditation and the Engagement Review

Accreditation is pivotal to leveraging education quality and continuous improvement. Using a set of rigorous research-based standards, the accreditation process examines the whole institution—the program, the cultural context and the community of stakeholders—to determine how well the parts work together to meet the needs of learners. Through the AdvancED Accreditation Process, highly skilled and trained Engagement Review Teams gather first-hand evidence and information pertinent to evaluating an institution’s performance against the research-based AdvancED Performance Standards. Using these Standards, Engagement Review Teams assess the quality of learning environments to gain valuable insights and target improvements in teaching and learning. AdvancED provides Standards that are tailored for all education providers so that the benefits of accreditation are universal across the education community.

Through a comprehensive review of evidence and information, our experts gain a broad understanding of institution quality. Using the Standards, the review team provides valuable feedback to institutions which helps to focus and guide each institution’s improvement journey. Valuable evidence and information from other stakeholders, including students, also are obtained through interviews, surveys, and additional activities.

### AdvancED Standards Diagnostic Results

The AdvancED Performance Standards Diagnostic is used by the Engagement Review Team to evaluate the institution’s effectiveness based on AdvancED’s Performance Standards. The diagnostic consists of three components built around each of the three Domains: **Leadership Capacity**, **Learning Capacity** and **Resource Capacity**. Results are reported within four ranges identified by the colors. The results for the three Domains are presented in the tables that follow.

Color	Rating	Description
Red	Needs Improvement	Identifies key areas that need more focused improvement efforts
Yellow	Emerging	Represents areas to enhance and extend current improvement efforts
Green	Meets Expectations	Pinpoints quality practices that meet the Standards
Blue	Exceeds Expectations	Demonstrates noteworthy practices producing clear results that exceed expectations

### 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.	Meets Expectations
1.2	Stakeholders collectively demonstrate actions to ensure the achievement of the system's purpose and desired outcomes for learning.	Meets Expectations
1.3	The system engages in a continuous improvement process that produces evidence, including measurable results of improving student learning and professional practice.	Meets Expectations
1.4	The governing authority establishes and ensures adherence to policies that are designed to support system effectiveness.	Exceeds Expectations
1.5	The governing authority adheres to a code of ethics and functions within defined roles and responsibilities.	Exceeds Expectations
1.6	Leaders implement staff supervision and evaluation processes to improve professional practice and organizational effectiveness.	Emerging
1.7	Leaders implement operational processes and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness in support of teaching and learning.	Meets Expectations
1.8	Leaders engage stakeholders to support the achievement of the system's purpose and direction.	Meets Expectations
1.9	The system provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness.	Emerging
1.10	Leaders collect and analyze a range of feedback data from multiple stakeholder groups to inform decision-making that results in improvement.	Emerging
1.11	Leaders implement a quality assurance process for its institutions to ensure system effectiveness and consistency.	Emerging

## 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.	Meets Expectations
2.2	The learning culture promotes creativity, innovation and collaborative problem-solving.	Emerging
2.3	The learning culture develops learners' attitudes, beliefs and skills needed for success.	Emerging
2.4	The system has a formal structure to ensure learners develop positive relationships with and have adults/peers that support their educational experiences.	Emerging
2.5	Educators implement a curriculum that is based on high expectations and prepares learners for their next levels.	Meets Expectations
2.6	The system implements a process to ensure the curriculum is clearly aligned to standards and best practices.	Meets Expectations

Learning Capacity Standards		Rating
2.7	Instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learners' needs and the system's learning expectations.	Emerging
2.8	The system provides programs and services for learners' educational future and career planning.	Meets Expectations
2.9	The system implements processes to identify and address the specialized needs of learners.	Meets Expectations
2.10	Learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated.	Emerging
2.11	Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to demonstrable improvement of student learning.	Emerging
2.12	The system implements a process to continuously assess its programs and organizational conditions to improve student learning.	Emerging

