

Report of the External Review Team for Saint Thomas More Catholic School

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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

The External Review for Saint Thomas More Catholic School in Chapel Hill, NC took place on February 7-9, 2016. There were five members on this team, representing both Catholic and Public schools. Much work was undertaken by this team prior to the arrival in Chapel Hill. School personnel had downloaded numerous documents into a Dropbox which was easily accessible by all team members. As the review dates drew closer, the team was also provided with access codes for school test data. The Lead Evaluator visited Saint Thomas More Catholic School three weeks prior to the review and spent approximately three hours with the Principal and Assistant Principal. The schedule for the review dates was planned. A virtual team conference took place about 10 days in advance of the visit. All members participated. At that time, standards assignments were made, review of the tasks necessary by each team member prior to arrival in Chapel Hill were discussed, and some logistics regarding allergies, food preferences and personal needs were also shared. Numerous email communications occurred between/among school staff and team members throughout the latter half of January. At dinner the night the review began, it was apparent that all team members had done much reading and reviewing of the standards as well as the evidence available to them at that point.

This team worked well together, openly sharing ideas and information they had gathered from reviewing the school's accreditation report. The technology expertise of one member facilitated note taking during interviews

and sharing a draft of action statements with the team. Sharing information in this manner allowed the team to communicate information among team members that possibly would not have been later expressed in an open team forum. While at Saint Thomas More Catholic School the team reviewed artifacts, examined the Parent Portal, conducted multiple sets of interviews, and observed in classrooms in an effort to gain a thorough understanding of the school's use of resources to facilitate and support student success.

The External Review Team would like to sincerely thank all staff and stakeholders who contributed to the success of this process. The advance work undertaken by Dr. Michael Ashton and Mrs. Kathy Sullivan to create the Executive Summary as well as the staff contributions for the Self Assessment set the tone and groundwork for the review. They insured that all surveys were completed by all stakeholder groups. Most of the staff participated in the internal review/Self Assessment of AdvancED Standards process. Personnel were on hand at all times and quickly responded to our unexpected technology problems. A total of 89 people met with the review team by participating in various interviews and are to be commended for their hospitality, warmth, and openness throughout the review process.

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 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Pastors | 1 |
| Administrators | 2 |
| Instructional Staff | 39 |
| Support Staff | 15 |
| Students | 8 |
| Parents/Community/Business Leaders | 24 |
| Total | 89 |

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 school's curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning.

| Indicator | Description | Review Team Score | AdvancED Network Average |
|-----------|---|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 3.1 | The school's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level. | 3.00 | 2.81 |
| 3.2 | Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice. | 2.20 | 2.49 |
| 3.3 | Teachers engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations. | 2.60 | 2.60 |
| 3.4 | School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success. | 2.00 | 2.70 |
| 3.5 | Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities to improve instruction and student learning. | 3.00 | 2.57 |
| 3.6 | Teachers implement the school's instructional process in support of student learning. | 3.00 | 2.57 |
| 3.7 | Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the school's values and beliefs about teaching and learning. | 2.00 | 2.54 |
| 3.8 | The school engages families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keeps them informed of their children's learning progress. | 3.00 | 3.06 |

| Indicator | Description | Review Team Score | AdvancED Network Average |
|-----------|---|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 3.9 | The school has a formal structure whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the school who supports that student's educational experience. | 2.80 | 2.98 |
| 3.10 | Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses. | 3.00 | 2.75 |
| 3.11 | All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning. | 1.00 | 2.53 |
| 3.12 | The school provides and coordinates learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students. | 2.00 | 2.61 |

Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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

| Indicator | Description | Review Team Score | AdvancED Network Average |
|-----------|--|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 5.1 | The school establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system. | 2.40 | 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. | 2.00 | 2.37 |
| 5.3 | Professional and support staff are trained in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data. | 1.00 | 2.06 |
| 5.4 | The school engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level. | 3.00 | 2.46 |
| 5.5 | Leadership monitors and communicates comprehensive information about student learning, conditions that support student learning, and the achievement of school improvement goals to stakeholders. | 2.20 | 2.71 |

