



Accreditation Report

Cook County School System

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Every school system has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school system makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school system stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school system, and the kinds of programs and services that a school system implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school system with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the community will have a more complete picture of how the school system perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school system to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

Description of the School System

Describe the school system's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school system serves?

According to the US Census Bureau, the 2011 estimated population of Cook County was reported as 17,125 with 70% White, 28% Black, and 2% other. Of these, 7.3% were people five years and older with a language other than English spoken at home. The median household income was \$35,306, with a per capita income of \$18,755. Twenty-three percent of the population lives below the poverty level, and approximately 47% of the county's population receives food stamps or some assistance from other governmental programs.

Only 9.9% of Cook County's population age 25 or older was reported as having a bachelor's degree or higher. The challenges of reduced income, high poverty rate, and limited educational level directly impact the school environment. Many parents work extended hours at one or more jobs to provide for their family, often leaving older students to care for younger siblings at home. These parents are frequently unavailable to take an active role in their child's educational process. Moreover, the value of an education is not always communicated to or understood by the child. The unique profile of the community poses challenges faced daily by the students, their parents, and the school.

A small agri-business community, Cook County is located between Lowndes and Tift Counties 40 miles north of Florida on Interstate 75, the nation's busiest corridor. Because of the county's proximity to larger cities, it does not attract much incoming industry. However, local leadership constantly strives to bring in new businesses and industries to generate more employment and expand the tax base. Through these efforts, many small businesses have formed in the historic downtown area of Adel, the county seat.

The Cook County School Board consists of five elected members certified by the Georgia School Board Association. They meet twice monthly and attend training for recertification annually. The experience of our Board members ranges from newly elected to 16 years. Coming from a diverse background, the membership includes a farmer and agri-businessman, a small business owner, a banking executive, a lawyer, and a retired city council member.

The school system consists of four schools: Cook Primary (Pre-K-2), Cook Elementary (3-5), Cook Middle (6-8), and Cook High (9-12). As an extension of Cook Middle and Cook High, Cook Performance Learning Center serves a small group of students in an alternative setting. The district's enrollment totals 3,323 students. Of those, 54% are White, 34% are Black, 8% are Hispanic, and 4% include Asian, American Indian, and multiracial students; 51% are male, and 49% are female. The school system mirrors the county's socioeconomic status in that 73% of the students receive free or reduced lunch.

The district employs 221 certified teachers and administrators and 224 classified personnel. All paraprofessionals and teachers are highly qualified, with all teachers teaching in their fields of certification. The certified staff is made up of 8% Black, 88% White, and 4% multiracial; 16% are male, and 84% are female. The classified staff consists of 37% Black, 61% White, 1% Hispanic, and 1% multiracial; 19% are male, and 81% are female. Thirty-one percent of the certified staff members hold bachelor's degrees, 43% master's, 23% specialist, and 3% doctorate. Fifty-three certified employees have 0-10 years of experience, 53 have 11-15 years, and 115 have 16 or more years. The teachers' average salary for the district is \$51,928.75.

During the last three years, the district has experienced economic hardships due to reductions in state and federal funds, as well as a decline in the local tax base. These hardships have resulted in a decrease in instructional days from 180 to between 160 and 166 days. However,

the minutes per day have been increased to protect instructional time and meet state requirements. Despite these adjustments, the district has increased class sizes, obtaining waivers in some instances, to accommodate increases in student population. Economic constraints have also led to the use of attrition and furlough days to operate within the budget and preserve personnel. Moreover, furlough days have resulted in the loss of teacher work days and professional learning days. In spite of all of these challenges, the district is committed to providing an exemplary education for all students. Cook County has experienced an increase in test scores and the graduation rate. We have maintained high expectations and look to the future with optimism.

System's Purpose

Provide the school system's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school system embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

Mission:

The Cook County School System will provide all students with an exemplary education, which will meet the diverse needs of individual students in a positive and safe environment while preparing them for academic success, productive citizenship, and lifelong learning.

Vision:

The Cook County School System envisions a professional team of educators fostering community partnerships with the purpose of inspiring students to reach their individual potential. We envision a standards-based, inclusive, and challenging curriculum that stimulates learning and creativity in a positive and safe environment.

Beliefs:

Student learning is the highest.

Each student is unique and will be provided with a variety of instructional approaches to support and enhance learning.

A positive, safe, and orderly environment enhances and promotes student learning.

Students should be involved in decision-making, planning, and enhancing self-esteem that promotes positive relationships and mutual respect among and between students and staff.

Students learn best when actively engaged with challenging work.

Education is a shared responsibility of the entire school community, i.e. students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members.

A commitment to continuous school improvement is necessary for students to become lifelong learners.

Cook County entities work together for the benefit of all citizens, and representatives from various organizations work as stakeholders within the district. Likewise, System personnel serve as members of county organizations that influence the district. These include but are not limited to Cook County Chamber of Commerce, Cook County Health Department Board, Cook County Library Board, Cook County Tourism Commission, Coastal Plains Economic Opportunity Authority, Cook County Family Connection Collaborative, Countywide Safety Committee, and Boys and Girls Club of Greater Cook County. Through this collaboration, the district's purpose is to produce students willing to sustain the economic growth and development of the community. These students are future parents, workers, business men and women, and leaders for Cook County. To achieve this purpose, Cook County Schools must ensure that the diverse needs of all students are met.

The Mission and Vision drive all decisions made within the district. The district provides students with multiple opportunities to develop academically and socially. A continuum of programs from special education to gifted are offered to meet the academic needs of all students. Interventions are provided through the Response to Intervention program, and support programs such as English for Speakers of Other Languages, Migrant, and the Early Intervention Program provide an additional safety net. Utilizing all of these programs allows the district to achieve high academic expectations for all students.

Cook County's schools also offer a wide variety of programs designed to meet the social needs of the students. Beginning at an early age, students participate in music, computer, and physical education classes. By high school, students have been provided the opportunity to participate in activities that meet the needs of their individual personalities. These activities include Career, Technical, and Agricultural

Education courses, elective courses, athletics, and various clubs. In addition to these activities, the district promotes the development of good citizens through recognition programs and student leadership programs.

