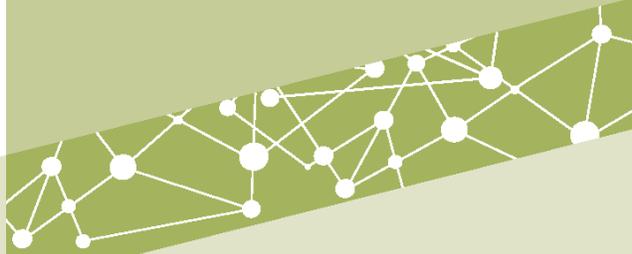


May 6-9, 2018



AdvancED® Engagement Review Report



AdvancED® Performance Accreditation

- » **Results for:**
St. Lucie Public Schools
4204 Okeechobee Road
Fort Pierce, Florida

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Introduction

AdvancED Performance Accreditation and the Engagement Review

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

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

As a part of the Engagement Review, stakeholders were interviewed by members of the Engagement Review Team to gain their perspectives on topics relevant to the institution's learning environment and organizational effectiveness. The feedback gained through the stakeholder interviews was considered with other evidences and data to support the findings of the Engagement Review. The following chart depicts the numbers of persons interviewed representative of various stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder Groups	Number
Superintendent:	1
Board Members:	5
Senior Leadership Team:	18
School Principals and Assistants:	53
Instructional Staff:	60
Support Staff:	6
Students:	72
Parents/Community Members	26
Total	241

Once all of the information is compiled and reviewed, the team develops the Engagement Review Report and presents preliminary results to the institution. Results from the Engagement Review are reported in four ratings represented by colors. These ratings provide guidance and insight into an institution's continuous improvement efforts as described below:

Color	Rating	Description
Red	Needs Improvement	Identifies key areas that need more focused improvement efforts
Yellow	Emerging	Represents areas to enhance and extend current improvement efforts
Green	Meets Expectations	Pinpoints quality practices that meet the Standards

Color	Rating	Description
Blue	Exceeds Expectations	Demonstrates noteworthy practices producing clear results that exceed expectations

AdvancED Continuous Improvement System

The AdvancED Continuous Improvement System (CIS) provides a systemic fully integrated solution to help institutions map out and navigate a successful improvement journey. In the same manner that educators are expected to understand the unique needs of every learner and tailor the education experience to drive student success, every institution must be empowered to map out and embrace their unique improvement journey. AdvancED expects institutions to use the results and the analysis of data from various interwoven components for the implementation of improvement actions to drive education quality and improved student outcomes. While each improvement journey is unique, the journey is driven by key actions. AdvancED identifies three important components of a continuous improvement process and provides feedback on the components of the journey using a rubric that identifies the three areas to guide the improvement journey. The areas are as follows:

Commitment to Continuous Improvement	Rating
The institution has collected sufficient and quality data to identify school improvement needs.	Meets Expectations
Implications from the analysis of data have been identified and used for the development of key strategic goals.	Meets Expectations
The institution demonstrates the capacity to implement their continuous improvement journey.	Exceeds Expectations

Continuous Improvement Journey Narrative

The system has allocated fiscal, human, and material resources to assure a continuous improvement process in the schools. Each of the schools uses the 8-Step Planning and Problem-Solving Process as a framework for their School Improvement Plans. Through analysis of the Florida State Assessment results, the schools were set on a course of increasing the level of rigor in courses and in placing students in advanced classes to expose them to higher level content and thinking skills. Some schools implemented Student-Led Goal Setting and other schools initiated Student-Led Parent Teacher Conferences based upon individual student achievement data.

The system has collected trend data over time and comparison data with school districts on the Treasure Coast. They have compared themselves with school systems “like them” across the state of Florida in graduation rates, school and district grades and Career and Technical Education (CTE) offerings. Displays of data in charts and graphs were shared with the team depicting outstanding student achievement over a three year period in comparison to competitive school systems in neighboring school districts. For example, the state school grades increased in 21 of the 38 schools in the system and the average graduation rates in all high schools increased from 45th in the state in 2015 to 5th in 2017. The four system-wide goals have directed the continuous improvement process with targeted strategies in the schools to meet the expectations. The disaggregated graduation rates for all subgroups of Black, White and Hispanic males and females have trended up by double digits in just two years. The system has increased its “points” toward state grades to an overall “B” with no failing schools in 2017. These statistics are impressive when comparing the increasing poverty rates in the schools over the past few years.

Improvement planning at the system level has included the gathering of perspectives from many stakeholder groups. Administrators have not only collected and analyzed student achievement data but also solicited feedback from students, staff and parents’ perceptions identifying both strengths and areas needing more focus. While parents and students are very complimentary of their teachers, selecting “respectful, supportive and helpful” when describing school staff, survey information has also confirmed the need for continuous improvement in classroom practice. Of the climate and culture surveys, parent perceptions indicated that most of the time students are “listening to the teacher” and often are perceived “completing worksheets.” An overwhelming number of high school students also responded that they most often are “listening to the teacher”

and “completing worksheets.” As the system continues to focus on instruction for college and career readiness as one of its top priorities, these classroom instructional practices will need to be reviewed.

