

Report of the External Review Team for Fremont County School District #38

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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

A team of six educators arrived in Arapahoe, Wyoming to engage in the External Review Process (October 18-22, 2015) for the public school system of Fremont District # 38. Four of the six educators were from Wyoming and two were from out-of-state, bringing a total of 173 years of experience to the Review Team. In preparation for the onsite External Review, the Lead Evaluator made personal phone calls to greet each team member. A conference call was then scheduled in late September with all team members. During this call, Team member expectations were reviewed, logistical planning conducted, and questions from all team members answered. Additional phone calls and emails between the Lead Evaluator and Team members helped to better prepare everyone for the onsite review. The Lead Evaluator was in constant contact with the district contact through phone calls and emails. A phone conversation was also held between the Superintendent and the Lead Evaluator.

In preparation for the Review, each Team member reviewed the Accreditation Report for the system, the school reports, the district website, an electronic link that contained evidence related to each Standard, and other accompanying artifacts to rate the school system with respect to each of the Indicators. Team members had primary responsibility for focus on one particular Standard, but they were also responsible for being familiar with all Standards and Indicators. Each Team member had to come to the opening Sunday evening

session with an initial rating of all Indicators.

On Sunday afternoon, an orientation session was held followed by Team members reviewing their preparation work with the entire team, sharing their initial ratings of Indicators, and finalizing planning details for the first day of the on-site review. The Lead Evaluator shared school schedules, and observation assignments were made to ensure coverage of every classroom in the district. Both schools were visited as 41 ELEOT observations were conducted across the system, in addition to visits to the pre-school classes and the cultural language classes. Interviews with administrators at both schools and the district level, teachers, support staff, students, parents, community persons, and board members were scheduled and conducted.

The External Review Team thanks the school system and all of the staff who prepared for the External Review. Throughout the review, the school system personnel were open and transparent. The planned observation schedule was followed with minor adjustments. Team members were welcomed into classrooms in both schools. The faculty and staff provided valuable insight through interviews. A total of 147 individuals were interviewed including five board members, the superintendent, six parents, eight community persons, 13 administrators and/or department heads, 41 teachers, 33 support staff, and 40 students. The Team was pleased that some of the community persons interviewed included some of the Tribal Elders.

To prepare for the system review, the school district had the schools prepare their Accreditation Reports and conduct surveys at the school level. The district then conducted their system-wide internal review. Survey results were given only by individual schools. At Arapahoe Elementary School (grades K-8), 60 percent of the staff, 25 percent of the parents, 86 percent of the early elementary students and 79 percent of the upper elementary students returned the surveys. At the high school, 60 percent of the staff, 13 percent of the parents, and 41 percent of the students returned surveys. The overall survey return was not very high for some stakeholder groups, and there was very limited evidence of parent involvement in the development of the system-wide Accreditation Report. District staff prepared the system-wide Accreditation Report with limited input from the various stakeholder groups.

Stakeholders were interviewed by members of the External Review Team to gain their perspectives on topics relevant to the institution's effectiveness and student performance. The feedback gained through the stakeholder interviews was considered with other evidences and data to support the findings of the External Review. The following chart depicts the numbers of persons interviewed representative of various stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder Interviewed	Number
Superintendents	1
Board Members	5
Administrators	13
Instructional Staff	41
Support Staff	33
Students	40
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	14
Total	147

Results

Teaching and Learning Impact

The impact of teaching and learning on student achievement is the primary expectation of every institution. The relationship between teacher and learner must be productive and effective for student success. The impact of teaching and learning includes an analysis of student performance results, instructional quality, learner and family engagement, support services for student learning, curriculum quality and efficacy, and college and career readiness data. These are all key indicators of an institution's impact on teaching and learning.

A high-quality and effective educational system has services, practices, and curriculum that ensure teacher effectiveness. Research has shown that an effective teacher is a key factor for learners to achieve their highest potential and be prepared for a successful future. The positive influence an effective educator has on learning is a combination of "student motivation, parental involvement" and the "quality of leadership" (Ding & Sherman, 2006). Research also suggests that quality educators must have a variety of quantifiable and intangible characteristics that include strong communication skills, knowledge of content, and knowledge of how to teach the content. The institution's curriculum and instructional program should develop learners' skills that lead them to think about the world in complex ways (Conley, 2007) and prepare them to have knowledge that extends beyond the academic areas. In order to achieve these goals, teachers must have pedagogical skills as well as content knowledge (Baumert, J., Kunter, M., Blum, W., Brunner, M., Voxx, T., Jordan, A., Klusmann, U., Krauss, S., Nuebrand, M., & Tsai, Y., 2010). The acquisition and refinement of teachers' pedagogical skills occur most effectively through collaboration and professional development. These are a "necessary approach to improving teacher quality" (Colbert, J., Brown, R., Choi, S., & Thomas, S., 2008). According to Marks, Louis, and Printy (2002), staff members who engage in "active organizational learning also have higher achieving students in contrast to those that do not." Likewise, a study conducted by Horng, Klasik, and Loeb (2010), concluded that leadership in effective institutions "supports teachers by creating collaborative work environments." Institutional leaders have a responsibility to provide experiences, resources, and time for educators to engage in meaningful professional learning that promotes student learning and educator quality.

AdvancED has found that a successful institution implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning. The curriculum provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process. Teachers provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. Teachers give students feedback to improve their performance.

Institutions with strong improvement processes move beyond anxiety about the current reality and focus on priorities and initiatives for the future. Using results, i.e., data and other information, to guide continuous improvement is key to an institution's success. A study conducted by Datnow, Park, and Wohlstetter (2007) from the Center on Educational Governance at the University of Southern California indicated that data can shed light on existing areas of strength and weakness and also guide improvement strategies in a systematic and strategic manner (Dembosky, J., Pane, J., Barney, H., & Christina, R., 2005). The study also identified six

key strategies that performance-driven systems use: (1) building a foundation for data-driven decision making, (2) establishing a culture of data use and continuous improvement, (3) investing in an information management system, (4) selecting the right data, (5) building institutional capacity for data-driven decision making, and (6) analyzing and acting on data to improve performance. Other research studies, though largely without comparison groups, suggested that data-driven decision-making has the potential to increase student performance (Alwin, 2002; Doyle, 2003; Lafee, 2002; McIntire, 2002).