The school system works diligently to strengthen the partnership between school and home. Parent involvement holds both strengths and challenges for the district. In the early grades, parents tend to participate at a higher rate. As students progress through school and become more independent, parents are not as actively engaged in their child's learning. However, the district and schools provide parents with multiple opportunities to be involved in the education process at all levels. Opportunities include school councils, Parent Teacher Organizations, volunteer programs, teacher conferences, Parent And Child Together Time, and Parent Lunch and Learn.

Communication between the schools and home is enriched through district and school websites, teacher emails, the AlertNow call out system, and local newspapers. Even with all of these opportunities in place, some parents are reluctant to communicate with the school system. In some instances, economic constraints limit parent involvement. The school system employs four parent involvement coordinators and one social worker to work with school administrators, counselors, and teachers to identify the needs of students, and they work to build trust among the parents they serve. Additionally, they identify and oversee at-risk students throughout the school year. The needs of these students may be based on academics, discipline, or personal well-being.

For the school system, students are the most important asset. To provide an education that produces well-rounded students, the system must ensure that it provides a safe environment. The Superintendent addresses safety and crisis management issues at monthly administrative meetings, while the Assistant Superintendent manages safety program activities. School leaders meet with faculty and staff to keep them abreast of system safety requirements, and individual schools conduct safety drills and practices. Cook High and Cook Middle house full-time School Resource Officers employed by the Cook County Sheriff's Department, and the district recently added safety personnel at Cook Primary and Cook Elementary.

Through these practices and programs, the district provides all students with an exemplary education while addressing the diverse needs of individual students in a positive and safe environment. The Cook County School District endeavors to prepare students for academic success, productive citizenship, and lifelong learning.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school system's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school system is striving to achieve in the next three years.

Cook County Schools has had several notable achievements and improvements over the last three years. The district's most challenging achievement has been the preservation of the school system in difficult economic times. The system has received budgetary cuts from state, federal, and local funding over the past five years. All Georgia school systems have been impacted by the State's across the board austerity cuts to public education in recent years. Cook County Schools' austerity reduction has been in the amounts of \$2,386,269. Another large cut has been from the state's equalization grant. The district's grant has been reduced from 3.4 million dollars to 2.2 million dollars per year, resulting in a dollar for dollar loss of 1.2 million dollars annually.

To endure these severe cuts, the district has been resourceful with its dollars. One of the most challenging issues has been preserving jobs without having to use Reduction in Force (RIF) measures to remove employees. The district has absorbed positions at all levels through retirements and employees leaving the system. Over the last three years, Cook County Schools has reduced its number of employees from 508 to 445. In order to prevent further job loss, employees have received furlough days. This was not a popular move; however, employees have been willing to work together for the benefit of all. Through all of these challenges, the Cook County Board of Education has been supportive of the Superintendent's budget process. This partnership has allowed the district to endure cuts without negatively affecting the education of the students.

Despite these economic challenges, Cook County Schools continues to focus on student achievement. Teachers face larger class sizes and shortened school years, yet student learning is evident throughout the district. Assessment scores continue to remain the same and in many areas show growth.

Cook County Schools publishes a Balanced Scorecard annually. The Balanced Scorecard provides a snapshot of state mandated assessments and compares scores longitudinally over three years. Combined scores in the meets and exceeds areas have increased or remained consistent. In the area of exceeds, the district has shown growth across many grade levels and subject areas. One area of emphasis over the past three years has been math. With increased rigor and concentration, the district has noted an increase of students meeting or exceeding on state assessments.

The Cook County School district's overarching goal is to have students graduate from high school and become productive citizens. The district's commitment to this goal is evident in the increase of graduates over the past three years. In 2010 the graduation rate was 65%, one of the lowest graduation rates in the Coastal Plains RESA district. In 2011, the graduation rate rose 15 percentage points to 80%. However, the Georgia Department of Education developed a new cohort method for calculating the graduation rate. After recalculating the state graduation rates, Cook High School had a final 2011 graduation rate of 77% compared to a state rate of 67%. In addition, Cook County Schools ranked first in the Coastal Plains RESA district that year. Currently, the state has not released an official graduation rate for 2012. The district anticipates the rate to remain around the same percentage.

Cook County Schools is also proud of the accomplishments made in extracurricular programs. Within the athletic program, many sports participated in region and state playoffs. Cook County Schools' various clubs had members competing and placing in competitions unique to those organizations. These programs help to support the social development of the students as they learn discipline, team building, and leadership skills.

While the school system has had many notable achievements, the district recognizes there are still areas for improvement. A goal of the system is an increase in collaboration within Professional Learning Communities. Cook County Schools recognizes that this goal must begin at the district level. Through an increase in both horizontal and vertical collaboration, the district anticipates great gains in teacher performance and student achievement.

A second goal for Cook County Schools is to implement Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) courses. These classes will address objectives within the College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) and better prepare students for college and the workforce.

Finally, the district recognizes the importance of meaningful relationships with adult advocates. Schools within the district will address the needs of all students, not just those considered at-risk. Cook County Schools will promote caring relationships between faculty, staff, and students.

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

The Cook County Educational Foundation, organized in 1991, is comprised of school, parent, and community stakeholders to provide opportunities for students to further their education with scholarships. Each year, the Cook County Educational Foundation gives an average of \$67,683 in scholarships to deserving high school seniors who have gone through a rigorous interview process. The total amount of scholarships awarded by the Cook County Educational Foundation over the last three years was \$203,050, with \$21,556 contributed by Cook County teachers and staff through payroll deductions. Knowing that much of the success of the community depends on investing in students, these generous donations from educators and community stakeholders exemplify Cook County's dedication to the future through education.