## 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 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.	Emerging
3.2	The system's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.	Emerging
3.3	The system provides induction, mentoring, and coaching programs that ensure all staff members have the knowledge and skills to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.	Emerging
3.4	The system attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the system's purpose and direction.	Emerging
3.5	The system integrates digital resources into teaching, learning, and operations to improve professional practice, student performance, and organizational effectiveness.	Emerging
3.6	The system provides access to information resources and materials to support the curriculum, programs, and needs of students, staff, and the system.	Meets Expectations
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.	Meets Expectations
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.	Emerging

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

### Results

The AdvancED 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. Classroom observations are conducted for a minimum of 20 minutes. Trained and certified observers take into account the level of embeddedness, quality, and complexity of application or implementation; number of students engaged and frequency of application. Results from the eleot are reported on a scale of one to four based on the students' engagement in and reaction to the learning environment. In addition to the results from the review, the AdvancED Improvement Network (AIN) results are reported to benchmark your results against the network averages. The eleot provides useful, relevant, structured, and quantifiable data on the extent to which students are engaged in activities and/or demonstrate knowledge, attitudes, and/or dispositions that are conducive to effective learning.

The insights eleot data provide are an invaluable source of information for continuous improvement planning efforts. Although averages by eleot Learning Environment are helpful to gauge quality at a higher, more impressionistic level, the average rating for each item is more fine-grained, specific and actionable. Institutions should identify the five to seven items with the lowest ratings and examine patterns in those ratings within and across environments to identify areas for improvement. Similarly, identifying the five to seven items with the highest ratings also will assist in identifying strengths within and across eleot Learning Environments. Examining the eleot data in conjunction with other institution data will provide valuable feedback on areas of strength or improvement in institution's learning environments.

eleot® Observations		
<b>Total Number of eleot® Observations</b>	<b>76</b>	
<b>Environments</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>AIN</b>
<b>Equitable Learning Environment</b>	2.65	2.86
Learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs	2.43	1.89
Learners have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	3.29	3.74
Learners are treated in a fair, clear and consistent manner	3.30	3.77
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	1.57	2.06
<b>High Expectations Environment</b>	2.52	3.02
Learners strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher	2.43	3.17
Learners engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	2.78	3.14
Learners demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work	2.26	2.83
Learners engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	2.51	3.06
Learners take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning	2.62	2.89
<b>Supportive Learning Environment</b>	3.04	3.61
Learners demonstrate a sense of community that is positive, cohesive, engaged, and purposeful	3.01	3.66



eleot® Observations		
<b>Total Number of eleot® Observations</b>	<b>76</b>	
<b>Environments</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>AIN</b>
Learners take risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	2.78	3.49
Learners are supported by the teacher, their peers and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks	3.18	3.66
Learners demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher	3.17	3.66
<b>Active Learning Environment</b>	<b>2.62</b>	<b>3.08</b>
Learners' discussions/dialogues/exchanges with each other and the teacher predominate	2.59	3.34
Learners make connections from content to real-life experiences	2.13	2.80
Learners are actively engaged in the learning activities	3.17	3.43
Learners collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments	2.58	2.74
<b>Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment</b>	<b>2.58</b>	<b>3.14</b>
Learners monitor their own learning progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored	2.22	3.20
Learners receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work	2.88	3.37
Learners demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content	2.83	3.37
Learners understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed	2.37	2.63
<b>Well-Managed Learning Environment</b>	<b>3.16</b>	<b>3.58</b>
Learners speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other	3.37	3.86
Learners demonstrate knowledge of and/or follow classroom rules and behavioral expectations and work well with others	3.37	3.83
Learners transition smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another	2.95	3.09
Learners use class time purposefully with minimal wasted time or disruptions	2.96	3.54
<b>Digital Learning Environment</b>	<b>1.79</b>	<b>1.50</b>
Learners use digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	2.11	1.60
Learners use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	1.89	1.46
Learners use digital tools/technology to communicate and/or work collaboratively for learning	1.36	1.46

## Assurances

Assurances are statements accredited institutions must confirm they are meeting. The Assurance statements are based on the type of institution and the responses are confirmed by the Accreditation Engagement Review Team. Institutions are expected to meet all Assurances and are expected to correct any deficiencies in unmet Assurances.

