Accreditation Engagement Review

July 01, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Richmond County School System

Institution #215157

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Accreditation Is Continuous Improvement

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." Accreditation is a continuous improvement process that helps an institution improve teaching and learning. Using Cognia's Performance Standards, the institution examines its current effectiveness as well as its capacity and capability to achieve its vision and goals for the future.

Cognia believes all institutions can improve no matter how well they are currently performing. 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 analyses of data from diverse sources to select and implement actions that drive improvement in education quality and student performance. Cognia recognizes that each institution's improvement journey is unique and that we can serve you best by providing key findings specific to your institution.

Around the turn of the 21st century, accreditation transformed its focus and process from a ten-year evaluation focused on the accomplishments of an institution's past decade to a forward-focused process examining what an institution is striving to accomplish in the next five years. Modern accreditation examines the current and future capabilities and capacities of an institution in the context of its mission, purpose and direction. The Standards for Accreditation define how a good institution behaves and provides the criteria to focus improvement efforts that will lead to growing learners, teachers, and leaders.

In reality, modern accreditation is a continuous improvement process. At least every six years, the institution formally engages the Standards for Accreditation to reflect and examine its progress toward its desired future as expressed through its mission, purpose, and strategic direction.

Cognia's purpose-driven, strategic process is the most widely used continuous improvement process in the world.

Cognia Performance Accreditation and the Engagement Review

This report contains the findings of the Engagement Review. The findings of the report are organized in five sections: Assurances, Rating of Analyses, Cognia Performance Standards, Insights from the Review, and a Summary of Findings that includes Noteworthy Practices and Areas for Improvement.

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 Cognia Accreditation Process, highly skilled and trained evaluators gather first-hand evidence and information pertinent to evaluating an institution's performance against research-based Cognia Performance Standards. Using these standards, evaluators assess the quality of the learning environment to gain valuable insights and target improvements in teaching and learning as well as the operation of the institution.

To build a comprehensive evaluation of your institution, our experts gain a broad understanding of institution quality through a review of documented evidence, discussions with leadership, and community feedback. Using the standards as a framework, the report provides valuable guidance to help focus your institution's improvement journey.

Assurances

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

#	ASSURANCES	YES/NO
1.	The institution has read, understands, and complies with the Cognia Accreditation and Certification Policies and Procedures.	⊘ Yes
2.	The institution complies with all applicable governmental laws or regulations.	⊘ Yes
3.	The institution adheres to ethical marketing and communication practices to transparently disclose current and accurate information to the public.	⊘ Yes
4.	The governing authority adheres to written policies that govern its conduct, decision making, ethics, and authority; and engages in training aligned to its roles and responsibilities.	⊘ Yes
5.	The institution annually submits all financial transactions for an annual audit conducted by an accounting authority external to the institution.	⊘ Yes
6.	The institution annually reviews and implements written management plans for security, crisis, safety and health for onsite and virtual environments that includes expectations, communications protocols, and training for students, staff and stakeholders.	⊘ Yes
7.	The institution participates in required training related to accreditation or certification by timeframes prescribed by Cognia.	⊘ Yes
8.	The system executes a written quality assurance process to monitor and verify that all institutions within its jurisdiction: • meet the applicable governmental requirements of the school's location; • meet the Cognia Accreditation and Certification Policies and Procedures; • meet the Cognia Accreditation and/or Certification Standards and Assurances and • implement its required education programs with fidelity	⊘ Yes

Evaluations of Institution Analyses

Cognia expects institutions to use a systematic process to collect data and information using quality instruments and then analyze and synthesize that information to arrive at findings. From the findings, Cognia expects institutions to develop, prioritize, and implement theories of action that will sustain high-performing areas and lead to improvement in underperforming areas.

Cognia requires institutions to complete analyses on selected data sources. Each analysis is evaluated using rubrics aligned to the main activities within the analysis process.

Stakeholder Feedback Analysis

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The institution has made an accurate appraisal of the quality of their data sources using the Evaluative Criteria.	★★★☆ Network Average: 3.5
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information.	★★★☆ Network Average: 3.0
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.3
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★ Network Average: 2.7

Network Comparison for Stakeholder Feedback Analysis

Your Institution	3.5
Cognia Network Avg.	3.1

Student Performance Analysis

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The institution has made an accurate appraisal of the quality of their data sources using the Evaluative Criteria.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.4
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information.	★★★☆ Network Average: 3.1
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.3
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★ Network Average: 2.8

Network Comparison for Student Performance Analysis

Your Institution	3.8
Cognia Network Avg.	3.1

Learning Environments Analysis

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The institution has made an accurate appraisal of the quality of their data sources using the Evaluative Criteria.	★★★☆ Network Average: 3.4
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information.	★★★☆ Network Average: 2.8
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.1
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★ Network Average: 2.7

Network Comparison for Learning Environments Analysis

Your Institution	3.5
Cognia Network Avg.	3.0

Culture of Learning

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The narrative provides evidence for Standards related to Culture of Learning.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.6
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information and responded to the prompts for Culture of Learning.	★★★☆ Network Average: 3.2
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.2
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★ Network Average: 2.7

Network Comparison for Culture of Learning

Your Institution	3.8
Cognia Network Avg.	3.1

Leadership for Learning

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The narrative provides evidence for Standards related to Leadership for Learning.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.5
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information and responded to the prompts for Leadership for Learning.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.1
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.1
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★ Network Average: 2.6

Network Comparison for Leadership for Learning

Your Institution		4.0
Cognia Network Avg.		3.1

Engagement of Learning

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The narrative provides evidence for Standards related to Engagement of Learning.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.5
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information and responded to the prompts for Engagement of Learning.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.0
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.1
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★ Network Average: 2.6

Network Comparison for Engagement of Learning

Your Institution		4.0
Cognia Network Avg.		3.0

Growth in Learning

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The narrative provides evidence for Standards related to Growth in Learning.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.4
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information and responded to the prompts for Growth in Learning.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.0
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.1
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★ Network Average: 2.6

Network Comparison for Growth in Learning

Your Institution		4.0
Cognia Network Avg.		3.0

Performance Standards Evaluation Results

Accreditation is based primarily on the evaluation of evidence that reflects an institution's ability to meet the expectations as defined by the Cognia Performance Standards. The Performance Standards define the elements of quality that research indicates are present in an effective institution. Accreditation standards provide the guideposts to becoming a better institution. The Engagement Review evaluators apply a four-level rubric to determine the degree to which the institution demonstrates effective practices that reflect the expectations of the standard. The rubric scale is designed to indicate the current performance of the institution.

The rubric is scored from Level 4 to Level 1. Descriptions are provided in the table below.

RATING	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
★★★★	4	Demonstrating noteworthy systematic and systemic practices producing clear results that positively impact learners.
★★★☆	3	Engaging in practices that provide evidence of expected effectiveness that is reflected in the standard.
★★☆☆	2	Developing or improving practices that provide evidence that effort approaches desired level of effectiveness.
★☆☆☆	1	Reflecting areas with insufficient evidence and/or limited activity leading toward improvement.

