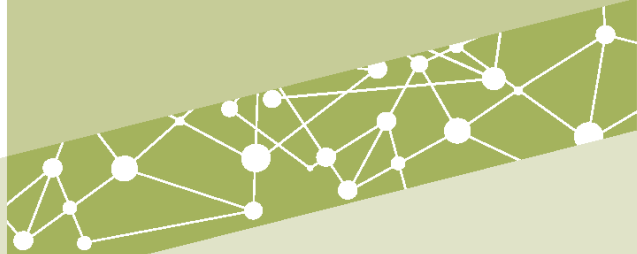


March 18-20, 2019



AdvancED® Engagement Review Report



AdvancED® Performance Accreditation

» **Results for:**
Hill City School District
488 Main Street
Hill City, South Dakota 76071

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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 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.

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**. Results are reported within four ranges identified by the colors. The results for the three Domains are presented in the tables that follow.

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

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.	Meets Expectations
1.2	Stakeholders collectively demonstrate actions to ensure the achievement of the system's purpose and desired outcomes for learning.	Exceeds 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.	Exceeds 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.	Meets Expectations
1.8	Leaders engage stakeholders to support the achievement of the system's purpose and direction.	Meets Expectations
1.9	The system provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness.	Meets Expectations
1.10	Leaders collect and analyze a range of feedback data from multiple stakeholder groups to inform decision-making that results in improvement.	Meets Expectations
1.11	Leaders implement a quality assurance process for its institutions to ensure system effectiveness and consistency.	Meets Expectations

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.	Meets Expectations
2.2	The learning culture promotes creativity, innovation and collaborative problem-solving.	Meets Expectations
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.	Meets Expectations
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 clearly aligned to standards and best practices.	Meets 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.	Exceeds Expectations
2.9	The system implements processes to identify and address the specialized needs of learners.	Exceeds Expectations
2.10	Learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated.	Meets Expectations
2.11	Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to demonstrable improvement of student learning.	Meets 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 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.	Meets Expectations
3.2	The system's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.	Meets 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.	Meets Expectations
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.	Meets Expectations
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 AdvancED 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. Classroom observations are conducted for a minimum of 20 minutes. Trained and certified observers take into account the level of embeddedness, quality, and complexity of application or implementation; number of students engaged and frequency of application. Results from the eleot are reported on a scale of one to four based on the students' engagement in and reaction to the learning environment. In addition to the results from the review, the AdvancED Improvement Network (AIN) results are reported to benchmark your results against the network averages. 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.

The insights eleot data provide are an invaluable source of information for continuous improvement planning efforts. Although averages by eleot Learning Environment are helpful to gauge quality at a higher, more impressionistic level, the average rating for each item is more fine-grained, specific and actionable. Institutions should identify the five to seven items with the lowest ratings and examine patterns in those ratings within and across environments to identify areas for improvement. Similarly, identifying the five to seven items with the highest ratings also will assist in identifying strengths within and across eleot Learning Environments. Examining the eleot data in conjunction with other institution data will provide valuable feedback on areas of strength or improvement in institution's learning environments.

eleot® Observations		
Total Number of eleot® Observations	26	
Environments		AIN
Equitable Learning Environment	2.72	2.86
Learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs	2.08	1.89
Learners have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	3.31	3.74
Learners are treated in a fair, clear and consistent manner	3.46	3.77
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	2.04	2.06
High Expectations Environment	2.51	3.02
Learners strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher	2.31	3.17
Learners engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	2.81	3.14
Learners demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work	1.96	2.83
Learners engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	2.42	3.06
Learners take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning	3.04	2.89
Supportive Learning Environment	3.09	3.61
Learners demonstrate a sense of community that is positive, cohesive, engaged, and purposeful	2.85	3.66

eleot® Observations		
Total Number of eleot® Observations	26	
Environments		AIN
Learners take risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	2.65	3.49
Learners are supported by the teacher, their peers and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks	3.42	3.66
Learners demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher	3.42	3.66
Active Learning Environment	2.78	3.08
Learners' discussions/dialogues/exchanges with each other and the teacher predominate	2.69	3.34
Learners make connections from content to real-life experiences	2.65	2.80
Learners are actively engaged in the learning activities	3.35	3.43
Learners collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments	2.42	2.74
Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment	2.44	3.14
Learners monitor their own learning progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored	2.23	3.20
Learners receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work	2.96	3.37
Learners demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content	2.81	3.37
Learners understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed	1.77	2.63
Well-Managed Learning Environment	3.18	3.58
Learners speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other	3.38	3.86
Learners demonstrate knowledge of and/or follow classroom rules and behavioral expectations and work well with others	3.38	3.83
Learners transition smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another	2.88	3.09
Learners use class time purposefully with minimal wasted time or disruptions	3.08	3.54
Digital Learning Environment	2.00	1.50
Learners use digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	2.12	1.60
Learners use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	1.92	1.46
Learners use digital tools/technology to communicate and/or work collaboratively for learning	1.96	1.46

Assurances

Assurances are statements 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	X	Unmet	
Unmet Assurances			

AdvancED Continuous Improvement System

AdvancED 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 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.