Assurances			
Met	<b>X</b>	Unmet	
Unmet Assurances			



## AdvancED Continuous Improvement System

AdvancED defines continuous improvement as “an embedded behavior rooted in an institution’s culture that constantly focuses on conditions, processes, and practices to improve teaching and learning.” The AdvancED Continuous Improvement System (CIS) provides a systemic fully integrated solution to help institutions map out and navigate a successful improvement journey. In the same manner that educators are expected to understand the unique needs of every learner and tailor the education experience to drive student success, every institution must be empowered to map out and embrace their unique improvement journey. AdvancED expects institutions to use the results and the analysis of data from various interwoven components for the implementation of improvement actions to drive education quality and improved student outcomes. While each improvement journey is unique, the journey is driven by key actions.

The findings of the Engagement Review Team will be organized by the Levels of Impact within i3: Initiate, Improve and Impact. The organization of the findings is based upon the ratings from the Standards Diagnostic and the i3 Levels of Impact.

### Initiate

The first phase of the improvement journey is to **Initiate** actions to cause and achieve better results. The elements of the Initiate phase are defined within the Levels of Impact of Engagement and Implementation. 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. Standards identified within Initiate should become the focus of the institution’s continuous improvement journey to move toward the collection, analysis and use of data to measure the results of engagement and implementation. A focus on enhancing the capacity of the institution in meeting the identified Standards has the greatest potential impact on improving student performance and organizational effectiveness.

### Improve

The second phase of the improvement journey is to gather and evaluate the results of actions to **Improve**. The elements of the **Improve** phase are defined within the Levels of Impact of Results and Sustainability. Results represents 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). Standards identified within Improve are those in which the institution is using results to inform their continuous improvement processes and using results over time to demonstrate the achievement of goals. The institution should continue to analyze and use results to guide improvements in student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

### Impact

The third phase of achieving improvement is **Impact** where desired practices are deeply entrenched. The elements of the **Impact** phase are defined within the Level of Impact of Embeddedness. Embeddedness is the degree to which the desired practices, processes, or programs are deeply ingrained in the culture and operation of the institution. Standards identified within Impact are those in which the institution has demonstrated ongoing growth and improvement over time and has embedded the practices within the culture of the institution. Institutions should continue to support and sustain these practices that are yielding results in improving student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

## Findings

The findings in this report represent the degree to which the Accreditation Standards are effectively implemented in support of the learning environment and the mission of the institution. Standards which are identified in the **Initiate** phase of practice are considered Priorities for Improvement that must be addressed by the institution to retain accreditation. Standards which are identified in the **Improve** phase of practice are considered Opportunities for Improvement that the institution should consider. Standards which are identified in the **Impact** phase of practice are considered Effective Practices within the institution.

IS Rubric Levels	STANDARDS
<b>Initiate</b> Priorities for Improvement	Standard 3.4
<b>Improve</b> Opportunities for Improvement	Standards 1.6, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11 Standards 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.7, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12 Standards 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.8
<b>Impact</b> Effective Practices	Standards 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 1.8 Standards 2.1, 2.5, 2.6, 2.8, 2.9 Standards 3.6, 3.7

