



Butler County Board of Education

Greenville, Alabama

February 22-25, 2022

System Accreditation Engagement Review

214777

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Cognia Continuous Improvement System

Cognia defines continuous improvement as "an embedded behavior rooted in an institution's culture that constantly focuses on conditions, processes, and practices to improve teaching and learning." The Cognia 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. Cognia expects institutions to use the results and the analysis of data from various interwoven components for the implementation of improvement actions to drive education quality and improved student outcomes. While each improvement journey is unique, the journey is driven by key actions. The findings of the Engagement Review Team are organized by the ratings from the Cognia Performance Standards Diagnostic and the Levels of Impact within the i3 Rubric: Initiate, Improve, and Impact.

Initiate

The first phase of the improvement journey is to **Initiate** actions to cause and achieve better results. The elements of the Initiate phase are defined within the Levels of Impact of Engagement and Implementation. Engagement is the level of involvement and frequency of stakeholders in the desired practices, processes, or programs within the institution. Implementation is the process of monitoring and adjusting the administration of the desired practices, processes, or programs for quality and fidelity. Standards identified within Initiate should become the focus of the institution's continuous improvement journey toward the collection, analysis, and use of data to measure the results of engagement and implementation. Enhancing the capacity of the institution in meeting these Standards has the greatest potential impact on improving student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Improve

The second phase of the improvement journey is to gather and evaluate the results of actions to **Improve**. The elements of the **Improve** phase are defined within the Levels of Impact of Results and Sustainability. Results come from the collection, analysis, and use of data and evidence to demonstrate attaining the desired result(s). Sustainability is results achieved consistently to demonstrate growth and improvement over time (a minimum of three years). Standards identified within Improve are those in which the institution is using results to inform their continuous improvement processes and to demonstrate over time the achievement of goals. The institution should continue to analyze and use results to guide improvements in student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

Impact

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

Cognia Performance Accreditation and the Engagement Review

Accreditation is pivotal in leveraging education quality and continuous improvement. Using a set of rigorous research-based standards, the Cognia 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 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 Cognia Performance Standards. Review teams use these Standards to assess the quality of learning environments to gain valuable insights and target improvements in teaching and learning. Cognia provides Standards that are tailored for all education providers so that the benefits of accreditation are universal across the education community.

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

Cognia Standards Diagnostic Results

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

| Color | Rating | Description |
|--------|--------------|---|
| Red | Insufficient | Identifies areas with insufficient evidence or evidence that indicated little or no activity leading toward improvement |
| Yellow | Initiating | Represents areas to enhance and extend current improvement efforts |
| Green | Improving | Pinpoints quality practices that are improving and meet the Standards |
| Blue | Impacting | Demonstrates noteworthy practices producing clear results that positively impact the institution |

Under each Standard statement is a row indicating the scores related to the elements of Cognia’s i3 Rubric. The rubric is scored from one (1) to four (4). A score of four on any element indicates high performance, while a score of one or two indicates an element in need of improvement. The following table provides the key to the abbreviations of the elements of the i3 Rubric.

| Element | Abbreviation |
|----------------|--------------|
| Engagement | EN |
| Implementation | IM |
| Results | RE |
| Sustainability | SU |
| Embeddedness | EM |

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. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 1.2 | Stakeholders collectively demonstrate actions to ensure the achievement of the system's purpose and desired outcomes for learning. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 1.3 | The system engages in a continuous improvement process that produces evidence, including measurable results of improving student learning and professional practice. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 1.4 | The governing authority establishes and ensures adherence to policies that are designed to support system effectiveness. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 1.5 | The governing authority adheres to a code of ethics and functions within defined roles and responsibilities. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 4 | EM: | |
| 1.6 | Leaders implement staff supervision and evaluation processes to improve professional practice and organizational effectiveness. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 3 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 1.7 | Leaders implement operational processes and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness in support of teaching and learning. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 4 | EM: | |
| 1.8 | Leaders engage stakeholders to support the achievement of the system's purpose and direction. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 1.9 | The system provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 1.10 | Leaders collect and analyze a range of feedback data from multiple stakeholder groups to inform decision-making that results in improvement. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 3 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 1.11 | Leaders implement a quality assurance process for their institutions to ensure system effectiveness and consistency. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |

Learning Capacity Domain

The impact of teaching and learning on student achievement and success is the primary expectation of every institution. An effective learning culture is characterized by positive and productive teacher/learner relationships, high expectations and standards, a challenging and engaging curriculum, quality instruction and comprehensive support that enable all learners to be successful, and assessment practices (formative and summative) that monitor and measure learner progress and achievement. Moreover, a quality institution evaluates the impact of its learning culture, including all programs and support services, and adjusts accordingly.

| Learning Capacity Standards | | | | | | | | | | Rating |
|-----------------------------|--|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|-----------|
| 2.1 | Learners have equitable opportunities to develop skills and achieve the content and learning priorities established by the system. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 2.2 | The learning culture promotes creativity, innovation, and collaborative problem-solving. | | | | | | | | | Improving |
| | EN: | 3 | IM: | 3 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |
| 2.3 | The learning culture develops learners' attitudes, beliefs, and skills needed for success. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 2.4 | The system has a formal structure to ensure learners develop positive relationships with and have adults/peers that support their educational experiences. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 2.5 | Educators implement a curriculum that is based on high expectations and prepares learners for their next levels. | | | | | | | | | Improving |
| | EN: | 3 | IM: | 3 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |
| 2.6 | The system implements a process to ensure the curriculum is clearly aligned to standards and best practices. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |
| 2.7 | Instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learners' needs and the system's learning expectations. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 3 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 2.8 | The system provides programs and services for learners' educational futures and career planning. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 2.9 | The system implements processes to identify and address the specialized needs of learners. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 3 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |
| 2.10 | Learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated. | | | | | | | | | Improving |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 3 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |

| Learning Capacity Standards | | | | | | | | | | Rating |
|-----------------------------|--|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|-----------|
| 2.11 | Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to the demonstrable improvement of student learning. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 3 | IM: | 3 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 3 | EM: | |
| 2.12 | The system implements a process to continuously assess its programs and organizational conditions to improve student learning. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 3 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |

Resource Capacity Domain

The use and distribution of resources support the stated mission of the institution. Institutions ensure that resources are distributed and utilized equitably, so the needs of all learners are adequately and effectively addressed. The utilization of resources includes support for professional learning for all staff. The institution examines the allocation and use of resources to ensure appropriate levels of funding, sustainability, organizational effectiveness, and increased student learning.

| Resource Capacity Standards | | | | | | | | | | Rating |
|-----------------------------|--|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|-----------|
| 3.1 | The system plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the system's effectiveness. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 3 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |
| 3.2 | The system's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 3 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |
| 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. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |
| 3.4 | The system attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the system's purpose and direction. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |
| 3.5 | The system integrates digital resources into teaching, learning, and operations to improve professional practice, student performance, and organizational effectiveness. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |
| 3.6 | The system provides access to information resources and materials to support the curriculum, programs, and needs of students, staff, and the system. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |
| 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. | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 3 | SU: | 2 | EM: | |

| Resource Capacity Standards | | | | | | | | | | | Rating |
|-----------------------------|--|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----------|
| 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. | | | | | | | | | | Impacting |
| | EN: | 4 | IM: | 4 | RE: | 4 | SU: | 3 | EM: | 4 | |

Assurances

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

| Assurances Met | | |
|----------------|----|--|
| YES | NO | If No, List Unmet Assurances by Number Below |
| X | | |

Accreditation Status and Index of Education Quality®

Cognia will review the results of the Accreditation Engagement Review to make a final determination concerning accreditation status, including the appropriate next steps for your institution in response to these findings. Cognia provides the Index of Education Quality (IEQ) as a holistic measure of overall performance based on a comprehensive set of standards and review criteria. This formative tool for improvement identifies areas of success and areas in need of focus. The IEQ comprises the Standards Diagnostic ratings from the three Domains: Leadership Capacity, Learning Capacity, and Resource Capacity. 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. Institutions should review the IEQ in relation to the findings from the review in the areas of Initiate, Improve, and Impact. An IEQ score below 250 indicates that the institution has several areas within the Initiate level and should focus its improvement efforts on those Standards within that level. An IEQ in the range of 225–300 indicates that the institution has several Standards within the Improve level and is using results to inform continuous improvement and demonstrate sustainability. An IEQ of 275 and above indicates the institution is beginning to reach the Impact level and is engaged in practices that are sustained over time and are becoming ingrained in the culture of the institution.

