



Self Assessment

Cartersville City School System

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Introduction

AdvancED's Self Assessment (SA) diagnostic is based on the AdvancED Standards of Quality, which serves as the foundation of the accreditation and continuous improvement process. The SA is a valuable tool for collaboratively engaging staff members and stakeholders in purposeful, honest dialogue and reflection to assess the institution's adherence to the Standards, and guide its continuous improvement efforts. The SA includes the institution's self-ratings of and the evidence cited for each of the indicators, comments that explain the indicator's ratings and an overall narrative for each Standard. The results of the SA are reviewed by the External Review Team as one essential component of the preparation process for the institution's External Review.

Purpose and Direction

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

Overall Rating: 2.75

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.1	The system engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a system-wide purpose for student success.	The system has a process for review, revision, and communication of its purpose. The process has been implemented. The process includes participation by representatives from stakeholder groups. The purpose statement focuses primarily on student success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •District purpose statements - past and present •Survey results •Examples of communications to stakeholders about the district's purpose (i.e. website, newsletters, annual report, student handbook) •Copy of strategic plan referencing the district purpose and direction and its effectiveness •System Charter application Core values 	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.2	The system ensures that each school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	System policies and procedures outline the expectations for schools regarding a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process for review, revision, and communication of a purpose for student success. System personnel monitor and maintain data about each school and provide feedback for the improvement of the implementation of the process to school personnel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey results •Agendas and/or minutes that reference a commitment to the components of the schools' purpose statements •Examples of school purpose statements if different from the district purpose statement •Examples of written stakeholder communications or marketing materials that portray the school purpose and direction 	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.3	The school leadership and staff at all levels of the system commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking, and life skills.	Commitment to shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning is evident in documentation and decision making. This commitment is regularly reflected in communication among leaders and staff. Challenging educational programs and equitable learning experiences are implemented so that all students achieve learning, thinking, and life skills necessary for success. Evidence indicates a commitment to instructional practices that include active student engagement, a focus on depth of understanding, and the application of knowledge and skills. System leadership and staff share high expectations for professional practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Communication plan and artifacts that show two-way communication to staff and stakeholders about educational programs and equitable learning experiences •Examples of schools' continuous improvement plans •Survey results •Statements or documents about ethical and professional practices •Statements of shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning •The district strategic plan 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.4	Leadership at all levels of the system implement a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	Leaders at all levels of the system implement a documented, systematic continuous improvement process for improving student learning and the conditions that support learning. All stakeholder groups are engaged in the process. Personnel maintain a profile with current and comprehensive data on student, school, and system performance. The profile contains analyses of data used to identify goals for the improvement of conditions that support student learning and that are aligned with the system's purpose. Improvement goals have measurable performance targets. The process includes action planning that identifies measurable objectives, strategies, activities, resources, and timelines for achieving improvement goals. Leaders hold all personnel accountable for and evaluate the overall quality of the implementation of all interventions and strategies. The process is reviewed and evaluated. Documentation that the process yields improved student achievement and conditions that support student learning is available and communicated to stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Examples of schools continuous improvement plans •Survey results •Agenda, minutes from continuous improvement planning meetings •The district data profile •The district strategic plan 	Level 3

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence the External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

The Cartersville City School System has a rich tradition of pride and a deeply ingrained culture based upon providing a quality education for all students. The focus is on equipping students to become responsible, productive citizens by providing a safe, cooperative learning environment which encourages students to reach their potential. The vision, "A Tradition of Excellence - Making It Personal," reflects a way of life and procedure throughout the system and its schools, and provides a compass by which instructional and operational decisions are made. This vision is not just a phrase on paper but a culture throughout the school district. The statement best encapsulates the 122-year

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history of the district and sets the expectation that all students are to be prepared for their future. It is from this continuing message that the mission statement resonates with the purpose of the school system, ". . . preparing students for the challenges of progress and change through development of the skills necessary to become lifelong learners in order that they may live successful and productive lives."

The vision and mission are based upon a set of principled core values adopted by the district. These include: Leadership, A Sustaining Purpose, Commitment to the Success of Each Student, Learning Focused Education, Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Continuous Improvement, A Meaningful Workplace, Involvement of Stakeholders, and Character. Consistent communication of the vision and mission is accomplished through a variety of avenues and strategies, including, but not limited to:

- System and school websites
- Publications such as Back-to-School newspaper insert; recruitment brochures
- Reports to the Board of Education
- School Governance Councils (SGC)
- Parent Teacher Councils (PTC)
- Social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter
- Communications with the local media
- System Strategic Plan and System Charter

The vision and mission statements were most recently reviewed and reconfirmed during the renewal process of the System Charter agreement with the Georgia Board of Education in spring 2015. During this process, stakeholder groups reviewed and recommitted itself to its purpose on behalf of all the children served and to the community.

Even though the Charter provides for more local school governance, Cartersville is a "school system" - not a system of schools. With the current organization, which is strongly supported by the citizens of Cartersville, it is critical that the district maintain a seamless process and approach to its operation and communication. The school system seeks to function uniformly in its vision, philosophy, and operation. Beginning with the superintendent, Board of Education and system leadership, the organizational structure is conducive to transparent, two-way communication among all stakeholders. The district has an organizational chart which delineates the official chain of command. However, the system is still small enough where the Superintendent, Board, and leadership are open to any employee or community member. Lines of responsibility are established, but there is always someone to listen.

The tradition, organizational structure, and philosophy of Cartersville City Schools reflect a culture of open communication and trust between the school district and its stakeholders. The district's vision, mission, and core values have been internalized by stakeholders and are regularly communicated to the public through various publications, programs, and discussions. The school system is known for its quality programs, student success, and community support. The tradition is strong and why many families seek out the Cartersville community to live and have their children attend the Cartersville City Schools. Leadership and staff are committed to shared values and beliefs that contribute to the formation of a strong learning culture which is the basis for students' success and educational experiences.

This commitment is reflected in communication among leaders and staff. Teachers are dedicated to providing challenging and equitable learning experiences that meet the needs of all students. Evidence indicates a commitment to instructional practices that include active student engagement, a focus on depth of understanding, and application of knowledge and skills. Additionally, school leadership and staff are committed to professional practices that support meeting the needs of all students. Administration and staff are devoted to practicing and sustaining high expectations for the students and themselves not only within the classroom but also in the community. Stakeholder survey results show a strong sense of the district's purpose and direction. Promoting the purpose and aim for student success is certainly an area of strength.

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To ensure implementation of the intent upon which the city established the school system, regular two-way communication exists between the district and city officials. District administrators meet regularly with school representatives to coordinate perpetuation of the system message. For example, the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent meet regularly with representatives from each school governance council to ensure a connected and consistent message. The vision statement is marketed throughout the system and community by having it displayed on communications, posters, advertisements, handouts, and other printed materials. The district prides itself in focusing on individual student academic needs through a plethora of programs and opportunities to support students. This is "making it personal!"

Schools have developed data driven approaches to guide instruction and assist teachers in using the strategies needed to bridge the achievement gap and support academic growth for all students. Schools have structured time periods which extend learning for struggling students and provide remediation for students who are meeting standards. This time is specifically designed to target the needs of the most at risk students, and is characterized by on-site and off-campus tutoring assistance not only for struggling students but also as an enrichment opportunity to accelerate students. Saturday school and summer school opportunities provide additional opportunities to ensure that all students are provided with the support and additional time needed to be successful in reaching their highest academic potential.

Qualifying students are further served through several avenues such as Early Intervention Program (EIP) classes, special education, and English Language Learners (ELL) program. Schools also offer resource classes for the gifted population. With new initiatives in STEM activities and the recent addition of STEM labs at three of the schools, students are provided additional knowledge and skill access necessary to be engaged in their learning and productive in their future. The district will continue to use research based interventions to meet the needs of students and allow students to reach their educational goals. Again, the aim is to "make it personal."