## Accreditation Status and Index of Education Quality® (IEQ®)

AdvancED will review the results of the Accreditation Engagement Review to make a final determination concerning accreditation status, including the appropriate next steps for your institution in response to these findings. AdvancED provides the Index of Education Quality® (IEQ®) as a holistic measure of overall performance based on a comprehensive set of standards and review criteria. A formative tool for improvement, it identifies areas of success as well as areas in need of focus. The IEQ is comprised of the Standards Diagnostic ratings from the three Domains: 1) Leadership Capacity; 2) Learning Capacity; and 3) Resource Capacity. The IEQ results are reported on a scale of 100 to 400 and provides information about how the institution is performing compared to expected criteria. Institutions should review the IEQ in relation to the Findings from the review in the areas of Initiate, Improve and Impact. An IEQ score below 250 indicates that the institution has several areas within the Initiate level and should focus their improvement efforts on those Standards within the Initiate level. An IEQ in the range of 225-300 indicates that the institution has several Standards within the Improve level and is using results to inform continuous improvement and demonstrate sustainability. An IEQ of 275 and above indicates the institution is beginning to reach the Impact level and is engaged in practices that are sustained over time and are becoming ingrained in the culture of the institution.

Below is the average (range) of all AIN institutions evaluated for accreditation in the last five years. The range of the annual AIN IEQ average is presented to enable you to benchmark your results with other institutions in the network.

<b>Institution IEQ</b>	<b>301.29</b>	<b>AIN 5 Year IEQ Range</b>	<b>278.34 – 283.33</b>
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## Insights from the Review

The Engagement 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 from the levels of Initiate, Improve, and Impact. The Insights from the Review narrative should provide next steps to guide the improvement journey of the institution in its 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 Accreditation Engagement Review Report will assist the institution in reflecting on its current improvement efforts and to adapt and adjust their plans to continuously strive for improvement.

The Engagement Review Team identified several themes that correlate to the continuous improvement process for enhancing the goals of Colquitt County School System. These themes present strengths and opportunities to guide the school system's improvement journey.

Leadership in Colquitt County School System has established a clear direction and strong commitment to continuous improvement. Records and interviews revealed a governing board that has earned numerous awards and has been designated as an exemplary board because of their focus on effective board governance, adherence to policy and ethical behavior. "We have a dedicated leader in our superintendent. He is a product of the school system and is focused on excellence in our schools and our community," stated one board member. Another said, "We have the right people in the right places. Our instructional leader is also a graduate of the school system and has a work ethic like no other. There is no doubt about our moving forward with these two leaders." A clear direction is evident through the district strategic plan with a purposeful vision and mission and five key goals, action steps and measures of effectiveness for the action steps. The commitment to the system's mission of the daily pursuit of excellence in student achievement is demonstrated by the actions taken in the schools within the last five years. "We took the findings of the last review team and internalized them. We have made great strides in unifying our schools into a system's approach and not operating in isolation," shared an administrator. As noted in one of the action steps of the strategic plan, it is the desire of the system to allow the schools to have autonomy while functioning as a school system. Several stakeholders shared success stories about growth in Advanced Placement offerings and scores, increased dual enrollment offerings and improved graduation rates. "We have made some growth in most areas of ELA and math in grades three through eight but are not pleased with where we are," stated one internal stakeholder. "I am confident our current improvement efforts will pay off. We have strong leadership teams at the schools; we operate as collaborative learning communities; and none of us are satisfied with the status quo," stated a school leader.

The clear direction continues with strategic resource management. Although Colquitt County School System ranks 173 of Georgia's 180 school systems in property wealth, the system has set a strategic goal to maximize the efficiency of budgeting, planning and funding. "We implement site-based budget meetings with central office leadership," said the finance officer. "We have a healthy general fund balance and have spent the Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (ESPLOST) wisely." One leader shared, "Voters approved a fifth ESPLOST and the majority of our facilities improvements are a result of the ESPLOST initiatives in Colquitt County." "When you have dedicated leadership that has the trust and support of the community, you can find the necessary

funding to do what is right for our children,” stated a stakeholder. “It all starts with leadership and we have to be serious about our business,” stated an educator. “The superintendent re-organized the central office and made some leadership changes at the schools. Now, we are all moving in the same direction.” The Engagement Review Team applauds leadership on its clear direction and encourages the ongoing commitment to the success of the strategic plan.