Through ongoing evaluation of educational institutions, AdvancED has found that a successful institution uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures. The system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine strategies to improve student performance. The institution implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the school with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained, and the institution demonstrates progress in improving student performance and institution effectiveness.

Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning

The system's curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning across all grades and courses.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
3.1	The system's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level.	2.17	2.68
3.2	Curriculum, instruction, and assessment throughout the system are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	2.50	2.50
3.3	Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	2.00	2.55
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	1.33	2.73
3.5	The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.	2.17	2.57
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	2.00	2.48
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	2.00	2.60

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
3.8	The system and all of its schools engage families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keep them informed of their children's learning progress.	2.67	2.92
3.9	The system designs and evaluates structures in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the student's school who supports that student's educational experience.	1.83	2.40
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	2.00	2.53
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	2.33	2.64
3.12	The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	2.50	2.66

Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
5.1	The system establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	2.50	2.66
5.2	Professional and support staff continuously collect, analyze and apply learning from a range of data sources, including comparison and trend data about student learning, instruction, program evaluation, and organizational conditions that support learning.	2.33	2.41
5.3	Throughout the system professional and support staff are trained in the interpretation and use of data.	2.00	2.15
5.4	The school system engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	2.00	2.46
5.5	System and school leaders monitor and communicate comprehensive information about student learning, school performance, and the achievement of system and school improvement goals to stakeholders.	2.33	2.72

Student Performance Diagnostic

The quality of assessments used to measure student learning, assurance that assessments are administered with procedural fidelity and appropriate accommodations, assessment results that reflect the quality of

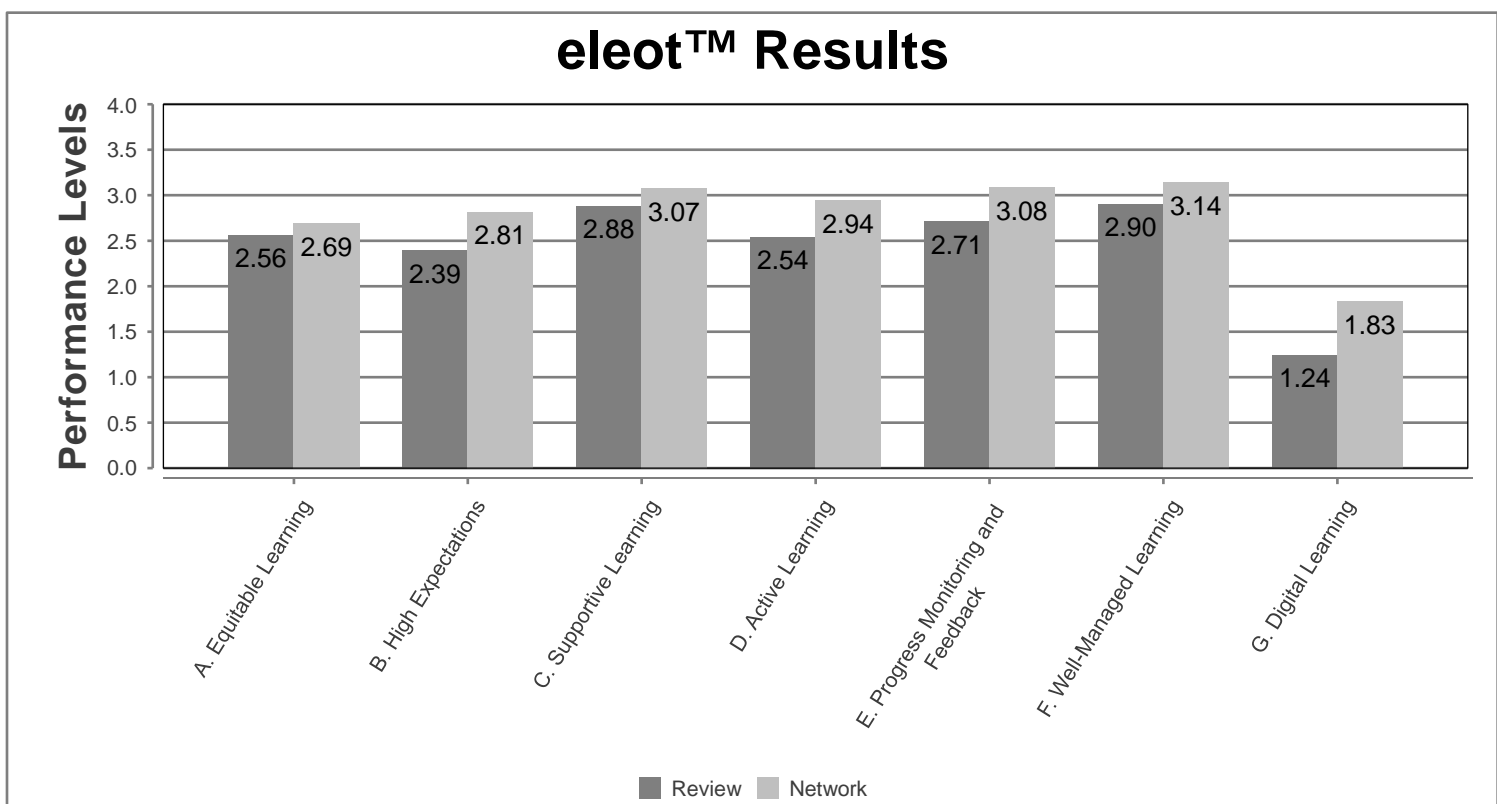
learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important indicators for evaluating overall student performance.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Assessment Quality	4.00	3.28
Test Administration	4.00	3.50
Equity of Learning	2.17	2.44
Quality of Learning	2.17	2.97

Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™)

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

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



The External Review Team completed 41 classroom observations in the two schools. These observations covered grades kindergarten through grade twelve with a cross-section of all subject areas. No rating for the school system in the seven learning environments was higher than those of the AdvancED Network Averages. The system's highest rating was the "Well-Managed Learning Environment" with a rating of 2.90 as compared to the Network Average of 3.13. The "Supportive Learning Environment" with a rating of 2.88, compared to the

Network Average of 3.06, was the environment with the next highest rating. "Digital Learning Environment" with a rating of 1.24, compared to a Network Average of 1.82, had the lowest rating of any of the seven learning environments. The "High Expectations Environment" had a low rating at 2.39 compared to the Network Average of 2.81.