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

| | | | |
|------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Institution IEQ | 363.71 | CIN 5 Year IEQ Range | 278.34 – 283.33 |
|------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|

Insights from the Review

The Engagement Review Team engaged in professional discussions and deliberations about the processes, programs, and practices within the institution to arrive at the findings of the team. These findings are organized around themes guided by the evidence, with examples of programs and practices, and suggestions for the institution's continuous improvement efforts. The Insights from the Review narrative should provide contextualized information from the team's deliberations and analysis of the practices, processes, and programs of the institution organized by the levels of Initiate, Improve, and Impact. The narrative also provides the next steps to guide the institution's improvement journey in its efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities for all learners. The findings are aligned to research-based criteria designed to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness. The feedback provided in the Accreditation Engagement Review Report will assist the institution in reflecting on its current improvement efforts and adapting and adjusting its plans to continuously strive for improvement.

Throughout the preparation and the subsequent review of Butler County Board of Education, it was the full intention of the Cognia Engagement Review Team (team) to gain as much information as possible to rate the standards, review the evidence, and engage all stakeholders in the virtual process. The team engaged in quality, information-gathering sessions including interviews of stakeholders, a presentation by the Butler County School System (BCSS) leadership team, and a comprehensive review of the evidence provided to the team. It is within this context that the team offers the following insights that highlight themes across the organization and ideas for next steps.

Butler County School System's culture embraces collaboration, shared communication, and collegiality through a commitment to the mission of the system, the demonstrable actions of stakeholders, and collective participation in continuous improvement. Stakeholder interviews and a review of the presented documentation indicated that a commitment to the mission of the system was "everybody's responsibility." Within the mission, these words state, "Our mission is...to collaborate with all stakeholders to create a positive learning environment that supports the academic, social, and emotional well-being of each child." The mission ensures that everyone is aware that being supportive, encouraging, and accountable holds true for each stakeholder. Examples were presented of town hall meetings at each school providing a forum for the voice of the community. The words from the community were included directly in the vision communicated in the Strategic Plan. Administrator and teacher interviews indicated that the system's leaders listen to and heed the voice of all personnel. Student interviews and student engagement surveys indicated that students have a voice in leadership roles, in specific school activities, and in relaying concerns and suggestions to system and school leaders. Sign-in logs, agendas, and minutes of meetings specifically related to the Alabama Continuous Improvement Plan (ACIP), both for the system and individual schools, listed stakeholders representing various groups who were involved, indicated collaborative discussion to determine goals, objectives, and timelines of the ACIP, and noted areas of improvement related to increased academic achievement and consistent student engagement. In addition, BCSS collaborated extensively to ensure the system's Closing Plan (2020-21) and Back to School Plan (2021-22) were fluid documents that set expectations and provided detailed explanations for traditional and virtual modes of instructional delivery.

As a small, rural school system, BCSS leaders have worked to develop communication avenues and strong relationships with all stakeholders. Parents spoke of the open-door policy not only at their community schools but also with the superintendent and central office leaders. Parents also explained that teachers were available before and after school and used specific apps for communication as well as "always available through texting." Students indicated they are well-known by their teachers and administrators. The building of relationships within the system is a priority for the system leaders. With

the disruptions during the past two years, BCSS is determined to provide social-emotional (SEL) support for all students and adults. The system uses the Rhithm app, which is a K-12 student and staff wellness check-in tool. The platform selects an ideal SEL activity or intervention video to regulate well-being based on user-given data from a simple emoji assessment. In reviewing data from the app, leaders have discovered that many students and adults use the app frequently; consistent use of this tool provides support in areas of empathy, gratitude, and mindfulness. In addition, BCSS builds relationships and support for students through collaboration with the AmeriCorps Instructional Support Team. This team consists of 25 full-time members who are regular instructional assistants in the system's schools. Ensuring that all students know they are important, cared for, and supported strengthens the bonds between the system, schools, students, teachers, and families.