Part of the continuous improvement process in the St. Lucie Public Schools is an emphasis on progress monitoring with a locally-developed, electronic Leadership Dashboard which has made it possible to analyze data collections for the purpose of using the information in planning for improvement strategies over time. Multiple interventions were set in place to produce outstanding student achievement in the past three years in graduation rates, school grade increases, decreases in student referrals for inappropriate behavior and outstanding attendance levels. Furthermore, during school visits, teachers and school administrators lauded the availability of real-time data collections from the Leadership Dashboard as they were able to track student progress and disaggregate sets of data for the purpose of targeting groups of students, both those who were struggling and others who needed more challenge in learning and coursework. Attendance rates have increased, out-of-school suspensions have decreased and habitual truancy was reduced in a short period of time. These results were reported to be directly attributable to the hard work of teachers and administrators. Staffs have based school improvement planning on data collection, progress monitoring, program implementation and the sharing of information in weekly system leadership team meetings and monthly school administrator meetings.

The system has implemented two specific strategies which have been particularly effective in helping to ensure the effectiveness of continuous improvement planning initiatives. First is the progress monitoring used in the bi-weekly unit assessments, created at the district level, and used in all content areas and grade levels to track student progress. In addition, the recently implemented Collaborative Learning and Planning (CLP) professional learning communities were reported to have substantial influence on networking and cooperative planning. Groups of teachers reported that they have used research to design best practices in the classroom like targeting instruction toward learning targets posted in classrooms framing the lesson planning and outcomes to be learned. These networking meetings have the potential to move the district to even higher levels of student performance.

In conclusion, the system has demonstrated its commitment to continuous improvement through data collections, analysis of results and the use of best practices to inform instructional planning. There are structures in place to support students in their learning, surrounded by abundant community partnerships, for the nearly 40,000 students and 5,000 employees in the system. This capacity for improvement to meet the system’s mission “...to ensure all students graduate from safe and caring schools, equipped with the knowledge, skills and desire to succeed...” is well documented in interviews and document reviews.

AdvancED Standards Diagnostic Results

The AdvancED Performance Standards Diagnostic is used by the Engagement Review Team to evaluate the institution’s effectiveness based on AdvancED’s Performance Standards. The diagnostic consists of three components built around each of the three Domains: **Leadership Capacity**, **Learning Capacity** and **Resource Capacity**. Point values are established within the diagnostic and a percentage of the points earned by the institution for each Standard is calculated from the point values for each Standard. Results are reported within four ranges identified by the colors representing Needs Improvement (Red), Emerging (Yellow), Meets Expectations (Green), and Exceeds Expectations (Blue). The results for the three Domains are presented in the tables that follow.

Leadership Capacity Domain

The capacity of leadership to ensure an institution’s progress toward its stated objectives is an essential element of organizational effectiveness. An institution’s leadership capacity includes the fidelity and commitment to its purpose and direction, the effectiveness of governance and leadership to enable the institution to realize its stated

objectives, the ability to engage and involve stakeholders in meaningful and productive ways, and the capacity to implement strategies that improve learner and educator performance.

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

Learning Capacity Domain

The impact of teaching and learning is the primary expectation of every system and its institutions. The establishment of a learning culture built on high expectations for learning, along with quality programs and services, which include an analysis of results, are all key indicators of the system's impact on teaching and learning.

Learning Capacity Standards		Rating
2.1	Learners have equitable opportunities to develop skills and achieve the content and learning priorities established by the system.	Emerging
2.2	The learning culture promotes creativity, innovation and collaborative problem-solving.	Emerging
2.3	The learning culture develops learners' attitudes, beliefs and skills needed for success.	Exceeds Expectations
2.4	The system has a formal structure to ensure learners develop positive relationships with and have adults/peers that support their educational experiences.	Needs Improvement
2.5	Educators implement a curriculum that is based on high expectations and prepares learners for their next levels.	Meets Expectations
2.6	The system implements a process to ensure the curriculum is aligned to standards and best practices.	Exceeds Expectations

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

Resource Capacity Domain

The use and distribution of resources align and support the needs of the system and institutions served. Systems ensure that resources are aligned with its stated purpose and direction and distributed equitably so that the needs of the system are adequately and effectively addressed. The utilization of resources includes support for professional learning for all staff. The system examines the allocation and use of resources to ensure appropriate levels of funding, sustainability, and system effectiveness.