Student Performance Diagnostic

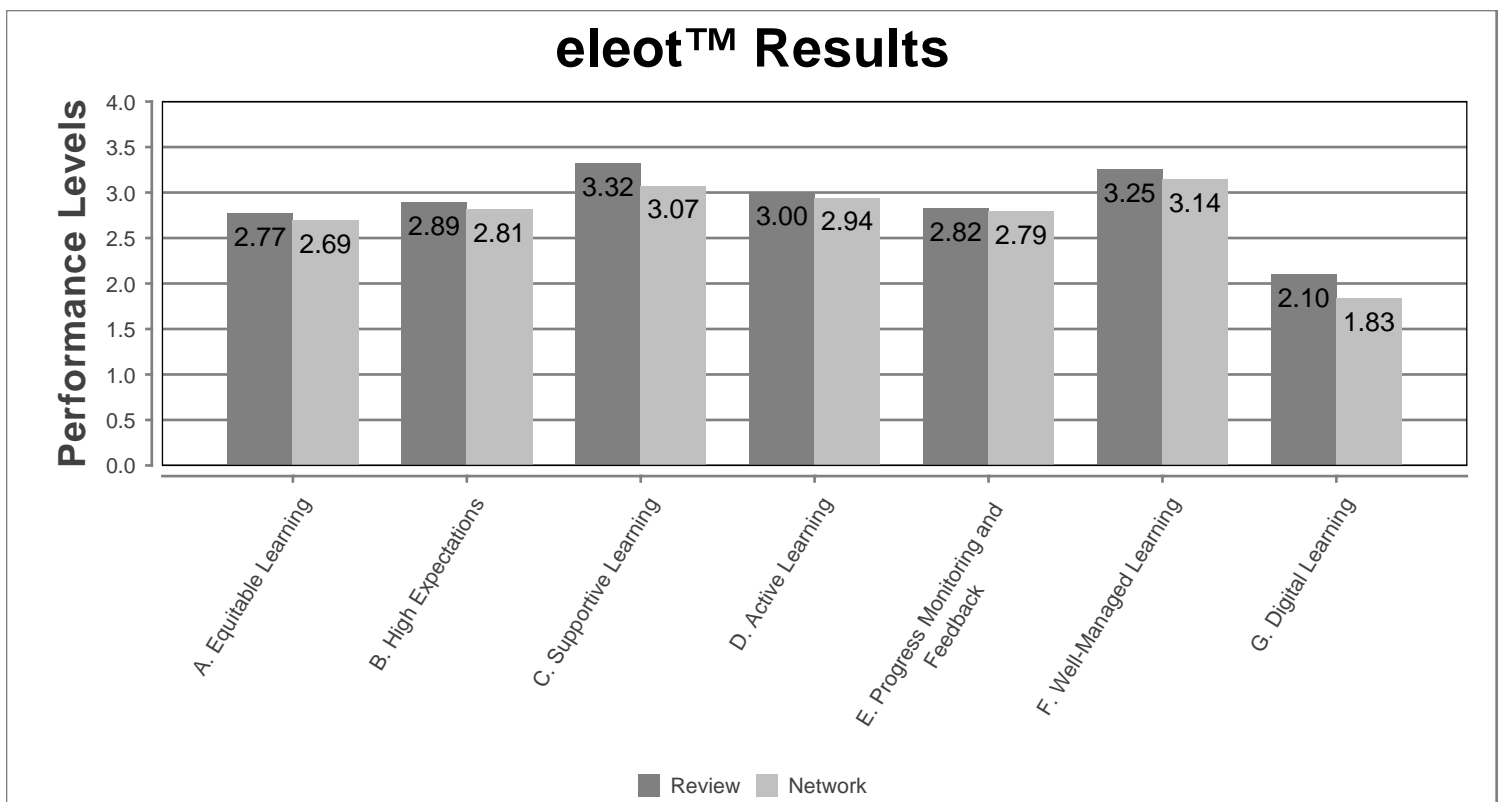
The quality of assessments used to measure student learning, assurance that assessments are administered with procedural fidelity and appropriate accommodations, assessment results that reflect the quality of learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important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

| Evaluative Criteria | Review Team Score | AdvancED Network Average |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Assessment Quality | 3.00 | 3.06 |
| Test Administration | 4.00 | 3.45 |
| Equity of Learning | 3.00 | 2.70 |
| Quality of Learning | 4.00 | 2.92 |

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.



Using the Effective Learning Environment Observation Tool (eleot™), the team conducted 26 classroom observations in both morning and afternoon observation sessions. Each learning environment is rated on a scale from 1 to 4. Overall team average results indicated that all seven learning environment ratings of Saint Thomas More Catholic School were higher than the AdvancED Network (AEN) average.