The Board of Education, superintendent, leadership team, and administrative leaders have established an environment that is visionary, progressive, inclusive, and transparent. In seeking an educational environment that supports all learners, the leaders of BCSS have worked to develop a visionary and progressive path for the system's students. In the development of the ACIP and the Strategic Plan for the system, leaders are integrating initiatives which support both current students and the students who will enter the system schools' doors in years to come. The four strategic themes for BCSS revolve around Building Scholarship, Building Support, Building Futures, and Building Relationships. These visionary goals include building scholarship through academic recovery and enrichment for all students, building support through strategic planning and aligning human and fiscal resources to support staff and students, building futures through ensuring access to quality college and career readiness programs, activities, and resources that engage and prepare students for next steps, and building relationships through promoting and supporting safe, positive, and healthy learning environments. From board member interviews, the team learned that the relationship between the board and superintendent is professional, trusting, and collaborative. The board indicated they were well-informed of any developments in schools, were provided information about any legislation or news from the Alabama Department of Education (ADE), and served on and participated in various committee assignments. The board reviews data that are collected and analyzed on student learning and growth, on professional practices implemented in the classrooms across the system, and on the fiscal responsibility and allocation of resources of the system. The board's responsibilities include establishing, reviewing, and revising the policies, procedures, and practices which guide the system. Interviews with board members and a review of documentation indicated specific trainings for the members, the code of ethics which all members sign and adhere to, and the written commitments for the members. One member stated, "We have a good system and are making great progress for our students." Members adhere to Alabama School Boards Association (ASBA) guidelines, review fiscal and business management decisions, and receive updates on instructional programs. Throughout the year, each of the six schools provides a presentation concerning respective schools. Interviews with board members indicated that the group is in continual two-way communication with the superintendent through emails, participates in all Alabama-mandated trainings, and takes additional trainings when needed. In addition, the board reviews the Strategic Plan and ACIP to ensure alignment of the board's focus to the system's goals. Teachers also indicated that the system leaders were visible in the schools, available for department and school professional learning community (PLC) meetings, and supportive and encouraging of the teachers and the spirit of collaboration.

Interviews with focus group stakeholders, representing several groups, noted that the superintendent and leadership team members were supportive and helpful in both long-range and day-to-day decisions which center on students. Documentation and stakeholder interviews indicated that the superintendent works closely with building-level leadership when making budget allocations, reviewing continuous improvement plans, revising standard operational procedures and practices, and determining needed informational resources and materials. Weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly leadership meetings of the

system and school-level leaders ensure the educational focus is maintained, the voices of all stakeholders are heard, and collaborative efforts guide the system.

The district and school leaders provide an open-door approach so that parents, community members, and students can speak directly to district and school leaders. Staff members repeatedly emphasized the visibility of not only the superintendent but also of many system personnel in schools and at many school activities. Teachers expressed that they have a voice which is heard by system leaders. System leadership was very transparent about challenges with improving student academic performance, implementing strategies for student engagement, and increasing consistent parental and community involvement. The board, superintendent, and system and building leaders work tirelessly to implement processes to ensure the system is effective and consistent in efforts to fulfill its purpose. The leadership is encouraged to expand these initiatives and continually seek ways of involving all stakeholders.

