

Report of the  
External Review Team  
for  
Burns Science and Technology  
Charter School

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# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	4
Results .....	9
Teaching and Learning Impact .....	9
Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning .....	10
Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement .....	11
Student Performance Diagnostic .....	11
Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™) .....	13
eleot™ Data Summary .....	16
Findings .....	19
Leadership Capacity .....	21
Standard 1 - Purpose and Direction .....	22
Standard 2 - Governance and Leadership .....	22
Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic .....	22
Findings .....	23
Resource Utilization .....	24
Standard 4 - Resources and Support Systems .....	24
Findings .....	25
Conclusion .....	26
Accreditation Recommendation .....	28
Addenda .....	29
Team Roster .....	29
Next Steps .....	31
About AdvancED .....	32
References .....	33

# 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 Burns Science and Technology Charter School was held February 20 and 21, 2017. The External Review Team consisted of five members, both administrators and classroom teachers.

The Lead Evaluator participated in a pre-visit to the school and several pre-visit phone calls to ensure arrangements were being made and to answer questions leading to the review. These phone calls allowed an opportunity for the Lead Evaluator to become knowledgeable about the school, support the Internal Review process, and to begin planning for the External Review.

The principal worked with the entire administrative team, teachers, and staff to ensure all aspects of the AdvancED Internal Review were completed on time. Prior to the start of the External Review, the school completed the Internal Review process and the resulting Accreditation Report was available to the team.

On Sunday, February 19, 2017 the External Review Team was treated to a dinner and afterwards the principal's presentation of the school at the hotel. Members of Burns Science and Technology Charter School leadership team attended, giving the External Review Team an opportunity to meet key personnel prior to beginning the review.

On Monday, February 20, the External Review Team heard a presentation from the SAC Committee presenter and the principal about each of the AdvancED Standards and the process used to complete the Internal Review. Additionally, interviews with stakeholders were held and an abundance of evidence and artifacts were reviewed. The Review Team visited many classrooms. At the conclusion of the work day, a team work session was held at the hotel.

On Tuesday, February 21, the External Review Team continued with several more classroom observations. While on-site, during the two-day visit, the External Review Team interviewed members of the campus leadership teams, teachers and students. A total of 30 classroom observations were conducted. For lunch, the principal escorted the Review Team to a near-by outdoor classroom, along the river, used in the STEM curriculum. For lunch, the team was treated at a local community supporter's restaurant, also on the river. Again, the External Review Team continued its evidence review and deliberations during an afternoon work session. The External Review Team completed its final work on Tuesday afternoon. The Lead Evaluator met with the principal to present the findings from the review. The Exit Report was delivered after school hours in a meeting in the Library.

The External Review Team found all internal and external stakeholders to be informed of the continuous improvement process, as well as the AdvancED accreditation process. Four board members, three administrators and 35 parents and community members made themselves available to the team for interviews. In addition, the Team interviewed 69 amazing students.

The External Review Team extends their appreciation to the Burns Science and Technology Charter School for the small-town hospitality shown throughout the process. The beautiful accommodations, appetizing meals, and snacks provided to the Team were appreciated, including the basket of treats for the long evening work sessions.

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
Board Members	4
Administrators	3
Instructional Staff	23
Support Staff	4
Students	69
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>



# 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.	3.60	2.82
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.	3.80	2.45
3.3	Teachers engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	4.00	2.63
3.4	School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	3.80	2.69
3.5	Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities to improve instruction and student learning.	3.80	2.52
3.6	Teachers implement the school's instructional process in support of student learning.	3.80	2.56
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the school's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	3.00	2.56
3.8	The school engages families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keeps them informed of their children's learning progress.	4.00	3.07

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.	2.60	3.01
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	2.80	2.71
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	3.00	2.48
3.12	The school provides and coordinates learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	4.00	2.63

### 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.	3.00	2.64
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.	3.00	2.33
5.3	Professional and support staff are trained in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data.	2.00	2.03
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	2.45
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.	3.00	2.68