The Supportive Learning Environment had the highest rating of 3.32 (AEN=3.06). The second highest mean rating of 3.25 (AEN=3.30) was given to a Well Managed Learning Environment. The Active Learning Environment average was 3.00 as compared to the AEN average of 2.94. The mean rating of 2.89 (AEN=2.81) was given to the High Expectations Learning Environment. Program Monitoring and Feedback Environment had a mean rating of 2.82 (AEN=2.79). The rating for an Equitable Learning Environment was a mean of 2.77 (AEN=2.69). The Digital Learning Environment average was 2.10 and is slightly higher than the AdvancED Network average of 1.82 even though this is the lowest average among the seven environments.

Throughout the visit, the team observed positive interactions between staff and students which promoted appropriate student behavior. Children are clearly aware of expected behavior and act accordingly. Hence, it was very evident that this is a well-managed environment for learning.

In some lower elementary classrooms, small instructional groups worked independently while being closely monitored by the teacher/teacher's aide to ensure understanding and continued progress. This supportive environment was also evident in an upper elementary math class where students were working in small groups using calculators to solve given problems. The teacher was moving freely from group to group providing guidance and direction as needed.

In one middle school science class, all students were conducting research on individual computers. Assignment expectations were clearly defined by a rubric that was provided at each work station. Throughout the observation period, the teacher was observed circulating around the room, ensuring students understood and remained focused on the assignment. The active learning was readily evident, in that students easily explained their chosen area of research and the PowerPoint that was expected upon completion. The rubric reflected high expectations. While this level of high expectations was not as evident in every classroom observed, it was somewhat evident in most classes.

The above-mentioned rubric was one example of how well students are aware of how their work is assessed. In numerous classrooms, teachers asked students to explain the task they were working on or to summarize a given assignment. In classes where teachers/aides routinely moved around the room, work was being monitored and students had an opportunity to revise or edit their responses. In one upper elementary remedial math class, students were observed working as a group using an interactive Smart Board. This often led to good dialogue and class discussion. These observations reveal that progress monitoring and feedback is somewhat evident, however; not consistently evident throughout all classrooms.

Many of the classrooms observed revealed that students were working on the same material with minimal evidence of differentiated instruction. Classroom observations revealed that digital learning was only somewhat evident. The school does not have a sufficient amount of computer hardware and/or software to allow all students technology access at the same time. Information shared with the team revealed that one set of laptops has to be shared with as many as six classrooms.

There is a high correlation between the eleot™ results and the general feeling expressed by stakeholders that "good things are happening in the classrooms of Saint Thomas More Catholic School. The high environmental

ratings supports this belief.

Saint Thomas More Catholic School is a warm, caring faith-based environment where children are supported in their learning. It was obvious that students are aware of expected behavior and demonstrate such throughout their day in all settings observed. Verbal interactions between adults and students were always respectful.

Although the average eleot™ results were good, the team observed a wide range of instructional environments with heavy emphasis on traditional settings of whole class instruction. The school should continue to identify and learn about innovative environments that are producing significant results.

While there are some classrooms where digital learning is routinely used, others continue to rely on the use of traditional materials. The latter can often lead to a lack of differentiated instruction, as well as a more passive learning environment.

Examining instructional software and acquiring additional hardware will provide access to more individualized/differentiated learning opportunities. This will support the use of instructional practices that increases active participation and encourage collaborative learning among students.

eleot™ Data Summary

| A. Equitable Learning | | | % | | | |
|--|----------------|---|---------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Item | Average | Description | Very Evident | Evident | Somewhat Evident | Not Observed |
| 1. | 2.08 | Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs | 11.54% | 23.08% | 26.92% | 38.46% |
| 2. | 3.35 | Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support | 53.85% | 30.77% | 11.54% | 3.85% |
| 3. | 3.65 | Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied | 69.23% | 26.92% | 3.85% | 0.00% |
| 4. | 2.00 | Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences | 11.54% | 23.08% | 19.23% | 46.15% |
| Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.77 | | | | | | |