In the "Well-Managed Learning Environment", Team members observed students who spoke and interacted respectfully with the teacher and their peers. They followed classroom rules and worked well with others. It was obvious that students knew classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences. Transitions were made smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another. The "Supportive Learning Environment" was evident as students demonstrated positive attitudes about the classroom and learning. Students took risks in learning without fear of negative feedback. Support and assistance were frequently provided so that students understood the content and could accomplish the learning tasks.

The "Digital Learning Environment" with a rating of 1.24 was rated lower than all other environments. Students were seldom observed using digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate and/or use information for learning. Neither were students observed using technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning. There were more classrooms with students using technology at the high school level than at the elementary level.

The "High Expectations Environment" with the low rating of 2.39 was evidenced by many classroom teachers who did not set high expectations for students. The questions did not require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing). Exemplars of high quality work were not frequently provided for students. The majority of the coursework was not challenging, and students were not actively engaged in rigorous discussions, tasks or coursework during the classroom observations.

These ELEOT findings are aligned to and support the Standards and Indicators. One such example is the Improvement Priority, "Design and implement a systematic K-12 curriculum plan and instructional process that ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and provide all students with engaging, challenging, and personalized learning opportunities that are supported by frequent student use of technology and prepare them for success at the next level. (Indicators 3.1, 3.3 & 3.6) This Improvement Priority ties directly to the low score on the "Digital Learning Environment" in which there was limited evidence during observations of student use of technology. Few students used computers to gather information for learning. Hardly any students used digital tools to conduct research, solve problems, create original works, or communicate and work collaboratively for learning. Even though one of the Powerful Practices addressed the system's available informational resources, technology, and infrastructure, staff members are not effectively incorporating these resources into the instructional process to improve student learning.

The Improvement Priority mentioned above also ties directly to the low ratings on the "High Expectations Environment" in that the tasks and activities observed by the External Review Team were not challenging for students. Higher order questioning was not frequently used by teachers. In fact, most questions were low level,

factual questions. Very few exemplars were provided by teachers, and students were not actively engaged in rigorous coursework. These observable behaviors are definitely correlated to the need for an improved instructional process in order to better prepare students for the next level.

Fremont School District #38 has new leadership and is beginning to streamline its planning process in order to better focus on improved instruction and increased student learning. The school system is encouraged to establish a more focused professional development program that will provide opportunities for all staff to acquire the skills necessary to meet the individual needs of the students. A more formal structuring of the collaborative learning communities and training staff to systematically analyze and use data to revise curriculum and adjust instructional practices will help to meet the unique learning needs of students. The training on best practices and effective data analysis will assure that quality instruction is occurring in classrooms everyday. Throughout the classroom observations, student use of technology was limited. Even though the technology equipment and infrastructure were commendable, the technology was not being widely used as an instructional tool. Quality teaching is the heart of the instructional program. Focusing on the information provided from the classroom observations on the seven learning environments and the actions recommended will assist the school system in moving forward in addressing the Improvement Priorities outlined in this report.

eleot™ Data Summary

A. Equitable Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.15	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	14.63%	12.20%	46.34%	26.83%
2.	3.15	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	26.83%	60.98%	12.20%	0.00%
3.	3.07	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	24.39%	60.98%	12.20%	2.44%
4.	1.88	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	7.32%	24.39%	17.07%	51.22%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.56						

B. High Expectations			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.78	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	12.20%	53.66%	34.15%	0.00%
2.	2.63	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	7.32%	53.66%	34.15%	4.88%
3.	1.95	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	4.88%	21.95%	36.59%	36.59%
4.	2.49	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	4.88%	43.90%	46.34%	4.88%
5.	2.07	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	2.44%	26.83%	46.34%	24.39%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.39						

C. Supportive Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.90	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	17.07%	58.54%	21.95%	2.44%
2.	2.95	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	21.95%	53.66%	21.95%	2.44%
3.	2.80	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	21.95%	48.78%	17.07%	12.20%
4.	3.10	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	36.59%	41.46%	17.07%	4.88%
5.	2.66	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	21.95%	39.02%	21.95%	17.07%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.88						

D. Active Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.51	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	12.20%	39.02%	36.59%	12.20%
2.	2.27	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	21.95%	17.07%	26.83%	34.15%
3.	2.85	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	24.39%	36.59%	39.02%	0.00%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.54						

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.78	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	14.63%	53.66%	26.83%	4.88%
2.	2.78	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	19.51%	48.78%	21.95%	9.76%
3.	2.83	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	17.07%	53.66%	24.39%	4.88%
4.	2.49	Understands how her/his work is assessed	7.32%	46.34%	34.15%	12.20%
5.	2.68	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	12.20%	51.22%	29.27%	7.32%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.71						

F. Well-Managed Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.27	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	39.02%	48.78%	12.20%	0.00%
2.	3.17	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	36.59%	46.34%	14.63%	2.44%
3.	2.85	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	31.71%	36.59%	17.07%	14.63%
4.	2.00	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	17.07%	17.07%	14.63%	51.22%
5.	3.20	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	41.46%	39.02%	17.07%	2.44%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.90						

G. Digital Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	1.34	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	2.44%	9.76%	7.32%	80.49%
2.	1.27	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	2.44%	4.88%	9.76%	82.93%
3.	1.12	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	0.00%	2.44%	7.32%	90.24%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 1.24						

Findings

Improvement Priority

Create and deploy leadership evaluation policies and processes to ensure that system and school leaders formally and consistently monitor instructional practices through well-defined supervision and evaluation procedures.