The findings of the Engagement Review Team will be organized by the Levels of Impact within i3: Initiate, Improve and Impact. The organization of the findings is based upon the ratings from the Standards Diagnostic and the i3 Levels of 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 stakeholders are engaged in the desired practices, processes, or programs within the institution. Implementation is the degree to which the desired practices, processes, or programs are monitored and adjusted for quality and fidelity of implementation. Standards identified within Initiate should become the focus of the institution’s continuous improvement journey to move toward the collection, analysis and use of data to measure the results of engagement and implementation. A focus on enhancing the capacity of the institution in meeting the identified 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 represents 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 (minimum of three years). Standards identified within Improve are those in which the institution is using results to inform their continuous improvement processes and using results over time to demonstrate 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 the culture of the institution. Institutions should continue to support and sustain these practices that are yielding results in improving student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

Findings

The findings in this report represent the degree to which the Accreditation Standards are effectively implemented in support of the learning environment and the mission of the institution. Standards which are identified in the **Initiate** phase of practice are considered Priorities for Improvement that must be addressed by the institution to retain accreditation. Standards which are identified in the **Improve** phase of practice are considered Opportunities for Improvement that the institution should consider. Standards which are identified in the **Impact** phase of practice are considered Effective Practices within the institution.

13 Rubric Levels	STANDARDS
Initiate Priorities for Improvement	
Improve Opportunities for Improvement	Standard: 3.5
Impact Effective Practices	Standards: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11 Standards: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12 Standards: 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8

Accreditation Status and Index of Education Quality® (IEQ®)

AdvancED 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. 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. The IEQ results are reported on a scale of 100 to 400 and provides 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 their improvement efforts on those Standards within the Initiate 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 AIN institutions evaluated for accreditation in the last five years. The range of the annual AIN IEQ average is presented to enable you to benchmark your results with other institutions in the network.

Institution IEQ	342.42	AIN 5 Year IEQ Range	278.34 – 283.33
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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, examples of programs and practices and provide direction for the institution's continuous improvement efforts. The Insights from the Review narrative should provide contextualized information from the team deliberations and provide information about the team's analysis of the practices, processes, and programs of the institution from the levels of Initiate, Improve, and Impact. The Insights from the Review narrative should provide next steps to guide the improvement journey of the institution 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 to adapt and adjust their plans to continuously strive for improvement.

The Engagement Review Team identified several themes from the review conducted at Hill City School District that support the continuous improvement journey for the school system. These themes present strengths and opportunities to assist the system in their improvement journey.

A spirit of accountability, collaboration and support characterizes the healthy culture of the district. Hill City School District clearly provides students with extensive positive opportunities for learning, growth and development in a supportive atmosphere that is recognized and appreciated by all stakeholder groups. The pride exhibited by all stakeholders was evidenced through the mutual support, respect, participation, and appreciation exhibited through formal and informal interviews, survey data and observations.

Ranger Time is a designated time in the daily schedule for students to get tutoring from a teacher in any subject and in any grade. There is a Peer-to-Peer mentoring program. Due to the small student population, students are involved in multiple clubs/activities. Through interviews and observations, the team noted a great deal of positive student/teacher interaction. Counseling services are readily available and used. The term "family" was indicated in the interviews of each stakeholder group.

Students at all levels spoke about how much they appreciated being able to learn in a challenging and supportive environment. The acceptance, spirit of accountability, and personal encouragement students are provided give them hope and support to hold their heads up, set goals, and develop as a whole child. In focus group interviews, the team found support throughout all stakeholder groups to indicate that the responsibility to provide a supportive learning environment is embedded in the school system culture. Additionally, students were frequently observed by the Engagement Review Team working collaboratively in the classroom. The eleot data accumulated from our observations indicated that learners demonstrated a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher. Overall, classroom pupil-teacher ratios are small allowing the teacher one-on-one time with students. Teachers remarked that the small student population of 453 students allowed teachers the informal time to communicate and collaborate with each other and students daily. One teacher commented, "We know personally and work with all the students." Teachers further explained that this informal setting is where survey and reflection data are often reviewed to ensure teacher and student needs are met. Other data meetings on a formal basis are scheduled during the week. Observations and interviews conducted during visits to schools revealed school leaders, teachers and support staff displayed unconditional love and acceptance for their young learners. During stakeholder interviews, parents described the culture with words such as accountability for both students

and teachers, mutual respect, higher expectations, caring, flexible and collaboration. Students described the school system as together, small, diverse, fortunate, reliable and expanding. A culture of caring and collegiality permeated all schools and was found to be deeply ingrained in the way staff, parents, and students work.