| B. High Expectations | | | % | | | |
|--|----------------|--|---------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Item | Average | Description | Very Evident | Evident | Somewhat Evident | Not Observed |
| 1. | 3.27 | Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher | 42.31% | 42.31% | 15.38% | 0.00% |
| 2. | 3.35 | Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable | 46.15% | 42.31% | 11.54% | 0.00% |
| 3. | 2.23 | Is provided exemplars of high quality work | 19.23% | 19.23% | 26.92% | 34.62% |
| 4. | 3.04 | Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks | 34.62% | 34.62% | 30.77% | 0.00% |
| 5. | 2.58 | Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing) | 19.23% | 30.77% | 38.46% | 11.54% |
| Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.89 | | | | | | |

| C. Supportive Learning | | | % | | | |
|--|---------|---|--------------|---------|------------------|--------------|
| Item | Average | Description | Very Evident | Evident | Somewhat Evident | Not Observed |
| 1. | 3.69 | Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive | 69.23% | 30.77% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| 2. | 3.69 | Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning | 73.08% | 23.08% | 3.85% | 0.00% |
| 3. | 3.27 | Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback) | 46.15% | 34.62% | 19.23% | 0.00% |
| 4. | 3.23 | Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks | 50.00% | 26.92% | 19.23% | 3.85% |
| 5. | 2.69 | Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs | 30.77% | 23.08% | 30.77% | 15.38% |
| Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.32 | | | | | | |

| D. Active Learning | | | % | | | |
|--|---------|--|--------------|---------|------------------|--------------|
| Item | Average | Description | Very Evident | Evident | Somewhat Evident | Not Observed |
| 1. | 2.85 | Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students | 30.77% | 30.77% | 30.77% | 7.69% |
| 2. | 2.88 | Makes connections from content to real-life experiences | 38.46% | 26.92% | 19.23% | 15.38% |
| 3. | 3.27 | Is actively engaged in the learning activities | 46.15% | 34.62% | 19.23% | 0.00% |
| Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.00 | | | | | | |

| E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback | | | % | | | |
|--|----------------|--|---------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Item | Average | Description | Very Evident | Evident | Somewhat Evident | Not Observed |
| 1. | 2.58 | Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning | 23.08% | 26.92% | 34.62% | 15.38% |
| 2. | 2.92 | Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding | 26.92% | 50.00% | 11.54% | 11.54% |
| 3. | 3.15 | Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content | 30.77% | 53.85% | 15.38% | 0.00% |
| 4. | 2.77 | Understands how her/his work is assessed | 30.77% | 30.77% | 23.08% | 15.38% |
| 5. | 2.69 | Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback | 26.92% | 38.46% | 11.54% | 23.08% |
| Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.82 | | | | | | |

| F. Well-Managed Learning | | | % | | | |
|--|----------------|---|---------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Item | Average | Description | Very Evident | Evident | Somewhat Evident | Not Observed |
| 1. | 3.85 | Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers | 88.46% | 7.69% | 3.85% | 0.00% |
| 2. | 3.46 | Follows classroom rules and works well with others | 53.85% | 38.46% | 7.69% | 0.00% |
| 3. | 3.19 | Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities | 53.85% | 23.08% | 11.54% | 11.54% |
| 4. | 2.42 | Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities | 26.92% | 23.08% | 15.38% | 34.62% |
| 5. | 3.31 | Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences | 50.00% | 34.62% | 11.54% | 3.85% |
| Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.25 | | | | | | |

| G. Digital Learning | | | % | | | |
|--|---------|--|--------------|---------|------------------|--------------|
| Item | Average | Description | Very Evident | Evident | Somewhat Evident | Not Observed |
| 1. | 2.15 | Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning | 26.92% | 11.54% | 11.54% | 50.00% |
| 2. | 2.08 | Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning | 23.08% | 15.38% | 7.69% | 53.85% |
| 3. | 2.08 | Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning | 15.38% | 26.92% | 7.69% | 50.00% |
| Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.10 | | | | | | |

Findings

Improvement Priority

Establish, implement, and document a more rigorous and comprehensive professional development plan that provides training for staff in the areas of data analysis and use of instructional strategies that meet the needs of 21st century learners.

(Indicator 3.11, Indicator 5.2, Indicator 5.3)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.11

Evidence and Rationale

Interviews with staff coupled with a review of the school's Self Assessment and staff survey results indicated a need for a comprehensive professional development plan that is based on staff needs. Staff reported that professional development and in-service training is minimal. Documentation in the school's accreditation report indicate that student data is not consistently and routinely analyzed in an effort to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning. Staff reported a desire for training related to data analysis as well as instructional strategies such as differentiated instruction, interactive technology, use of digital tools/technology by students to conduct research, working collaboratively, and creating original works for learning. Ongoing professional development and in-service training for staff is a foundation for maintaining current instructional strategies that meet the needs of the 21st century learner. Training in the analysis and use of data will guide instructional decisions of the staff and verify improved student learning.