### Student Performance Diagnostic

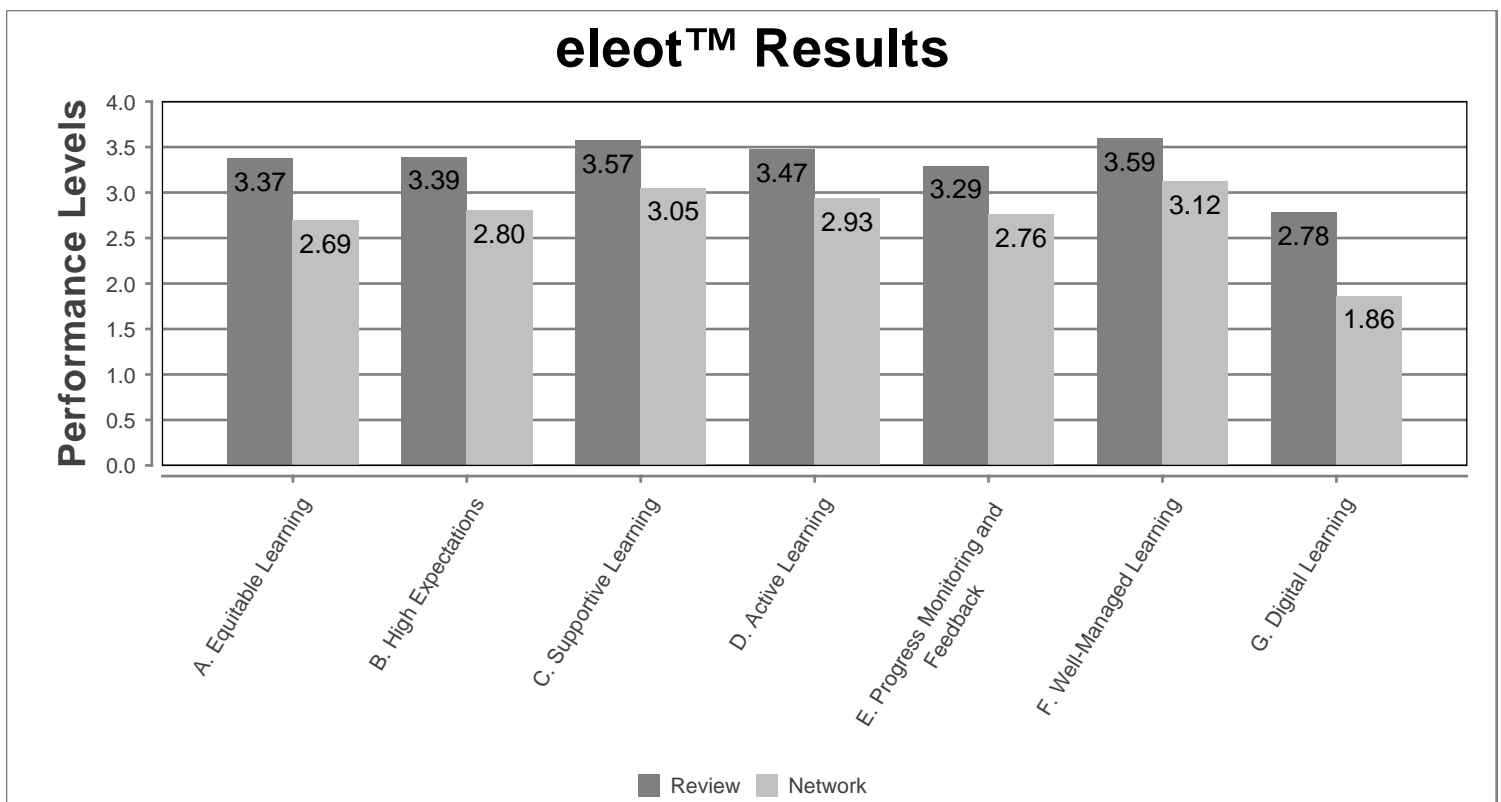
The quality of assessments used to measure student learning, assurance that assessments are administered with procedural fidelity and appropriate accommodations, assessment results that reflect the quality of learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important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