Cognia Performance Standards Ratings

Culture of Learning Standards

A good institution nurtures and sustains a healthy culture for learning. In a healthy culture, learners, parents, and educators feel connected to the purpose and work of the institution as well as behave in alignment with the stated values and norms. The institution also demonstrates evidence that reflects the mission, beliefs, and expectations of the institution (e.g., student work; physical appearance of the institution; participation in institution activities; parents' attendance at institution functions).

Keys to Culture of Learning
A healthy culture is evident where:
• Stakeholders are actively engaged and supportive of the institution's mission
• Learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests are the focal point
• Stakeholders are included and supported

Standard 1

Leaders cultivate and sustain a culture that demonstrates respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion, and is free from bias.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 3.3

4	4 - Leaders consistently model the attributes and implement practices that shape and sustain the desired institution culture, clearly setting expectations for all staff members. Leaders and professional staff members consistently implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that embody the values of respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion and are free from bias.
3	3 - Leaders regularly model the attributes and implement practices that shape and sustain the desired institution culture, clearly setting expectations for all staff members. Leaders and professional staff members routinely implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that embody the values of respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion and are free from bias.
2	2 - Leaders occasionally model the attributes and implement practices that shape and sustain the desired institution culture, clearly setting expectations for all staff members. Leaders and professional staff members sometimes implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that embody the values of respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion and are free from bias.
1	1 - Leaders rarely model the attributes and implement practices that shape and sustain the desired institution culture, clearly setting expectations for all staff members. Leaders and professional staff members seldom implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that embody the values of respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion and are free from bias.

Standard 2

Learners' well-being is at the heart of the institution's guiding principles such as mission, purpose, and beliefs.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 3.4

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Staff members continually demonstrate commitment to learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests. The institution's practices, processes, and decisions are documented and regularly reviewed for consistency with its stated values.
3	3 - Staff members routinely demonstrate commitment to learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests. The institution's practices, processes, and decisions are documented and are consistent with and based on its stated values.
2	2 - Staff members occasionally demonstrate commitment to learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests. The institution's practices, processes, and decisions are consistent with and based on its stated values.
1	1 - Staff members seldom demonstrate commitment to learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests. The institution's practices, processes, and decisions may not be based on its stated values.

Standard 3

Leaders actively engage stakeholders to support the institution's priorities and guiding principles that promote learners' academic growth and well-being.

YOUR RATING
★★★★
Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL   DESCRIPTION

4	4 - Leaders establish and sustain conditions that consistently result in support and active participation among stakeholders. Leaders consistently collaborate with stakeholders to advance identified priorities. Institutions implement a formal process to choose areas of focus based on analyzed data on learners' needs and consistent with guiding principles.
3	3 - Leaders establish and sustain conditions that regularly result in support and active participation among stakeholders. Leaders routinely collaborate with stakeholders to advance identified priorities. Institutions choose areas of focus based on analyzed data on learners' needs and consistent with guiding principles.
2	2 - Leaders establish conditions that occasionally result in support and participation among stakeholders. Leaders sometimes collaborate with stakeholders to advance identified priorities. Institutions choose areas of focus sometimes based on data on learners' needs and consistent with guiding principles.
1	1 - Leaders establish conditions that rarely result in support and participation among stakeholders. Leaders seldom collaborate with stakeholders. Institutions choose areas of focus rarely based on data about learners.

Standard 4

Learners benefit from a formal structure that fosters positive relationships with peers and adults.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 3.1

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - A formal structure is planned and consistently implemented to promote a culture and climate in which learners receive support from adults and peers. Peer and adult interactions and behaviors consistently demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for one another's well-being.
3	3 - A formal structure is planned and regularly implemented to promote a culture and climate in which learners receive support from adults and peers. Peer and adult interactions and behaviors routinely demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for one another's well-being.
2	2 - A formal structure may be planned but is minimally implemented to promote a culture and climate in which learners receive support from adults and peers. Peer and adult interactions and behaviors sometimes demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for one another's well-being
1	1 - A formal structure is not planned or implemented to promote a culture and climate in which learners receive support from adults and peers. Peer and adult interactions and behaviors rarely demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for one another's well-being.

Standard 5

Professional staff members embrace effective collegiality and collaboration in support of learners.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - The institution's documented operating practices cultivate and set expectations for collegiality and collaboration and are monitored for fidelity of implementation. Professional staff members consistently interact with respect and cooperation, learn from one another, and consider one another's ideas. Professional staff members intentionally and consistently work together in self-formed or assigned groups to review information, identify common problems, and implement solutions on behalf of learners.

3	3 - The institution's documented operating practices cultivate and set expectations for collegiality and collaboration. Professional staff members regularly interact with respect and cooperation, often learn from one another, and routinely consider one another's ideas. Professional staff members often work together in self-formed or assigned groups to review information, identify common problems, and implement solutions on behalf of learners.
2	2 - The institution's operating practices somewhat cultivate and set expectations for collegiality and collaboration. Professional staff members generally interact with respect and cooperation, periodically learn from one another, and somewhat consider one another's ideas. Professional staff members sometimes work together in self-formed or assigned groups to review information, identify common problems, and implement solutions on behalf of learners.
1	1 - The institution's operating practices rarely cultivate and set expectations for collegiality and collaboration. Professional staff members may or may not interact with respect and cooperation, learn from one another, or consider one another's ideas. Professional staff members rarely work together in self-formed or assigned groups to review information, identify common problems, and implement solutions on behalf of learners.

Standard 6

Professional staff members receive the support they need to strengthen their professional practice.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.8

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Professional staff members consistently receive adequate resources and assistance based on data and information unique to the individual. A formal structure ensures that professional staff members receive personalized mentoring and coaching from leaders and peers.
3	3 - Professional staff members receive adequate resources and assistance based on data and information unique to the individual. Professional staff members receive personalized mentoring and coaching from leaders and peers.
2	2 - Professional staff members receive some resources and assistance based on data and information unique to the individual. Professional staff members periodically receive mentoring and coaching from leaders and peers.
1	1 - Professional staff members receive few or no resources and assistance based on data and information unique to the individual. Professional staff members rarely receive mentoring and coaching from leaders and peers.

Network Comparison for Culture of Learning Standards

Your Institution	3.2
Cognia Network Avg.	3.1

Leadership for Learning Standards

The ability of a leader to provide leadership for learning is a key attribute of a good institution. Leaders who engage in

their own learning while tangibly supporting the learning process for learners and teachers have a significant positive impact on the success of others. Leaders must also communicate the learning expectations for all learners and teachers continuously with consistency and purpose. The expectations are embedded in the culture of the institution, reflected by learners', teachers', and leaders' behaviors and attitudes toward learning.