Opportunity For Improvement

Create, utilize and document an effective peer mentoring/modeling program for instructional staff.

(Indicator 3.4, Indicator 3.7)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.4

Evidence and Rationale

After analyzing teacher surveys and conducting teacher interviews, it was apparent that there is a need for a more formal and consistent mentoring model. Even though a mentor program is provided through the diocese, staff indicated that it does not adequately meet the professional or personal needs of instructional staff because staff is often paired with employees from another school that may be a distance away. An examination of eleot™ results indicate that there are many examples of good teaching at Saint Thomas More Catholic School. School leadership could consider peer coaching and mentoring between and among staff within the building. This program will support the professional growth of instructional staff and foster best practices for student success.

Opportunity For Improvement

Utilize the school's resource team to support classroom teachers in their efforts to differentiate instruction.
(Indicator 3.12)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.12

Evidence and Rationale

Staff interviews, classroom observations, team meeting conversations, and survey data results indicate a strong desire and need for additional input from the school's support personnel in developing strategies to meet the unique learning needs of a growing diverse student population. This team must include the guidance counselor, curriculum specialist, resource teachers, and administration. Their background and knowledge will bring a wealth of information to the discussion and aid in designing instructional activities, examining multi-modality learning styles, and establishing behavior modification strategies that enhance the learning experiences of all children. Ongoing success for all students best occurs when instruction is appropriate and meets individual instructional needs of students through differentiated instruction.

Powerful Practice

Saint Thomas More Catholic School has designed an instructional program with learning experiences that prepares students for success at the next level.

(Indicator 3.1)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.1

Evidence and Rationale

Parents, parents of alumni, teachers, and support staff shared many success stories with members of the

review team regarding their children's accomplishments at the high school level and beyond. Survey data and stakeholder interviews indicate that the school's curriculum and learning experiences provide challenging and equitable opportunities at all grade levels that develop learning and life skills leading to success at the next level. This was observed in all courses and across grade levels. Focusing on a school curriculum, instructional practices, and learning experiences that provide challenging opportunities to all students will prepare students for success at the next level.

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

| Indicator | Description | Review Team Score | AdvancED Network Average |
|-----------|--|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.1 | The school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success. | 2.00 | 2.73 |
| 1.2 | The school's leadership and staff commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking, and life skills. | 2.40 | 2.96 |
| 1.3 | The school's leadership implements a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning. | 1.00 | 2.56 |

Standard 2 - Governance and Leadership

The school operates under governance and leadership that promote and support student performance and school 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 school. | 2.00 | 2.96 |
| 2.2 | The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively. | 2.40 | 2.91 |
| 2.3 | The governing body ensures that the school leadership has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively. | 3.00 | 3.15 |
| 2.4 | Leadership and staff foster a culture consistent with the school's purpose and direction. | 2.00 | 3.09 |
| 2.5 | Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the school's purpose and direction. | 2.40 | 2.79 |
| 2.6 | Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice and student success. | 2.00 | 2.74 |

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 | 3.35 |
| Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis | 4.00 | 3.04 |

Findings

Improvement Priority

Develop, document, implement, and annually evaluate a systematic, inclusive and comprehensive School Improvement Plan.

(Indicator 1.1, Indicator 1.3, Indicator 2.4)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 1.3

Evidence and Rationale

Examination of documents submitted prior to arrival on site revealed that Saint Thomas More Catholic School did not have a current, up-to-date School Improvement Plan. Interviews with the school leadership team confirmed that the school's improvement plan expired in June of 2015 and no plans were currently in place to review, revise, or create a new plan. As so many indicators within the standards for review hinge upon such a plan, it is critical that the school leadership gather a team of staff and stakeholders to undertake the task of creating a new Improvement Plan. This plan must include a clearly defined school direction statement that supports student learning based on shared beliefs and values about teaching and learning. A wide range of data from surveys, assessments, stakeholder input, and the contents of this review report should serve as the driving force and the roadmap for continuous improvement. This School Improvement Plan must also include an effective and consistent communication piece based on stakeholder input and survey information. Efforts need to be made to minimize volume, eliminate duplication, and stress pertinent and highly meaningful information. A long-range plan for the direction of a school is an essential document to guide instructional practices, staff development, material acquisition, and steps for evaluation of data leading to improved student learning.