Through focused professional learning, the system can move forward with technology advancements that will assist with providing a technology-rich environment for student learning and will allow additional ways to communicate information to parents and the community. The district and its schools regularly review available data in order to improve instructional delivery. However, the district tries not to knee jerk to situations based upon only one data source or draw speculative conclusions based upon limited information. Student achievement will remain the focus of the district. Five of the seven goals in the System Strategic Plan are based upon student achievement and it is the expectation of the district and the requirements of the System Charter that there will be continual improvement in the identified areas. Each school must use the goals in the System Strategic Plan to establish their strategies for meeting those objectives. Stakeholders will continue to examine student data and use stakeholder feedback to help guide the decision-making.

The positive reputation of the school system and its schools has contributed to the strong desire of students residing outside the district to attend Cartersville City Schools. The system does allow a number of out-of-district students (currently 530) to attend Cartersville schools if there is space and they meet attendance, behavior, and performance criteria. The out-of-district tuition is minimal at an initial \$300 per student with an annual renewal of only \$200 per family. Unfortunately, the school system is using a lot of time and resources to control and monitor those who try to circumvent the requirements. It is estimated that as many as 150-200 out-of-district students are attending the school system illegally. This is a huge challenge for the school system and places undue pressure on facilities, transportation, and resources. An additional 156 non-paying out-of-district students also attend as children of employees of the district or of the city of Cartersville.

Standard 1 survey results from all three stakeholder groups (staff, students and parents) indicate a strong perception that the district is maintaining and communicating its purpose and direction committing to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching. Cartersville does a great job of enculturating new staff and students into being a Purple Hurricane. People tend to come to Cartersville and stay, establishing strong ties and trust in the mode of operation and belief that there is a commitment toward the success of all students.

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Although Cartersville City Schools communicate the vision and mission to all stakeholders through many avenues, there is not a specific written process for a periodic review. In 2011 a formal evaluation of the system vision and mission statement was conducted with input from various stakeholders including board members, administrators, school groups, and community members as part of the Charter process. These statements were more informally reviewed as part of the Charter renewal process in 2015.

Traditionally, the district has had a very stable leadership and the vision and mission have not changed drastically. With the 10-year approval of the latest System Charter, however, the district may benefit by creating a plan to formally review the vision and mission statements on a more frequent basis. Student demographics have changed over the last several years and are expected to continue to diversify. Therefore, revisiting the purpose and mission statements needs to be considered as the schools continually strive to better meet the needs of the population. The district must continue to explore new avenues for communication with all stakeholders and utilize not only current means of communication but also those available in the future.

Governance and Leadership

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

Overall Rating: 3.0

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.1	The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the system and its schools.	Policies and practices support the system's purpose and direction and the effective operation of the system and its schools. Policies and practices promote conditions that support student learning, effective instruction, and assessment that produce equitable and challenging learning experiences for all students. There are policies and practices regarding professional growth of all staff. Policies and practices provide requirements, direction for, and oversight of fiscal management at all levels of the system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Professional development plans •Governing body policies, procedures, and practices •Staff handbooks •Communications to stakeholder about policy revisions •School Governance Councils Organizational Chart 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	The governing body has a process to ensure that its decisions and actions are in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities, a code of ethics, and free of conflict of interest. Governing body members participate in a systematic, formal professional development process regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing body and its individual members. The governing body complies with all policies, procedures, laws, and regulations, and functions as a cohesive unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Communication plan to inform all staff on code of ethics, responsibilities, conflict of interest •List of assigned staff for compliance •Proof of legal counsel •Findings of internal and external reviews of compliance with laws, regulations, and policies •Governing authority policies on roles and responsibilities, conflict of interest •Governing code of ethics 	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.3	The governing body ensures that the leadership at all levels has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.	The governing body protects, supports, and respects the autonomy of system and school leadership to accomplish goals for improvement in student learning and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations of the system and its schools. The governing body maintains a distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of system and school leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Communications regarding governing authority actions •District strategic plan •Examples of school improvement plans •Roles and responsibilities of district leadership •Social media •Stakeholder input and feedback •Maintenance of consistent academic oversight, planning, and resource allocation •Agendas and minutes of meetings •System Charter 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.4	Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction.	Leaders and staff throughout the system align their decisions and actions toward continuous improvement to achieve the system's purpose. They expect all personnel to maintain high standards and to hold students to high standards in all courses of study. All leaders and staff are collectively accountable for maintaining and improving conditions that support student learning. Leaders throughout the system support innovation, collaboration, shared leadership, and professional growth. The culture is characterized by collaboration and a sense of community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Examples of decisions aligned with the district's strategic plan •Professional development offerings and plans •Examples of collaboration and shared leadership •Survey results •System Charter 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	Leaders communicate effectively with appropriate and varied representatives from stakeholder groups, provide opportunities for stakeholders to shape decisions, solicit feedback and respond to stakeholders, work collaboratively on system and school improvement efforts, and provide and support meaningful leadership roles for stakeholders. System and school leaders' efforts result in measurable, active stakeholder participation, engagement in the system and its schools, a sense of community, and ownership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Minutes from meetings with stakeholders •Examples of stakeholder input or feedback resulting in district action •Copies of surveys or screen shots from online surveys •Survey responses •Involvement of stakeholders in a school improvement plan •Involvement of stakeholders in district strategic plan 	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice in all areas of the system and improved student success.	The focus of the criteria and processes of supervision and evaluation is improving professional practice throughout the system and improving student success. Supervision and evaluation processes are regularly implemented. The results of the supervision and evaluation processes are used to monitor and effectively adjust professional practice throughout the system and improve student learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Governing body policy on supervision and evaluation•Job specific criteria•Representative supervision and evaluation reports	Level 3

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence the External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

The Cartersville City School Board is the governing body for the district, establishing policies that promote effective administration and operation in all aspects of the organization. The Board is made up of seven elected officials; one from each of the city's six wards and one at-large member. Clearly defined lines of authority, relationships, and accountability are established to support the vision, mission, and goals of the district. The primary focus is to ensure the success of each student within a safe and secure environment. The Board invites and solicits public comment, including thoughts and suggestions from school personnel, regarding the adoption of and changes in policies and procedures. The community atmosphere between the administration and the board is based upon trust, collaboration and professionalism. The size of the system and community lends itself to effective communication. However, because of continuing growth and changing demographics this communication has become a greater challenge.

The Board is organized into six standing committees each of which is scheduled to meet on a monthly basis. The appropriate committee receives reports and recommendations from the Superintendent and his designees in matters pertaining to that particular committee. The committees are: Curriculum, Finance, Personnel and Extra-Curricular, Technology, Building and Grounds, and Policy. Additionally, each committee acts in an advisory capacity and sounding body to the superintendent. Each Board member, other than the President, serves on three committees with each member chairing one of the committees. The Board President serves in ex-officio capacity at all committee meetings. School Board meetings and Board committee meetings are announced and open to the public.

The school board entrusts the Superintendent in ensuring that district and school decisions are in accordance with the established purpose and direction of the school system in line with the core values. There are defined roles and responsibilities for all staff members which are based upon ethical behavior free of conflict of interest, written job descriptions, and efficiency in operation. The Superintendent and his staff have an open door policy which encourages the free exchange of ideas and suggestions to improve the school system. School board members participate in required annual training and comply with all policies, procedures, laws and regulations. The School Board annually appoints legal counsel and consults with other education attorneys as needed. All Board policies are posted on the system website through eBoard, the Georgia School Boards Association web housing tool. Additionally, a hard copy of the Board Policy Manual is available at each school and at the central office. The assistant superintendent serves as keeper of official Board policies. The Secretary to the Board also publishes a summary after each School Board meeting in order to communicate a summary of the actions of the Board to all staff.