Keys to Leadership for Learning
Leadership for learning is demonstrated when school leaders:
• Communicate expectations for learning
• Influence and impact the culture in positive ways
• Model and engage in learning while supporting others to do so

Standard 7

Leaders guide professional staff members in the continuous improvement process focused on learners' experiences and needs.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.8

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Leaders consistently engage professional staff members in developing, communicating, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting the continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process is based on analyzed trend and current data about learners' academic and non-academic needs and the institution's organizational effectiveness. Leaders and professional staff members consistently implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that improve learning and engage stakeholders.
3	3 - Leaders regularly engage professional staff members in developing, communicating, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting the continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process is based on analyzed data about learners' academic and non-academic needs and the institution's organizational effectiveness. Leaders and professional staff members routinely implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that improve learning and engage stakeholders.
2	2 - Leaders occasionally engage professional staff members in developing, communicating, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting the continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process is sometimes based on data about learners' academic and non-academic needs and the institution's organizational effectiveness. Leaders and professional staff members sometimes implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that improve learning and engage stakeholders.
1	1 - Leaders seldom engage professional staff members in developing, communicating, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting the continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process is rarely based on data about learners' academic and non-academic needs and the institution's organizational effectiveness. Leaders and professional staff members rarely implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that improve learning and engage stakeholders.

Standard 8

The governing authority demonstrates a commitment to learners by collaborating with leaders to uphold the institution's priorities and to drive continuous improvement.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 3.2

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - The governing authority's policies and decisions are regularly reviewed to ensure an uncompromised commitment to learners and the institution's identified priorities. The governing authority and institution leaders use their respective roles and responsibilities to consistently and intentionally collaborate to further the

institution's improvement.

| 3 | 3 - The governing authority's policies and decisions demonstrate a commitment to learners and support the institution's identified priorities. The governing authority and institution leaders use their respective roles and responsibilities to collaboratively further the institution's improvement. |

| 2 | 2 - The governing authority's decisions demonstrate some commitment to learners and sometimes support the institution's identified priorities. The governing authority and institution leaders use their respective roles and responsibilities to focus the institution's improvement. |

| 1 | 1 - The governing authority's decisions demonstrate minimal commitment to learners and rarely support the institution's identified priorities. The governing authority and institution leaders seldom collaborate on the institution's improvement. |

Standard 9

Leaders cultivate effective individual and collective leadership among stakeholders.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Leaders consistently recognize and actively encourage leadership potential among stakeholders. Leaders create conditions that ensure formal and informal leadership opportunities, and provide customized support for individuals and groups to improve their leadership skills. Stakeholders show initiative and eagerness to take on individual or shared responsibilities that support the institution's priorities.
3	3 - Leaders frequently recognize and encourage leadership potential among stakeholders. Leaders create conditions that regularly offer formal and informal leadership opportunities, and support individuals and groups to improve their leadership skills. Stakeholders demonstrate a willingness to take on individual or shared responsibilities that support the institution's priorities.
2	2 - Leaders occasionally recognize and encourage leadership potential among stakeholders. Leaders sometimes create conditions that offer leadership opportunities and support individuals and groups to improve their leadership skills. Stakeholders sometimes volunteer to take on individual or shared responsibilities that support the institution's priorities.
1	1 - Leaders seldom recognize and encourage leadership potential among stakeholders. Leaders rarely create conditions that offer leadership opportunities and support individuals and groups to improve their leadership skills. Stakeholders rarely volunteer to take on individual or shared responsibilities that support the institution's priorities.

Standard 10

Leaders demonstrate expertise in recruiting, supervising, and evaluating professional staff members to optimize learning.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Leaders intentionally and consistently identify, develop, and retain qualified professional staff members who contribute to the institution's culture and priorities. Leaders consistently use analyzed data from a variety of

sources to forecast future staffing needs and employ best practices to attract a diverse pool of candidates. Leaders implement and monitor documented practices and procedures for supervision and evaluation that improve professional staff members' performance to optimize learning.

3	3 - Leaders identify, develop, and retain qualified professional staff members who contribute to the institution's culture and priorities. Leaders routinely use data from a variety of sources to forecast future staffing needs and employ best practices to attract a diverse pool of candidates. Leaders regularly implement practices and procedures for supervision and evaluation that improve professional staff members' performance to optimize learning.
2	2 - Leaders hire qualified professional staff members who contribute to the institution's culture and priorities. Leaders sometimes use data to forecast future staffing needs. Leaders supervise and evaluate professional staff members to improve performance.
1	1 - Leaders hire qualified professional staff members without consideration of contribution to the institution's culture and priorities. Leaders rarely use data to forecast future staffing needs. Leaders seldom supervise and evaluate professional staff members to improve performance.

Standard 11

Leaders create and maintain institutional structures and processes that support learners and staff members in both stable and changing environments.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 3.1

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Leaders consistently demonstrate awareness of potential influences on institution stability and engage stakeholders in planning and implementing strategies to maintain stability and respond to change. The institution's structure and processes are documented, monitored, and thoroughly communicated so that learners and staff members know what to do and expect in everyday circumstances. The institution's structure and processes include emergency and contingency plans that support agile and effective responses to both incremental and sudden change.
3	3 - Leaders regularly demonstrate awareness of potential influences on institution stability and engage stakeholders in planning and implementing strategies to maintain stability and respond to change. The institution's structure and processes are documented and communicated so that learners and staff members know what to do and expect in everyday circumstances. The institution's structure and processes include emergency and contingency plans that support responses to both incremental and sudden change.
2	2 - Leaders sometimes demonstrate awareness of potential influences on institution stability and engage stakeholders in planning and implementing strategies to maintain stability and respond to change. The institution's structure and processes are occasionally documented and communicated so that learners and staff members know what to do and expect in everyday circumstances. The institution's structure and processes include emergency and contingency plans to respond to change.
1	1 - Leaders seldom demonstrate awareness of potential influences on institution stability. The institution's structure and processes are not well documented or communicated so that learners and staff members know what to do and expect in everyday circumstances. The institution's structure and processes may not include emergency and contingency plans to respond to change.

Standard 12

Professional staff members implement curriculum and instruction that are aligned for relevancy, inclusion, and effectiveness.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.9

4	4 - Professional staff members systematically implement, review, and adjust curriculum and instruction based on recognized and evidence-based content standards. Curriculum and instructional practices are regularly assessed through a formal, systematic process to assure alignment, relevancy, inclusiveness, and effectiveness for all learners.
3	3 - Professional staff members implement, review, and adjust curriculum and instruction based on recognized and evidence-based content standards. Curriculum and instructional practices are regularly assessed to assure alignment, relevancy, inclusiveness, and effectiveness for all learners.
2	2 - Professional staff members implement curriculum and instruction based on recognized and evidence-based content standards. Curriculum and instructional practices are sometimes assessed to assure alignment, relevancy, inclusiveness, and effectiveness for all learners.
1	1 - Professional staff members implement locally adopted curriculum and instruction. Curriculum and instructional practices are rarely or not assessed to assure alignment, relevancy, inclusiveness, and effectiveness for all learners.

Standard 13

Qualified personnel instruct and assist learners and each other in support of the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.