Opportunity For Improvement

Examine steps and procedures that can be taken by administration and staff to work openly and honestly to build a more positive climate and boost morale within the school based on the established shared values and beliefs.

(Indicator 2.4)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 2.4

Evidence and Rationale

After completing interviews and reviewing staff surveys and emails, it was clear that attention should be given to building staff morale and a more positive school climate. While staff focuses on maintaining a positive attitude in classrooms, their negative perceptions toward administration, and decisions being made at present, seem to permeate discussions. A close look at strategies that facilitate conflict resolution in an effort to improve the school climate and maintain positive attributes of the school and staff should be considered. The strength of the common values and beliefs within this school are highly evident when spending even a short period of time here. As that is the foundation of this school, it is essential that it not be lost. Leadership and staff that foster a culture consistent with the school's purpose and direction while encouraging collaboration and a sense of community among all stakeholders is the foundation of school improvement.

Powerful Practice

The leadership and staff of Saint Thomas More Catholic School, fostered by the parish and community, promote growth and development of children in a faith based and family centered environment.

(Indicator 1.2)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 1.2

Evidence and Rationale

After reviewing the school's accreditation report, conducting multiple interviews and classroom observations, the team agreed that a strong commitment to shared values and beliefs was demonstrated through the staff's interactions with each other. The school staff lives their mission through their tone, mannerisms, care, and respect for their surroundings and each other. Their gentleness was demonstrated in interactions with all stakeholders. School leadership and staff that is committed to a culture based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning is essential for maintaining and communicating the school's purpose and direction.

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 school has resources and provides services that support its purpose and direction to ensure success for all students.

| Indicator | Description | Review Team Score | AdvancED Network Average |
|-----------|--|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 4.1 | Qualified professional and support staff are sufficient in number to fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school's purpose, direction, and the educational program. | 3.00 | 2.95 |
| 4.2 | Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the school. | 2.00 | 2.96 |
| 4.3 | The school maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff. | 2.60 | 3.11 |
| 4.4 | Students and school personnel use a range of media and information resources to support the school's educational programs. | 2.00 | 2.78 |
| 4.5 | The technology infrastructure supports the school's teaching, learning, and operational needs. | 1.20 | 2.52 |

| Indicator | Description | Review Team Score | AdvancED Network Average |
|-----------|---|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 4.6 | The school provides support services to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served. | 3.00 | 2.81 |
| 4.7 | The school provides services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students. | 3.00 | 2.75 |

Findings

Improvement Priority

Conduct a needs assessment and use the results to develop and implement a comprehensive technology plan that meets the school’s teaching, learning and operational needs by improving technology services and infrastructure.

(Indicator 4.2, Indicator 4.4, Indicator 4.5)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 4.5

Evidence and Rationale

After examining the executive summary, the self-assessment, the survey results, conducting interviews and observing in 26 classrooms, it was apparent that technology resources and infrastructure are not sufficient to meet the teaching and learning needs of a diverse population of 21st century learners. The school recognizes the need for improvement in this area and recently hired a technology coordinator to assist teachers and facilitate program improvements. Also, the school is in the beginning stages of drafting a technology plan. However, this plan does not delineate estimation of desired hardware/software or propose a budget necessary to support the plan. A technology team comprised of the technology coordinator and representation from the administration and staff needs to routinely meet to determine technology needs/desires and professional development to support appropriate use of these resources. Fiscal resources need to be focused on the acquisition and appropriate use of these new materials and technologies to ensure such an investment leads to best practices in teaching and learning and results in improved student achievement. Digital learning is an integral part of instruction in 21st century classrooms. Instruction must facilitate understanding of all that is available, as well as its use and application for acquiring and disseminating information.

Powerful Practice

Saint Thomas More Catholic School facilities are impeccably maintained providing a safe, clean, and healthy environment.

(Indicator 4.3)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 4.3

Evidence and Rationale

Despite being a school that is 50 years old, Saint Thomas More Catholic School facilities are well maintained and up-to-date. It was evident through team observations of the facility that all stakeholders take pride in their school. Conversation with staff and students revealed a sense of pride and respect for the school facility. The school provides a clean and healthy environment for all students and staff. Maintaining a healthy school environment ensures that the physical setting for education is of high quality, meets at least minimum standards and guidelines, does not interfere with the education process, and supports teaching and learning.