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Assessment Quality	4.00	3.11
Test Administration	4.00	3.46
Equity of Learning	4.00	2.75
Quality of Learning	4.00	2.93

## Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™)

Every learner should have access to an effective learning environment in which she/he has multiple opportunities to be successful. The Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™) measures the extent to which learners are in an environment that is equitable, supportive, and well-managed. An environment where high expectations are the norm and active learning takes place. It measures whether learners' progress is monitored and feedback is provided and the extent to which technology is leveraged for learning.

Observations of classrooms or other learning venues are conducted for a minimum of 20 minutes per observation. Every member of the External Review Team is required to be trained and pass a certification exam that establishes inter-rater reliability. Team members conduct multiple observations during the review process and provide ratings on 30 items based on a four-point scale (4=very evident; 3=evident; 2=somewhat evident; and 1=not observed). The following provides the aggregate average score across multiple observations for each of the seven learning environments included in eleot™ as well as benchmark results across the AdvancED Network.



The External Review Team observed 30 classrooms during the two-day visit. Each of the 30 observations was conducted by team members certified in the use of the eleot. The observations ranged in grade level and subject area and included the computer lab, music, physical education, electives and regular classrooms. All seven learning environments measured by the eleot were rated higher than the AdvancED Network Average (AEN).

The seven eleot environments are broken down into several sub-sections or items. Each item is rated from 1 (not observed) to 4 (very evident). The observations are conducted for no fewer than 20 minutes and the aggregate information can be used by the institution to analyze trends in instruction.

The Well-Managed Learning Environment received the highest rating by the team of 3.59. The Supportive Learning Environment also received a high rating of 3.57. The lowest rated environment was the Digital Learning at 2.78, yet is higher than the AEN of 1.86.

The Well-Managed Learning Environment was rated highest at 3.59 overall. Students spoke and interacted in a respectful manner to both the teacher and other students (F1, 3.83). Likewise, students understood classroom routines and expectations (F5, 3.80) and followed classroom rules (F2, 3.73). The External Review Team noted many fine examples of whole group instruction, however, providing fewer opportunities for students to collaborate with others (F4, 3.07).

As noted above, the Supportive Learning Environment was rated second highest. Students demonstrated a positive attitude about the classroom (C2, 3.73) and their learning experiences (C1, 3.70). The eleot item that measures the students' opportunities to receive additional/alternative instruction to meet their individual needs was rated comparatively lower at 3.17 (C5).

The Active Learning Environment was rated 3.47. Overall, students were engaged in the learning activities (D3, 3.73) but had fewer opportunities to make connections to real-life experiences (D2, 3.13).

The Progress Monitoring and Feedback (3.29) and the Digital Learning (2.78) Environments, though still above the AEN, were the lowest ratings for the school. As observed, the students' opportunities to understand how his/her work is assessed received an average rating of 3.10 (E4). In the Digital domain, based on the observations, students are not fully utilizing the digital tools/technology to communicate and to work collaboratively for learning (G3, 2.37).

Burns Science and Technology Charter School has a reputation of high expectations and high student performance. Although not rated the highest, the High Expectations Environment was rated higher than the AEN during the review at 3.39. The External Review Team noted examples of students engaged in critical thinking and challenging curriculum.

Among the lowest rated environments was the Equitable Learning with a rating of 3.37. Students had equal access to discussion, resources and technology (A2, 3.77), but few had opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds (A4, 2.57). Additionally, at 3.47 (A1), the item measuring students' differentiated learning opportunities was rated as a weaker area. As mentioned previously, students were primarily engaged in whole-group instruction with fewer differentiated opportunities. The school will benefit from professional development to meet the needs of students who have performed at a lower level as indicated by the data. It is also noted that the staff should understand the process for analyzing data skill levels which will lead to continuous improvements.