Resource Capacity Standards		Rating
3.1	The system plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the system's effectiveness.	Meets Expectations
3.2	The system's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.	Exceeds Expectations
3.3	The system provides induction, mentoring, and coaching programs that ensure all staff members have the knowledge and skills to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.	Meets Expectations
3.4	The system attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the system's purpose and direction.	Meets Expectations
3.5	The system integrates digital resources into teaching, learning, and operations to improve professional practice, student performance, and organizational effectiveness.	Emerging
3.6	The system provides access to information resources and materials to support the curriculum, programs, and needs of students, staff, and the system.	Emerging
3.7	The system demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning and use of resources in support of the system's purpose and direction.	Emerging
3.8	The system allocates human, material, and fiscal resources in alignment with the system's identified needs and priorities to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.	Meets Expectations

Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®)

Results

The eProve™ Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®) is a learner-centric classroom observation tool that comprises 28 items organized in seven environments aligned with the AdvancED Standards. The eleot provides useful, relevant, structured, and quantifiable data on the extent to which students are engaged in activities and/or demonstrate knowledge, attitudes, and/or dispositions that are conducive to effective learning. Classroom observations are conducted for a minimum of 20 minutes. Results from eleot are reported on a scale of one to four based on the degree and quality of the engagement.

eleot® Observations	
Total Number of eleot® Observations	108
Environments	Rating
Equitable Learning Environment	2.45
Learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs	1.87
Learners have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	3.04
Learners are treated in a fair, clear and consistent manner	3.24
Learners demonstrate and/or have opportunities to develop empathy/respect/appreciation for differences in abilities, aptitudes, backgrounds, cultures, and/or other human characteristics, conditions and dispositions	1.64
High Expectations Environment	2.42
Learners strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher	2.47
Learners engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	2.67
Learners demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work	2.00
Learners engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	2.52
Learners take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning	2.44
Supportive Learning Environment	2.95
Learners demonstrate a sense of community that is positive, cohesive, engaged, and purposeful	2.92
Learners take risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	2.75
Learners are supported by the teacher, their peers and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks	3.04
Learners demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher	3.09
Active Learning Environment	2.43
Learners' discussions/dialogues/exchanges with each other and the teacher predominate	2.63
Learners make connections from content to real-life experiences	2.12
Learners are actively engaged in the learning activities	2.75
Learners collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments	2.20
Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment	2.28
Learners monitor their own learning progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored	2.04
Learners receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work	2.70
Learners demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content	2.58

eleot® Observations	
Total Number of eleot® Observations	108
Environments	Rating
Learners understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed	1.80
Well-Managed Learning Environment	3.00
Learners speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other	3.17
Learners demonstrate knowledge of and/or follow classroom rules and behavioral expectations and work well with others	3.15
Learners transition smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another	2.79
Learners use class time purposefully with minimal wasted time or disruptions	2.90
Digital Learning Environment	1.37
Learners use digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	1.57
Learners use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	1.34
Learners use digital tools/technology to communicate and/or work collaboratively for learning	1.19

eleot® Narrative

A highlight of every Engagement Review visit is the opportunity for the team to conduct classroom observations. The focus of the classroom visits is student engagement not teacher practice. One hundred eight classroom observations for a minimum of 20 minutes each took place during the visit to the St. Lucie Public Schools. A cross section of learners at all grade levels, kindergarten through twelve, and all discipline areas were observed. Each of the observations was assessed through the use of the eleot® tool, as organized around seven environments.

The highest rated area was Well-Managed Learning, with a rating of 3.00 on a 4-point scale. Observations of respectful interactions among teachers and their peers and of learners understanding and following rules were the most evident in classrooms visited. This was consistent with what was learned in interviews conducted with staff and students. There were few situations of students needing correction or redirection. Learners displayed positive behavior and an understanding of classroom rules and routines across most classrooms. Students transitioned easily with a minimum loss of instructional time in the majority of classes.

Supportive Learning was next highest with a rating of 2.95. The items within this environment that received highest ratings were those instances in which observers detected that learners demonstrated a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher. Through interviews with students and teachers it was clear that strong relationships have been intentionally established and impact achievement. Throughout the classroom observations it was clear that learner supports have been nurtured. Respectful interactions between learners and teachers, as well as peers was evidence of systemic buy-in to the mission of "...safe and caring schools."

Equitable Learning received a rating of 2.45. The team observed learners being treated in a fair, clear and consistent manner. Students appeared to have equal access to resources and support. However, learners were very infrequently observed demonstrating, or having opportunities to develop, empathy, respect or appreciation for individual differences. In addition, few examples of differentiated instruction within classes were noted. Only in special education classrooms were substantially differentiated lessons noted, as would be expected. Whole group instruction appeared to be the most common instructional strategy, although many classrooms made use of groupings of students, especially in centers for learning in elementary schools.

Fourth highest was a rating of 2.43 for Active Learning. Observers did not detect active engagement in all

classrooms. However, many learners were focused on the lessons with slightly less collaboration and more whole group, teacher-directed learning. In addition connections of content to real-life experiences were not widely observed. Where connections were made, student interest and participation appeared at a higher level. Few situations of students collaborating with peers on assignments were noted. However, in one high school classroom, a teacher used the motivation of money to help students understand compound interest and the importance of saving money for future wants and needs. One student was quoted as saying “This is my favorite class because we can actually use this information in my life.” Active learning was demonstrated in another school in a sixth grade classroom where students were playing jeopardy to learn historical facts and relating that information to what was happening in the news of the day.