Even though BCSS has a plethora of academic and behavioral data available and detailed procedures for implementing Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) interventions, students struggle in many areas of academic performance, and gaps in learning exist within the system schools. BCSS has identified higher levels of academic performance by all students as a system-wide goal; however, using ADE statistics, in 2021 the system declined in the proficiency rate in English/language arts, math, and science. From 2017 to 2019, the system had seen growth in these areas and the overall rating of the system by the ADE calculations has been increasing yearly. However, the effects of the pandemic, the introduction of a new (virtual) modality of instruction, and the lingering challenges of adult and student attendance due to quarantine restrictions halted the increase in academic performance and introduced new challenges for all system leaders. BCSS has survey, assessment, behavioral, college and career readiness, and attendance data which combined depict the landscape of the academic progress of all students. As one leader stated, “One data point does not define a student.” The system has implemented processes for ensuring Multi-Tiered System of Supports and Response to Intervention (RtI) procedures are being utilized at all levels, tutoring is available, counselors and therapists are active at all schools, and data are being used to target students who are struggling academically. Students have data portfolios and binders, PCL meetings “name and claim” students who are not progressing to proficiency, and students and teachers monitor progress frequently. Deep, intentional dives into the data have been implemented in the schools; however, interviews indicated that the school teams do not consistently disaggregate and examine the data. For system-wide improvements in academic achievement, the team encourages the system and school leaders to fully implement the expanded data exploration to include all schools, all students, and all assessed content areas. In addressing the inconsistency, the leaders can identify all struggling learners, seek best practices in instruction and learning, and remain committed to the teaching and learning of all students.

System-wide monitoring and adjusting of classroom instruction which includes the consistent use of best practices, innovative, creative, and problem-solving activities, connections of content to real-life experiences, and student collaboration in projects/tasks to increase student engagement and academic growth are inconsistent. Student surveys, interviews, and documented evidence indicated that system-wide, consistent, classroom instruction which promotes student engagement, creativity, and innovation is a challenge for BCSS. The student engagement survey analysis indicated elementary students were compliant as opposed to engaged, middle school students needed more problem-solving opportunities, and high school students would benefit from more electives, pathways, and real-life experiences. Evidence indicated the system has developed action plans from the survey data. In addition, the system uses the Cognia Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®) to gauge student engagement and the use of high expectations and digital resources in instruction. Results of eleot observations confirmed that projects, engagement, and high expectations were areas of growth for the system. The system leaders confirm that the consistent use of

best practices, collaboration, and creativity does not appear in all classrooms. Through the Communities of Excellence program, Cognia’s Learning Community Platform, and the hiring of an instructional specialist at the secondary level, BCSS plans to provide individualized professional development (PD), purposeful and intentional PLC opportunities, and community PD for the development of active learning environments. The system is encouraged to fully implement these initiatives and processes into all classrooms and to consistently and frequently monitor classroom instruction to ensure these initiatives bolster student engagement and increase student academic achievement.

In conclusion, Butler County School System is to be commended for its commitment to the mission and vision, visionary and transparent leadership, and unwavering focus on students. The Engagement Review Team thanks the system for its genuine engagement in the continuous improvement process and hopes the system will use the insights from this review as they continue moving forward in **“Building Communities for Student Success.”**

Next Steps

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

- Review and share the findings with stakeholders.
- Develop plans to address the areas for improvement identified by the Engagement Review Team.
- Use the findings and data from the report to guide and strengthen the institution's continuous improvement efforts.
- Celebrate the successes noted in the report.
- Continue the improvement journey.

Team Roster

The Engagement Review Teams are comprised of professionals with varied backgrounds and expertise. To provide knowledge and understanding of the Cognia tools and processes, all Lead Evaluators and Engagement Review Team members are required to complete Cognia training. The following professionals served on the Engagement Review Team:

| Team Member Name | Brief Biography (Lead Evaluator Only) |
|---|---|
| Donna Wear, Lead Evaluator | Donna Wear holds a Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts, and Rank I (MA +30) certification from Murray State University (MSU). She began her career as a secondary English and social studies teacher, followed by serving as a middle and high school assistant principal and principal. She actively led curriculum, instruction, and assessment initiatives at the school level. Ms. Wear served as the principal/director of the Commonwealth Middle College. Currently, Ms. Wear is a clinical supervisor for the MSU’s Teacher Quality Institute and serves as an adjunct faculty member. She teaches practicum courses and observes secondary education practicum students and student teachers. Ms. Wear is a Lead Evaluator and team member for system, school, charter authorizer, and corporation reviews, serves as a Cognia Content Coach, and is a member of the Cognia KY Advisory Council. |
| Ashley Catrett, Associate Lead Evaluator | Director, Crenshaw County Schools, AL |
| Rachel Gunn, Team Member | Technology Director |
| Edie Hand, Team Member | Principal |
| Dr. Annise Mabry, Team Member | President |

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