Conclusion

The Teaching and Learning Impact IEQ rating (258.10) was comparable to the AEN rating (268.94). Eleot™ results reflected learning environments that insured student learning was challenging, that teachers monitored and supported students in their learning and that classrooms were well managed. Digital learning was observed in some classrooms. Parent interviews revealed that students leave Saint Thomas More Catholic School well prepared for the next level. Teachers meet in teams to jointly plan and share concerns regarding individual students. The very positive, family atmosphere throughout this school is indicative of shared values and beliefs. The environment is meticulously clean throughout, which affords an atmosphere for learning.

The Leadership Capacity IEQ rating (247.27) is somewhat lower than the AEN rating (292.64). The AdvancED Self Assessment was led by the school's administration and resulted in a detailed and honest reflection of the school. It was evident that multiple modes of communication are in place to keep everyone informed and allow input from stakeholders. For example, Ren-Web is a Parent Portal where curriculum information, student grades, and notifications are shared. In addition, staff and parents receive email information from the administration on a regular basis. Parishioners are encouraged to volunteer at the school and provide services such as translating documents and serving as interpreters for the Hispanic students and families.

In an interview with the pastor, he stated that even though the church administrative team meets monthly with the school leadership team, the school leadership team is provided the autonomy to make decisions that best supports the school's improvement efforts. The leadership team utilizes the supervision and evaluation model developed by the Diocese of Raleigh to ensure improved professional practice and student success.

The Resource Utilization IEQ rating (240.00) was also lower than the AEN rating (283.86). The administration has worked to insure that qualified personnel are on staff at Saint Thomas More Catholic School. Recently, a safety/security person was hired to review the existing safety policies and procedures and make needed changes. A new manual, the STMCS Strategic Action Plan, is the outcome of his initial work. Within the past 4 years, an Assistant Principal was named to assume the responsibilities of supervision and coordination of the middle school. There are sufficient custodial personnel who do a masterful job of maintaining this 50 year old facility. It is remarkably clean in every area observed. The school is in the beginning stages of developing a technology plan that projects future needs. A fully certified school counselor has recently been hired for 20 hours weekly. In an interview with her, she shared that she willingly adjusts her hours to insure that she is available at varying times to meet the needs of students and their families.

The School Improvement Plan expired in June of 2015 and has not been revised to reflect current goals and strategies for improvement. The absence of a plan hinders efforts to utilize assessment data for continuous planning, to determine a plan for technology acquisition, to evaluate current instructional programs, and to increase involvement of the Hispanic church population into the school. Because much of this review involved linking information with the School Improvement Plan, the absence of a current plan resulted in lower rating in many areas. Establishing and tasking a team with developing a plan is essential to ensuring continuous improvement and growth.

The school recently made a concerted effort to improve communication among staff and parents. The outcome has led to a plethora of information coming from multiple sources. This has resulted in some confusion and pertinent data being lost in the volume. Efforts now need to focus on streamlining the amount and focus of information sharing to ensure that it is effective.

The school has an assessment system in place, however; interviews and documentation from the Self Assessment did not indicate that data from these assessments are consistently and routinely analyzed and utilized in program planning and material acquisition. Additional professional development training should be provided in the interpretation and use of data to ensure effective classroom adaptations that support student success. Also, staff expressed the need for training related to instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations. This training should include differentiated instruction, use of interactive technology, and meeting the needs of a diverse learning community.

Surveys and interviews revealed that frustration between administration and staff is hindering school and staff morale. The administration is aware of this matter and is making a concerted effort to address this issue.

In closing, the school's Internal Review Process was authentically facilitated and produced similar results to the External Review Process. Given their awareness of the need to create an effective School Improvement Plan, the leadership and staff can examine the effectiveness of current instructional strategies and professional development offerings to ensure appropriate goals are in place that address the needs of students. Designing a Technology Plan will provide a framework and timeline for addressing technology needs related to the school improvement plan. The strong desire of all Saint Thomas More stakeholders to facilitate and maintain success for all students in a nurturing and supportive environment will continue to be the force that moves the school forward.