Students at the Burns Science and Technology Charter School were polite, respectful and knowledgeable about the expectation for them to excel. Students were happy and engaged in their authentic learning opportunities and proud of their school and their achievement.

**eleot™ Data Summary**

<b>A. Equitable Learning</b>			<b>%</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
1.	3.47	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	56.67%	36.67%	3.33%	3.33%
2.	3.77	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	83.33%	10.00%	6.67%	0.00%
3.	3.67	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	70.00%	26.67%	3.33%	0.00%
4.	2.57	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	33.33%	16.67%	23.33%	26.67%
<b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.37</b>						

<b>B. High Expectations</b>			<b>%</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
1.	3.57	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	63.33%	30.00%	6.67%	0.00%
2.	3.63	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	70.00%	23.33%	6.67%	0.00%
3.	3.10	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	46.67%	26.67%	16.67%	10.00%
4.	3.53	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	66.67%	23.33%	6.67%	3.33%
5.	3.10	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	46.67%	26.67%	16.67%	10.00%
<b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.39</b>						



<b>C. Supportive Learning</b>			<b>%</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
1.	3.70	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	73.33%	23.33%	3.33%	0.00%
2.	3.73	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	73.33%	26.67%	0.00%	0.00%
3.	3.60	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	66.67%	30.00%	0.00%	3.33%
4.	3.63	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	63.33%	36.67%	0.00%	0.00%
5.	3.17	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	46.67%	33.33%	10.00%	10.00%
<b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.57</b>						

<b>D. Active Learning</b>			<b>%</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
1.	3.53	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	66.67%	23.33%	6.67%	3.33%
2.	3.13	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	50.00%	23.33%	16.67%	10.00%
3.	3.73	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	80.00%	13.33%	6.67%	0.00%
<b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.47</b>						

<b>E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback</b>			<b>%</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
1.	3.13	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	50.00%	26.67%	10.00%	13.33%
2.	3.53	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	60.00%	33.33%	6.67%	0.00%
3.	3.47	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	63.33%	23.33%	10.00%	3.33%
4.	3.10	Understands how her/his work is assessed	50.00%	26.67%	6.67%	16.67%
5.	3.23	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	53.33%	30.00%	3.33%	13.33%
<b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.29</b>						

<b>F. Well-Managed Learning</b>			<b>%</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Very Evident</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Somewhat Evident</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
1.	3.83	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	86.67%	10.00%	3.33%	0.00%
2.	3.73	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	73.33%	26.67%	0.00%	0.00%
3.	3.50	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	63.33%	26.67%	6.67%	3.33%
4.	3.07	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	50.00%	26.67%	3.33%	20.00%
5.	3.80	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	80.00%	20.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.59</b>						

G. Digital Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.03	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	63.33%	6.67%	0.00%	30.00%
2.	2.93	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	60.00%	6.67%	0.00%	33.33%
3.	2.37	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	36.67%	10.00%	6.67%	46.67%
<b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.78</b>						

## Findings

### Improvement Priority

Develop a systematic plan where staff is trained in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data to reflect individualized student academic skills allowing teachers to make informed decisions regarding individual student skill levels.

(Indicator 5.3, SP4. Equity of Learning)

#### Primary Indicator

Indicator 5.3

#### Evidence and Rationale

Research has shown the more staff members are trained through appropriate professional development programs, the more effective they will be. Research supports a correlation between effective school professional development and student achievement. After staff members are trained in rigorous professional development, an increase in student learning will be apparent as indicated by their success at the next level.

The team noted through interviews and artifact review that the school has limited processes for analyzing data that determines teacher understanding to interpret data for instructional purposes. Evidence indicates the professional and support staff have limited training to evaluate, interpret, and teach for the improvement of student achievement. Stakeholder interviews indicated a lack of professional development to meet the needs of students who have performed at a lower level as indicated by the data. It is also noted that the staff should understand the process for analyzing data skill levels which will lead to continuous improvement.