High Expectations was fifth rated environment at 2.42. The lowest rated item was learners’ ability to describe high quality work. Survey perception data corroborates this rating reflected by both parents and high school students citing “completing worksheets” as one of the two most frequently identified things student are doing while at school. Although high expectations were not the norm in most classrooms, in Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes students were clearly focused on high expectations while pursuing their credentials for future employment. For example, in one Medical Assistant’s CTE class, students were learning the difference in the types of appointments that might be scheduled in a dentist’s office by the front office assistant. Students talked about the practical application of their learning while realizing the world of work requires higher-order thinking skills and quick decision making, even at the receptionist level.

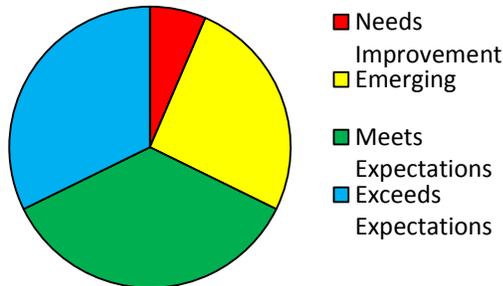
The Progress Monitoring average rating was 2.28. The highest rated individual items were those of learners receiving/responding to feedback and learners demonstrating and/or verbalizing understanding of their lesson. In light of the emphasis in the system for progress monitoring, it is clear that teacher’s progress monitoring of student learning was a focus, but students were not observed knowing how their work was assessed. An example of this environment put to practice was the observation of an art class in a middle school where students were working on colors and mixing paints. When asked how a student could predict a new color from mixing paints, the students were not able to articulate how the mixing of paints could predict a resulting color or the process targeted by the lesson. The teacher posted the objectives of the lesson, but students did not make a connection between the lesson objective and what they were learning.

Digital Learning received the St. Lucie Public Schools’ lowest rating of 1.37. While there were some examples of teachers using technology to enhance instruction, few observations of student using technology to conduct research, solve problems or create original works for learning were observed. (It should be noted that many classroom computers had been moved to labs to be used by students while completing the state test. It was reported by administrators that computers would be returned to classrooms after the state test was over.)

The team noted that students were provided with supportive and well-managed learning environments. They had many opportunities to interact with teachers and peers and had well defined coursework, as well as the materials and supplies with which to achieve the learning.

Findings

The chart below provides an overview of the institution ratings across the three Domains.



Rating	Number of Standards
Needs Improvement	2
Emerging	8
Meets Expectations	11
Exceeds Expectations	10

Powerful Practices

Powerful Practices reflect noteworthy observations and actions that have yielded clear results in student achievement or organizational effectiveness and are actions that exceed what is typically observed or expected in an institution.

Powerful Practice #1

The system, led by a visionary executive leadership team, has shown a focused commitment to providing a systematic, continuous improvement process that ensures high levels of organizational effectiveness. (Standards 1.3, 1.7, and 1.9)

Primary Standard: 1.3

Evidence:

Interviews with various stakeholder groups, as well as a review of numerous artifacts, enabled the team to agree that the system uses a highly effective and data-driven continuous improvement process. The system provides a wealth of data reports from the Leadership Dashboard. The various data collections, generated by the system, allowed administrators, teachers and stakeholders at the local school level to make informed decisions based on the unique needs of their schools and avoided the use of a “one size fits all” model. This process promoted a climate of autonomy for the schools and fostered a high level of trust and commitment needed to improve the organizational effectiveness of the system.

During interviews, principals and teachers praised the system for providing real time data for their schools and described how the Leadership Dashboard reports provided each individual school with their personalized key metrics to promote academic and non-academic support.

Student achievement results clearly showed the effects of setting system-wide goals and the results of continuous improvement planning at the school level yielding graduation rate increases from 45th to 5th in the state over two years, state grade increases in 21 of the 38 schools in the system in the past year and attendance rates improving with community partnerships targeting decreased truancy.

Powerful Practice #2

St. Lucie Public Schools and the communities have developed powerful partnerships with numerous agencies and businesses to provide both academic and extra-curricular opportunities for all students in order to meet the four goals established by the system “...to increase English/Language Arts Proficiencies in Grade 3-10, to Create a

Leadership Dashboard to Track Student Progress, to Increase College and Career Readiness Skills, and to Decrease the Number of Out-of-School Suspensions.”

Primary Standard: 1.10

Evidence:

It was shared in interviews and observed in written documents that collaboration with community partners has contributed greatly to student achievement and the well-being of learners throughout Saint Lucie County. The schools have partnered with the St. Lucie Roundtable, including government officials, law enforcement, the local Economic Development Council and Early Learning Coalition representatives to support Kids at Hope. St. Lucie Reads with business volunteers who read to students at the elementary level and the SOAR program with Big Brother/Big Sisters are additional examples of effective partnerships. A Truancy Initiative Partnership with the City of Port St. Lucie provides training to the city police about truancy, assisting the schools in finding students who need to be in school. There is a Safety Initiative in partnership with local law enforcement departments to provide additional deputies for schools in addition to the Resource Officer (SRO) for every school partially funded by the schools, local law enforcement and the St. Lucie County Sheriff’s office. Another community partnership offers “Too Good for Drugs” for all fifth graders and “Too Good for Violence” at the middle school level addressing prevention and intervention. The Youth Development Organization offers Project Rock North and Project Rock South as an alternative to suspension for students who need a safe and caring place to adjust their behavior while completing their studies. In addition, local churches and service organizations support schools in many ways, including the St. Lucie Education Foundation which funds scholarships and grants to individual classroom teachers.