YOUR RATING
★★☆☆
Network Average: 3.0

LEVEL   DESCRIPTION

4	4 - All staff members demonstrate commitment to enhancing their professional practice over and above the required knowledge and skills for their positions. Staff members work collaboratively to instruct and assist learners and colleagues in support of the institution's guiding principles. Staff members' individual and collective decisions and behaviors consistently demonstrate alignment and coherence with the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.
3	3 - All staff members demonstrate the required knowledge and skills for their positions. Staff members work cooperatively to instruct and assist learners and colleagues in support of the institution's guiding principles. Staff members' individual and collective decisions and behaviors demonstrate alignment and coherence with the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.
2	2 - Most staff members demonstrate the required knowledge and skills for their positions, and a plan is being implemented to ensure that all staff members are qualified for their positions. Staff members sometimes work cooperatively to instruct and assist learners and colleagues in support of the institution's guiding principles. Staff members' individual and collective decisions and behaviors sometimes demonstrate alignment and coherence with the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.
1	1 - Some staff members do not demonstrate the required knowledge and skills for their positions, and a plan does not exist to ensure that all staff members are qualified for their positions. Staff members rarely work cooperatively to instruct and assist learners and colleagues in support of the institution's guiding principles. Staff members' individual and collective decisions and behaviors rarely demonstrate alignment and coherence with the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.

Standard 14

Curriculum and instruction are augmented by reliable information resources and materials that advance learning and support learners' personal interests.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Professional staff members consistently suggest and provide thoughtfully selected information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process and support learners' personal interests. A systematic process is used to identify and verify that information resources and materials are selected from credible sources.
3	3 - Professional staff members suggest and provide thoughtfully selected information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process and support learners' personal interests. These information resources and materials are selected from credible sources and based on verifiable information.
2	2 - Professional staff members sometimes suggest and provide information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process and/or support learners' personal interests. These information resources and materials are usually selected from credible sources and based on verifiable information.
1	1 - Professional staff members rarely suggest and provide information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process or support learners' personal interests. These information resources and materials are rarely selected from credible sources or may not be based on verifiable information.

Standard 15

Learners' needs drive the equitable allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 3.0

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Professional staff members engage in a systematic process to analyze learners' needs and current trend data to adjust the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources to ensure equity for learning. Adjustments to resource allocation are consistently based on current data at any point in time.
3	3 - Professional staff members routinely analyze learners' needs and current trend data to adjust the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources to ensure equity for learning. Adjustments to resource allocation are routinely based on current data and at predetermined points in time.
2	2 - Professional staff members sometimes analyze learners' needs and current trend data to adjust the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources to ensure equity for learning. Adjustments to resource allocation are sometimes based on current or updated data.
1	1 - Professional staff members rarely analyze learners' needs and trend data to adjust the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources. Resources are rarely allocated in alignment with documented learners' needs or to ensure equity for learning.

Network Comparison for Leadership for Learning Standards

Your Institution	2.9
Cognia Network Avg.	3.0

Engagement of Learning Standards

A good institution ensures that learners are engaged in the learning environment. Learners who are engaged in the learning environment participate with confidence and display agency over their own learning. A good institution adopts policies and engages in practices that support all learners being included in the learning process.

Keys to Engagement of Learning
Engagement is demonstrated when all learners:
• Are included in the learning process
• Participate with confidence
• Have agency over their learning

Standard 16	

Learners experience curriculum and instruction that emphasize the value of diverse cultures, backgrounds, and abilities.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Respect for the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is embedded in every aspect of the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are authentically integrated in the curricular content and instructional practices.
3	3 - Respect for the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is clearly present in the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are intentionally included in the curricular content and instructional practices.
2	2 - Respect for the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is somewhat present in the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are inconsistently included in the curricular content and instructional practices.
1	1 - Respect for the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is rarely present in the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are not included in the curricular content and instructional practices.

Standard 17	

Learners have equitable opportunities to realize their learning potential.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 3.0

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION

4	4 - Professional staff members develop relationships with and understand the needs and well-being of individual learners. Academic and non-academic experiences are tailored to the needs and well-being of individual learners. Learners are challenged and supported to strive towards maximal levels of achievement and self-efficacy without barriers or hindrances by schedules or access to academic and non-academic offerings.
3	3 - Professional staff members know their learners well enough to develop and provide a variety of academic and non-academic experiences. Learners have access and choice in most academic and non-academic opportunities available according to grade levels or through expected sequencing of courses. Learners rarely encounter barriers when accessing academic and non-academic experiences most suited to their individual needs and well-being. Learners are challenged and supported to strive towards individual achievement and self-efficacy.
2	2 - Professional staff members give consideration to varying learner needs and well-being when developing and providing academic and non-academic experiences. Learners have access to some variety in academic and non-academic opportunities available according to grade levels or through expected sequencing of courses. Learners may encounter barriers when accessing some academic and non-academic experiences most suited to their individual needs and well-being. Learners are sometimes challenged and supported to strive towards individual achievement and self-efficacy.
1	1 - Professional staff members give little or no consideration to individual learner needs and well-being when developing and providing academic and non-academic experiences. Academic and non-academic opportunities are limited and standardized according to grade levels or a predetermined sequencing of courses. Learners frequently encounter a variety of barriers when accessing academic and non-academic offerings that would be well suited to their individual needs and well-being. Learners are rarely challenged to strive towards individual achievement and self-efficacy.

Standard 18

Learners are immersed in an environment that fosters lifelong skills including creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Conditions across all aspects of the institution promote learners' lifelong skills. Learners engage in ongoing experiences that develop the non-academic skills important for their next steps in learning and for future success. A formal structure ensures that learning experiences collectively build skills in creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.
3	3 - Conditions within most aspects of the institution promote learners' lifelong skills. Learners engage in experiences that develop the non-academic skills important for their next steps in learning and for future success. Collectively, the learning experiences build skills in creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.
2	2 - Conditions within some aspects of the institution promote learners' lifelong skills. Learners engage in some experiences that develop non-academic skills important for their next steps in learning and for future success. Some learning experiences build skills in creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.
1	1 - Learners engage in environments that focus primarily on academic learning objectives only. Little or no emphasis is placed on non-academic skills important for next steps in learning and for future success. Learning experiences rarely build skills in creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, or design thinking.

Standard 19

Learners are immersed in an environment that promotes and respects student voice and responsibility for their learning.

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Conditions across all aspects of the institution promote learners' active discovery and expression of their needs and interests. Learners give input into the instructional and learning activities they pursue and the methods in which they learn. Learners consistently identify their learning targets and monitor their progress.
3	3 - Conditions within most aspects of the institution are learner-centered and promote learners' active discovery and expression of their needs and interests. Learners give input into most of the instructional and learning activities available to them. Learners are frequently involved in identifying their learning targets and monitoring their progress.
2	2 - Conditions within some aspects of the institution are learner-centered and promote learners' active discovery and expression of their needs and interests. Learners have some opportunity for input into the instructional and learning activities available to them. Learners are sometimes involved in identifying their learning targets and monitoring their progress.
1	1 - Learners engage in environments that are heavily instructor-centered. Learners have little or no input into the instructional and learning activities available to them. Learners are rarely expected to monitor their learning progress.

Standard 20

Learners engage in experiences that promote and develop their self-confidence and love of learning.