Self Assessment

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's process for review, revision, and communication of the purpose statement is documented. The process is formalized and implemented on a regular schedule. The process includes participation by representatives from all stakeholder groups. The purpose statement focuses on student success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •District purpose statements - past and present •Survey results •Documentation or description of the process for creating the district's purpose including the role of stakeholders •Written District Quality Assurance Review procedures and documents that monitor its schools' adherence to the district purpose and direction •Examples of communications to stakeholders about the district's purpose (i.e. website, newsletters, annual report, student handbook) •Minutes from meetings related to development of the district's purpose and direction •Copy of strategic plan referencing the district purpose and direction and its effectiveness •Communication plan to stakeholders regarding the district's purpose 	Level 3

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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 •Written District Quality Assurance Review procedures and documents that monitor schools' adherence to the district purpose and direction and that of the school •Examples of written stakeholder communications or marketing materials that portray the school purpose and direction 	Level 3

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 •Professional development plans and implementation timelines on topics related to equity, organizational effectiveness, and improved instruction and programs •The district strategic plan 	Level 3

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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.	Most leaders throughout the system implement a continuous improvement process for improving student learning and the conditions that support learning. Some stakeholder groups are engaged in the process. School personnel maintain a profile with data on student, school, and system performance. The profile contains data used to identify goals for the improvement of achievement and instruction that are aligned with the system's purpose. The process includes action planning that identifies measurable objectives, strategies, activities, resources, and timelines for achieving improvement goals. Most interventions and strategies are implemented with fidelity. Some documentation that the process yields improved student achievement and conditions that support student learning is available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Examples of schools continuous improvement plans•Survey results•Professional development plans and implementation timelines on topics related to equity, organizational effectiveness, and improved instruction and programs•Agenda, minutes from continuous improvement planning meetings•Communication plan and artifacts that show two-way communication to staff and stakeholders•The district data profile•The district strategic plan	Level 2

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 Cook County School System is committed to maintaining and communicating a purpose and direction that commits to high expectations for learning, as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning. The district's mission is to provide a positive, safe environment that meets the diverse needs of individual students, thereby promoting academic success, productive citizenship, and lifelong learning.

The district ensures that each school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success. All teachers in Cook County are highly qualified in the areas in which they teach. Teachers at each school meet through departmental collaborations for the purpose of discussing curriculum maps, unit writing, student achievement data, and the daily operations of the school. These collaborative meetings help guide the decision making and documentation process of implementing the values and beliefs the system embraces about teaching and learning.

The district engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a system-wide purpose for student success, recognizing that accomplishing the vision, mission, and beliefs is a joint effort of the school, students, parents, and community. Communication with all stakeholders occurs through email, stakeholder surveys, school websites, daily school bulletin and news, student handbooks and agendas, the Back to School Newspaper, monthly school newsletters, and various opportunities for parent meetings after school hours. The local newspaper also reports student academic achievements and extracurricular events. For urgent matters, the AlertNow call system is used to contact stakeholders after school hours.

Each school has a leadership team comprised of representatives from each academic area as well as other non-academic support staff. Along with school personnel, parent and community representatives are included on the leadership teams. The leadership teams, staff, and parents share high expectations for teaching and learning. Learning expectations are evident through active student engagement, a focus on depth of understanding, and the application of knowledge and skills through a rigorous curriculum. In addition to the leadership teams, each

school has several committees that handle the daily operational business of the school's events such as field days, homecoming, prom, fall festival, pageants, and choral and band presentations. Additionally, all schools in the district have a School Council comprised of parents, teachers, administration, and community representatives.

While districts across the state are experiencing budget and personnel cuts, the Cook County School System has maintained minimum requirements for essential positions, programs, and resources necessary to continue the purpose and direction for student learning. With continued budget cuts, it is difficult to plan for improvements that are based on funding. However, the district has explored several creative avenues for maintaining programs and personnel, such as but not limited to reduction in the number of instructional days in the school calendar, furlough days, employment of faculty on a 49% basis, attrition of faculty, reduction in teacher and departmental budgets, a decrease in the number of field trips, and implementation of an energy plan. The district also reorganized the parent involvement coordinators under the direction of the system's social worker. These coordinators focus on the social, emotional, and academic needs of the system's at-risk students.

The Cook County School System is dedicated to maintaining and communicating a purpose and direction that inspires students to reach their individual potential. By supporting the individual needs of students, the district is dedicated to providing an exemplary education that guides students to become productive members of society.

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 •Student handbooks •Governing body policies, procedures, and practices •Staff handbooks •District operations manuals •Communications to stakeholder about policy revisions 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	The governing body has implemented a process to evaluate its decisions and actions to ensure they are in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities, a formally adopted code of ethics, and free of conflict of interest. Governing body members are required to participate in a systematic, formal professional development process regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing body and its individual members. The professional development curriculum also includes conflict resolution, decision-making, supervision and evaluation, and fiscal responsibility. Members comply with all policies, procedures, laws, and regulations and function as a cohesive unit for the benefit of effective system operation and student learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Governing authority minutes relating to training •Communication plan to inform all staff on code of ethics, responsibilities, conflict of interest •List of assigned staff for compliance •Proof of legal counsel •Governing authority training plan •Assurances, certifications •Findings of internal and external reviews of compliance with laws, regulations, and policies •Historical compliance data •Governing authority policies on roles and responsibilities, conflict of interest •Governing code of ethics 	Level 4

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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 school leadership •Roles and responsibilities of district leadership •Survey results regarding functions of the governing authority and operations of the district •Stakeholder input and feedback •Maintenance of consistent academic oversight, planning, and resource allocation •Agendas and minutes of meetings 	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 •Examples of decisions aligned with the school's purpose statement •Survey results •Examples of decisions in support of the schools' continuous improvement plans •Examples of improvement efforts and innovations in the educational programs •Examples of decisions aligned with the district's purpose and direction 	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	Leaders sometimes communicate effectively with stakeholder groups, provide opportunities for stakeholders to shape decisions, solicit feedback from stakeholders, work collaboratively on school improvement efforts, and provide some leadership roles for stakeholders. System and school leaders' efforts result in some stakeholder participation and engagement in the system and its schools.	<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 •Communication plan •Involvement of stakeholders in district strategic plan 	Level 2

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"> •Examples of professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the results from supervision and evaluation •Governing body policy on supervision and evaluation •Job specific criteria •Supervision and evaluation documents with criteria for improving professional practice throughout the system and student success noted •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.