The school board respects the autonomy of district and school leadership to accomplish goals for improvement in student learning and the management of day-to-day operations. Leaders and staff throughout the district and schools make decisions and implement actions toward continuous improvement to achieve the system's vision - "A Tradition of Excellence - Making it Personal." All personnel are expected to

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maintain high professional standards and hold students to high academic standards. Collaboration and shared leadership is evident in various system and school groups. The superintendent's Cabinet meets generally once a month and is composed of the superintendent, assistant superintendent and all director level personnel. The assistant superintendent's Coordination Team meets monthly through the school year and is composed of the Assistant Superintendent, Director of Curriculum and Accountability, Director of Special Programs, Director of Technology, System Media Specialist, Data Support Clerk, and Parent Engagement/Title III Coordinator. The Superintendent also meets with the System Leadership team weekly. This team is composed of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Finance, Director of Curriculum and Accountability, Director of Technology, and Director of Special Programs. Additionally, the Director of Curriculum and Accountability meets monthly during the school year with the System Curriculum Team composed of representatives from each school, school instructional technologists, Director of Technology, Director of Special Programs, System Media Specialist, and the Parent Engagement/Title III Coordinator.

The Board's policies are reviewed and provide a broad framework for the various functions throughout the district. When consideration is being given to new or revised policies, various stakeholder input is sought. The size and composition of those stakeholder groups is dependent upon the proposed change and clientele most affected by the change. Cartersville has an approved System Charter which is an agreement with the Georgia State Board of Education providing flexibility and waiver from most state education law, policy and regulation in exchange for higher student performance goals. Under the System Charter, each school has a School Governance Council (SGC) composed of various stakeholder representatives including teachers, parents, and business representatives. Oftentimes, it is the SGCs that act as stakeholder groups for the Board in policy discussions. SGCs may request the superintendent or his designee to attend meetings of the SGC and provide information.

At the school level, various committees serve to provide leadership and input into areas of operations and curriculum such as scheduling, discipline, technology and media. Leadership committees are active at each school for overall oversight in the operations of that school. SGCs and school staffs are free to present new ideas, methodologies, and innovations to solving local school problems and efforts toward school improvement. In Cartersville, this approach is continuous and not always a formalized event. It is standard operating procedure. As long as efforts are within the scope of the System Charter and in concert with the mission and core values, the course of action is open for any consideration.

Student performance data and critical instructional decisions are discussed by the councils. SGCs may submit inquiries, requests, and recommendations to the superintendent or school board for consideration. The board must receive this information and respond to it. Teacher representatives on the council are elected by other teachers in that school; parent representatives are elected by other parents in that school; and the business representatives are selected by the other members of the council. The SGC is also given great latitude in researching and implementing ways the school can be more effective in promoting higher academic achievement and performance. Each school also has a Parent-Teacher Council (PTC) which can be used to provide input, carry out supportive tasks, and support the goals of the school.

Additionally, the district has a System Council Advisory Panel consisting of two representatives from each local SGC. This Panel meets at least twice annually with the superintendent and assistant superintendent to exchange ideas and share information about the workings and concerns of each council.

The System Strategic Plan is reviewed annually in January - February. Each system goal in the plan is supported by specific objectives, benchmark targets, and measurement criteria in order to effectively utilize available resources to accomplish the goal. Goals are based upon high academic standards and efficient operation. Data is constantly reviewed and the plan is updated regularly as new data becomes available. System and school personnel look for trends and patterns in the data analysis so that decisions are systemic, systematic, and sustainable. Schools are required to utilize the system plan in developing their annual school improvement plan and initiatives.

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The System Employee Handbook and other communications with stakeholders about policy revisions support the system's objective of efficient and effective operations. Individual school staff handbooks and parent/student handbooks include policies and practices that promote conditions that support student learning. There are general system policies and procedures regarding professional learning, and each school has its own school improvement plan based upon specific needs and the overarching goals of the system. District personnel provide flexibility to the schools in the development and implementation of their improvement efforts as long as the system strategic plan is being utilized to guide practice and resources align with the consistent purpose of Cartersville City Schools.

During parent meetings throughout the school year, parents receive an overview of the grade level and content standards and the grading process. Parents are provided opportunities during these occasions to give input, make suggestions, and receive pertinent information about the district and its schools. Parent meetings occur at each Title I school in the district to explain what services are offered and how parents have the right to be involved in their child's education. The Empower and Lead Conference is another example of how teachers, stakeholders and the community leaders learn together as partners in education.

Evaluations for most certificated positions are administered through the state's Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES) and Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) process. For those positions not covered by the state protocol the system is in the process of developing an enhanced evaluation tool based upon current job descriptions. A similar tool is being developed to use in the evaluation of all classified employees. The teacher's professional practices and students' success are observed through announced and unannounced classroom visits, conferences and a summative assessment. The supervision and evaluation process is used to monitor services and improve student learning. Leadership and staff have the opportunity to participate in professional development related to observation results and identified needs. Schools are given flexibility in designing and providing professional learning based upon school and individual needs. System personnel provide support and resources for those professional learning efforts.

Survey results from all three stakeholder groups (staff, students and parents) indicate a strong satisfaction with the governance and leadership structure that supports student performance and school effectiveness. Cartersville has a history of long-tenured superintendents and board members.

With the desired organization of the district's schools, however, comes the challenge of vertical curriculum alignment. Since each grade level is entirely contained within one school, there is a tendency at times to operate in isolation especially in terms of curriculum issues. Over just the last few years, schools have begun to become more aware of the importance of communication in the matter of curriculum alignment. What goes on in teaching and learning in one school has a tremendous implication on the success of students in the next school. The district has identified this as an area for continued improvement

Teaching and Assessing for Learning

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

Overall Rating: 3.25

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.1	The system's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level.	Curriculum and learning experiences in each course/class provide all students with challenging and equitable opportunities to develop learning skills, thinking skills, and life skills. There is some evidence to indicate curriculum and learning experiences prepare students for success at the next level. Like courses/classes have equivalent learning expectations across the system. Teachers in all schools individualize some learning activities for each student in a way that supports achievement of expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning expectations for different courses and programs • Student work across courses or programs • Survey results • Lesson plans • Graduate follow-up surveys • Posted learning objectives 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.2	Curriculum, instruction, and assessment throughout the system are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	System personnel monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and alignment with the goals for achievement and instruction and statements of purpose. A process is implemented sometimes to ensure alignment when curriculum, instruction, and/or assessments are reviewed or revised at the system or school level. There is limited evidence that the continuous improvement process ensures vertical and horizontal alignment and alignment with the system's purpose in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.		Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.3	Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	Teachers throughout the district are consistent and deliberate in planning and using instructional strategies that require student collaboration, self-reflection, and development of critical thinking skills. Teachers personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs of each student. Teachers consistently use instructional strategies that require students to apply knowledge and skills, integrate content and skills with other disciplines, and use technologies as instructional resources and learning tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of teacher use of technology as an instructional resource • Findings from supervisor formal and informal observations • Examples of student use of technology as a learning tool • Student work demonstrating the application of knowledge • Surveys results 	Level 4