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Learners consistently pursue challenging opportunities that may not always result in success, knowing that they will be supported when needed. Learners readily and consistently show motivation, curiosity, and excitement about their learning.
3	3 - Most learners pursue opportunities that may not always result in success, knowing they will be supported. Most learners show motivation, curiosity, and excitement about their learning.
2	2 - Some learners pursue opportunities that may not always result in success, but only with significant, individual support. Some learners show motivation, curiosity, and excitement about their learning.
1	1 - Most learners primarily pursue opportunities they believe to be risk-free or heavily guaranteed to be successful. Most learners show little motivation, curiosity, or excitement about their learning.

Standard 21

Instruction is characterized by high expectations and learner-centered practices.

LEVEL   DESCRIPTION

4	4 - Learners engage in instructional activities, experiences, and interactions based on their individual needs and interests. Professional staff members consistently deliver instruction designed for learners to reach their potential.
3	3 - Most learners engage in instructional activities, experiences, and interactions based on their individual needs and interests. Professional staff members routinely deliver instruction designed for learners to reach their potential.
2	2 - Learners engage in instructional activities, experiences, and interactions based on needs and interests typical of most students. Professional staff members infrequently deliver instruction designed for learners to reach their potential.
1	1 - Instructional activities are primarily designed around curriculum objectives with little or no focus on learner needs and interests. Professional staff members rarely deliver instruction designed for learners to reach their individual potential.

Standard 22

Instruction is monitored and adjusted to advance and deepen individual learners' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.7

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Professional staff members consistently monitor and adjust instruction based on each learner's response to instruction and achievement of desired learning targets. Professional staff members use a formal, systematic process for analyzing trend and current data to deepen each learner's understanding of content at increasing levels of complexity.
3	3 - Professional staff members regularly monitor and adjust instruction based on each learner's response to instruction and achievement of desired learning targets. Professional staff members routinely analyze trend and current data to deepen each learner's understanding of content.
2	2 - Professional staff members sometimes monitor and adjust instruction based on each learner's achievement of desired learning targets. Professional staff members sometimes analyze data to deepen each learner's understanding of content.
1	1 - Professional staff members rarely monitor and adjust instruction. Professional staff members rarely analyze data to deepen each learner's understanding of content.

Standard 23

Professional staff members integrate digital resources that deepen and advance learners' engagement with instruction and stimulate their curiosity.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.7

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Professional staff members seamlessly and deliberately integrate digital resources that add value to the learning process and encourage learners' active engagement in the learning process. Digital resources consistently support learners' pursuit of interests and deepen or extend curriculum topics to stimulate learners' curiosity.

3	3 - Professional staff members intentionally select and integrate digital resources that add value to the learning process and encourage learners' active engagement in the learning process. Digital resources routinely support learners' pursuit of interests and deepen or extend curriculum topics to stimulate learners' curiosity.
2	2 - Professional staff members occasionally select and integrate digital resources that add value to the learning process or encourage learners' active engagement in the learning process. Digital resources sometimes support learners' pursuit of interests and deepen or extend curriculum topics to stimulate learners' curiosity.
1	1 - Professional staff members select and integrate few or no digital resources or select digital resources that rarely add value to the learning process or encourage learners' active engagement in the learning process. Digital resources rarely support learners' pursuit of interests or deepen or extend curriculum topics to stimulate learners' curiosity.

Network Comparison for Engagement of Learning Standards

Your Institution	2.9
Cognia Network Avg.	2.8

Growth in Learning Standards

A good institution positively impacts learners throughout their journey of learning. A positive impact on the learner is reflected in readiness to engage in and preparedness for the next transition in their learning. Growth in learning is also reflected in learners' ability to meet expectations in knowledge and skill acquisition.

Keys to Growth in Learning
Growth is evident when
• Learners possess non-academic skills that ensure readiness to learn
• Learners' academic achievement reflects preparedness to learn
• Learners attain knowledge and skills necessary to achieve goals for learning

Standard 24

Leaders use data and input from a variety of sources to make decisions for learners' and staff members' growth and well-being.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL   DESCRIPTION

4	4 - Leaders consistently demonstrate skill and insight in considering a variety of information, choosing relevant and timely information, and interpreting data. Leaders make intentional decisions by consistently taking into account data and additional factors that have an impact on learners and staff members such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.
3	3 - Leaders regularly demonstrate skill and insight in considering a variety of information, choosing relevant and timely information, and interpreting data. Leaders make decisions by routinely taking into account data and additional factors that have an impact on learners and staff members such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.
2	2 - Leaders sometimes demonstrate skill and insight in considering and choosing information and interpreting data. Leaders make decisions that occasionally take into account data and additional factors that have an

impact on learners and staff members such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.

1	1 - Leaders rarely demonstrate skill and insight in considering and choosing information and interpreting data. Leaders make decisions that rarely take into account data and additional factors that have an impact on learners and staff members such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.

Standard 25

Leaders promote action research by professional staff members to improve their practice and advance learning.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.5

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Leaders intentionally create and preserve a culture that invites inquiry, reflection, and dialogue about instructional problems and issues relevant to the institution and/or individual learning environments. Professional staff members, as a group or as individuals, consistently engage in action research using an inquiry-based process that includes identifying instructional areas of improvement, collecting data, and reporting results to make informed instructional changes. Leaders provide and engage in learning opportunities customized for professional staff members about action research.
3	3 - Leaders regularly create and preserve a culture that invites inquiry, reflection, and dialogue about instructional problems and issues relevant to the institution and/or individual learning environments. Professional staff members, as a group or as individuals, routinely engage in action research using an inquiry-based process that includes identifying instructional areas of improvement, collecting data, and reporting results to make informed instructional changes. Leaders provide and engage in learning opportunities for professional staff members to implement action research.
2	2 - Leaders occasionally create and preserve a culture that invites inquiry, reflection, and dialogue about instructional problems and issues relevant to the institution and/or individual learning environments. Professional staff members, as a group or as individuals, sometimes engage in action research using an inquiry-based process that includes identifying instructional areas of improvement, collecting data, and reporting results to make informed instructional changes. Leaders provide and engage in some learning opportunities for professional staff members to implement action research.
1	1 - Leaders rarely create a culture that invites inquiry, reflection, and dialogue about instructional problems and issues relevant to the institution or learning environments. Professional staff members seldom engage in action research to make informed instructional changes. Leaders provide and engage in few or no learning opportunities for professional staff members about action research.

Standard 26

Leaders regularly evaluate instructional programs and organizational conditions to improve instruction and advance learning.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.6

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Leaders consistently implement a documented process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders use a formal, systematic process for analyzing current and trend data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.

3	3 - Leaders routinely implement a documented process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders use analyzed current and trend data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.
2	2 - Leaders occasionally implement a process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders sometimes use data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.
1	1 - Leaders rarely implement a process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders seldom use data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.