### Opportunity For Improvement

Ensure, as a part of a formal program, that every child has an assigned adult advocate at school to provide support and guidance.

(Indicator 3.9)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.9

Evidence and Rationale

Consistent evidence of a formal program that ensures every student has an advocate at school is needed. Teachers and staff should serve as an adult advocate by design through a more formalized process. Every student should have access to an assigned school-based adult advocate. Having at least one instructional member advocate for individual students at school can have a dramatic, positive impact on student success. Providing every student with a guaranteed school-based adult advocate is critical to ensure that educators are aware of the needs of every student so that the appropriate support, guidance and assistance are available.

**Powerful Practice**

Burns Science and Technology Charter School reflects an exemplar of teaching children to learn and to also love learning.

(Indicator 3.3)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.3

Evidence and Rationale

There is evidence that the children are well served by the instructional programs. The commitment to a challenging and authentic learning environment using technology creates an opportunity for each student to be the “best they can be” in a “loving and supportive culture.” The allocations for facilities and on-going staff development allow the staff to address the needs of individual students to ensure success. The commitment of local and private funds, along with the leadership of the principal and the teaching staff, provide a solid foundation for continuous improvement. Parents and community members openly express their pride in the school and the commitment to provide “anything” the staff, stakeholders, or students need to continue to remain a High Performing “A” school. The cultural aspects are above reproach and will continue to be the backbone of this charter school as an exemplar school for other educators to learn to serve students and their learning.

# 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.	4.00	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.	4.00	3.00
1.3	The school's leadership implements a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	4.00	2.52

## 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.	3.00	2.95
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	3.00	2.90
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.	3.60	3.15
2.4	Leadership and staff foster a culture consistent with the school's purpose and direction.	3.40	3.11
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the school's purpose and direction.	3.00	2.79
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice and student success.	3.00	2.71

## Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic

Stakeholder Feedback is the third of three primary areas of evaluation in AdvancED's Performance Accreditation model. The AdvancED surveys (student, parent, and teacher) are directly correlated to the AdvancED Standards and indicators. They provide not only direct information about stakeholder satisfaction but also become a source of data for triangulation by the External Review Team as it evaluates indicators.

Institutions are asked to collect and analyze stakeholder feedback data, then submit the data and the analyses to the External Review Team for review. The External Review Team evaluates the quality of the administration of the surveys by institution, survey results, and the degree to which the institution analyzed and acted on the results.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Questionnaire Administration	4.00	3.43
Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	4.00	3.08

## Findings

### Powerful Practice

The family-oriented culture at Burns Science and Technology Charter School permeates the school, nurturing high expectations, student success, and strong quality leadership. Furthermore, the school has established a consistent method to disseminate communications of general information and important notifications to all stakeholders.

(Indicator 2.4)

#### Primary Indicator

Indicator 2.4

#### Evidence and Rationale

Throughout the school, Burns Science and Technology Charter School personnel and stakeholders exhibit a family-oriented culture that serves as support for students in meeting the high expectations of the school and upholding their strong purpose and direction. During interviews, parents and community members stated the sense of commitment and acceptance felt at this school. Parents and community members participate willingly to volunteer in their child's school, and the school offers many opportunities for family engagement. The school culture offers a safe place for students to receive additional help on school work and to participate in extra-curricular activities both during and after school hours. These extra support structures ensure students feel welcome in their school which in turn increases their desire to perform well. Burns Science and Technology Charter School creates an abundance of communications to inform the stakeholders, including the students and parents, of upcoming events, important dates and welcomes participation that furthers the purpose and direction of the school.

# 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.	4.00	2.95
4.2	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the school.	3.00	2.98
4.3	The school maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	4.00	3.14
4.4	Students and school personnel use a range of media and information resources to support the school's educational programs.	3.00	2.84
4.5	The technology infrastructure supports the school's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	3.00	2.63



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	2.86
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

### Opportunity For Improvement

Providing a full-time school counselor on site will help support physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.