In the area of Governance and Leadership, several strengths were noted. The governing body establishes policies and practices that ensure effective administration of the school district. This body operates and functions responsibly while affording district and school leadership the autonomy to meet goals for school improvement and to manage day-to-day operations.

The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the district. The School Board policy manual outlines promotion criteria and ensures equitable and challenging programs for all students. The policy manual further outlines guidelines for professional growth and fiscal management.

The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively. The School Board Operations component of the School Board policy

manual lists the Board Code of Ethics support definition of roles and compliance with ethical obligations of board members. Governing body members participate in an annual board retreat and undergo training at the beginning of each school year. This participation is defined in the Conduct as Board Member section of the Code of Ethics.

Strength is also noted in the area of leadership and staff supervision and evaluation. All district level administrators have building level leadership experience. This experience was gained from within the Cook County School System and provides support for current building level administrators. These building level administrators are the instructional leaders in the schools, and they participate with teachers in various forms of evaluation. Evidence from formal evaluations, e-walks, peer observations, and teacher self-reflections and professional growth plans have led to improvements in instructional practices and gains in student achievement.

Areas in need of improvement were also recognized in Governance and Leadership. Due to current economic constraints, the district provides limited opportunities for professional growth for all personnel. Currently, academic teachers are extended the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills in their areas due to the implementation of the Common Core Standards. The district has relied heavily on RESA workshops, webinars, and redelivery as standard avenues of presentation. Other areas of weakness are involvement of stakeholders and communication of the district's purpose and direction.

To sustain areas of strength, the Board of Education will continue to have annual retreats that include team-building exercises, policy revision, and data analysis. To sustain our strength in supervision and evaluation, administrators will implement Georgia CLASS Keys and continue peer observations, e-walks, and other forms of evaluation.

To improve the areas of need, all teachers will be provided opportunities for professional development as funding becomes available. Minutes from board meetings could be disseminated to faculty and staff to promote better communication. Even though stakeholders attend and give their approval, more active engagement by stakeholders is needed.

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: 2.58

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 • Course, program, or school schedules • Student work across courses or programs • Course or program descriptions • Survey results • Lesson plans • Teacher evaluation criteria relating to prescribed instructional designs and proprietary practices • Posted learning objectives • Enrollment patterns for various courses and programs • Descriptions of instructional techniques 	Level 3

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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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Curriculum guides•A description of the systematic review process for curriculum, instruction, and assessment•Common assessments•Standards-based report cards•Surveys results•Program descriptions•Teacher evaluation criteria relating to prescribed instructional designs and proprietary practices•Curriculum writing process•Profile of educational model or delivery system•Products – scope and sequence, curriculum maps•Lesson plans aligned to the curriculum	Level 2

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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 plan and use 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 students when necessary. Teachers 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 professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the results from supervision and evaluation •Authentic assessments •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 •Examples of professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the approved or prescribed instructional strategies and programs •Teacher evaluation criteria relating to prescribed instructional designs and proprietary practices •Interdisciplinary projects 	Level 3

Accreditation Report

Cook County School System

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 monitor instructional practices through supervision and evaluation procedures 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">•Curriculum maps•Supervision and evaluation procedures•Documentation of collection of lesson plans, grade books, or other data record systems•Peer or mentoring opportunities and interactions•Recognition of teachers with regard to these practices•Surveys results•Examples of improvements to instructional practices resulting from the evaluation process•Administrative classroom observation protocols and logs•Professional development offerings and plans tied to the prescribed education program, instructional strategies, developmentally appropriate practices, and student success	Level 2

Accreditation Report

Cook County School System

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 •Calendar/schedule of learning community meetings •Survey results •Peer coaching guidelines and procedures •Evidence of informal conversations that reflect collaboration about student learning •Examples of improvements to content and instructional practice resulting from collaboration •Examples of cross curricular or program projects, interdisciplinary instruction, and classroom action research projects 	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"> •Examples of learning expectations and standards of performance •Survey results •Examples of assessments that prompted modification in instruction •Samples of exemplars used to guide and inform student learning 	Level 3

Accreditation Report

Cook County School System

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 •Records of meetings and informal feedback sessions •Professional learning calendar with activities for instructional support of new staff •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 and implemented. System and school personnel regularly inform families of their children's learning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Performance-based report cards •Examples of learning expectations and standards of performance •Survey results •Volunteer program with variety of options for participation •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 •Samples of exemplars used to guide and inform student learning 	Level 3

Accreditation Report

Cook County School System

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.	Most school personnel participate in a structure designed by the system that gives them interaction with individual students, allowing them to build relationships over time with the student. Most students participate in the structure. The structure allows the school employee to gain insight into the student's needs regarding learning skills, thinking skills, and life skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Curriculum and activities of structures for adults advocating on behalf of students •Description of formalized structures for adults to advocate on behalf of students •Survey results •List of students matched to adults who advocate on their behalf •Master schedule with time for formalized structure 	Level 2

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.	Most teachers across the system use common grading and reporting policies, processes, and procedures based on criteria that represent each student's attainment of content knowledge and skills. These policies, processes, and procedures are implemented in most or all schools across grade levels and courses. Most stakeholders are aware of the policies, processes, and procedures. The policies, processes, and procedures may or may not be 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 2

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 continuous program of professional learning that is aligned with the system's purpose and direction. Professional development is based on assessment of needs of the system. The program builds capacity among all professional and support staff. The program is 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 professional development plan involving the district and all schools •Brief explanation of alignment between professional learning and identified needs 	Level 3

Accreditation Report

Cook County School System

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•Training and professional learning related to research on unique characteristics of learning•Data used to identify unique learning needs of students	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.

Cook County Schools are focused on developing lifelong learners through the implementation of the new Common Core Georgia Performance Standards. The district employs highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals who utilize research based instructional strategies and best practices. Teachers integrate units provided by the state with locally written units to ensure rigor and relevance within the curriculum.