A positive and supportive environment exists in Colquitt County Schools. In numerous interviews, the words commitment, pride, excellence and family were heard. Staff continually shared how they are willing to go over and beyond what is required for their students to succeed. During classroom observations, students demonstrated a sense of community that is positive, cohesive and purposeful throughout the schools. Congenial and supportive relationships were observed between teachers and students. All of the schools in Colquitt County School System (CCSS) earned either 4 or 5 ratings on the School Climate Star Ratings that are a component of the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI), thus indicating positive school climate in which students feel socially, emotionally and physically safe.

Elementary students described their schools as exciting, fun, caring and safe. Upper level students described their schools as friendly, inviting, safe, organized, understanding and challenging. Several students said, “We are like family.” “We have so much pride. It’s Packer Pride,” said one student. All elementary schools feed into one middle school, one junior high school and one high school, and the sense of Packer Pride is evident throughout all schools in the system. “Our beautiful, renovated, and well-maintained facilities are a real source of Packer Pride,” shared a parent. “Our schools are truly an extension of our community. Moultrie is known as the ‘City of Southern Living’ and our schools are a part of this,” said a parent. Students have many opportunities to participate on sports teams and in clubs, as well as with community service projects. Community organizations support Colquitt County students in such ways as offering free swimming lessons for all third graders offered by the YMCA. “The YMCA also collaborates with the school system and provides 200 mentors for our students,” stated an administrator. “For those students volunteering at the local hospital, scholarship funds are allocated. Plus, the hospital helped to fund our medical STEM lab,” shared a leader. One high school student summed up the students’ interview session as she stated, “There’s lots of diversity in our schools but there is a place for everyone.” A principal shared his school’s philosophy as he said, “Numbers aren’t the only thing that determines success.” “We have a true sense of community. We are ‘all in’ when it comes to working together to support our students,” shared a school leader. A parent told the review team, “Many of our Colquitt County students are returning home to teach. Some of our leaders graduated from the school system. There is real buy-in and a sense of ownership with these folks.” Evidence of this caring and supportive learning environment is strong, and the school system is urged to sustain this positive atmosphere so that it remains deeply ingrained throughout the culture of the school system.

In this nurturing environment, the Colquitt County staff members continuously exhibit intentional efforts to meet the needs of the whole child. Without exception, every group of internal stakeholders mentioned the strength of student services during their interviews. “We are regularly trained to be proactive and how to respond in crisis situations, how to effectively conduct safety drills and the appropriate procedures to follow when sexual abuse, neglect and other areas are suspected,” stated an internal stakeholder. “We just had the Darkness to Light training by the Stewards of Children and are in year one of implementation.” Colquitt is in year four of implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). “Every school has a PBIS coach and team meetings are held regularly. This one program has made a tremendous difference in the climate of our schools,” shared a teacher. “We actually made changes in the Code of Conduct so that it would align with PBIS implementation,” shared an administrator. Records showed nurses, counselors and parent coordinators at every school, as well as ten social workers shared across the system. “In addition to this, we have agreements with such community agencies as mental health to provide more intense services when needed,” stated a counselor. “YMCA has a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant and provides after school services for our students,” shared a principal. The student services department

shared how attendance protocols and self-harm protocols have been updated. “We can’t teach them and take care of them if they aren’t here,” stated the administrator for student services. Staff members continually shared stories and reported statistics about how they feel more equipped to support students because of the intense support services that have been implemented. “Our student demographics are changing, and we have to meet their needs,” stated a system leader. Some of the initiatives, training and services are in the early stages of implementation while others have been sustained for years. For Colquitt County Schools to continue meeting the needs of their students, these student support services need to become deeply ingrained in the operations of the institution.