(Indicator 4.6)

#### Primary Indicator

Indicator 4.6

#### Evidence and Rationale

The school supports students through mentoring, school personnel, and agreements with school community agencies to provide student-family support, social classes, and bullying education. Mentors are provided to students, upon request of teachers and/or parents, and are provided training. Presently, the leadership team provides counseling when necessary for each grade level. The students moving to high school are counseled toward the academies that are provided in the local high schools. Implementing the position of a full time certified school counselor would benefit the students in navigating individual social and emotional needs as well as assist students with the transition to the high school.

# Conclusion

Burns Science and Technology Charter School is a charter school seeking its initial accreditation with AdvancED. The school serves students in grades K-8. The school is governed by an eight-member board, which includes Burns Science and Technology Charter School parents. The school has a well-defined mission and vision and all stakeholders were knowledgeable of the expectations for rigorous curriculum that leads to preparedness for high school. The strong commitment to the purpose of the school by all stakeholders led the External Review Team to identify a Powerful Practice related to the school's leadership and staff commitment to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning. It is rare to find such a cohesive, mission-driven focus of equipping students with an excellent education in a safe, bully-free, and nurturing environment. Both teachers and parents repeatedly voiced that "Kids don't fall through the crack" at this school.

The Burns Science and Technology Charter School leadership team embraces a family culture of support that was evidenced in all observed interactions among them. The External Review Team noted how cohesively members of the leadership team worked together and sensed the family and friendly atmosphere throughout the review. Students knew their teachers, administrators, and parents, who with the strength of 243 volunteers from a population of 420 students, expressed a commitment to their child's school. The caring and nurturing staff dominate from custodian to principal. Burns Science and Technology Charter School encourages parent and community participation and has a variety of volunteer opportunities for meaningful parent involvement at their child's school.

The Burns Science and Technology Charter School, board of directors, and its leadership team have focused on providing the school an excellent academic program which includes STEM and STEAM programs for students as well as teaching the students how to give back to the community. In addition to plans for the construction of the much-desired gymnasium, the school leaders recognize their responsibility to continue to improve and remodel the existing, original facilities. There remains a very clear commitment to the vision and purpose of the school to ensure that all facilities meet the growing needs of the students and community.

Throughout the review, the Team noted that the school, teachers, and students would benefit from the development of a systematic plan where staff is trained in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data to reflect individualized student academic skills allowing teachers to make informed decisions regarding individual student skill levels. The more staff members are trained through appropriate professional development programs, the more effective they will be. Staff members are dedicated to the improvement of the use of data to gear rigorous professional development for increasing student learning to the next level.

The school has invested in technology to ensure ready access to the internet throughout the campus. Additionally, students have access to classroom computers, tablets, and a computer labs. During classroom observations, the External Review Team observed students using technology for many higher order activities. The team also observed the use of multiple STEM learning centers in many of the classrooms allowing for the diversity learning opportunities as well as differentiated curriculum and instruction for students. Teachers used collaborative and/or authentic tasks that place students at the center of the learning process. The school

utilizes a solid, school-based evaluation system which is supported by Marzano Evaluation instruments. Throughout the school, the team observed a joyful feeling of purposeful movement and a vital and vibrant atmosphere environment where students are engaged in meaningful activities. In addition, multiple music and art standards supported the STEM and STEAM curriculum. Many were observed using the technology to conduct research and create new documents, organize presentations, and create objects to send to the laser printer.

Burns Science and Technology Charter School has developed a strong culture of high expectations and student success. The school is fiscally responsible and careful in its decision-making process. A total commitment to reviving their community school has led to continuous improvement by all stakeholders including students and parents, who feel fortunate to attend the school. These strengths of the school will serve them well in their future improvement processes.

## **Improvement Priorities**

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

- Develop a systematic plan where staff is trained in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data to reflect individualized student academic skills allowing teachers to make informed decisions regarding individual student skill levels.