Standard 27

Learners' diverse academic and non-academic needs are identified and effectively addressed through appropriate interventions.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - The institution consistently addresses the range of developmental, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs to support learners' ability to learn. Strategies and interventions for these needs are formally and systematically planned and implemented based on analyzed information, data, and instructional best practices to ensure learners' success.
3	3 - The institution routinely addresses the range of developmental, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs to support learners' ability to learn. Strategies and interventions for these needs are regularly planned and implemented based on analyzed information, data, and instructional best practices to ensure learners' success.
2	2 - The institution sometimes addresses the range of developmental, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs to support learners' ability to learn. Strategies and interventions for these needs are occasionally planned and implemented based on information, data, and instructional best practices to ensure learners' success.
1	1 - The institution rarely addresses the range of developmental, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs to support learners' ability to learn. Strategies and interventions for these needs are seldom planned and implemented based on information, data, or instructional best practices.

Standard 28

With support, learners pursue individual goals including the acquisition of academic and non-academic skills important for their educational futures and careers.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.8

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Professional staff members consistently engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential and to identify meaningful, attainable goals that support academic, career, personal, and social skills. Learners consistently choose activities and monitor their own progress, demonstrating active ownership of their stated goals.

3	3 - Professional staff members regularly engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential and to identify meaningful, attainable goals that support academic, career, personal, and social skills. Learners routinely choose activities and monitor their own progress, demonstrating active ownership of their stated goals.
2	2 - Professional staff members sometimes engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential and to identify meaningful, attainable goals that support academic, career, personal, and social skills. Learners occasionally choose activities and monitor their own progress, demonstrating active ownership of their stated goals.
1	1 - Professional staff members rarely engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential and to identify meaningful, attainable goals that support academic, career, personal, and social skills. Learners do not choose activities or monitor their own progress toward goals.

Standard 29

Understanding learners' needs and interests drives the design, delivery, application, and evaluation of professional learning.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.6

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Professional learning is learner-centered, customized around the needs of individual or groups of professional staff members, and focuses on improving pedagogical skills and knowledge to better address learners' needs and interests. A documented process to select, deliver, implement, and evaluate professional learning is being fully implemented and monitored for fidelity.
3	3 - Professional learning is learner-centered, designed around the principle that professional staff members need opportunities to focus on improving pedagogical skills and knowledge to better address learners' needs and interests. A documented process to select, deliver, implement, and evaluate professional learning is being fully implemented.
2	2 - Professional learning is occasionally learner-centered, designed around the principle that professional staff members need opportunities to focus on improving pedagogical skills and knowledge to better address learners' needs and interests. A documented process to select, deliver, implement, and evaluate professional learning exists but is not fully implemented.
1	1 - Professional learning is rarely learner-centered and may or may not focus on improving pedagogical skills and knowledge to better address learners' needs and interests. A documented process to select, deliver, implement, and evaluate professional learning does not exist.

Standard 30

Learners' progress is measured through a balanced system that includes assessment both for learning and of learning.

YOUR RATING
★★★☆
Network Average: 2.8

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Professional staff members and learners collaborate to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives based on assessment data gathered through formal and informal methods. Assessment data are systematically used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.

3	3 - Professional staff members and learners regularly use assessment data gathered through formal and informal methods to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives. Assessment data are routinely used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.
2	2 - Professional staff members occasionally use assessment data gathered through formal and informal methods to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives. Assessment data are sometimes used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.
1	1 - Professional staff members seldom use assessment data to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives. Assessment data are rarely or inconsistently used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.

Network Comparison for Growth in Learning Standards

Your Institution	3.0
Cognia Network Avg.	2.7

Insights from the Review

The evaluators engaged in professional discussions and deliberations about the effectiveness of the processes, programs, and practices within the institution to arrive at the findings of the report. Guided by evidence, the evaluators arrived at findings that will inform your institution's continuous improvement efforts. The findings are aligned to research-based criteria designed to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness.

The findings are organized into narratives around four Key Characteristics critical to the success of any educational institution: culture of learning, leadership for learning, engagement of learning, and growth in learning. The narratives also provide the next steps to guide your institution's improvement journey in its efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities for all learners. The feedback provided in this Accreditation Engagement Review Report will assist your institution in reflecting on its current improvement efforts and adapting and adjusting your plans to continuously strive for improvement.

Culture of Learning

Leadership has implemented numerous opportunities for stakeholders to play a valuable role in supporting the mission and vision of the Richmond County School System. Interviews and artifacts shared insight into the many ways both internal and external stakeholders actively engage in initiatives to support the academic growth of learners. The superintendent's Student Advisory Council consists of students from grades 6-12 representing each middle and high school in the system. The group meets four times per year to engage in conversations with the superintendent as they discuss concerns, challenges, and ideas. Some of the topics discussed at the council meeting have included discipline, mental health, grading, testing, dress code, and classroom management. One major challenge brought to the superintendent at a recent meeting was the use of technology in the classroom where students voiced the concern that technology may be being used too much and even pointed out that many of the activities incorporating technology were not effective in enhancing student learning. The leadership's response was a focused professional learning session on the effective use of technology in the classroom and development of a Canvas course integrating handwriting activities to be used at the elementary schools. Students on the council routinely

make presentations at board meetings and have been involved in providing feedback as part of the instructional resources adoption process. Similarly, the superintendent's Teacher Advisory Council involves representatives from each school who provide input on policies during the adoption and revision phase and collaboratively analyze system-level data used in making decisions regarding improvement initiatives.

Strong partnerships provide evidence of the support of external audiences as part of the system's continuous improvement journey. Working together with E-Z Go Textron, a manufacturing company in the community, the system has implemented a program to improve the graduation rate while also ensuring students are college- and career-ready. Documentation included in the system's narrative stated the partnership focuses on students who are not on track to graduate. Selected students complete on-the-job training at the company while being coached on subject matter content. According to data shared by the system, 347 students have graduated from the program, 135 of whom were immediately offered full-time employment with the company. The E-Z Go Textron partnership also includes wrap-around and support services such as health care, counseling, transportation, and a food pantry. Other key partnerships exist with corporations and other entities through initiatives such as the Verizon Innovative Learning Schools (VILS) program where technology devices, free internet, and hands-on learning experiences are provided to students and teachers. Community agencies that routinely provide support in schools throughout the system include the HUB for Community Innovation which houses Augusta's Locally Grown, the Augusta University Literacy Center and the Harrisburg Family Health Care Center, the Boys and Girls Club, Junior Achievement, and the United Way.

Even though stakeholders are routinely involved, survey data do not always reflect an extremely high perception of the work of the system. Results from a recent Georgia Health Climate Survey revealed only 58.6% of middle and high school students indicated they look forward to going to school while only 62% felt they were treated fairly by teachers. Seventy-five percent of students at these grade levels stated they feel supported by their teachers. The staff survey results revealed that 71% of teachers felt parents were not involved in schooling. Realizing the need to gather and use data on stakeholder perception, leadership has implemented "Let's Talk," a platform

that promotes two-way communication by allowing staff, parents, and community members the opportunity to interact with school officials through a call-in system that includes an anonymous option. Interviews revealed the platform allows members of the internal and external community an outlet to pose questions, share ideas, and express concerns. Data on the use of the platform is regularly compiled with leadership noting that 68% of the contacts have been from employees. Recently, "Let's Talk" has also received community feedback regarding the system's plans for the long-range use of facilities. Perception can become a person's reality. Leadership is encouraged to investigate possible root causes of some of the perceptions revealed through survey data and engage stakeholders in collaborative conversations to address means to enhance the presence of a supportive culture throughout the system.