(Indicator 2.6, Indicator 3.4)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.4

Evidence and Rationale

The External Review Team interviewed 147 persons during the district-wide visit. All district employees who were interviewed were asked about supervision and evaluation policies, practices, and procedures. The majority stated that the McREL evaluation system had been adopted but not formally followed. Many experienced staff members stated that the evaluation/supervision process is very informal. "There has not been a very formal process for evaluation in a number of years," replied one teacher. Another stated that the evaluation process is "semi-informal" and considered a "maybe process" because of the constant turnover in administration. "We don't know what is expected from year to year," stated yet another teacher.

Staff shared that there was an overview of McREL given at the beginning of this school year, but very little had been mentioned since that one brief overview. Some teachers had submitted their self-assessments but had not received any feedback. These teachers stated that they were waiting for feedback or the "next steps." One new teacher said, "So far, I have heard nothing about evaluation until just recently. I was told last week that I should hear something after the accreditation visit."

When reviewing the Accreditation Report at the system level, the district rated itself at a Level 2 on Indicator 2.4 and at Level 1 on Indicator 3.4. These low self-ratings reflect an occasional or random monitoring of instructional practices through supervision and evaluation procedures. In fact, such statements as, “the district is researching the use of McREL’s Classroom Instruction that Works for our instructional strategies; the district is beginning to use McREL’s Balanced Leadership framework as the basis for leadership practices; and the district will begin to use McREL’s Power Walkthrough program to maintain a focus on improving professional practices” are evidence within the narrative of the Accreditation Report that there are not supervision and evaluation procedures and practices currently being followed. Within the evidence provided by the district for Standard 3, the staff stated that the Danielson Evaluation Model was being used by the instructional facilitators and instructional coaches, math and reading interventionists, and support staff. Yet, there was not any mention by the instructional facilitators and coaches or any evidence found of the Danielson Model during interviews or observations. Therefore, the External Review Team found uncertainty as to the well-defined supervision and evaluation processes and procedures that were being used or even planned for usage in the school system.

When administrators were asked about the supervision and evaluation procedures, the Review Team heard a variety of responses. Based on these responses, it became evident that there was not a system-wide, agreed upon set of procedures, processes or even forms being used for classroom observations, walkthroughs, supervision, and providing feedback to teachers. Some teachers said their principals had walked through their classrooms for brief 3 to 5 minute visits but no type of written feedback had been provided.

Results of classroom observations in 41 classes revealed a need for improved instructional strategies. Differentiated learning opportunities to meet student needs, exemplars of high quality work provided for students, and asking higher order thinking questions were all behaviors rated at a low level during the 41 classroom observations. Very few classes were observed with students using technology to increase student learning. This observable evidence of classroom environments is correlated directly to the lack of effective instructional supervision and to the low achievement scores of the majority of the students in the school system.

The full implementation of leadership and staff supervision and evaluation policies, procedures, and processes are necessary for improved professional practices in all areas of the system and improved student success.

Improvement Priority

Design and implement a systemic K-12 curriculum plan and instructional process that ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and provide all students with engaging, challenging, and personalized learning opportunities that are supported by frequent student use of technology and prepare them for success at the next level.

(Indicator 3.1, Indicator 3.3, Indicator 3.6)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 3.6

Evidence and Rationale

While there is evidence to indicate that there is a beginning focus on creating a viable curriculum and instructional process, there is little support to show that a systemic approach is being taken to develop these. Interviews with teachers and members of the district leadership team revealed fragmentation among the three schools in the system as opposed to operating as one unified system. Teachers indicated that schools typically operated in isolation, with little alignment and collaboration across schools or grade levels. Both teachers and members of the leadership team cited a need for a planning methodology in instructional processes that used a K-12 viewpoint. One staff member stated, "Inconsistent curriculum planning is a result of the continuous leadership turnover."

There are such district-wide support positions as instructional facilitators and instructional coaches. The facilitator reported meeting with the staff at the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) times, but there was very little discussion of effective instructional strategies being discussed. Demonstrations of model lessons to include effective instructional strategies was not a common practice for the instructional facilitator and instructional coach. It was also reported that the district was in its beginning stages of entering its curriculum maps into Rubicon Atlas, and training would be needed for all staff.

In regards to the learning opportunities available to students, the Effective Learning Environment Observation Tool (ELEOT) observations revealed deficiencies in the areas of differentiation, student engagement, and student use of technology. Several observations revealed lecture-based formats with little opportunity for students to collaborate with one another or to be active participants in the classroom. Student interviews at the middle school level revealed that they rarely engaged in hands-on activity in the classroom and usually "listen to the teacher and take notes." Interviews with multiple members of the district leadership team revealed that there was a need for coaching teachers in the area of having more active student engagement. Additionally, while there is a variety of technology available in the classroom, the External Review Team's observations revealed that it is not being utilized by students at a high degree. Overall, the Team's rating for the Digital Learning Environment was a 1.24 (on a scale of 1.0 to 4.0), showing a significant need for technology to be embedded in the student learning process.

Finally, ELEOT observations, interviews, and student performance data showed that there is a high need for the increase of rigor in both the curriculum and instruction. When asked if students were being prepared for high school, one teacher said, "No, our students are not ready." The Team's ELEOT rating for the High Expectations Environment was 2.39, with a 2.07 rating on the sub-indicator related to higher-order thinking. Questions asked by teachers during the observations were mainly low-level, factual questions. Seldom did the Team hear teachers asking students to compare and/or contrast, defend/justify answers, analyze and interpret data, etc. A member of the district leadership team indicated that it was evident that there was a need for improvement in the area of providing rigorous instruction for students. Additionally, student performance data on state assessments and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) indicate that the majority of students are performing at below-proficient levels, with the system's high school having a graduation rate significantly below the state of Wyoming's minimum required percentage.