# 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	344.10	278.94
Teaching and Learning Impact	343.81	268.48
Leadership Capacity	354.55	293.71
Resource Utilization	328.57	286.27

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
Dr. Jacqueline Grimm	<p>Dr. Jackie Grimm has been an educator in Georgia and Florida since 1977. She has served in the capacity as a teacher of French and English, Chairperson of the Foreign Language Department, Director of a Drop-Out Prevention Program which received the Governor's Award and Disney's Teacheriffic Award, and as the Curriculum Resource Specialist. Dr. Grimm also taught at Valencia Community College as an adjunct professor of French. She has been responsible for teacher training and inservice developments for educators across the country. She also served as Lead Evaluator for schools' accreditation teams for the Southern Association for Colleges and Schools. She has been serving on teams with SACS/Advanc-Ed since 2002. Dr. Grimm received her B.A. degree from Georgia State University, her Master's degree from West Georgia College and was awarded her Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from Walden University. Currently, Dr. Grimm is the Director of Operations for New Dimensions High School, Kissimmee's first and oldest Charter School in Osceola County since 1998. Dr. Grimm has been heavily involved with the management of the school facilities, construction, and renovations, developing and maintaining a sound fiscal budget, and overseeing the general and successful operations of New Dimensions High School.</p>
Mr. Larry Davis	<p>Mr. Davis has spent of 37 years in education. He enjoyed teaching, being a coordinator of Community/Adult education, administrator for vocational education, coordinator of magnet schools. assistant principal, and principal. He served on the state education task force with governor Bush to review the state grading system and working with poverty schools in the state. He was a principal of many low income schools that received the state grade of "A". He is presently retired. He now enjoys working with Foster children at Seamark Ranch where he is presently the principal for 23 students in a Christian private school setting.</p>
Dr. Peggy B. Johnson	<p>Peggy Johnson has worked in the field of education for 35 years from a preschool to a college teaching experience and is now retired. Working toward contributing to the improvement of education is of the utmost goal. Having taught English, AP Language, and AP Literature in public and private schools in Texas and Florida, experience was gained in a multiple of classroom situations where certifications in teaching and as a principal enhance personal skill levels. As a National Board Certified teacher, Dr. Johnson has served as a supervising teacher for the University of Central Florida, NBCT mentor for new teachers, and Coordinator for Gifted Education. Dr. Johnson has served on many school and district committees to improve education. Having the privilege of attending Oxford for classes gave a new insight into learning. Working with AdvancEd has provided experiences in many types of educational facilities and has shown that effective education can fit the needs of any student.</p>
Mrs. Andrea Monk	<p>Certified in Social Studies with 11 years experience in the International Baccalaureate Program and AP program .An examiner for the IB and have applied for a reader in AP. Prior to joining education, she has 15 years experience in Psychology as a counselor and director. Prior to that,15 years experience in the mortgage banking industry. Extensive travel through the United States and Europe, She is presently retired from the Seminole County Public School System.</p>

Member	Brief Biography
Mr. Alpha Omega Smith	<p>Alpha O. Smith Jr., a former teacher/administrator served Duval and Marion County Public Schools system for 35 years. He earned his Master's degree in Educational Leadership from University of North Florida and his Bachelors of Science degree in Health &amp; Physical Education from Tennessee State University (HBCU) in Nashville, Tennessee. His 35 years includes his Teaching Experience: Duval &amp; Marion County Public Schools, Health &amp; Physical Education, Duval Public Schools, Biology/Physical Science &amp; Physics. Administrative Experience: Assistant Principal, Behavior Interventionist, Graduation Initiative &amp; Accelerated Learning Program/ Director, Custodial Services/Coordinator &amp; Contract Manager. Alpha's background also includes serving as program director for The True North Program (Reclaiming Young Black Males), Upward Bound Program/assistant director; He has facilitated programs in leadership, communication, and team building initiatives. In addition, he organizes college tours, mentors, and appears as a guest speaker at numerous youth and public events. His passion is providing opportunities for young black males to develop the civic capacities needed in order to contribute as an active citizen. Mr. Smith is a nurturing individual to the overall development of young black men.</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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