Powerful Practice #3

The system’s deliberate actions of gathering, analyzing and using formative and summative assessment data have resulted in tremendous success for the students of St. Lucie Public Schools. (Standards: 2.6, 2.10, and 2.11)

Primary Standard: 2.11

Evidence:

St. Lucie Public Schools have developed a Leadership Dashboard that provides real time data to system level administrators, school administrators and teachers. This versatile program is customized to support detailed analysis of student achievement data, results of teaching and learning, professional development results and resource distribution throughout the system. The availability of this dashboard has allowed the system to drill down to the individual student level. The Leadership Dashboard encompasses data in multiple areas such as graduation rate probabilities, progress monitoring of formative and summative assessments for teachers, college/career readiness results, attendance levels, out of school suspension and referral data for all students. This dashboard has been transformational for the system when making informed decisions impacting schools and students. The most notable successes the system has experienced in the last three years are the increases of state grades for the schools with 21 of the 38 schools increasing at least one grade. In addition, the district graduation rate increased from 75.5% (45th in the state) to 90.1% (5th in the state) in two years. Increases were found in all subgroups and St. Lucie was ranked higher than the state average in ESE graduation rate, African American graduation rate, White graduation rate and Hispanic graduation rate. Overall the district grade increased from a “C” to a “B” in the past year.

Improvements such as increased daily attendance rates, decreased out-of-school suspensions, decreased negative behavior referrals, and increases in students passing courses are credits to supporting the targeted focus of the system which is increasing the graduation rate. Administrators and teachers were able to have real-time disaggregated data available in a much faster time span. Teachers reported in interviews that they appreciated having the time to plan collaboratively during common planning periods to make adjustments to the curriculum. An additional support service for using data was the expertise of the executive directors assigned to the schools who have monthly meetings or more often with principals to review data and jointly make decisions about improvement in classroom instruction. This layer of additional support was reported to help ensure the schools are using data with fidelity in scheduling students into classes, monitoring of assessments, curriculum updates, and adjusting pedagogy in the classrooms. Other components also supported by the Leadership Dashboard included

collaboration with the sheriff’s office to work with truancy infractions, professional development for deans on consistency in dealing with referrals, and professional learning scheduled for school-based professionals in the Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS) program. All of these endeavors were reported to have an influence on supporting the vision and mission of the individual schools as well as the system.

Opportunities for Improvement

Opportunities for Improvement are those actions that will guide and direct institutions to specific areas that are worthy of additional attention.

Opportunity for Improvement #1

Research and implement best practices to engage families as partners in the education of all students.

Primary Standard: 1.8

Evidence:

Interviews, surveys and system narratives all revealed a need to develop more positive relationships with parents as educational partners in most schools. While the team did find opportunities for families to engage in school activities, there was a need reported in the System Quality Factors document for personal two-way communication with parents. One high school has worked tirelessly to schedule and invite parents to become partners with the school to guarantee increased graduation rates in Operation Graduation. However, parents of struggling students need unique and creative ways to become involved with their child’s learning whether it is at school or at home. When educators and other adults in the lives of children work together, students can reach high levels of success. The system’s powerful phrase of “no exceptions” is appropriate as an approach for engaging families at all schools.

Opportunity for Improvement #2

Design a formal systematic mentoring/advocacy process whereby each student has an adult advocate on campus that provides a long-term interaction that builds strong relationships over time with the student.

Primary Standard: 2.4

Evidence:

Through interviews, a review of the System School Quality Factors report and the Superintendent’s overview, there was evidence of adult mentors who are assigned to the most “at-risk” students but not to all students. One of the strategic focus areas for the St. Lucie Public Schools is to develop “... a safe and caring environment...” for every student. During interviews with parents they expressed that relationships were very important for their children’s success. School Board members described the relationship they had with the superintendent, cabinet and schools as a model for advocacy for students and other adults. The schools offer numerous extra-curricular activities that foster a safe and caring relationship for many groups of students. To further develop the process of a caring culture, the system needs to develop a formalized advocacy program where every student has an identified mentor that meets on a regular basis during the school year to develop a supportive relationship with each learner.

Improvement Priorities

Improvement priorities are developed to enhance the capacity of the institution to reach a higher level of performance and reflect the areas identified by the Engagement Review Team to have the greatest impact on improving student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Improvement Priority #1

Develop a comprehensive, written, systematic quality assurance plan which includes program evaluation and action planning within a comprehensive strategic plan.