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	System and school leaders formally and consistently monitor instructional practices through supervision and evaluation procedures beyond classroom observation to ensure that they 1) are aligned with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning, 2) are teaching the approved curriculum, 3) are directly engaged with all students in the oversight of their learning, and 4) use content-specific standards of professional practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Supervision and evaluation procedures •Documentation of collection of lesson plans, grade books, or other data record systems •Peer or mentoring opportunities and interactions •Surveys results •Administrative classroom observation protocols and logs 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.5	The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.	Some system staff participate in collaborative learning communities that meet both informally and formally. Collaboration occasionally occurs across grade levels, content areas, and other system divisions. Staff members promote discussion about student learning and the conditions that support student learning. Learning, using, and discussing the results of inquiry practices such as action research, the examination of student work, reflection, study teams, and peer coaching sometimes occur among system personnel. System personnel express belief in the value of collaborative learning communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Common language, protocols and reporting tools •Agendas and minutes of collaborative learning committees •Survey results •Professional development funding to promote professional learning communities •Peer coaching guidelines and procedures •Evidence of informal conversations that reflect collaboration about student learning 	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	All teachers throughout the system use an instructional process that informs students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Exemplars are often provided to guide and inform students. The process includes multiple measures, including formative assessments, to inform the ongoing modification of instruction and provide data for possible curriculum revision. The process provides students with specific and timely feedback about their learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey results •Samples of exemplars used to guide and inform student learning 	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	System personnel are engaged in mentoring, coaching, and induction programs that are consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching, learning, and the conditions that support learning. These programs set expectations for all system personnel and include measures of performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey results •Descriptions and schedules of mentoring, coaching, and induction programs with references to district and school beliefs and values about teaching and learning •Personnel manuals with information related to new hires including mentoring, coaching, and induction practices 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.8	The system and all of its schools engage families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keep them informed of their children's learning progress.	Programs that engage families in meaningful ways in their children's education are designed, implemented, and evaluated at the system level and in all schools. Families have multiple ways of staying informed of their children's learning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Performance-based report cards •Survey results •List of varied activities and communications modes with families, e.g., info portal, online, newsletters, parent centers, academic nights, open house, early release days •Calendar outlining when and how families are provided information on child's progress •Parental/family/caregiver involvement plan including activities, timeframes, and evaluation process •Samples of exemplars used to guide and inform student learning 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.9	The system designs and evaluates structures in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the student's school who supports that student's educational experience.	School personnel implement and participate in a structure designed and evaluated by the system that gives them long-term interaction with individual students, allowing them to build strong relationships over time with the student and related adults. All students participate in the structure. The structure allows the school employee to gain significant insight into and serve as an advocate for the student's needs regarding learning skills, thinking skills, and life skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey results 	Level 4

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	Teachers across the system use common grading and reporting policies, processes, and procedures based on clearly defined criteria that represent each student's attainment of content knowledge and skills. These policies, processes, and procedures are implemented in all schools across grade levels and courses. Stakeholders are aware of the policies, processes, and procedures. The policies, processes, and procedures are regularly evaluated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey results •Sample communications to stakeholders about grading and reporting •Sample report cards for each program or grade level and for all courses and programs •Policies, processes, and procedures on grading and reporting 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	All staff members participate in a rigorous, continuous program of professional learning that is aligned with the system's purpose and direction. Professional development is individualized based on an assessment of needs of the system and the individual. The program builds measurable capacity among all professional and support staff. The program is rigorously and systematically evaluated for effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning, and the conditions that support learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Evaluation tools for professional learning •Survey results •District quality control procedures showing implementation plan for professional development for district and school staff •District professional development plan involving the district and all schools 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.12	The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	System and school personnel use data to identify unique learning needs of all students at all levels of proficiency as well as other learning needs (such as second languages). System and school personnel stay current on research related to unique characteristics of learning (such as learning styles, multiple intelligences, personality type indicators) and provide or coordinate related learning support services to all students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Schedules, lesson plans, or example student learning plans showing the implementation of learning support services •Survey results •List of learning support services and student population served by such services 	Level 3

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence the External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

The district recognizes that a viable and consistent curriculum with clearly defined expectations is the foundation of a quality education program. All schools have implemented instruction based upon curriculum standards developed by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and approved by the State Board of Education. To ensure consistent and effective implementation of the curriculum, teachers and administrators collaborate for training, identify resources, and analyze student performance data for each grade level, content area, or course. The state curriculum provides teachers with research-based guidance for instruction that clearly defines what students are expected to know and be able to do. To meet the diverse needs of students, district curricula offerings are broad, balanced, and inclusive of core

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academics, fine arts, physical education, and career/technical education. Without exception, all teachers are expected to follow the curriculum. As curriculum changes are made at the state level, the district makes appropriate modifications and adjustments.

District and school staff are continually guided by the motto - "Making It Personal." The district strives to provide all students with equitable and challenging learning experiences. The ultimate goal of the district and each school is to prepare students for the next grade level and ultimately for post-secondary success. This is summed up in the system mission of "preparing students for the challenge of progress and change through development of the skills necessary to become lifelong learners in order that they may live successful and productive lives." Each school works to make education meaningful, rigorous, and relevant for each student.

Most teachers throughout the system endeavor to keep the individual student as the primary focus instead of delivering instruction in a "one-size-fits-all" manner. Teachers regularly use instructional strategies to reach each student and differentiate instruction to meet the educational needs of all students. Differentiation of instruction and drilling down in the analysis of student performance data has been a significant focus at each school over the past several years in terms of professional learning and data measurement. The system views student performance data as representative of specific students and not just as average numbers. Additionally, each school has programs in place to help struggling students and to challenge accelerated learners. With increasing diversity and changing demographics, differentiating instruction will continue to be a major focus in the district. Schools have some recent training on the impact of poverty on instruction to help in this need.

In an effort to encourage high achievement for all students, the school system promotes and supports the implementation of research-based instructional strategies, innovations, and activities. Recognizing that students have diverse academic needs, interventions to help students meet expectations for learning are implemented at all grade levels. The district provides specialized support through Title I, Early Intervention (EIP), Remedial Education (REP), Response to Intervention (RtI), as well as a continuum of services for special education, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), homeless, and gifted/high-performing students. Parents are informed of program services through parent-student handbooks, newsletters, meetings, School Governance Councils, system and school websites, and other appropriate communications. No student is denied the opportunity to have access to the range of programs and services for which a student may qualify.

School personnel collaborate in both formal and informal settings to discuss instructional practices used to teach curriculum standards. Teachers and school administrators understand that collaboration is a key to academic effectiveness. Each school determines its own method of how that collaboration should take place within the school. The System Curriculum Committee provides a framework for and expectation that this collaboration takes place and provides a platform for which results and challenges are communicated. This committee, headed up by the Director of Curriculum and Accountability, meets at least monthly to help facilitate vertical alignment and communication. The committee is comprised of an administrator from each school, the Instructional Lead Teachers from all schools, school based instructional technologists, Director of Special Programs, Director of Technology, Parent Engagement/Title III Coordinator, and the System Media Specialist. It is critical that the district continue to look for ways to effectively manage the communication and seamless function of curriculum analysis from a PK-12 perspective.

Professional learning opportunities to support the instructional program include activities such as use of consultants, conferences and workshops, embedded on-the-job experiences, use of instructional coaches to model strategies, common planning, and release time. Many teachers attend various professional learning opportunities throughout the school year and into the summer. A significant amount of those activities in the last few years have focused on use of instructional technology, differentiation of instruction, and effective utilization of data to impact instruction. District and school leaders encourage teachers to attend and engage in professional growth and adjust their instruction accordingly to meet the diverse needs of their students. Professional learning is tracked by utilizing a common form used by all staff and submitted annually to the principal. The principal in turn submits a summary to the assistant superintendent ensuring that all teachers have participated in at least one high quality professional learning activity for the year.

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In summer 2016 Cartersville schools were invited to participate in the Phil Schlechty Institute focusing on student engagement. Each school sent a team of teachers for the training. These teachers will implement the strategies gathered from the workshop in order to better solicit student interest and attention to the work. The intent is for these teachers to share their job-embedded experiences with colleagues and then have other teachers attend the workshop next year to broaden the application base at each school. Student engagement will be a priority focus in each school.