The district fosters communication and collaboration among families to enhance and improve student learning. Cook County Schools provides an annual Balanced Scorecard to summarize achievement and survey data. Parents have access to curriculum maps, standards, and unit timelines through the school system website. Information is also disseminated through student handbooks, progress reports, report cards, Power School, the Alert Now call system, course descriptions and syllabi, and open houses.

The school system coordinates learning support services to provide consistent but flexible instruction. The goal is to meet the needs of all students, from gifted learners to those who need specialized support, including Special Education students, English Learners, migrant students, and remedial students. While an adult-student advocate structure exists at Cook High School, further training would strengthen the advisement program. A formal structure is needed system-wide to ensure that each student has one designated adult advocate. However, through support and encouragement, all students are challenged to set and meet high levels of expectation.

The district supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practices. Cook County's educators stay abreast of current trends in education through participation in professional learning activities. The district provides opportunities for teachers to participate in webinars, workshops, online courses, and professional learning communities. Instructional practices are further enhanced through peer observations, the mentoring program, redelivery of information, and collaboration.

The district endeavors to support curriculum and instruction throughout the system; however, attrition due to budget constraints has led to limited personnel serving in multiple roles at the district level. Teacher-leaders have assumed additional responsibilities such as leading professional learning communities. Even though teachers are involved in collaborative learning communities, needs exist for vertical teaming, peer coaching, protocols for analysis of student work, and action research to improve student achievement.

In addition, teachers need to increase student involvement in the instructional process to address individual learning styles and intelligences. Students should be allowed more choices to demonstrate mastery of standards, and exemplars need to be provided as guidance for student work. Student self-reflection is needed to assess individual learning, and teachers need to provide increased levels of constructive, clear, and concise feedback to their learners.

Overall, Cook County School System supports instruction and student learning at all levels. Dedication to continuous improvement is evident at the heart of the planning process in every Cook County school.

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: 3.12

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.	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 systematically 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 positions critical 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 •Assessments of staffing needs •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 3

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

Accreditation Report

Cook County School System

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 created clear expectations for maintaining safety, cleanliness, and a healthy environment, and have shared these definitions and expectations with stakeholders. System and school personnel as well as students are accountable for maintaining these expectations. Measures are in place that allow for continuous tracking of these conditions. Improvement plans are developed and implemented by appropriate personnel as necessary to improve these conditions. Results of improvement efforts are evaluated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •District quality control procedures showing the monitoring of compliance with district expectations for school facilities and learning environments •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 3

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 •District quality control procedures showing the monitoring of compliance with district expectations for school facilities, learning environments •Evaluation results of the effectiveness of the district strategic plan or indicators of changes resulting in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategic plan •Survey results •Policies, handbooks on district and school facilities and learning environments 	Level 4

Accreditation Report

Cook County School System

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"> •Evaluation procedures and results of education resources •Survey results •District education delivery model intended for school implementation including media and information resources to support the education program •Data on media and information resources available to students and staff •Schedule of staff availability to assist students and school personnel related to finding and retrieving information 	Level 3

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 •District quality control procedures that monitor the effectiveness of technology services at the district-level and school-level •Assessments to inform development of district and school technology plans •Brief description of learning management systems or data management systems that support the effective use of student assessment results, school effectiveness, and district effectiveness 	Level 3

Accreditation Report

Cook County School System

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"> •Student assessment system for identifying student needs •Survey results •Schedule of family services, e.g., parent classes, survival skills •Rubrics on developmentally appropriate benchmarks; e.g. early childhood education •Social classes and services, e.g., bullying, character education •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"> •List of services available related to counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning •Survey results •Description of IEP process •District quality assurance procedures that monitor program effectiveness of student support services •Description of referral process 	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.

Cook County School System has a strong system of resources and services to support each school's purpose, direction, and educational program. The governing body and administration assess annual staffing needs and follow standard procedures to hire highly qualified personnel. The SOAR (Successful Orientation and Retention) program is used to train and mentor new teachers and teachers new to the system.

In operating the most effective school district possible, the Superintendent may recommend to the board the transfer or reassignment of personnel into positions that best meet the needs of the students. Although the system has absorbed jobs through attrition to help avoid layoffs, qualified professional and support staff are sufficient in number to fulfill their roles and responsibilities.

Due to budget cuts in educational funding, the district has become quite creative in the vast ways to educate students with fewer funds. The

district has shortened the academic calendar and lengthened the school day. While some programs have been cut, others have been expanded to support student learning. Each school in the district has intervention and remediation programs to support reading and math. Extensive efforts are made to maintain interruption-free instructional time.

The district maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy learning and work environment. Safety is the foremost priority of the entire district. Security is maintained in accordance with Board and school policies through strict adherence to safety protocols, regularly scheduled drills for emergency-preparedness, and consistent application of discipline plans. With the increase of school tragedies in our nation, additional safety measures have been implemented. The district's proactive approach has led to physical changes as well as a heightened level of awareness.

The district provides a wide range of media, technology, and other informational resources to support the educational program. On-site technology staff members maintain the technology infrastructure, provide annual updates, and assist all district employees as needed. SMARTBoards, as well as several computers, are located in all K-12 academic classrooms. In order to support student learning, the district purchases educational software and online programs, and each building has multiple computer labs available. To prepare students for the future, additional age-appropriate technology is available at each school.

The district offers many services that support the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population. The physical education department administers regularly-scheduled fitness checks with feedback to all 3rd through 12th grade students and their parents. The district has a system social worker, as well as non-certified staff who work as parent resource coordinators. Each school in the district has counselors available to support the needs of students, and referrals are made to other agencies as needed.

The district provides services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of students. Standards are in place and followed closely by school counselors. The Response to Intervention (RTI) process is used to refer students for extra services. The progress of special needs students and English Learners is closely monitored. Services are provided through resource, collaborative model, and self-contained classrooms. Students referred for the gifted program (Program to Accelerate, Challenge, and Enrich Students, or PACES) are evaluated throughout the school year. Services are provided through resource, cluster, collaborative, advanced content and Advanced Placement classes.