Concentrated efforts at becoming a data-driven, collaborative school system are evident in Colquitt County. Since 2016-2017, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have been utilized to support vertical and horizontal alignment and to facilitate collaboration. Based on artifact reviews, schools formed PLCs that operate by grade level, content area and/or course level. “It was in the 2017-2018 school year that 100 percent of the staff certified their participation in the school-based PLCs regarding training linked to school improvement goals and best practices. At the same time, 100 percent of the leaders certified participation in system-based PLCs regarding training linked to district improvement plan goals and best practices,” stated an administrator. Artifacts included agendas, minutes, and data dig materials that verified all certificated staff members participated in PLCs for the past two years. The high school principal said, “We changed our schedule to help us do a better job with PLCs and looking at data. I own one of the teachers’ planning periods each day so we can become more student focused and data driven.” “This is year three that we have been working with PLCs but still have some work to do. All school leadership will be attending a summer PLC conference to help us do a better job with supporting and monitoring PLCs,” stated a system-level administrator.

Colquitt County Schools have established a data-driven culture. Evidence of the data-driven culture is demonstrated with the analysis and use of data from such sources as Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), IReady, Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). “All schools utilize valid and reliable assessments to screen students three times per year. Illuminate is used to facilitate testing and disaggregate data,” shared an administrator. “The disaggregated data is used to identify sub-groups for PLC focus and to identify needs by standard,” stated a department head. “Colquitt County’s multi-tiered system of support is based on this data analysis and intervention periods are scheduled at every school. Interventionists and academic coaches have been hired at each school to support students and teachers. Data teams also operate at each school and lead the system with the use of the TregoED situational analysis process for building system capacity,” shared a system leader. “With the TregoED process, we are achieving practical solutions to our school system’s toughest issues,” stated an administrator. “Our data teams use a template for data collection and analysis and hold retreats to analyze benchmark data, unit test data and milestone data,” shared a data team member. “We don’t just analyze academic data. We include enrollment, attendance, discipline, financial, facilities, personnel and athletic data,” shared a system administrator. “We are constantly analyzing dual enrollment course credits, Advanced Placement offerings and Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) credentialing,” shared a school administrator. The superintendent’s presentation included enrollment trends, enrollment by ethnicity, expenditures per FTE with comparisons to other school systems, changes in free/reduced lunch status, discipline trends, daily attendance trends, special education population trends, facilities improvements and additions with funding sources, and staff demographics. To accompany the statistics, explanations were provided on how data analysis has affected the school system. “A formalized protocol for attendance was developed because of this data analysis,” stated the superintendent. “Because of the discipline data analysis and the implementation of PBIS, one can walk into any of our schools and feel the difference,” stated a school administrator. “We can’t quantify everything we do but feel

that our PLCs are ensuring that teachers work and plan together, using disaggregated data to ensure effective instruction in order to improve student performance,” stated a system leader. Staff at all levels are encouraged to work collaboratively to continue their commitment to and demonstration of the use of data to verify progress and modify practices to improve student learning and system effectiveness.

Even with the school system’s focus on continuous improvement, there is a need to formalize processes and procedures to ensure consistency and continued institutional effectiveness. An example of this is with adult advocacy. High school staff shared that students have the same counselor/adult advocate assigned to them for three consecutive years. Some schools reported that the adult advocate was the homeroom teacher, but no formalized advisement activities were planned. Another area in which a formalized process for improvement has not been finalized is with teacher retention. “We do the typical teacher recruitment activities by attending recruitment fairs at colleges and we have paraprofessionals working in the school system who decide to complete teacher certification programs and return to teach with us. For retention, our goal is for our teachers to be our best advertisement,” stated a system administrator. When asked if exit conferences are held to determine why persons are leaving or if any types of incentives are offered to keep teachers, there were no such plans or activities. “Our retention rate is approximately 84 percent,” stated a system level administrator. “We need to look at ways to ‘beef up’ our retention efforts.”