Primary Standard: 1.11

Evidence:

The Engagement Review Team found evidence in many departments and schools where strategic planning protocols and action plans were used for curriculum materials review, grants review, professional development planning and information technology operations. Although the data-driven process for monitoring student achievement was well developed, there was no documentation of a deliberate formalized process to evaluate programs and functions at the school or system level. There was a detailed System Improvement and Achievement Plan (DIAP) available to guide the improvement processes at the low performing schools. Every school has a state approved School Improvement Plan (SIP) based upon each school’s needs. However, a system-wide comprehensive strategic action plan was not observed being used for continuous improvement throughout all departments on a routine basis. During interviews, there was little reference or connection to an overarching strategic plan for the system. In addition, there was no evidence that specific strategies, identified outcomes, measures of progress, staff responsible or timelines for achievement were included in any written strategic plan at the system level.

Improvement Priority #2

Create digital learning environments at every school to engage all students in the use of technology to collaborate, create, research, problem solve and communicate while learning. (Standards 3.5 and 3.6)

Primary Standard: 3.5

Evidence:

During school visits the team observed few examples of students using technology as a tool for learning other than frequent use of pre-programmed math and language arts programs. The eleot classroom observations indicated a lack of digital engagement. Although many classrooms were equipped with digital projection systems, most observations included teacher use and not student interaction with this technology tool for learning. During interviews, staff and system leaders acknowledged the challenge of providing up-to-date technology. It is imperative for students to develop digital literacy at every grade level in order to prepare them for success in college and their chosen careers. Engaging digital experiences where students interact directly with digital devices are essential for tomorrow’s global citizens.

Accreditation Recommendation and Index of Educational Quality™ (IEQ™)

The Engagement Review Team recommends to the AdvancED Accreditation Commission that the institution earns the distinction of accreditation for a five-year term. AdvancED will review the results of the Engagement Review to make a final determination, including the appropriate next steps for the institution in response to these findings.

AdvancED provides the Index of Education Quality™ (IEQ™) as a holistic measure of overall performance based on a comprehensive set of standards and review criteria. A formative tool for improvement, it identifies areas of success as well as areas in need of focus. The IEQ is comprised of the Standards Diagnostic ratings from the three Domains: 1) Leadership Capacity; 2) Learning Capacity; and 3) Resource Capacity and the results of eleot classroom observations. The IEQ results are reported on a scale of 100 to 400 and provide information about how the institution is performing compared to expected criteria.

Institution IEQ	318.58
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Conclusion Narrative

St. Lucie Public Schools have taken deliberate and specific actions to ensure that Each Child, Every Day is being prepared and achieving success for their future through its mission "...to ensure all students graduate from safe and caring schools..." With nearly 40,000 students and approximately 5,000 employees in 39 public schools with a Free/Reduced Lunch rate of 70%, the system and its schools have produced outstanding student achievement results in a short period of time with new leadership over the past three years. There are four "focus" areas posted for all departments and schools to see both at the system level and the school level. Senior leadership team members have a laser-like focus on producing results to support the four goals for the system. In all six comprehensive high schools the graduation rate has increased by double digits with the exception of one high school which was already at the 98.6% graduation rate. The system has concentrated on placing students in more advanced coursework and offering more varied career and technical fields of studies such as Agritechnology, Veterinary Technology, Digital Design, TV Production, 3D Animation, Cybersecurity and Criminal Justice coursework, to name a few. There is an active Junior ROTC which is supportive of citizenship and life skills as well as leadership and physical fitness.

The system has produced an effective design for classroom formative assessment in the unit assessments administered approximately each two-week period. There is a well-developed system for item analysis for the assessments so that teachers can focus their re-teaching targeted to students' specific needs. Executive directors, who act as area school supervisors, work with the school-based leadership teams to improve classroom practice and provide grants and community services to assist teachers to meet students' needs. A sophisticated, locally developed Leadership Dashboard of demographic and achievement results, as well as student safety information and personnel statistics, can be accessed and used for improvement strategies. There has been a targeted focus on Safe and Caring Schools, documented in presentations and artifacts, with 22 school model sites operating outstanding programs in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). The community has partnerships supporting Kids At Hope where students get the message "All Children Are Capable of Success...No Exceptions." Even bus drivers have had training to include CHAMPS strategies with before- and after-school transportation offered by the school system. The district collaborates with outside agencies in New Horizons of the Treasure Coast Collaborative to provide nine Student Assistance Program Counselors who offer services for students needing interventions for substance abuse, mental health, and connections for families who need support and assistance with life challenges.

The system provides support for new teachers in the NEST (New Educators Support Team) program and for the development of new leaders with training in the ELITE program with Instructional Rounds, a summer leadership conference, and principal certification in Leadership Pathways. There were reports of monthly Instructional Coach meetings and support in the form of demonstration teaching in the classrooms and simulations for skill development in the "year round" professional learning offerings for teachers and administrative staff.

The system was reported to provide for extensive business and community partnerships in support of all students. There are more than 18 business partners providing work experiences for students interested in certain careers and the Economic Development Council Bus Tours for school counselors to understand the many job opportunities available to students in the region.