A systemic approach to instruction and curriculum that embodies student engagement, rigor, personalization, and student use of technology increases effective learning opportunities for all students and better prepares

them for the next level in 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 system maintains and communicates at all levels of the organization a purpose and direction for continuous improvement that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
1.1	The system engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a system-wide purpose for student success.	2.17	2.62
1.2	The system ensures that each school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	2.33	2.63
1.3	The school leadership and staff at all levels of the system commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking, and life	2.33	2.89
1.4	Leadership at all levels of the system implement a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	2.00	2.61

Standard 2 - Governance and Leadership

The system operates under governance and leadership that promote and support student performance and system effectiveness.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
2.1	The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the system and its schools.	2.17	2.95
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	2.00	2.92
2.3	The governing body ensures that the leadership at all levels has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.	2.00	3.12
2.4	Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction.	2.83	2.97
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	2.17	2.67

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice in all areas of the system and improved student success.	1.83	2.76

Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic

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

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

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Questionnaire Administration	3.00	3.36
Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	3.00	3.04

Findings

Improvement Priority

Systematically develop and implement a clearly defined governance and leadership model that establishes policies and supports practices that ensure continuity in the effective administration of the system and schools and protects the autonomy of the system and school leadership to accomplish goals for instruction and achievement.

(Indicator 2.1, Indicator 2.2, Indicator 2.3)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 2.2

Evidence and Rationale

In order to be an effective school system and meet the requirements of Standard 2, the system must operate under governance that promotes and supports student performance and system effectiveness. The governing board must establish policies and support practices that ensure effective administration of the system and its schools. A review of the district documents, including board policies and minutes of board meetings, portrayed a rather "hit and miss" process for reviewing and updating policy. When reviewing the Policy Manual, some

policies had 2008 dates while many had no dates for review/update. When searching the on-line policies, the phrase “currently under construction” was found. Interviews revealed a three-year update plan for all policies with a specified number of policies being presented at each meeting for review/update. Yet, board minutes did not validate that practice. Overall, the External Review Team found it difficult to ascertain what the actual plan was for policy update/review and could not verify the basic function of the board which is policy-making.

The External Review Team examined evidence for how well the board operates responsibly and functions effectively, ensuring that the district administration and school administration have the autonomy (independence from the School Board) to meet goals and to manage day-to-day operations. Interviews, along with information from board minutes, depicted an extremely high turnover rate in administration. Data gathered indicated the district has had 18 different superintendents in the past 35 years, five of those in the last five years. Turnover in building level administrators was also revealed with all three principals being new in their positions this school year. When staff was interviewed regarding the implementation of the McRel evaluation system, everyone stated the lack of proper implementation of the evaluation system was a result of the constant change in administration and not knowing what was expected from year-to-year. In fact, the lack of continuity in leadership was the response given most frequently by everyone interviewed as the main problem with low achievement scores and lack of system success.

Board member interviews revealed the fact that some board members actually sat in on staff interviews as a part of the hiring practices. This practice is in direct conflict with the policies of ensuring that decisions and actions are free of conflict of interest, are ethical, and in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities. Board members are to act only upon the recommendation of the superintendent in matters of employment or dismissal of school personnel.

Interviews with five board members and the review of board minutes verified opportunities for board training including the Wyoming School Board Association conferences. Yet, the External Review Team did not find evidence of a process to ensure that all board members are continually trained in their roles and responsibilities and that these trainings are discussed and reviewed at regular board meetings. Furthermore, the induction process for new members was described as “very informal.” Board member participation in staff interviews, not acting on a superintendent’s recommendation yet bringing forth a new motion that has nothing to do with the superintendent’s recommendation for hire, and the continuous turnover in administration are all examples of ways in which the board has not internalized their training and does not distinguish between its roles and responsibilities and those of system leadership.

Some of the personnel interviewed felt that the current board might possibly understand its roles and responsibilities a bit better than in past years. Some stated a “sense of hope” that the board had the right leadership in place and would trust them to get the job done without their micromanaging. One community person stated, “We are hopeful that there will not be anymore turnover for awhile.” Another interviewee said, “If the board will trust the current district and school administration and give them the authority to make decisions, we have the right people in place to get the job done.”

For school systems to be effective, the governing body must consistently protect, support, and respect the

autonomy(independence from the School Board) of the system and school administration to accomplish goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations of the system and its schools. Board members must honor their responsibility and understanding that the basic function of a school board is policymaking, not administration.

Improvement Priority

Using a process that engages all relevant stakeholder groups, consolidate multiple plans into a clear, concise, cohesive, strategic plan for the district and an improvement plan for each school that includes assessment of needs based on student performance data; and that identifies improvement goals, performance milestones, interventions, action steps, timelines and measurable implementation benchmarks to improve student, school, and district performance as measured by the state accountability system.

(Indicator 1.4)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 1.4

Evidence and Rationale

The district has a clear purpose statement: “Together We Learn, Together We Teach, Together We Succeed.” Strategic planning has occurred in the district, but it appeared fragmented to the External Review Team. The Team was provided extensive evidence of strategic planning that included documentation of a strategic planning leadership team, an organizational assessment, minutes and agendas from multiple strategic planning meetings and retreats, documentation of support related to strategic planning by Milestone Enterprises, Professional Learning Communities (PLC) three year implementation plans, Plan-Do Study-Act (PDSA) cycles as applied to Professional Learning Communities, etc. Posted on the superintendent’s wall are core objectives, core strategies, and core performance measures in four areas. The superintendent’s presentation included belief statements, performance goals, a community-driven commitment statement, guiding principles, purpose, direction, and philosophy. Yet, that information had not been “rolled out” to the entire district yet.