While the system provides multiple professional development opportunities for staff, there was limited evidence of a formal evaluation process to determine effectiveness or impact on student performance. When discussing cultivation of leaders, administration mentioned the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) and how each system can send four candidates to the Aspiring Leaders program. Leadership development activities within the system are informal and are provided through staff being assigned grade level chairs or department chairs, as well as participation on data teams and selection of teachers as academic coaches. Interviews and artifacts revealed monthly meetings of principals and assistant principals, yet no formalized leadership activities are planned. The mentoring of new administrators is on an informal basis with little to no evidence of monitoring or evaluating support practices. Numerous professional development activities are documented but the only evidence of the evaluation of the effectiveness of the training is through teacher surveys. While many eleot observations had been conducted across the system, limited analysis and use of the data has occurred. The only response heard by the team when asked about the use of eleot results was, “I know we need to do more with technology integration.” After observing Hawg Time, a daily period set aside at the high school for remediation and support and asking about the monitoring and evaluation of this initiative, the administration told of the change from once a week to meeting daily. Yet, limited data were available on monitoring of the activities during Hawg Time or the effectiveness of the sessions. “With all of our academic initiatives, we are not as successful as we need to be,” stated an administrator. “We need to more carefully monitor academic achievement across grade levels and especially for certain subgroups,” shared a stakeholder. “We have participated in the Striving Readers Grant and this has helped. Yet, there are wide discrepancies in achievement between students in the comprehensive programs and students with disabilities. Maybe we need to analyze everything being used and determine what is best overall for our system.” Formalizing processes and procedures to ensure that they are systemic is necessary so that consistency and effectiveness across the school system can be ensured.

Increased parental involvement continues to challenge Colquitt County School System. One of the goals in the strategic plan includes parental engagement. Schools use a variety of websites, social media, Remind 101 phone calls, checking grades through the parental portal known as Infinite Campus, newsletters, Parent Teacher Associations (PTO) and opportunities to serve on school improvement committees as communication and engagement methods to garner parent involvement. The superintendent spoke of holding annual Parent Summits

to encourage parent involvement and input. When a sufficient number of surveys was not returned by parents at the high school, the staff took laptops to football games and had parents complete the survey to earn a t-shirt. “Tuesday and Thursday are conference days at the junior high and high schools,” said an administrator. “As a charter system, we have local governance teams at each school. It is difficult to get parents to commit to serving on these councils,” stated a system leader. “We have social workers and parent coordinators at our schools. They plan parent nights and numerous activities, but we often have little participation,” shared a school administrator. One principal stated, “Parent involvement ends after open house, other than at sporting events.” A teacher shared, “If I could change one thing in our schools, it would be parental engagement and support.” Artifacts revealed ample evidence of community and governmental agencies being involved in school improvement, but evidence of active parent involvement on a continuous basis is lacking. For student success, the school system is encouraged to create deliberate and intentional parent engagement strategies.

Even with updated infrastructure and sufficient technology equipment, more effective integration of digital tools in teaching and learning is needed. “We have made significant improvements towards meeting our goal of having 1:1 for all students and we have embraced virtual learning,” shared an administrator. “Our partnering with local colleges and offering dual enrollment courses have been a real success because of our technology advancements,” stated a system leader. “We have technology instructional coaches to support teachers in effectively using technology tools,” stated an administrator. “Yet, we still have room to grow.” With the 1400 eleot observations conducted within and by the school system, digital learning continues to be an area of growth. Student interviews revealed a desire for more technology usage for projects and collaborative work assignments. Colquitt County Schools are encouraged to commit to the integration of digital resources throughout the system to improve student learning and system effectiveness.

Effective leadership with a focus on continuous improvement in a data-driven, collaborative culture and a supportive learning environment with intentional efforts to meet the needs of the whole child, as well as strategic resource management, are the system’s pillars of success. Colquitt County School System is encouraged to continue embedding these effective practices throughout the culture and operations of the schools while addressing the other areas by ensuring quality implementation of programs and practices and using results to support improvement over time.