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:

- Conduct a needs assessment and use the results to develop and implement a comprehensive technology plan that meets the school's teaching, learning and operational needs by improving technology services and infrastructure.
- Develop, document, implement, and annually evaluate a systematic, inclusive and comprehensive School Improvement Plan.
- Establish, implement, and document a more rigorous and comprehensive professional development plan that provides training for staff in the areas of data analysis and use of instructional strategies that meet the needs of 21st century learners.

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 | 251.79 | 278.34 |
| Teaching and Learning Impact | 258.10 | 268.94 |
| Leadership Capacity | 247.27 | 292.64 |
| Resource Utilization | 240.00 | 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

Team Roster

| Member | Brief Biography |
|-------------------------|--|
| Mrs. Kathryn Kirby | <p>Mrs. Kathryn Kirby is a retired educator who taught in Connecticut for 35 years prior to relocating to North Carolina. The majority of her experience has been with special education students of all exceptionalities, grades K-12. She also spent five years as a middle school language arts teacher. Following her retirement from the public schools in Connecticut, she taught third grade in a Catholic school, also in Connecticut. Since the move to North Carolina, she worked for five years at the Trilogy School in Raleigh, where she served on the Leadership Team preparing for the school Advanc-Ed review in 2011. Most recently, Kathryn worked as a remedial reading and math tutor in the Franklin County Schools. Kathryn began doing school re-accreditation visits with NEASC in Connecticut, where she was trained and served on one team. She has been working with Advanc-Ed since 2012 and has served as a team member as well as Lead Evaluator on numerous teams. Kathryn received her B.A. in Elementary Education/Special Education from the University of St. Joseph in West Hartford, CT. She has a M.S. in Special Education from Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, CT. In addition, Kathryn has attended numerous in-service meetings, area and regional conferences; served on curriculum and department committees; and assisted in writing an application for a U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Award.</p> |
| Mr. Branden C. Figueroa | <p>Branden is a proud and dedicated educator at Northside K8 school, where he teaches 5th grade math and science. He is currently leading the School Leadership Team and Hospitality Committee, and has really enjoyed working with his colleagues to make their school the best it could be!</p> <p>Branden is passionate about using technology to connect with his students, as well as their families. He constantly strives to become a better educator and community member, and looks forward to serving on the advanc-ed external review team.</p> |
| Kristy Kidney | <p>Currently Kristy Kidney teaches 3rd grade at Saint Mark Catholic School in Wilmington, North Carolina. She has been teaching there since it opened in 2002. Prior to that, she taught 3rd grade at Saint Mary Catholic School.</p> <p>Kristy has been a member of the St. Mark School Advisory Council for 3 years, and has also been appointed to the school Leadership Team. She is a certified ILT Mentor and serves on the following committees: MTSS, Data Management PLC, and is a member of the New Hanover County Literacy Council.</p> <p>Kristy graduated from the University of North Carolina, Wilmington and is certified by the State of North Carolina to teach K-6. In the past, she has been the Vice President of the Watson School of Education UNCW Alumni Board and has served as a member of the mentor committee.</p> <p>In her spare time she enjoys horseback riding, reading, and camping.</p> |

| Member | Brief Biography |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <p>Mrs. Christine Marlene Quinn</p> | <p>Graduating from from The University of Vermont with a B.A. in Elementary Education, not only did Christine Quinn have a passion for teaching, she also wanted to run her own business. She worked, managed and eventually owned a skateboard and snowboard retail store for 17 years. After her business endeavor, she was able to resume to her other passion, teaching. Christine and her family, moved to Wilmington in 2007. Her two daughters graduated from St. Mark School. Christine is an active member of St. Mark Church. She has been teaching 5th /6th grade for nine years and is currently highly qualified by the State of North Carolina to teach Kindergarten through 6th grade. Christine been serving on St. Mark's SAC (School Advisory Commitee) for 7 years and has been appointed to be a part of the Leadership Team for St. Mark, as well as a certified ILT Mentor and a member of the New Hanover Literacy Council. Some of her other interests include Bikram Yoga, reading ,drawing, cooking, aerobics, snowboarding, and now surfing!</p> |
| <p>Mrs. Sarah Smith</p> | <p>Mrs. Smith has been a elementary classroom teacher in both the private and public setting for seven years. Before teaching, she held a variety of positions including active duty soldier, adult education counselor and many volunteer positions in and out of education. She and her family have been privileged to travel extensively due to her husbands active duty military service living abroad for nine years (six in Germany, three in Italy).</p> |

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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