Continuing the implementation of the system's current technology/digital learning plan will ensure all learners use digital tools for gathering, evaluating and using information for learning, both individually and collaboratively. For several years the system has continued its commitment to digital and technology growth for each student, a significant financial investment. The Engagement Review Team reviewed the technology plans/continuous improvement plans. It is apparent through these documents and leadership interviews that technology implementation is making some progress and has been for the past three years. To date there is a 1:1 ratio of technology devices at all schools. A review of documents, surveys and interviews available indicated improvement efforts could be realized by an increased emphasis on the future of technology in the system. There is an increase in funding projected for technology in the 5-year plan. This is promising for the system. Student and parent comments in focus interviews confirmed that technology and digital learning had been increased over the years but should also show more improvement and usage. All learners have access to digital material and resources as evidenced by the 1:1 initiative. Interviews indicated the system has a technology person who is contracted through Golden West Telecommunications. In addition to regular maintenance, this individual offers support for the on-line state mandated tests.

As indicated by the eleot observations results, learners are only somewhat utilizing technology/digital tools to communicate and or work collaboratively for learning. The two additional learner ideas in the digital learning environment observations indicated that learners use tools to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning in the not observed to evident categories. As indicated during classroom observations, students used very little technology to conduct research, solve problems and/or create original works for learning to some degree.

It is important that the system ensures that teachers and staff continue to have training to integrate technology into their instruction. All classrooms have Smart Boards to support teaching. The system (K - 12) is a 1:1 computer to student ratio system. Laptops are checked out to students; however, K - 5 student computers are not taken home. Interviewed elementary school students made statements such as, "We are all issued laptops but are not allowed to take them home. They must be returned to our classroom cart at the end of the day." The eleot scores for the Digital Learning Environment verify the need for increased student use of technology. Expanding student access to digital resources can allow more opportunities for them to use the digital resources for collaborative problem-solving, researching and responding to information for learning.

The Hill City School District continuous improvement process provides a positive and valuable tool allowing stakeholder input and commitment to improving student learning and professional practice. Through observations, interviews, well-developed continuous improvement plans (CIP) and the AdvancED Strategy Map, it was apparent to the team that the system has consistently documented improvement efforts and effective planning for sustained growth over time. The system provided numerous documents and presented clarifying information in the superintendent's orientation. The team reviewed numerous documents including the 2013-2017 Strategic Planning and School Improvement Plans, strategic agendas, advisory committee documents and survey results. Also available were professional development plans for the school years 2015-2019. Many documents indicated sustained growth and improvement over time. All schools and the system completed the AdvancED strategy map template (in chart form) as part of the CIP. The strategy is a five-year plan for improvement and growth ideas. The strategy maps (one for each school and the school system) included the three main ideas of vision, mission and beliefs followed by the objectives of professional development -student safety-

student achievement and parent engagement. The last part completed indicated the key measures of each objective. Used regularly, the strategy map will provide clear direction for continuous improvement and sustained growth.

Although some stakeholders were frequently involved in support of the programs and practices, actively seeking additional stakeholders should help contribute to even greater success of student learning and shared responsibility of professional practice. Interviews, evidence in documents and observations revealed that school leaders analyzed data to develop and implement continuous improvement plans. The addition of AdvancED culture and climate surveys and the AdvancED inventories should provide additional insight of stakeholder perceptions and perspectives. School-wide use of the eleot tool would provide additional insight into the learning environments of each school and an overall assessment of activities in the school system. The system is encouraged to use these components of the AdvancED eProve platform. As new leadership for the system begins next school year, continuing the process with timely reviews/revisions and communicating the plans and strategies to all stakeholders will foster greater success with fidelity.

Special needs and career/ college focus supports the system vision of “Advancing Education to Empower Every Student to Succeed in A Rapidly Changing World.” Based on interviews, surveys, observations and documents, the team learned that there was a great deal of support for student’s individual needs, strengths, and weaknesses. Students are met at their individual levels and given learning opportunities for sustained growth. Using test scores, data, and other assessments (AP courses, Scholastic Aptitude Test) students are assembled according to ability. The formative student assessment program implemented in the system is the North West Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Performance MAP program (NWEA). The online assessment program is administered to students. This practice enables students to grow and develop according to individualized needs. The on-line assessment program measures academic progress in Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) is administered to Hill City School District Students grades 3-8 and 11 where 100% of students are tested. Data are dissected and utilized and reported to parents.