The walls of the Team work room were filled with Know, Want, How, Learned, Action, Questions (KWLAQ) work products that showed the local efforts around strategic planning for the accreditation visit. Posted on the walls of the elementary school were laminated “School Beliefs” with the purpose statement, direction statement, As a School We Will statements, and the Peaceful Warrior’s Pledge.

Interviews with leaders and staff identified multiple mentors and consultants that are currently providing assistance to the district in the area of strategic planning, but they are not the same people that were providing support in the past. While this was not identified as an area of need by the district administration, the External Review Team sees much activity related to strategic planning that has not resulted in a clear purpose and direction for the district or a clear focus on learning. The External Review Team was provided multiple plans with hundreds of pages of information that presumably describe what the district intends to do, but the sheer amount of information is difficult to read and does not have a clear focus for the district. The strategic planning website is incomplete. Two of the links within the site are to documentation on the Sublette County School

District #1 website which was used as a model.

In the oral presentations to the External Review Team by Fremont School District #38 staff, each presenter was to give an overview of his/her assigned Standard for the school system. Most presentations were given by three persons, one from each of the three schools in the district. The majority of the presentations were not about the system-wide Accreditation Report but mainly reports from the individual school level. Many of the Indicator ratings that were shared during the oral presentations were from the individual presenter's school level. When the Team interviewed the presenters who were to have been the team leaders at the system level, many said they did not work on the system-wide Accreditation Report and did not know the ratings for the system's Accreditation Report. Therefore, it was evident to the Team that the system-wide Accreditation Report did not involve all relevant stakeholder groups in developing a comprehensive Accreditation Report.

There is some continuity between the strategic plan and the improvement plan for the elementary school posted in AdvancED® ASSIST. However, there is no improvement plan for the high school in ASSIST.

Having a clear focus is a key correlate to school effectiveness. The research and literature related to improvement planning supports simple, focused plans with stakeholder involvement.

Powerful Practice

Fremont School District #38 demonstrates a culture of caring, a sense of community and a commitment to heritage and shared values.

(Indicator 2.4)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 2.4

Evidence and Rationale

The External Review Team noted the work Fremont #38 is doing on developing a culture consistent with the school system's purpose and direction. The team found evidence of multiple strategies that are occurring to demonstrate the caring culture. The Team utilized interviews of 147 stakeholders (district and school staff, students, parents, community, board members and Tribal Elders), a review of district documentation, site visits, and classroom observations to identify positive practices that promote the shared values.

In the 41 classroom observations conducted by the External Review Team, the Supportive Learning Environment and the Well-Managed Learning Environment were the two areas with the highest ratings. Teachers provided extra support for students. Students displayed positive attitudes about learning and took risks in learning without fear of being wrong. A very respectful environment was demonstrated with the interactions between students and staff. Many examples were observed of teachers providing support and assistance to students as they accomplished assigned tasks. The district's purpose statement, "Together We Learn, Together We Teach, Together We Succeed," was definitely demonstrated during the Team's classroom observations.

Interviews and classroom observations validated that Fremont #38 includes culture classes for students at all levels in the system including elementary, middle school, and high school. The culture classes include the use of culture teachers and Tribal Elders to instruct students in the Arapaho language and culture. In interviews, multiple students cited their culture courses as one of their favorite classes. Also, during the interviews of staff, board members, community, and parents, each group indicated the importance of these courses and was appreciative of the school district's commitment to offer this resource.

Through interviews with district staff, the Board of Trustees, and Tribal Elders, the External Review Team learned that the school district is developing an iPad application that will help teach the Arapaho language. The application is currently in development and is utilizing the expertise within the school system to record Tribal Elders speaking Arapaho. It was shared that the application will assist students in learning the language by adding a digital learning component. Staff and stakeholders shared that students enjoy using technology, such as smart phones and tablets, to expand their knowledge of the language. This iPad application will provide an additional way to reach students and allow students to learn the language both inside and outside of the school setting. The culture courses, the iPad application, and other such district initiatives honor and promote the heritage of the Arapaho community.

Evidence was found in stakeholder surveys and interviews that the Pow Wow held in conjunction with the fall Open House is a very positive activity sponsored by the school system. This event in which the community is engaged is noted as an excellent blending of school and native culture. Teachers noted that the Pow Wow had been one way of increasing parent participation in school activities.

Not only are there culture classes and activities involving parents, Fremont #38 includes a variety of additional strategies to promote culture and community. The district utilizes a 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant to establish an after school program that combines student learning with aspects of the Native American culture to provide engaging and meaningful enrichment experiences. Additional cultural activities that surfaced in the review of district documents, interviews and site visits were the participation in the Wind River United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY) Council and the creation of a student hand game team at Arapaho Charter High School (ACHS). Staff and students at ACHS indicated that the hand game opportunity was an important and valuable cultural activity and participation is growing. The system also implements a Falcon Pride program that promotes and reinforces high expectations and positive student behaviors. Students earning the Falcon Pride status are known as Falcon Legends and are treated to a meal at the Arapaho Casino.

To operate effectively, the leadership of the school system must foster a culture consistent with the system'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 system has resources and provides services in all schools that support its purpose and direction to ensure success for all students.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
4.1	The system engages in a systematic process to recruit, employ, and retain a sufficient number of qualified professional and support staff to fulfill their roles and responsibilities and support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, and educational programs.	2.50	2.92
4.2	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, educational programs, and system operations.	2.50	2.93
4.3	The system maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	2.67	3.05
4.4	The system demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning in support of the purpose and direction of the system.	2.00	2.63

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
4.5	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of information resources and related personnel to support educational programs throughout the system.	2.67	2.74
4.6	The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	2.83	2.54
4.7	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of support systems to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.	2.17	2.66
4.8	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students.	2.17	2.60

Findings

Powerful Practice

The school system has informational resources, infrastructure, and technology equipment that are necessary to prepare students for the 21st Century.