Beginning with the 2017-18 school year, teachers will be evaluated in part by their achievement of one or more professional learning goals monitored in the state Teachers Keys Effectiveness System (TKES). In the TKES process teachers are evaluated on the performance of ten standards including: Professional Knowledge, Instructional Planning, Instructional Strategies, Differentiated Instruction, Assessment Strategies, Assessment Uses, Positive Learning Environment, Academically Challenging Environment, Professionalism, and Communication. In addition, teaching and learning is monitored by continually reviewing and analyzing student performance results. This data is derived from state mandated assessments, benchmark assessments, classroom formative assessments, and observations. TKES provides for constructive feedback and promotes continuous professional growth to improve instruction and meet the instructional needs of all students.

Each school has embraced the use of instructional technology as an important tool in meeting the educational needs of students. One of the goals in the System Strategic Plan focuses on technology and its importance in delivering services to students. Over the past two years a position of Instructional Technologist has been added to three of the district's four schools (Elementary - CES, Middle - CMS, and High - CHS). The Primary School is scheduled to have the position added within the next two years. The system is currently studying the validity and feasibility of moving to one-to-one use of technological devices for students. Bring-your-own-device is already permissible at each school and utilized by several teachers especially at the high school. Instructional technology is used as a tool to engage students, expand the depth of knowledge, and to address the needs for specific groups of students served in various programs such as 504, RtI, special education.

All schools use the RtI process to provide preventive, supplementary instructional support services for students facing challenges in meeting benchmark achievement levels. Using a data-based process, RtI seeks to prevent academic failure through early intervention, frequent progress monitoring, and increasingly intensive research-based interventions. To maximize instructional time, each school has implemented an age appropriate behavioral management program to encourage positive behavior. The Primary, Elementary and Middle schools utilize a plan that mirrors the GaDOE's Positive Behavioral and Instructional Supports (PBIS) model. The High school uses the Renaissance Program. Each program is research-based and encourages positive choices with tangible rewards while minimizing inappropriate behaviors.

Although the district's collaboration process is a work in progress, the communication with parents and the community meets the expectations of the standard. Teachers use school-based websites to communicate regularly with parents. Teachers also use multiple electronic programs to communicate with students and parents, including Edmodo, Remind 101, and Google Classroom. With the availability of so many electronic options, however, some parents have expressed concern over the lack of consistency and uniformity. The district is currently researching this concern and seeks a manageable solution. School counselors hold informational student and parent meetings for each grade level throughout the school year. Counselors visit classrooms and meet with students and parents on an individual basis. Progress reports or report cards are sent home with each student at least every six weeks, and parents are encouraged to use the online portal in the system's student information system (PowerSchool) regularly to monitor the progress of their student. Staff members communicate with parents when students are struggling academically, but they also call parents to share good news and celebrate their child's successes. As well, ESOL teachers at each school continually work to lessen communication barriers with the international student population. The system and school websites are easily translated into several languages with just the click of a button.

Parents of students who are served through various programs such as ESOL, special education, and Section 504 meet with school

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personnel to ensure students are provided with the necessary accommodations to achieve success in the classroom. These particular students are monitored closely and their case managers are in constant contact with the classroom teachers and parents. Teachers and staff at all schools offer a multitude of interventions as needed for students. Program directors monitor the overall efforts for each of these programs and efforts.

Although Standard 3 has the lowest aggregate average on the stakeholder surveys, the value is still 4.06. All three stakeholder groups (staff, students and parents) believe that the district's curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide and ensure success for all students.

Resources and Support Systems

The system has resources and provides services in all schools that support its purpose and direction to ensure success for all students.

Overall Rating: 3.38

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.1	The system engages in a systematic process to recruit, employ, and retain a sufficient number of qualified professional and support staff to fulfill their roles and responsibilities and support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, and educational programs.	Clearly defined policies, processes, and procedures ensure that system and school leaders have access to, hire, place, and retain qualified professional support staff. System and school leaders use a formal, systematic process to determine the number of personnel necessary to fill all the roles and responsibilities necessary to support purposes, educational programs, and continuous improvement throughout the district. Sustained fiscal resources are available to fund all positions necessary to achieve the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, and educational programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey results •District budgets or financial plans for the last three years •District quality assurance procedures for monitoring qualified staff across all schools •School budgets or financial plans for last three years •Documentation of highly qualified staff •Policies, processes, procedures and other documentation related to the hiring, placement and retention of professional and support staff for the district and schools 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.2	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, educational programs, and system operations.	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are focused on supporting the purpose and direction of the system, its schools, educational programs, and system operations. Instructional time is protected in policy and practice. System and school leaders work to secure material and fiscal resources to meet the needs of all students and improve the effectiveness of the system. System and school leaders demonstrate that instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are allocated so that all students have equitable opportunities to attain challenging learning expectations. Efforts toward the continuous improvement of instruction and operations include achieving the purpose and direction of the system and its schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Examples of school schedules •District quality assurance procedures showing district oversight of schools pertaining to school resources •Examples of efforts of school leaders to secure necessary material and fiscal resources •Survey results •Examples of school calendars •Alignment of school budgets with school purpose and direction •Alignment of district budget with district purpose and direction •District strategic plan showing resources support for district 	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.3	The system maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	System and school leaders have adopted or collaboratively created clear definitions and expectations for maintaining safety, cleanliness, and a healthy environment, and have shared these definitions and expectations with all stakeholders. All system and school personnel as well as students are accountable for maintaining these expectations. Valid measures are in place that allow for continuous tracking of these conditions. Improvement plans are developed and implemented by appropriate personnel to continuously improve these conditions. The results of improvement efforts are systematically evaluated regularly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Example systems for school maintenance requests •Survey results •Documentation of compliance with local and state inspections requirements •Policies, handbooks on district and school facilities and learning environments •Example maintenance schedules for schools •School safety committee responsibilities, meeting schedules, and minutes •Example school records of depreciation of equipment 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.4	The system demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning in support of the purpose and direction of the system.	The system has clearly defined policies and procedures for strategic resource management. The system employs a systematic, long-range, strategic planning process in the areas of budget, facilities, and other strategic system components. The strategic planning process is regularly evaluated for effectiveness, and improvement plans related to the process are developed and implemented when necessary. All strategic plans are implemented with fidelity by the governing body, and system leaders and have built-in measures used to monitor and ensure successful implementation and completion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •District strategic plan showing the areas of budget, facilities, quality control, and other strategic systems •Survey results •Policies, handbooks on district and school facilities and learning environments 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.5	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of information resources and related personnel to support educational programs throughout the system.	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of information resources and related personnel to ensure that all students, school, and system personnel have access to the media and information resources necessary to achieve the educational programs of the system and its schools. The system implements and evaluates processes to ensure qualified personnel are recruited, hired, and retained in sufficient numbers to assist students, school and system personnel in learning about the tools and locations for finding and retrieving information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey results •Schedule of staff availability to assist students and school personnel related to finding and retrieving information 	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.6	The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	The system provides a modern, fully functional technology infrastructure, modern, updated equipment, and a qualified technical support staff to meet the teaching, learning, and operational needs of all stakeholders throughout the system. System and school personnel collect data concerning needs and use the resulting data to develop and implement a technology plan to continuously improve technology services, infrastructure, and equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Brief description of technology or web-based platforms that support the education delivery model •Policies relative to technology use at the district-level and school-level •Survey results •District technology plan and budget to improve technology services and infrastructure for the district-level and school-level •Brief description of learning management systems or data management systems that support the effective use of student assessment results, school effectiveness, and district effectiveness •Examples of school-level technology plans and budgets to improve technology services and infrastructure to students and staff 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.7	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of support systems to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.	The system has designed and implemented a process to determine the physical, social, and emotional needs of all students and then selects or designs and implements programs to meet the needs of these students. Measures of program effectiveness are in place, and system and school personnel use the data from these measures to regularly evaluate all programs. Improvement plans related to these programs are designed and implemented to more effectively meet the needs of all students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Agreements with school community agencies for student-family support •Survey results •List of support services available to students 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.8	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students.	The system has designed and implemented a process to determine the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students and then selects or designs and implements programs to meet the needs of these students. Measures of program effectiveness are in place, and system and school personnel use the data from these measures to regularly evaluate all programs. Improvement plans related to these programs are designed and implemented to more effectively meet the needs of all students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey results •Description of IEP process •District quality assurance procedures that monitor program effectiveness of student support services •Description of referral process 	Level 3