Economic constraints have presented many challenges for the entire district. The Board of Education and administration have demonstrated support through wise fiscal management and necessary budgetary cuts. Through normal attrition and furlough days, staff reductions have been limited. The district cultivates relationships with businesses, community leaders, and other stakeholders to offer diverse opportunities to students, including: local scholarships, job shadowing, mentoring programs, and financial support of positive incentives.

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: 2.6

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"> •Brief description of technology or web-based platforms that support the education delivery model •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 •Brief description of learning management systems or data management systems that support the effective use of student assessment results, school effectiveness, and district effectiveness •Evidence that assessments are reliable and bias free 	Level 3

Accreditation Report

Cook County School System

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.	Processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing, and applying learning from data sources are documented and used by professional and support staff throughout the district. Data sources provide a picture of student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and the conditions that support learning. System and school personnel use data to design and implement 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 •District quality control procedures that monitor schools in effectively using data to improve instruction and student learning •List of data sources related to district effectiveness •Survey results •Written protocols and procedures for data collection and analysis •Examples of changes to the district strategic plan based on data results •Examples of use of data to design, implement, and evaluate continuous improvement plans and apply learning •List of data sources related to student learning, instruction, program effectiveness, and conditions that support learning 	Level 2

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 •Policies and written procedures specific to data training 	Level 2

Accreditation Report

Cook County School System

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"> •Policies and procedures specific to data use and training •Student surveys •Agendas, minutes of meetings related to analysis of data •Description of process for analyzing data to determine verifiable improvement in student learning •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"> •District quality control procedures for monitoring district effectiveness •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 •District quality control procedures for monitoring information about student learning, systems that support learning, and the achievement of school improvement goals •Examples of district marketing tools and websites that cite student achievement results or that make promises regarding student achievement •Executive summaries of student learning reports to stakeholder groups 	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 Cook County School District implements a comprehensive assessment system and uses the data to guide continuous improvement. One area of strength is a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system. Data from state assessments such as Criterion Referenced Competency Tests (CRCTs), End of Course Tests (EOCTs), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) ACCESS, and state writing assessments, is analyzed and used as the basis for school improvement. Leadership teams within each school hold a Data Retreat at the beginning of each school year to review and discuss the Balanced Scorecard. The Longitudinal Data System provides easy access for retrieval of data, which is used to generate the Balanced Scorecard, district and school action plans, and teachers' Professional Goal Plans. Progress monitoring is facilitated through the use of programs such as System to Enhance Educational Performance (STEEP) testing, the Georgia Online Assessment System, Study Island, and locally-developed assessments, including benchmark tests. Discipline and attendance data is also analyzed at the end of each eight weeks. Follow-up with students and parents is provided as needed in accordance with the district's attendance policy and each school's discipline policy.

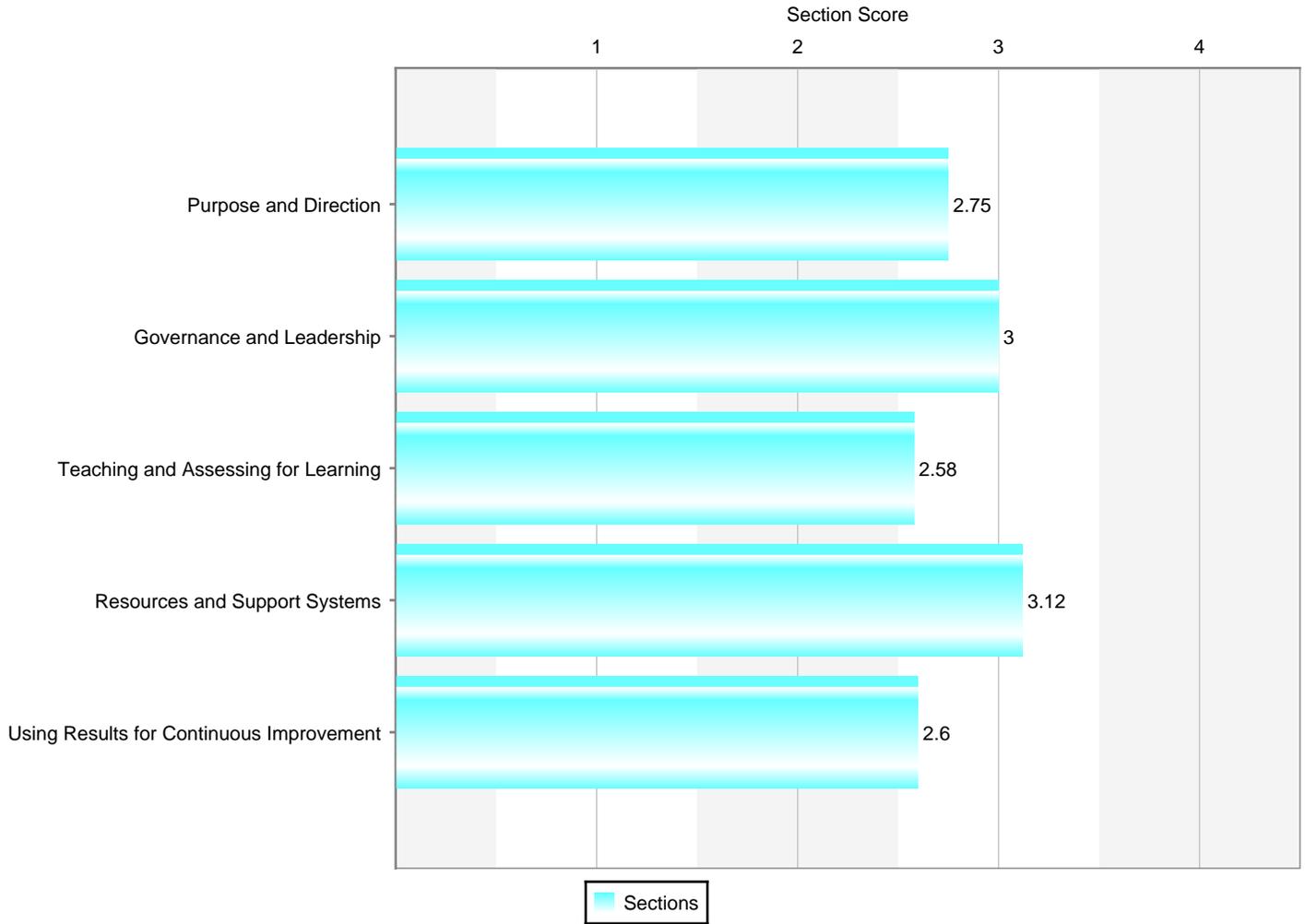
Due to budget constraints in recent years, training and resources have been limited, and redelivery of information has been heavily relied upon. Although redelivery does help our fiscally conscious system, it also limits the quality of receiving information first hand. While some grade levels and departments utilize locally developed benchmark assessments, the district does not consistently use these benchmarks across grade levels and content areas. Therefore, consistent analysis of benchmark data is limited, impeding the identification of areas for improvement to guide classroom instruction and student learning. Furthermore, written protocols and procedures should be used to analyze the effectiveness of programs and instruction.