(Indicator 4.5, Indicator 4.6)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 4.6

Evidence and Rationale

Technology infrastructure in this school district is of high quality with modern and functioning equipment. The technology director communicated that the amount of support the district gets for technology is “amazing”. The director reports, “It is not just me. The business manager is very supportive, and the district leadership is superb about securing funding for technology.” School board member interviews indicated that technology is important to have in the schools.

The Accreditation Report and interviews reveal that most classrooms have Smartboards with projectors and FM audio systems. In 2014, general funds were used to purchase four shared iPad carts for classrooms. Students have access to technology in all classrooms, and students in grades 9-12 have 1:1 Chromebooks for use while at school. According to district reports and interviews, additional Chromebooks are to be purchased this school year for the middle grades.

Teacher groups and the technology director report that bandwidth is adequate, and other stakeholder groups report they are very satisfied with the technology improvements in their schools. According to interviews, E-rate helped fund wireless throughout the buildings last spring. Recently, a technology assistant was hired to help with technology usage in the buildings. The district is in the early stages of implementing a learning management system (Schoology) and has met with early success. Although the use of the available

technology by students was not frequently observed, a middle school language arts class observation revealed students utilizing desktop computers to formulate letters. Arapaho Charter High School students accessed information from the Internet using Chromebooks. Some elementary classroom observations revealed the use of interactive Smartboards by students to practice reading skills.

The technology plan is in place and used to make systemic decisions. Teacher interviews and discussions reveal they are very satisfied with technology in their rooms. As communicated in professional development manuals, teachers have participated in technology staff development.

In addition, the system also provides and coordinates information resources and related personnel to support educational programs throughout the system. Information from the self-assessment indicates that the library/media center assists in developing independent readers. The media specialist uses “Destiny” to track quantity of reading by individual students and the student’s reading level. The library is in the center of the elementary school and is a spacious, clean, and inviting environment. According to interviews and Team observations, library usage is strong and operations are well-funded. The informational resources, technology equipment, and infrastructure are definitely available so that staff and students can begin to more effectively use these resources for improved teaching and learning.

Technology and informational resources are two important components in a 21st Century world. Providing, coordinating, and evaluating the effectiveness of the technology infrastructure and information resources and related personnel to support educational programs throughout the system will promote student success today and tomorrow.

Conclusion

The Team identified several pervasive themes that emerged during the time spent in the school system. It was obvious to the Team that there is a strong sense of community and a "family atmosphere" that exist in the school system. Every person interviewed mentioned the caring atmosphere that exists in each school. There is genuine care and concern for students. The supportive learning environment was observed in classrooms from kindergarten through high school. Students displayed positive attitudes about the classroom and learning and were very willing to take risks in learning without fear of negative feedback. Classrooms were very well-managed as students readily followed classroom rules and worked well with others. Every student spoke and interacted respectfully with teachers and peers. Transitions from one activity to another went smoothly and efficiently. It was evident that students at all grade levels knew the classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences.

The staff was excited about the new leadership and expressed hope for continuity with the superintendent of only a few months and three new principals. The Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) structure, common planning times, and the variety of interventions being tried were positive avenues now in place to improve instructional effectiveness and increase student learning.

Available resources in the way of informational resources, technology, and infrastructure were points of pride for the school system, and the Review Team commended the district on this area. Every high school student had a Chromebook, and plans were for all middle school students to receive Chromebooks during this year. All classrooms had Smartboards with projectors and FM audio systems. Four iPad carts had been purchased for the elementary grades to add to the computers already in classrooms. Every room had ample instructional materials, and multiple programs were being used (e.g., Excel Math, Read 180, System 44, STEM lab.)

The Team understands that the district and its schools have targeted initiatives in place to provide a roadmap for progress and improvement. The Improvement Priorities provided by the Team were designed as to not divert energies from present initiatives, but to enhance the initiatives and provide additional clarity for future planning.

Although the system had evidence of several planning initiatives, there was a demonstrated need for a streamlined planning process. The multiple plans needed to be consolidated into one cohesive strategic plan for the district and one comprehensive improvement plan for each school. All stakeholder groups had not been involved in the planning efforts, nor was there sufficient evidence that the plans actually included an assessment of needs based on student performance data. Performance milestones, action steps, timelines, and measurable benchmarks to improve student, school, and district performance were not an integral part of all plans.

Although the Board of Trustees had policies, there was not a clear understanding by board members of their roles and responsibilities. The need exists to systematically develop and implement a clearly defined governance and leadership model that ensures continuity in the effective administration of the school system.

Autonomy needs to be given by board members to the system and school leaders to do the job they have been assigned to do.

The lack of follow-through with supervision and evaluation processes and procedures was a critical area connected to the below average ratings on the seven learning environments and the low student achievement scores. Staff voiced the constant turnover in leadership positions as the main reason the supervision and evaluation procedures were not formalized and almost non-existent at times. Evaluation policies and procedures must be developed and formally and consistently implemented to ensure effective instructional practices.

One of the greatest challenges in Fremont #38 is the lack of systematic processes for curriculum and instruction, as well as inconsistent use of effective research-based instructional strategies. The district has the beginnings of a curriculum alignment project but more rigor is needed. A systematic K-12 curriculum plan and instructional process that ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and provide students with engaging and challenging learning opportunities that are supported by frequent use of technology are needed. By meeting this challenge, the system would be better able to prepare all students for success at the next level.

The Team offered a number of Improvement Priorities that address the practices that may enhance the capacity of the school system to reach a higher level of performance. The staff of Fremont School District #38 possess an understanding of the current reality of student achievement. They have made some initial steps at getting at those areas that are preventing them from being as effective as they could be. By addressing these Improvement Priorities, they will be approaching the accomplishment of their desire to ensure a high-quality education for all students.

Using the Improvement Priorities as a roadmap can form a foundation for growth and improvement. The Improvement Priorities are those things that the team identified as preventing the school system from being as effective as it could be in meeting accreditation standards and policies. Implementing a streamlined planning process that provides avenues for all stakeholders to be involved; developing a clearly defined governance model that establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the system and gives autonomy to the system and school leadership to get the job done without micromanaging; formally and consistently implementing supervision and evaluation procedures; and creating and implementing a systematic K-12 curriculum plan and instructional process are those areas that should have the greatest impact on improving student performance and system effectiveness.