School Board policies were observed to be in place to guide the administrators and building principals in the day-to-day operations of the schools and the system. The active school board, with Master Board Certification from the Florida School Board Association, ensures procedures are in place for resource management by providing for students' educational needs. The system's budgeting process includes a long standing Citizens' Budget Advisory Committee to allow for transparency to the public and accountability at the leadership level. There is a strong emphasis on a Single School Culture, a method of organizing the schools to run smoothly with shared norms, beliefs, values, and goals embedded in classrooms, the front office and the leadership team's supervision and leadership style. Often the team members heard reference to "Our schools are like family" from parents and staff members. Collegiality and working in Collaborative Learning and Planning Teams (CLP's) are reported in interviews

to assist the schools with a positive climate and culture built from common beliefs. In fact, the system has been identified as “The Best Place to Work” in St. Lucie County by the St. Lucie Human Resource Association.

Professional staffs are supported by a lean budget with testing coordinators, instructional coaches, executive directors and staff allocation formulas which allow for school size and weighted student needs as a way of assigning personnel to school campuses. The safety and security needs of students are now provided for by School Resource Officers and additional local police presence at all schools. Although schools now feel more like fortresses compared to the open door policies of the past, the system continually strives to present a warm and caring atmosphere to students, staff, parents and visitors, who are screened and required to wear badges organized by the Raptor Security System.

With the many positive initiatives implemented in the St. Lucie Public Schools, there is room for improvement in the form of providing for creative and unique approaches to parent involvement in all schools and designing a student advocacy process to assure each student has a caring adult who knows them well and can attend to the student’s needs. Paramount to future college attendance and career preparation, the system and all of the schools could benefit from digital learning environments with real-world applications mirroring career and technical classroom lessons. Project-based and problem-based learning activities could be greatly enhanced by digital resources targeted for student use on a daily basis in collaborative lessons with authentic tasks. The system could benefit greatly from a comprehensive strategic planning process to ensure program evaluation and action planning across all departments and all schools are aligned with the system’s goals.

It was clear to the team that the system was well-prepared to host the Engagement Review, both in readying the schedules and documents to be reviewed and in arranging for the interviews and classroom visits. It appeared to the team that the parents and the community members were candid and the staff was very professional during the interviews and classroom observations. Throughout the interview process, faculty, staff, students, support staff, parents and community partners provided valuable insight into the teaching and learning processes in the schools.

In conclusion, the Engagement Review Team appreciated the system’s and the schools’ hospitality and its willingness to achieve excellence by participating in this rigorous process. The team would like to thank all staff for making the team feel welcome and comfortable while hosting the review. The Engagement Review Team was grateful for the exceptional preparation done by the system leadership and the staffs for the visit. The System and School Quality Factor reports were well developed with supporting documentation, reflecting the thorough self-assessment process the system and its schools had conducted prior to the on-site review. The transparency with which both the data presentations and the interview processes were conducted is acknowledged. The candid responses from the school board members, the staff, parents and community members were greatly appreciated and assisted the team in confirming what they had observed, read in prior documents and listened to in presentations and interviews. It was shared in phone conferences before the review that the superintendent and the leadership team welcomed the feedback from the accreditation process in order to reach even higher toward the goals and aspirations of the system and the schools.

Next Steps

The results of the Engagement Review provide the next step to guide the improvement journey of the institution in their efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities for all learners. The findings are aligned to research-based criteria designed to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness. The feedback provided in the Accreditation Engagement Review Report will assist the institution in reflecting on their current improvement efforts and to adapt and adjust their plans to continuously strive for improvement.

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

- Review and share the findings with stakeholders.

- Develop plans to address the Improvement Priorities identified by the Engagement Review Team.
- Use the findings and data from the report to guide and strengthen the institution’s continuous improvement efforts.
- Celebrate the successes noted in the report
- Continue your Improvement Journey

Team Roster

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

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
<p>Dr. Vicki DeMao Lead Evaluator</p>	<p>Vicki DeMao is a Lead Evaluator for AdvancED, and has worked in more than 13 different states in the Midwest and in the South, leading teams of educators in more than 35 different school systems, charter schools and Educational Service Agencies. Her current responsibilities include consultant and administrator for Centerville-Abington Community Schools and Field Consultant for Indiana NCA/AdvancED schools identified for school improvement under Title I guidelines. Her past educational experiences include: Kindergarten teacher, principal of two different elementary schools, and central office administrator for gifted education, federal programs, and grant writer. She has been a professor at University of the Pacific in Stockton, California; Director of Elementary and Secondary Education for Richmond Community School in Indiana; and, Field Coach for Gifted Education in Indiana. Vicki has written for publications and been a presenter at state and national conferences. She works with schools and school districts in Indiana to implement the state laws governing gifted education identification, service options, and program evaluation. As a community volunteer, Vicki has been a First Tee Charter Board Member, Chamber of Commerce subcommittee member, original grant writer for Birth to Five, Inc., university advisor for Indiana University East, trained reviewer of federal grants, adjunct professor at Earlham College, and grant writer for public and private organizations.</p>
<p>Dr. Elisabeth Davis</p>	<p>Elisabeth Davis has served as the Superintendent of Eufaula City Schools in Eufaula, Alabama since January 2016. Dr. Davis earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Secondary Education with a concentration in English Language Arts from Jacksonville State University, a Master of Arts Degree in Education in English Language Arts and Instructional Leadership Certificate from the University of Alabama in Birmingham, an Education Specialist Degree in Instructional Leadership from The University of Montevallo, and a Doctor in Education in Instructional Leadership from Samford University. She has previously served as an English teacher, athletic coach, middle school assistant principal, district school improvement specialist, middle school program area specialist, and assistant superintendent of curriculum. She is an AdvancED Lead Evaluator for schools, and she has served on numerous school and district accreditation review teams over the past 16 years.</p>