The college and career counselor shared with the team that data were collected and analyzed that reflected that all students at Hill City High School have a continual collaborative review of their academic and career plans. The school counselor has very close ties with all of the area colleges such as SD School of Mines and Black Hills State University. Students also have many other venues to consider for their future including Western Dakota Tech which offers degree and career opportunities to pursue from carpentry, welding, and the medical fields. The middle and high school counselor deals with a variety of issues that includes student’s academic pathways, class scheduling, and social/emotional problems.

The high school and area business owners work in conjunction to host a yearly job fair expo to help students acquire and obtain summer and possible future employment. The town’s economy is largely based on the tourism industry. This practice enables students to grow and develop according to need. Parent and student interviews revealed that they are fully behind the school district and are grateful for the educational partnership they have engaged in with the community and the stakeholders.

The team observed a display board of students’ post-secondary plans in the main entrance of the high school and board office that celebrates the next chapter of their lives. This annual exhibit exemplifies the excitement, encouragement, and support this school system has for its students. Furthermore, the district provided specific graduation data over the past 3 years on students’ post-secondary pathways that they have chosen. The high school reported that they typically have a 100% graduation rate with mild fluctuations from year to year never

dipping below 92%.

The Engagement Review Team’s observations identified specific instructional strategies are used at all grade levels to fully support the system’s vision of “Advancing Education to Empower Every Student To Succeed in A Rapidly Changing World.” Based on the eleot results, general observations, stakeholder comments, and formal interviews, consideration should be given to focusing on particular professional learning opportunities to increase teacher skills in the following areas: differentiated learning, appreciation for learner differences, how to describe high quality work, making connections from content to real-life experiences, understanding or explaining how student work is assessed, and the integration of technology in curriculum.

With many standards already embedded in the system, the system can now make these effective practices “the way we do things” in Hill City. Collectively, the elements of the AdvancED Performance Standards serve as a road map for the continuous improvement process for institutions and as the foundation of the accreditation process used by AdvancED Review Teams to provide relevant and quality feedback on how institutions are serving the learner.

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 Priorities 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 professional experiences. All Lead Evaluators and Engagement Review Team members complete AdvancED training and elect 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>Garry Rickard Lead Evaluator</p>	<p>Garry Rickard is a retired educator serving 37 years in the Mountain Brook City Schools in Alabama. In that system, he served as a high school teacher, high school assistant principal, junior high principal and vocational director. After retirement in 2008, Mr. Rickard served as a college supervisor of student teachers. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in social studies and a Master of Arts in education, and Educational Specialist in school administration. He has served as Lead Evaluator and/or team member on state, system, corporate, international and early learning AdvancED reviews throughout the United States and the world. He has served as a state council member and associate director for AdvancED Alabama and is an AdvancED field consultant.</p>
<p>Becky Sukstorf</p>	<p>Becky Sukstorf has taught English and social studies at Spearfish Middle School for 23 years. She was a building representative on the AdvancED (formerly NCA) team for nearly 20 years. She currently is the district AdvancED chairman/coordinator, and has served on several AdvancED Engagement Review Teams. After obtaining her B.S. in elementary/middle level education, Becky obtained her M.Ed. in literacy, leadership and reading from the University of Sioux Falls. She is the English department building chairperson and serves on the building leadership team, the curriculum council, and several other committees in her building. She has been active with the South Dakota Department of Education in the writing, revision, and disaggregation of the English Language Arts standards.</p>
<p>James Nelson</p>	<p>Mr. James E. Nelson currently serves as principal of Cheyenne-Eagle Butte High School (C-EB) in South Dakota. Nelson has served as an assistant principal in Wichita, KS, Kansas City, Kansas and in C-EB High School. Mr. Nelson has an undergraduate degree from the University Science of Arts of Oklahoma, master's degree from Oklahoma City University with a gifted track and administration degree from Wichita State University.</p>

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Stephanie Strand	<p>Stephanie Strand is an employee of the Rapid City Catholic School System and is primarily housed at St. Thomas More High School in Rapid City, South Dakota. She is currently in her 12th year as a K-12 school counselor, and most of her time is spent with 9-12th graders. She graduated from South Dakota State University with a bachelor's degree in psychology in 2002. She then worked in a public-school system in a small town in Minnesota briefly, where she then decided to pursue her master's degree (2005) in marriage and family therapy from Argosy University. After working for a couple of years in Minneapolis in a variety of clinical settings, she moved back to Rapid City, South Dakota where she worked in private practice for 7 years. During that time, she pursued her school counseling certification from South Dakota State University. She recently graduated from the University of South Dakota with an Ed.S. in educational leadership.</p>

References and Readings

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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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