Fremont School District # 38 will be held accountable for addressing the Improvement Priorities outlined by the External Review Team. By addressing these identified actions, the school system may enhance the capacity of the district to reach a higher level of performance and find success for every student.

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:

- Create and deploy leadership evaluation policies and processes to ensure that system and school leaders formally and consistently monitor instructional practices through well-defined supervision and evaluation procedures.
- Design and implement a systemic K-12 curriculum plan and instructional process that ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and provide all students with engaging, challenging, and personalized learning opportunities that are supported by frequent student use of technology and prepare them for success at the next level.
- Systematically develop and implement a clearly defined governance and leadership model that establishes policies and supports practices that ensure continuity in the effective administration of the system and schools and protects the autonomy of the system and school leadership to accomplish goals for instruction and achievement.
- Using a process that engages all relevant stakeholder groups, consolidate multiple plans into a clear, concise, cohesive, strategic plan for the district and an improvement plan for each school that includes assessment of needs based on student performance data; and that identifies improvement goals, performance milestones, interventions, action steps, timelines and measurable implementation benchmarks to improve student, school, and district performance as measured by the state accountability system.

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	234.96	278.34
Teaching and Learning Impact	233.33	268.94
Leadership Capacity	231.94	292.64
Resource Utilization	243.75	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

Individual Institution Results (Self-reported)

Institution Name	Teaching and Learning Impact	Leadership Capacity	Resource Utilization	Overall IEQ Score
Arapaho Charter High School	219.05	209.09	200.00	212.82
Arapahoe Elementary School	219.05	209.09	171.43	207.69

Team Roster

Member	Brief Biography
Dr. Cheryl C Allread	Dr. Allread's career spans over 40 years. She retired from Marion County Schools in South Carolina after having taught math and science for 7 years, serving as principal for 11 years, as assistant superintendent for instruction for 11 years, and as district superintendent for 7 years. After retirement from 36 years working in Marion County, she began working as a consultant with the S.C. State Department of Education, serving as Liaison for low-performing schools/Palmetto Priority Schools. She also conducted academic audits, served as principal mentor and served as a leadership coach in instructional supervision. Dr. Allread serves as Field Consultant for AdvancED in S.C. and works as Lead Evaluator for AdvancED in schools and districts across the country, as well as continuing to work as a private consultant with schools in instructional supervision.
Mrs. Denise Herman	Denise Herman is an instructional facilitator in Worland, Wyoming for Washakie County School District #1. This is her ninth year serving as an instructional facilitator. Mrs. Herman began her career in 1987 teaching special education in Arizona at an elementary level. She also co-taught in the gifted program. After returning to Wyoming, she taught at a middle school level in special education, language, and math. Denise has her Master's in Educational Technology. Her emphasis as a facilitator is technology, student engagement, and meeting the needs of all students through differentiation and Response to Intervention. Currently, she serves on her school and district accreditation teams. Mrs. Herman has served on North Central Accreditation and Advanc-ed for over ten years.
Dr. W. Darrell Barringer	Dr. Barringer's educational career spans 39+ years. On June 30th, 2012, he retired from Lexington School District One in Lexington, SC after working there for 34 years. Of that time, he served as an elementary principal for 29 years and had the privilege of opening two new schools. He has taught grades 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, served as an Assistant Principal in addition to the Principal role. He has also served with SACS (AdvancED) since 1983 having chaired teams in Egypt, Thailand, India, Saudia Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Jordan, Bahrain, Costa Rica, Japan, Guyana, Guatemala and Nicaragua as well as in the U.S. His service has included schools, systems, digital learning institutions, and corporations. Dr. Barringer's BA is in Biblical Education from Columbia International University, and his MEd (Elementary Ed), his EdS (Administration) and PhD (Elementary Ed) are from the University of South Carolina. Dr. Barringer joined the AdvancED family officially on July 1st of 2012 as State Director for AdvancED South Carolina.
Mr. Jeff Brewster	Jeff Brewster has worked for 22 years in the Natrona County School District. Jeff has a K-12 Principal Endorsement, a M.Ed in Technology education and at B.S. degree in Secondary Education. During the 22 years with NCSD he was a 7-12 Science Educator, a Technology Integration Coach and is now the Director of Professional Learning. In addition to his work with NCSD, over the years he as served as an adjunct faculty with Casper College and Lesley University, taught PBS Teacherline national online courses and worked as a consultant with Wyoming PBS, CISCO Networking Academy.
Mr. Ken Griffith	With over 40 years experience in education, 20 of those as a Principal, Ken Griffith has served at every level from K-20 and beyond. He has served on may statewide committees including the Wyoming Professional Judgement Panel and the Wyoming Professional Teaching Standards Board. In 2011-12 he served as the President of the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Mr. Griffith is currently serving as the Executive Director of the Wyoming Association of Secondary School Principals.

Member	Brief Biography
Mr. Joshua Kitchens	Josh Kitchens graduated from Georgia Southern University in 2007 with a B.S. in Political Science Education. In 2011, he earned his M.Ed. in School Administration from Liberty University. Currently, he serves as the high school principal for South Carolina Connections Academy, an online public school serving students in grades K-12. Prior to this role, he taught high school social studies at SC Connections Academy, as well as served at the school's trainer and lead teacher.
Mr. Bill Pannell	Bill is currently the accreditation section supervisor for the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) and was formerly a classroom teacher at the secondary and community college levels for 12 years. While teaching, Bill served as a district chair for NCA/AdvancED accreditation. Bill has served many roles with WDE for the past 12 years, including multiple accreditation external review teams. He is currently responsible for Accreditation, Native American education and dropout prevention at the WDE. Bill is well-versed in education research and school improvement initiatives.

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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