In order to sustain areas of strengths, the system will continue to hold Data Retreats to review and discuss the Balanced Scorecard and student achievement data, and teachers will use the data to create their Professional Growth Plans. The system will continue to utilize the Longitudinal Data System for retrieval of data, and teachers and administrators will utilize reports from Study Island. Cook High School and Cook Middle School will continue peer observations to identify effective instructional strategies. Administrators at Cook Primary and Cook Elementary plan to reinstate peer observations as well.

To improve areas of need, protocols should be used to analyze software programs currently in use and programs within Response to Intervention (RTI) at some levels. Data should be collected and analyzed from the peer observations in order to implement effective teaching strategies. An Instructional Coach would also be an asset at Cook High School to compile data from various sources, disseminate and review data with teachers, and identify strategies to improve instruction. Leadership teams will develop short term goals to ensure success with each school improvement plan. More intense training of the Longitudinal Data System would allow teachers to utilize data to drive instruction within this planning process.

Report Summary

Scores By Section



Assurances Report

AdvancED Assurances

Assurance	Certified	Comment/Attachment
The institution has read, understands, and complies with the AdvancED Policies and Procedures.	Yes	The Superintendent, Board of Education members, District Level Administrators, and School Principals have reviewed the AdvancED Policies and Procedures. Policies and Procedures were reviewed and discussed at the District Administrative Team meeting. Also, the Policies and Procedures document has been presented to individual School Leadership teams.
The system verifies that all institutions within its jurisdiction meet the AdvancED Standards for Schools. Attach a description of the quality assurance process used to monitor the institutions.	Yes	<u>Attachment:</u>
The institution monitors all financial transactions through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system.	Yes	Cook County Schools employs a full time CPA to oversee the system and school budgets. An audit is completed annually by the Georgia Department of Audit. <u>Attachment:</u>
The institution engages in a continuous improvement process and implements an improvement plan. Attach the improvement plan if the plan is not located in AdvancED's Adaptive System of School Improvement Support Tools (ASSIST).	Yes	District and school level improvement plans are updated annually. Plans are reviewed to ensure that individual school goals and action plans correlate with the district level plan. Financial decisions regarding curriculum and instruction are driven by these improvement plans. <u>Attachment:</u>

Accreditation Report

Cook County School System

<p>The institution implements a written security and crisis management plan which includes emergency evacuation procedures and appropriate training for stakeholders. Attach the security and crisis management plan. (optional)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Security and Crisis management is a priority for Cook County Schools. The Assistant Superintendent oversees the management plan at the district and school level. A district level Safety Committee reviews the management plan and addresses security issues that arise within the system. <u>Attachment:</u></p>
<p>The institution has reported all substantive changes in the institution that affect the scope and/or have an impact on the institution's ability to meet the AdvancED standards and policies. Such changes include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Restructuring (merging, opening, or closing) of the institution or institution(s) within its jurisdiction •Mission and purpose of the institution •Governance structure of the institution, including changing to a charter school/school system, being the subject of a state takeover, or a change in ownership •Grade levels served by the institution •Staffing, including administrative and other non-teaching professionals personnel •Available facilities, including upkeep and maintenance •Level of funding •School day or school year •Establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus •Student population that causes program or staffing modification(s) •Available programs, including fine arts, practical arts and student activities 	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Due to a decrease in State, Federal, and Local tax dollars, Cook County Schools has encountered an economic hardship. As a result, the district shortened the school calendar and implemented furlough days. However, to ensure instructional time was protected, Cook County Schools lengthened the school day to meet the seat time requirements as put forth by the Georgia Department of Education. AdvancED was notified of these changes.</p>

Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic

Introduction

The Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic is designed to analyze the institution's survey results in terms of areas of achievement and areas that need improvement. Further, the diagnostic is essential to the accreditation and continuous improvement processes in that it provides the institution with a comprehensive view of the aggregate scores of the surveys administered, and the actual total of respondents for each survey type to derive a single score for this diagnostic. The performance level score computed at the completion of the diagnostic is used to broaden and enhance the external review team's understanding of the stakeholder's perceptions of the institution; the diagnostic should be used in the same manner by the institution as it engages in improvement planning.

Criteria for Assessing Stakeholder Feedback

Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
Select the rubric level obtained from the Stakeholder Feedback Worksheet.	Level 3: Minimum response rate was met. All surveys had an average item value of 3.20 or above (on a 5.0 scale).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Evidence of survey responses•Evidence of survey response rates	Level 3

Areas of Notable Achievement

Which area(s) indicate the overall highest level of satisfaction or approval?

Survey results from Cook County School stakeholders indicate the highest average levels of satisfaction to be:

*Staff members report that 92.74% are satisfied in the area of Purpose and Direction. They agree that the district's purpose is clearly focused on student success.

*Parents report that 81.56% are satisfied with Resources and Support. They agree that students have multiple activities to participate in that interest them.

*Early elementary surveys find that 98.79% of students feel the school has books available to read.

*Elementary surveys highest level of satisfaction is Purpose and Direction with a percentage of 93.48. The highest indicator states that principals and teachers want every student to learn.

*Middle and high surveys indicate that 63.96% of students rate Teaching and Assessing for Learning as the highest level of satisfaction. Students report that principals and teachers have high expectations while the school provides challenging curriculum and learning experiences.