## Next Steps

Upon receiving the Accreditation Engagement Review Report the institution is encouraged to implement the following steps:

- Review and share the findings with stakeholders.
- Develop plans to address the Priorities for Improvement identified by the Engagement 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
- Continue the improvement journey



## Team Roster

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

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
<p><b>Dr. Cheryl Allread, Lead Evaluator</b></p>	<p>Cheryl Allread's career spans over 47 years. She retired from Marion County Schools in South Carolina after having taught math and science for 7 years, serving as principal for 11 years, as assistant superintendent for instruction for 11 years, and as district superintendent for 7 years. After retirement from 36 years working in Marion County, she began working as a consultant with the S.C. State Department of Education, serving as liaison for low-performing schools/Palmetto Priority Schools. She also conducted academic audits, served as principal mentor, and served as a leadership coach in instructional supervision. Dr. Allread currently works as Lead Evaluator for AdvancED in schools and systems across the United States and internationally, as well as continuing to work as a consultant with schools and systems in instructional supervision.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Dana Harman</b></p>	<p>Dana Harman is the assistant superintendent of teaching and learning for the Carroll County School System in Carrollton, Georgia. As assistant superintendent, her areas of focus include curriculum, instruction, assessment, leadership development, professional learning, and strategic planning. In that position, she coordinates processes and learning structures for twelve elementary schools, six middle schools, five high schools, and two college and career academies. Dr. Harman holds a Doctor of Education in instructional leadership from the University of Alabama. She has her Bachelor of Arts in secondary education and her Master of Arts and Educational Specialist in middle grades education. Dr. Harman has K-12 experience as a middle school and high school teacher and has served as a principal at the elementary, middle and high school levels.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Laverne Hill</b></p>	<p>Laverne Hill is a retired educator who has 30 years of experience in education including 10 years as an elementary classroom teacher and 20 years as a media specialist for elementary and high school. Dr. Hill has played an active role in technology integration, working with students and teachers on implementing technology tools in the classroom. As a Google for Education certified trainer, she also provides technology professional learning and encourages digital learning environments. Dr. Hillis also an adjunct instructor for Valdosta State University and Colorado Christian University. She has earned degrees from Valdosta State University, Georgia Southwestern University, Georgia College and State University and Troy University. She earned her doctorate in instructional leadership from Nova Southeastern University and she maintains her teaching certificates for early childhood, media specialist and teacher support specialist. Dr. Hill has experience with accreditation, having served on three prior AdvancED review teams.</p>

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
<p><b>Ms. Shala Sweeney</b></p>	<p>Shala Sweeney joined the field of education in July of 2002. Throughout the past seventeen years, she has served as a second-grade teacher, a third-grade teacher, an assistant principal, and currently serves as the principal of Easterling Primary School. Ms. Sweeney received her Bachelor of Science degree in early childhood education from South Carolina State University in May 2002. She received her Master of Education degree in administration and supervision from Charleston Southern University in May 2007. In addition, she received her Educational Specialist degree from Converse College in May 2018. Ms. Sweeney has experience with accreditation, having led her school through the AdvancED process as well as co-chairing Standard 2 on Governance and Leadership for her school system. Ms. Sweeney continues to serve on Marion County School System’s strategic planning team.</p>
<p><b>Ryan Perez</b></p>	<p>Ryan Perez is new to AdvancED this year and brings the experiences of a 2017 Teach for America Corps member teaching English Language Arts at Alfred I. DuPont Middle School in Jacksonville, Florida. Mr. Perez earned his bachelor’s degree in English literature and creative writing at St. Andrews University. His vision and practices as an educator attempt to re-imagine how students find purpose and success no matter the challenge.</p>
<p><b>Carla Dean</b></p>	<p>Carla Dean has been an educator in the Effingham County School System in Georgia for 19 years. She taught middle school for 14 years before becoming the middle school gifted and talented facilitator for Effingham County. Mrs. Dean served two years at South Effingham Middle School as an assistant principal prior to becoming the district testing coordinator for Effingham County. She has a Bachelor of Science in middle grades education from Armstrong Atlantic State University and a Master of Education in educational leadership from Georgia Southern University.</p>

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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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