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Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence the External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

Cartersville has policies, processes and procedures in place that ensure the hiring and retention of highly qualified and effective professionals. The assistant superintendent coordinates recruitment efforts with school principals and, where appropriate, district department heads. Fortunately, the reputation and tradition of Cartersville City Schools attracts many applicants for most positions from which to fill vacancies. The quality of the school system and the desirability to live in the Cartersville area contribute to the recruiting of quality educators. Typically, there are few vacancies except for retirements, stay-at-home moms, or spouses being relocated. Data for the past five years shows a teacher retention rate of 88%, and 75% over the past ten years. Current and anticipated vacancies are posted on the district website and also on the state TeachGeorgia.org site. District and school representatives attend nearby regional college and university career fairs to promote the school system and recruit for potential job openings. Additionally, the system advertises regularly in minority recruiting advertisements to try to increase the number of minority teachers on staff. Area colleges and universities regularly request placement of their student teachers in Cartersville because of the quality experience and training they receive. The district eventually employs many of these candidates. The district provides a very competitive compensation package and was recently ranked the eighth best in the state in teacher salaries.

Cartersville currently employs 301 professionally certified educators at the school level including 263 classroom teachers. Of these classroom teachers 81.4% have advanced degrees (44% Masters, 36% Specialist, and 2% Doctorate). Historically, 100% of all classroom teachers have met "highly qualified" requirements. Should a vacancy occur and the system not be able to find a viable candidate, the system hires the best applicant and develops a written plan to get that person highly qualified as quickly as possible. Funds are set aside to address these rare situations. The size of the district allows administrative personnel the opportunity to see firsthand the instructional program and individuals performing the duties and responsibilities of their job assignment.

District and school leadership are actively engaged in the improvement of student achievement and growth through staff meetings, data team meetings, leadership meetings, and professional learning opportunities. Teachers are regularly recognized and praised for their success. The district has a HEARTS (Honoring Employees' Achievements, Reliability, Talents and Successes) program which recognizes a different category of employee each month during the school year. Honorees are recognized at a public meeting of the Board of Education and provided a gift card to a local restaurant, compliments of a local service organization. The individual schools also recognize staff members for their service and outstanding performance throughout the year.

The district has the financial resources to support the purpose and direction of the system, its schools, programs and operations as well as the basic needs of all students and staff. Despite cuts in state funding over the last several years, Cartersville City Schools is on sound financial standing. Through leadership of the superintendent, Board of Education and Finance Director, the school system has not cut any programs or negatively impacted classroom instruction. The district has been able to eliminate over \$32,000,000 in bond debt. Additionally, during challenging economic conditions, the school system has always maintained a full 180-day instructional calendar and there have been no furlough days for staff unlike many other systems in the region and throughout the state.

Approximately 44% of the system's annual budget comes from local tax revenue. Each school is allowed to budget its allocated funds in a way to support the goals and mission of the school. Additionally, schools can apply for available grant funds to enrich their offerings and services to students. For example, each school applied for and was awarded a Striving Readers Literacy Grant for a four-year period beginning the 2012-13 school year. These grants allowed the schools to purchase additional instructional technology including iPad's, mobile laptop carts, smart boards, and smart board tables. These funds are also used to fund continuing professional learning opportunities

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for teachers in the use of these instructional tools. Online literacy programs and universal literacy screeners such as Reading Eggs and Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) have also been purchased with these funds. Back packs filled with literacy items were purchased to send home with PreK students in an effort to support literacy at home. The district currently has a student-to-computer ratio of approximately 1.67:1. In conjunction with the curriculum department, the district is researching and moving toward a 1:1 implementation of mobile devices. The system already provides a secure platform for bring-your-own-device at each school.

The system's annual budget process begins in December - January with the Board setting budget parameters that serve as a subsequent guide for departments and schools in developing budgets for the ensuing year. The budgeting process involves communication and coordination between each school and operational department. To ensure a transparent process, each department and school presents its budget before all others. Each department and school is allowed to justify any additional requests before final decisions are made and the budget is presented to the Board. The system undergoes an annual audit, and is also subject to SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) performance audits, E-rate audits, and periodic monitoring of federally funded programs. For over 20 years the district has received top ratings in all of its financial and program audits.

The school system operates under the Charter of the City of Cartersville, but with its own legal authority. The annual system budget is developed with stakeholder input and the School Board recommends a millage tax rate to the City Council based upon the adopted budget. All aspects of the budget are monitored throughout the year for effectiveness and efficiency. Over the past ten years the district has reduced its energy consumption by implementing and enforcing conservation and monitoring measures. The subsequent savings have enabled the system to efficiently operate its facilities and pass along some of those savings to employee benefits.

Addressing instructional technology needs at each school is an ongoing challenge. Currently, the Primary School (CPS) is limited on additional equipment because of the aged electrical grid within the building structure. The district has plans to upgrade the electrical grid at the school beginning spring 2017. Technology teams have been created at each school to collaborate and share feedback from all grade level staff, department leaders, and district staff. Technology purchases are made in relation to program goals.

Three of the four schools (Elementary - CES, Middle - CMS, and High - CHS) each have a full-time Instructional Technologist on staff to support the effective use of instructional technology in the classroom. In addition to group professional learning conducted by these staff members, teachers can sign up for one-on-one assistance or have the specialist model or co-teach in their classrooms. The district has plans to add the position to CPS once the electrical grid is updated at that school. One of the goals in the System Strategic Plan specifically targets ongoing technology needs. Part of addressing those needs is the standardization of technology equipment, devices, protocols, and procedures. It is critical in order to support the increasing use and acquisition to this vital administrative and instructional tool, that the district maintains a systematic and systemic approach to technology use and expectation. This will continue to be a challenge as more and new technology becomes more available.

Title III funds are used to support a growing English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) population in several ways. These funds compensate teachers and purchase materials for summer tutoring for Title III, LEP, and immigrant students. They are also used to provide professional learning for teachers and send students on a field trip to nearby Kennesaw State University where they acquire the tools and resources needed to access college information and explore careers. The district also allocates some of the homeless education budget to provide home visits, tutoring, transportation, and classroom supplies to qualifying students.

The Primary, Elementary and Middle schools are schoolwide Title I schools. Each of these schools establishes a budget for allocated funds to support the instructional needs at that school. All four schools receive Title II-A Improving Teacher Quality funds to support identified professional learning needs of the school and individual teachers. Beginning with the 2016-17 school year, the district has been approved as one of three systems in the state to pilot the consolidation of federal program funds (Title I, Title II-A and Title III) in an effort to provide

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schools more flexibility in the expenditure of funds to meet school improvement goals and student needs.

District and school leaders provide opportunities for teachers to select the instructional materials such as necessary for student success and achievement. Ample instructional funds are allocated each year to the schools for the materials necessary to provide a solid educational experience for all students. Teachers repeated report not lacking instructional materials to meet student needs in their classrooms.