Leadership for Learning

Leadership has identified and implemented a variety of strategies to support teachers who currently do not meet certification requirements for their teaching assignments. The system's recruitment, hiring, and retention efforts have resulted in a sizable pool of teachers who currently do not possess certification requirements to serve in their role in the classroom. Data included in the Leadership for Learning Diagnostic Analysis revealed that 31% of the current teaching staff are waiver teachers meaning they possess a four-year degree that is either not in education or not in the content area in which they are teaching. According to information included in the system's leadership narrative and confirmed during interviews with the leadership team, there are several initiatives in place to support waivers as well as teachers in other alternative certification programs. Some of these include setting up model classrooms throughout the district, assigning mentor teachers via a formal mentoring and induction program facilitated through the Teacher Development Department, and providing coaches to offer assistance in instructional planning, delivery, and assessment. Additionally, the presence of professional learning communities (PLCs) in each school provides novice, waiver, and alternatively certified teachers time to engage in collaborative conversations where student data are analyzed, best practices discussed, and decisions are made regarding addressing student needs in the classroom. The system has employed six professional learning facilitators who work directly with teacher quality by conducting specialized support sessions for induction

teachers as well as their lead mentors. Working closely with colleges and universities in the area, the school system has supported waiver teachers as they completed their Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree. Interviews revealed that 49 waiver teachers completed their MAT degree and certification during December of the current school year.

These support initiatives also serve as opportunities to cultivate individual and collective leadership. The system's "Lead to Succeed" initiative includes teacher leaders who often serve as mentors to others in the building and serve in other capacities such as department chairs, grade level chairs, PLC facilitators, and academic coaches. Data shared during the leadership interview revealed that 10 of the 20 recent participants in the "Lead to Succeed" program are now employed as assistant principals at schools throughout the system. Additionally, the assistant principal cohort forum includes administrators who are currently serving in that capacity and fosters the enhancement of skills, knowledge, and dispositions in the areas of instructional leadership and operations through job-embedded professional development sessions included in the system's Aspiring Leaders program. During leadership interviews as part of the review, specific roles were identified as positions now being held by internal stakeholders who moved up through leadership development initiatives in the system. The system's narrative also included information about the Principal's Playbook. Housed in Canvas for ease of access, the platform includes multiple files on titles such as instructional look-fors, grading information, data analysis, and even a general "to-do" list. As new teachers come into the building, it is beneficial to have a cadre of administrative, as well as non-administrative staff, who are prepared to embrace them and support the acquisition and use of skills to promote effective teaching and learning in the classroom. Leadership is encouraged to continue to design, implement, and evaluate opportunities where staff members can cultivate the skills needed to foster their growth and development as well as the professional practices of others in the building.

Engagement of Learning

Opportunities for students to have a voice and to exercise responsibility for their learning are not always pervasive across the school system. Interviews with the leadership team provided several examples of instructional strategies and learning opportunities observed in some classrooms and spaces in the system. The extensive listing which was also highlighted in the Engagement of Learning Diagnostic Analysis included high-impact strategies

such as learning styles inventories, choice boards, progress monitoring charts, student-led conferencing, rubrics, and goal-setting sessions. However, disaggregated data from eProve™ Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®) observations and instructional walkthroughs as well as interviews revealed these practices are not routinely visible in classrooms across the school system. To enhance teachers' skills in what the system referenced as "choice and voice," information shared during the review revealed the Academic Services Department had developed a sustainable professional learning model focused on enhancing learner engagement in the classroom. Housed on Canvas, the model is intended to increase teacher clarity regarding the depth and rigor of the standards while also sharing insights on how to ensure students' needs and interests are acknowledged. As part of the onboarding process for teachers new to the system, a course entitled "Richmond Ready" has also been developed to systematically aid educators in effective instructional strategies to increase learner engagement and to provide opportunities for students to have input into their learning activities.

Even though 93.1% of student surveys indicated they have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, and resources; results from the eleot revealed collaborative learning was observed in fewer classrooms than the other elements. However, the system has shown significant improvement over time reducing the "not observed" ratings to less than 60%. Information included in the RCSS's Self-Assessment narrative referenced the eleot as a tool for "removing academic barriers." The system's compilation and use of eleot data from the past eight years combined with the findings from a 2018 comprehensive curriculum audit have guided the work of decision-making regarding the focus of initiatives to enhance the presence of learner-centric behaviors in the classroom. The system's Academic Services Department has utilized these data and findings to generate instructional expectations to better ensure consistency in the routine inclusion of high-impact strategies in the classroom. Building student efficacy includes enhancing conditions where students have an active role in guiding their learning. Student voice in the classroom may become more pervasive as system and school-level leadership systematically monitor the implementation, with fidelity, of learning from professional development sessions that are intended to build knowledge on instructional strategies that support student input in the processes of teaching and learning.

Growth in Learning

Data from a variety of sources are routinely captured, analyzed, and used during decision-making. Throughout the review, reference was consistently made to the critical role data play during decision-making. According to information included in the Growth in Learning Diagnostic Analysis, a data-driven process throughout the system has resulted in the development of the Portrait of a Graduate. During the review, it was noted that the intent is that all students who complete the RCSS's program of study should be equipped with the knowledge and skills to be productive collaborators, critical thinkers, responsible citizens, innovative problem-solvers, effective communicators, and continuous learners. To ensure all efforts throughout the system align with the vision of the RCSS graduate, data are routinely captured, analyzed, and used during decision-making. A comprehensive school status dashboard is updated monthly to provide timely access to critical data including enrollment, demographics, subgroup enrollment and performance data, dual enrollment, work-based learning, attendance, tardiness, discipline, formative assessment results, staff vacancies, and even over-aged students.

The RCSS Data Analysis Protocols (DAP), a compilation of clearly defined guidelines, have been established and utilized throughout decision-making processes focused on student learning. As part of the protocol, stakeholders move through the Plan, Do, Check, Act continuous improvement cycle to consistently monitor the impact of work occurring in the system. Implementation of the data analysis protocols has yielded gradual, but positive improvements. According to information shared by system leadership, the current graduation rate is 77.67%, the highest it has been in two decades. The mean ACT score of students in the system increased in 2023 from 18.4 to 19.4. The system's five-year analysis of data on the Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS) indicates performance is moving up as the scores on the End of Course Tests have demonstrated student proficiency has increased from 40% to 45%. In 2023, 872 students were enrolled in college coursework through dual enrollment. That number was down from 964 in the previous year, but initial numbers from 2024 revealed 487 students have already completed courses during the current school year. Additionally, RCSS offered 25 Advanced Placement (AP) classes with a pass rate of 23% in 2023, an increase of 3% from 2022 schools. However, data analysis still indicates areas of needed focus as 53% of students in the system are reading

below grade level. Consequently, the system has introduced initiatives to provide additional support for both the students and the teachers.