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Dr. David Dixon	<p>Dr. David Dixon is currently the Virtual Education Supervisor for Pelham City Schools. He recently retired from the University of Alabama where he served as a manager of Teacher Development and Curriculum Management in the College of Continuing Studies at the University of Alabama. In 1980 he began his teaching career in the Shelby County School District in Alabama, where he taught instrumental music Grades 6-12. In 1996 he was appointed assistant principal at Columbiana Middle School for three years and later accepted the position of principal at Columbiana Middle School for the remaining seven years of his career in public education. After retirement he served one year as headmaster of a non-denominational private school in Central Alabama. Dr. Dixon currently serves as an adjunct professor at the University of West Florida. Degrees include: Bachelor of Music Education, Master's in Music Education, Education Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership, and Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Alabama.</p>
Ms. Carol Martin	<p>Carol Martin is a life-long educator in Alabama who has the same enthusiasm for her work as she did when she began. After enjoying her work as a high school English teacher, assistant principal, and principal, she now serves as the Director of Instruction and Intervention in Sylacauga City Schools. She enjoys working with all grade levels with a 12-K "begin with the end in mind" perspective. Ms. Martin holds an Educational Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership and has trained schools and presented at national conferences in the areas of Response to Instruction, team building, support teams, advisors, data teams, and more. She is an enthusiastic team member on AdvancED reviews and has served in several states, and has led her own school system's continuous improvement processes.</p>
Dr. Minnie Ogburn	<p>Minnie Ogburn, co-founder of The Ogburn School, has over 20 years of experience in education. She earned an Ed.D. from the University of Florida, where her research focus was homeschooling, including distance education, online and blended learning. She also holds an Ed.S. Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Florida, a Masters of Administration Degree from Central Michigan University, and a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Jones College. During her teaching career she taught at the elementary, middle, and high school level. She also served as a mathematics coach at a high needs school and curriculum coordinator at a charter school.</p>
Mrs. Xenobia Poitier-Anderson	<p>Retiring after 38 years in public education, Mrs. Poitier-Anderson has served in a variety of roles. Beginning her career as a high school English teacher, after earning a Master's Degree, she pursued advancement in education and accepted the position of middle school dean and athletic director. Mrs. Poitier-Anderson transitioned into other administrative roles as a middle school assistant principal for curriculum and later served 18 years as an elementary school principal. The last three years of her career in public education were spent serving in the district's personnel office as Director of Human Resources, Risk, and Benefits. Following retirement in May 2015, she established an independent consulting organization: Educational and Religious Leadership Consulting (E&R Leadership Consulting).</p>

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Mrs. Toni Stivender	Mrs. Toni Stivender is a retired teacher and administrator who spent 45 years in education. She is currently contracting with the School Board of Highlands County to work with beginning teachers during their first year and plans to continue her work with AdvancED. Her work with AdvancED began in the late 90's and she has seen many changes in the process over the years. It has been a rewarding experience for her and the best hands-on professional development she has experienced. During her work as an educator, she worked at elementary, middle, high school levels as well as an adjunct instructor at the community college. She was a teacher at all levels and an administrator at the middle and high schools level. Mrs. Stivender earned her Bachelor's Degree from FSU and her Master's Degree from USF.
Mrs. Toni Wiersma:	Mrs. Toni Wiersma is currently serving as the Director of Student Services of the Okeechobee County School system. Mrs. Wiersma earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mathematics with a minor in Education from Florida Southern College. She earned a Masters in Guidance and Counseling and an Ed.S. Degree in Educational Leadership from Florida Atlantic University. She has previously served as high school principal for 12 years, assistant principal, guidance counselor, dropout prevention teacher, and mathematics teacher. She has served on several AdvancEd school accreditation teams. She has completed AdvancED lead evaluator training.



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About AdvancED

AdvancED is a non-profit, non-partisan organization serving the largest community of education professionals in the world. Founded on more than 100 years of work in continuous improvement, AdvancED combines the knowledge and expertise of a research institute, the skills of a management consulting firm and the passion of a grassroots movement for educational change to empower Pre-K-12 schools and school systems to ensure that all learners realize their full potential.

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