School leaders have adopted clear expectations for maintaining safety, cleanliness, and a healthy environment for all students and staff. Personnel and students are held accountable for maintaining these expectations. Evaluative measures are in place that allow for continuous tracking of these conditions through regular inspections and reports. The school system contracts with a third party (Service Solutions) for all custodial services. For all practical purposes the supervisor of custodians from the company is considered a staff member and treated as such. In fact, all custodians are treated as part of the school staff even though they are paid through the third party. This is a true partnership.

The district has a written long-range plan to provide a replacement strategy for major expenditures in the areas of facilities, school nutrition, transportation and technology. This written plan is utilized in the budgeting process to guide the system in expenditure control and ensure that these areas are maintained and appropriate for use. To ensure long term planning for technology, the system implemented the Destiny Asset management and ticketing system for all technology devices during the summer of 2014. Over the fiscal year 2014-15 the technology department completed an exhaustive physical inventory, adding assets, and determining the lifespan for all technology items. With this system, the district has a way to track repairs, determine depreciation value and replacement times, and thus make more informed decisions. This process will greatly assist the district in its efforts to provide more digital technology to students and staff. Maintenance and facility assets will be inventoried and tracked in the Destiny program during the 2016-17 school year.

The district sufficiently provides resources and personnel to ensure that all students and staff have quality access to media and information resources. Based on results from needs assessments, the district schedules system staff to assist school personnel and students on finding and retrieving information sources. For the last three years the school system has operated with one System Media Specialist who provides guidance and direction to media/library services at each school. Each school has a full-time media clerk who supervises the day-to-day operation of the media center. The Instructional Technologist at CES, CMS and CHS provides further support and training to access information. The district also employs a full-time Data Support Specialist who administers the student information system (PowerSchool), supports curriculum and assessment data analysis, and the district's automated telephone messaging service (School Messenger).

The district provides a modern, fully functioning technology infrastructure, state-of-the-art equipment, and highly qualified technical support staff to meet the teaching, learning, and operational needs of all stakeholders. Teacher websites, Office 365, Brainpop, STEAM, Discovery Steaming, Nearpod, Tagul, iXL and "A Flipped Lesson" by teachers and students are some of the online and web-based platforms utilized to support the education delivery model. Classworks, SRI, Study Island and DIBELS are learning or data management systems that support the effective use of student assessment results to guide instruction. Teachers and students have regular access to state-of-the-art equipment such as Smart Boards, ELMOs, mobile laptop and iPad carts, Nooks, VRI, and Z-Space.

Each school within the district uses numerous methods to identify the physical, social and emotional needs of all students. School teams are also in place to monitor this tiered program of support at the school level. Screeners are used to identify students with areas of need. Once identified, the school selects, designs, and implements a variety of best-practice programs, interventions and other efforts to meet the needs of the student. Personnel in each school are responsible for ensuring that proper screeners are used, and identification of eligible students for intervention are based on cut of scores and norms provided by the screeners. Throughout the school year, the building level personnel who monitor this process provide student data progress checks to central office personnel in the special programs office. This information is monitored by the Director of Special Programs in order to evaluate demographics, intervention, implementation, and effectiveness as well as

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referral rates for students with physical, social and emotional needs of the student population. Any pertinent information is also shared with system social workers to obtain additional information so that outside services can be sought when needed.

Special education services are provided to qualifying students between ages 3 and 22 who have varying disabilities. Services are provided within the system, in the community, through local agencies, and occasionally in-home services. Cartersville currently provides individual educational services to approximately 430 students. Students with disabilities receive appropriate instructional strategies, accommodations, and modifications to allow them equitable opportunity.

Each school has two full-time guidance counselors to support individual students as well as staff. Counselors are responsible for the guidance curriculum, career assessment, college protocol, individual academic planning, and responsive services. Few functional areas of the school are not affected by the professionals who occupy the counseling positions. Counselors are involved with scheduling, behavior modification, career development, basic personal and social needs, intervention, and assessment. This comprehensive school counseling approach is developmental, preventive, remedial, and responsive. The high school also has a part-time Graduation Coach who assists counselors and works to improve the graduation rate.

The district also has a full-time registered nurse at each of the Primary, Elementary, and Middle schools. School nurses provide a variety of services including, but not limited to: first aid application, hearing and vision screenings, immunization record checks, illness assessment, scoliosis screenings, medicine administration, and case management for students with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, asthma, and heart conditions. The high school utilizes a health clerk to assess initial medical issues.

Through a cooperative agreement with the Cartersville Police Department and City of Cartersville, the district employs three police officers who serve as School Resource Officers (SRO). One SRO is assigned full time at CHS, one is at CMS, and the third is shared and assigned on a rotating based between CES and CPS. The SROs are on call to assist anywhere in the district. To provide help provide a safe and secure environment, these SROs form a close partnership with school administration and assist school officials in emergency situations, crisis planning, and campus security.

In addition to operating a fleet of buses to provide transportation services to and from school on a daily basis, the district allots funds toward each school's educational field trips. Local school administrators determine approval of trips related to the curriculum content and enrichment activities. Transportation is also provided for students assigned to the alternative school who might otherwise use that as an excuse for not continuing their education. The system daily route covers approximately 816 miles to and from school and transports nearly 50% of the student population. The district employs 32 drivers, 4 bus monitors, and 2 mechanics.

While the Cartersville School System does have many processes and measures in place to monitor the effectiveness of its efforts to meet the physical, social and emotional needs of its students, the use of expanded and additional evaluation processes and measures could enhance the system's ability to more effectively meet the needs of all its students.

Each school uses numerous and diverse methods to identify the needs of all students. Assessment, counseling, and social work responsibilities are listed on the system website. The Response-to-Intervention (RTI) pyramid, initial evaluation, and parent information is

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documented. The system also has a Student Support Team (SST) protocol and special education procedures in place. There are other outreach programs that provide educational services to reach the needs of the students. Some of these programs include Advocates, Hands of Christ, Georgia Hope, Rainbows, Parent Links, 504 Services, Hospital Homebound and a parent resource link called Autism Speaks. In the primary and elementary schools a career class is taught by the counselors and in the high school there is a Vocational Education Policy. Previously, at the Primary School LEAP, an afterschool tutoring program was implemented. For 2016, CPS had a summer tutoring program to meet the academic needs of the lowest performing first and second grade students in order to bridge gap needs. Bus transportation, breakfast and lunch are provided. CPS also offered a Kindergarten Boot Camp in summer 2016 to reach out to any student that has not attended any state or private pre-kindergarten program. As eighth grade students transition into high school, they are assigned a teacher who serves as their advisor during their high school years.

The Cartersville Schools Foundation supports teachers by providing mini-grants to teachers who submit approved requests for funding an innovative strategy for their classroom. These requests are by application process and the Foundation has historically funded about \$8000 annually for these grants. The Foundation also sponsors the GateKey Scholarship program to support selected students from as early as sixth grade until they graduate college. These students are identified by teachers, counselors, or parents for their hard work, dedication, and drive but they lack the resources to attend college when that time comes. These students are eligible for a college scholarship which guarantees two years at either Chattahoochee Technical College or Highlands College if they meet the criteria of the program. Since its inception in 2007, the Foundation has provided 59 scholarships and to date 54 of those have maintained eligibility. Currently, there are 54 Cartersville enrolled GateKey students; 16 of which are GateKey/REACH Scholars. The GateKey program was the forerunner to the state REACH Scholarship program. There are 109 active GateKey Scholars in total including 4 who have graduated from college and 3 who are active military.