Data on students' learning styles, results from interest inventories, and surveys on industry demands have been used to develop comprehensive programming to support learners in pursuit of their career goals. Information shared as part of the review process highlighted the fact that students enrolled in the RCSS have access to learning experiences through 19 different cluster pathways that lead to credentialing status. Reported data revealed that over the past five years, 2,990 students have completed career pathways. It was noted in the system's Engagement of Learning Diagnostic Analysis that career development is a K-12 initiative with Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) programming beginning in elementary schools through Maker Space, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) classrooms, and through a focus on digital citizenship. Based on career interests, students in 6th-12th grades may attend Richmond County Technical and Career Magnet (RCTCM) School or A. R. Roberts Health Science Magnet School. Located on the same campus as Augusta Technical College, RCTCM focuses on early college and career readiness. STEM is the focus of instructional programming at A. R. Roberts. High school students have opportunities to attend the Marion E. Barnes Career Center, the Cyber Academy of Excellence, or Reaching Potential Through Manufacturing (RPM). Each of these facilities provides programming and support systems focused on specific career areas. Additionally, middle school curricular offerings include Foundations of Interactive Design, Foundations of Computer Programming, and Foundations of Secure Information Systems as part of the focus on career preparation.

According to interviews and information included in the RCSS Self-Assessment, the system is now embarking on defining a long-range facilities plan with mixed opinions from community stakeholders in terms of the best options for serving the needs of students throughout the school system. A noted challenge articulated in the Self-Assessment narrative is the school system has too many school buildings that are not at capacity to maximize funding from the state. To maximize resources some sites may need to be closed, repurposed, or merged. During stakeholder surveys, 90% of the respondents indicated that renovating schools will improve equity and fairness for all student populations. Additionally, the system is faced with a growing number of private and charter

school options from which parents and families can select resulting in a need for the RCSS to carefully examine its programming as well as its public perception. Leadership is encouraged to approach the process of developing the long-range plan for facilities with the same intentionality and transparency used during curricular discussions while systematically incorporating data analysis protocols when making decisions about future growth and the potential impact on organizational effectiveness.

Stakeholders throughout the RCSS have thoroughly engaged in the self-assessment process as strengths, areas of needed improvement, and challenges were systematically identified. The findings from this review can further enhance the system's work as it continues to pursue its mission and vision.

Summary of Findings

The review process focused on establishing evidence of effective practice and performance of the institution in relation to the accreditation standards.

Noteworthy Practices

In conducting the review, the evaluator identified Noteworthy Practices that reflect significant areas of strength in the work of the institution. Although there are numerous examples of the institution's level of quality, the recognition of Noteworthy Practices reflects the greatest strengths of the institution.

1   **Stakeholders are routinely involved in activities that support the guiding principles and priorities of the Richmond County School System. The review process highlighted numerous programs, initiatives, and partnerships where stakeholders are strategically involved in activities that promote the academic growth and well-being of learners throughout the system.**

   Standard 3   Standard 7

Areas for Improvement

Using the information collected and reviewed, the evaluator identified the following Areas for Improvement that will help the institution improve. The Areas for Improvement will be revisited when the institution conducts Cognia's Progress Report.

1   **Design, implement, and assess professional learning opportunities that focus on strategies to enhance student voice and responsibility for their learning.**

   Standard 19   Standard 29

   RATIONALE   When conditions in the institution support opportunities for learners to give input into instructional activities, then students take ownership of their learning as they monitor their progress toward meeting established goals.

2   **Collect, analyze, and use data from a variety of sources when making critical decisions about long-range plans for facilities, structures, and programming.**

   Standard 7   Standard 15   Standard 24

   RATIONALE   When leaders make decisions by taking into account data and additional factors from multiple sources, then goals established for continuous growth and improvement will align with the institution's purpose and direction.

Accreditation Status and Index of Education Quality®

Cognia will review the results of the Accreditation Engagement Review to make a final determination concerning the accreditation status of your institution based on these findings. Cognia provides the Index of Education Quality (IEQ) as a holistic measure of overall performance.

Your Institution's IEQ

317

Cognia's IEQ Network Average: **253**

SCORE	DESCRIPTION
Below 220	An IEQ score below 220 indicates that the institution has several Areas for Improvement and should focus their improvement efforts on those areas and the related Standards and/or Assurances. The institution will be required to present evidence of improvement to Cognia within one year through a Progress Monitoring Review. Additional Progress Reports may be required if satisfactory improvement is not achieved.
220 - 300	An IEQ in the range of 220-300 suggests the institution has some Areas for Improvement and may include one or more Noteworthy Practices. Institutions must address the Areas for Improvement and provide evidence of actions taken and results to Cognia in a required Progress Report due three years following the review. Additional progress monitoring may be required if satisfactory improvement is not achieved.
Above 300	An IEQ above 300 indicates the institution meets Cognia's expectations for accreditation that include one or more Areas for Improvement and may include one or more Noteworthy Practices. Institutions must address the Areas for Improvement and provide evidence of actions taken and results to Cognia in a required Progress Report due three years following the review. Additional progress monitoring may be required if satisfactory progress is not achieved.

Your Next Steps

Accreditation is a continuous improvement process. The Engagement Review provides independent, objective guidance in relation to the Performance Standards and the institution's improvement journey. Upon receiving the Accreditation Engagement Review Report, the institution is expected to implement the following steps:

- Review and share the findings in this report with stakeholders.
- Use the findings from the report to guide and strengthen your institution's improvement efforts.
- Celebrate the successes noted in the report.
- Continue the improvement journey.
- Report to Cognia on your progress toward improvement.

Evaluator Roster

The Engagement Review is conducted by professionals with varied backgrounds and professional experiences. All evaluators complete Cognia training and eleot certification to ensure knowledge and understanding of the Cognia tools and processes. The following professional(s) served on the Engagement Review:

EVALUATOR NAME	BRIEF BIOGRAPHY
Cynthia Anderson **Lead Evaluator**	Dr. Cynthia Anderson is a public school educator who has served as an elementary school teacher, instructional lead teacher, elementary school principal, director of professional learning, director of elementary curriculum, and director of middle grades curriculum. She holds degrees from Auburn University, the State University at West Georgia, and the University of Georgia. Dr. Anderson retired after 36 years of public school education. She has served Cognia as an accreditation field consultant and lead evaluator for numerous school and system-level engagement reviews as well as a team member on international reviews. In the past, Dr. Anderson taught undergraduate and graduate classes for Clark-Atlanta University, Clayton State College and University, and the University of Georgia. After 12 years of work, she recently retired from the position of assistant professor at Mercer University where she taught coursework in curriculum and instruction and assessment, served on numerous committees, supervised field experiences, and served as the liaison for a university partnership with a local school district. Since retirement, Dr. Anderson has continued to work with Mercer on the Dominican Republic partnership through the McDonald Center for the Advancement of Global Education. She also currently serves as a co-investigator for Georgia Educators Networking to Revolutionize and Transform Education.
Jay Wansley	

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