The system contracts with Ombudsman, Inc. to provide alternative school services to up to 30 high school students and 15 middle school students. Few of these students are placed in the program primarily because of discipline issues. Instead, the program is set up truly as an alternative to the traditional school setting for students who are struggling academically and not being successful in the traditional school environment. The presentation of material in the program is via computerized instruction and accomplished in a more personalized environment.

Collectively, all stakeholder groups rated Standard 4 the highest of all five standards with an aggregate 4.19 average. Staff, parents and students recognize that the district has the resources and support services to compliment the purpose and direction of the schools to ensure success for all students.

Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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

Overall Rating: 2.8

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.1	The system establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	System and school personnel maintain and use a comprehensive assessment system that produces data from multiple assessment measures. These measures include locally developed and standardized assessments about student learning as well as school and system (including non-instructional divisions) performance. The comprehensive assessment system ensures consistent measurement across classrooms, courses, educational programs and system divisions. Most assessments are proven reliable and bias free. The comprehensive assessment system is regularly evaluated for reliability and effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning, and the conditions that support learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Documentation or description of evaluation tools/protocols •Survey results •Brief description of student assessment system including range of data produced from standardized and local or school assessments on student learning and school performance •Evidence that assessments are reliable and bias free 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.2	Professional and support staff continuously collect, analyze and apply learning from a range of data sources, including comparison and trend data about student learning, instruction, program evaluation, and organizational conditions that support learning.	Systematic processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing, and applying learning from multiple data sources are documented and used consistently by professional and support staff throughout the district. Data sources include comparison and trend data that provide a complete picture of student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and the conditions that support learning. System and school personnel use data to design, implement, and evaluate continuous improvement plans to improve student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and the conditions that support learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Examples of data used to measure the effectiveness of the district systems that support schools and learning •Survey results •Examples of use of data to design, implement, and evaluate continuous improvement plans and apply learning 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.3	Throughout the system professional and support staff are trained in the interpretation and use of data.	Most professional and support staff members are assessed and trained in a professional development program related to the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Professional learning schedule specific to the use of data •Documentation of attendance and training related to data use •Survey results •Training materials specific to the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data 	Level 2

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.4	The school system engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	Policies and procedures describe a process for analyzing data that determine verifiable improvement in student learning including readiness for and success at the next level. Results indicate improvement, and system and school personnel systematically use these results to design, implement, and evaluate the results of continuous improvement action plans related to student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Student surveys•Agendas, minutes of meetings related to analysis of data•Examples of use of results to evaluate continuous improvement action plans•Evidence of student readiness for the next level•Evidence of student growth•Evidence of student success at the next level	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.5	System and school leaders monitor and communicate comprehensive information about student learning, school performance, and the achievement of system and school improvement goals to stakeholders.	System and school leaders monitor comprehensive information about student learning, system and school effectiveness, and the achievement of system and school improvement goals. Leaders regularly communicate results using multiple delivery methods and to all stakeholder groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Minutes of meetings regarding achievement of student learning goals•Survey results•Sample communications to stakeholders regarding student learning, conditions that support learning, and achievement of school improvement goals•Examples of district marketing tools and websites that cite student achievement results or that make promises regarding student achievement	Level 3

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence the External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

The Cartersville City School System uses a variety of assessment tools to measure student learning and progress. These assessments take place throughout the school year and include state-mandated tests such as the Georgia Milestone Assessment System (GMAS), Georgia Alternative Assessment (GAA), Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS), and Access for ELL's (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State for English Learners). Additionally, supplemental evaluation programs such as Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), Classworks universal screener, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), Words Their Way Spelling Inventory; and numerous locally-developed formative and summative assessments.

Annually, district personnel with input from local school leaders review GMAS and College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) data to gauge progress on meeting the goals and objectives in the System Strategic Plan and System Charter. Subsequently, strategies

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may be modified, added or deleted to address the obtainment of the objective measures. Resources are aligned to meet the objectives of the Plan which is continually being reviewed for progress and focus. GMAS assessments are given in grades 3-8 and in certain high school courses as an End of Course (EOC) assessment on standard mastery. The CCRPI is the approved state measure designed as a comprehensive school improvement, accountability, and communication platform for all educational stakeholders to promote college and career readiness for all Georgia public school students.

Analysis of the data from the various assessments allows teachers and administrators to identify strengths and weaknesses of the overall school program and individual academic student progress. Teachers can use this information to modify or change instructional strategies to better ensure the success of each student by addressing content and processing skills. The results of this analysis guide the design and implementation of school improvement plans and initiatives. Furthermore, it allows schools to see how various subgroups of students are performing. Teachers use the data to identify strengths and weaknesses of students and drive instruction to meet the needs of their students. Schools use data to inform promotion and retention decisions, eligibility for subject specific remedial instruction, and appropriate placement in intervention programs such as Early Intervention Program (EIP), Remedial Education Program (REP), and Response to Intervention (RtI). Teachers have access to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) which provides historical data of each of their students including assessment results, attendance, enrollment, courses and grades since 2006-2007. The SLDS platform provides electronic access to this information in order to inform instructional decisions both on the classroom and individual student basis.

Assessment results are shared with stakeholders in multiple ways. Schools use social media, school websites, the local media, and various stakeholder and parent meetings to share information regarding the progress of the school and achievement of improvement goals. Individual conferences are conducted to provide parents and teachers and/ counselors time to review and discuss individual student progress. Additionally, the district must file a progress report with the Georgia Department of Education annually relative to the System Charter.

Various methods of communication will continue to be used to share school performance results on student assessments. Parents have 24/7 access to student progress and standing in each one of their classes through the parent portal in the system student information system, PowerSchool. Parent conferences will continue to be used as well to discuss details of student progress and ideas to address specific individual needs. The use of professional learning to gain a better understanding of both developing appropriate assessments and intentionally using the data gathered from various assessments will continue to be used throughout the system. These opportunities, which have been held within each school as well as some vertical alignment, will remain a priority to increase all stakeholders' understanding of students' achievement and progress.

Survey results show that all stakeholder groups (staff, students and parents) believe that the district implements a comprehensive assessment program that generates a range of data about student learning and school effectiveness. Furthermore, they trust that the results of the assessment system are used to guide the district's continuous improvement efforts. Collectively, the stakeholders rated this Standard with a 4.14 composite average.

Although professional learning is taking place at all schools to help teachers grow in their use of data collection and data use, more is still needed. In some cases, multiple assessments and the multitude of data may inhibit teachers from using it effectively when there is so much to review. A new state assessment measure, with higher expectations, has created a need to align effective data analysis practices in order to best prepare all students for college and career readiness. Schools have done trainings on data analysis of individual assessments and specific program data. Moving to a more multiple data approach would enhance this process. While all schools have systematic data collection processes in place, more training in this area will be beneficial and will lead to consistency among teachers and various data teams.

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Additionally, because of the school organization pattern in the district, there is a tendency to become isolated in terms of data analysis. Increasing opportunities for vertical alignment of data analysis could help solidify the transitions students have from one school to the next. This would also assist the district in providing a platform to analyze trend data. Since district leaders often wear many hats and carry a large burden of responsibility, it is sometimes challenging to ensure and monitor progress from a K-12 perspective. It is incumbent upon the district to ensure that effective data analysis takes place and clear results are communicated to all stakeholders.

The district has an aggressive Strategic Plan which informs decisions and focuses on what is important. The Plan has challenging goals supported by specific measurable objectives which guide in continuous improvement. To keep the district moving toward the attainment of its goals, each objective has definitive and timely benchmarks. The Plan is reviewed regularly to assess and monitor progress and make appropriate adjustments. The conversation about consequent strategies in individual school improvement plans transfers ownership of continuous improvement efforts to the classroom and student levels where the greatest impact can be realized.

Report Summary

Scores By Section