Which area(s) show a trend toward increasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval?

Survey results from Cook County School stakeholders indicate a trend toward increasing satisfaction or approval in the following areas:

* Staff members report that the school maintains facilities that support student learning and contribute to a safe environment.

*Parents report from year to year that teachers have high expectations for their children's performance.

*Student surveys at all levels indicate that teachers want students to do their best work and to be successful.

Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other stakeholder feedback sources?

Overall, one of the strongest consistencies within findings from other stakeholder feedback is in conjunction with parents' report of teachers having high expectations of the students. The SACS survey data and the Balanced Scorecard data are highly correlated in this area.

Student survey responses about teacher expectations were also very consistent between the SACS survey data and the Balanced Scorecard.

Areas in Need of Improvement

Which area(s) indicate the overall lowest level of satisfaction or approval?

*Staff surveys indicate Teaching and Assessing for Learning as the lowest area of satisfaction, with an average of 78.52% responding in agreement with the indicators. The lowest indicator was the school engaging families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keeping them informed of their children's learning progress. The level of satisfaction decreased as the students' progressed through the grade levels.

*Parents lowest area of satisfaction was Governance and Leadership with an average of 76.39% of respondents in agreement with the indicators. The lowest indicator was that the governing body does not interfere with the leadership of the school.

*The students in all schools indicated that students do not treat adults with respect. Results further state that middle and high school students do not respect others' property, and students do not help others who are not their friends.

Which area(s) show a trend toward decreasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval?

*Staff surveys indicate a decline in parental involvement in the learning process. Survey results also indicate staff members perceive a decline in opportunities for active participation in professional learning.

*Parent surveys report a decreasing level of satisfaction with communication concerning grading policies and their child's progress on a regular basis.

*Middle and high school student surveys indicate a trend toward a decreasing level of approval when asked about teachers changing their teaching practices to meet the students' learning needs.

*According to data from the Balanced Scorecards, all stakeholders perceive the lowest areas of satisfaction to be bus safety and the school nutrition program.

What are the implications for these stakeholder perceptions?

*To address the decline in parental involvement, the district will seek innovative ways to reach out to parents. For example, a Lunch and Learn opportunity will be provided for parents at all levels. The district will also increase the level of interaction with parent involvement coordinators in an effort to increase parental contact and participation.

*As funds become available, and as furlough days are eliminated, the district will provide more opportunities for active participation in professional learning. In the meanwhile, the district will continue to provide in-house opportunities. As part of these professional learning opportunities, teachers will be trained in ways to modify their teaching practices to accommodate students' learning needs.

*Administrators will continue to address communication concerning grading policies and student progress. To ensure timely feedback to parents and students, administrators will randomly monitor grades in Power School and provide feedback to teachers. This information will also be added to teachers' final evaluation.

*Due to survey responses, the transportation department has been restructured. The transportation committee will meet to review all bus routes and make changes as needed.

*In regard to the school nutrition program, survey results will be provided to the nutrition director. As school level administrators receive concerns, they will address these with their lunchroom managers and the nutrition director.

Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other stakeholder feedback sources?

*Through the self assess process, the district found consistent concerns among staff related to professional learning and parental involvement.

*Among parents and students, the consistent concerns were highest in the areas of school nutrition and bus safety.

Student Performance Diagnostic

Introduction

The Student Performance Diagnostic provides an institution with a process to report summative student assessments. This diagnostic is significant to the accreditation and continuous improvement process as it serves as a resource for schools to view content area assessment results required by the state, district, or other entities, determine the quality and reliability of the given assessments, and show the alignment of the assessments to the school's curriculum. The performance level computed at the completion of the diagnostic is used by the external review team as a comprehensive report to understand fully the institution's assessment program; the diagnostic should be used in the same manner by the institution as it engages in improvement planning.

Assessment Scores

Label	Question	Value
1. Quality Score	Enter the average assessment quality score from the Student Performance Worksheet (this average is based on the score for each assessment based on the rubric below).	4.0

Label	Question	Value
2. Alignment Score	Enter the average assessment alignment score from the Student Performance Worksheet (this average is based on the score for each assessment based on the rubric below).	4.0

Label	Question	Value
3. Disaggregation/Analysis Score	Enter the average disaggregation/analysis score from the Student Performance Worksheet (this average is based on the score for each assessment based on the rubric below).	3.76

Label	Question	Value
4. Student Results Status Score	Enter the average student results status score from the Student Performance Worksheet.	18.0

Label	Question	Value
5. Improvement Score	Enter the average improvement score from the Student Performance Worksheet.	4.0

Label	Question	Value
6. Overall Student Performance Score	Enter the average overall student performance score from the Student Performance Worksheet.	33.76

Areas of Notable Achievement

Which area(s) are above the expected levels of performance?

Cook County Schools found that students performed higher than expected on standardized testing in the area of Social Studies. Over a three year period, significant growth was noted in almost all levels from third grade through high school. On the CRCT, all grades with exception of eighth grade, showed a 4% average growth. In sixth grade, students demonstrated an 18% growth. Cook High School EOCTs for Economics and US History courses had a 3% and 18% growth respectively.

Describe the area(s) that show a positive trend in performance.

A positive trend in performance has been noted in the area of math. School initiatives have led to an increase in scores. Several grades have shown remarkable increases in the number of students exceeding the standards. For example, in fourth grade, 48 students exceeded in 2011 while 84 exceeded in 2012. In 2011, 28 sixth grade students exceeded with 35 exceeding in 2012. Twenty-two seventh graders exceeded in 2011 and 53 exceeded in 2012. Math I EOCT scores showed a 4% gain in the Exceeds area.

Which area(s) indicate the overall highest performance?

Students within the Cook County School system perform above the expected levels of performance in the areas of Reading and English Language Arts. The majority of first and second grade students at Cook Primary School scored above grade level on the STAR reading assessment. Two hundred and sixteen out of 245 first grade students met or exceeded the expected performance level on STEEP Reading while 205 out of 213 second grade students met or exceeded the expected performance level. Increased STEEP performance is also an indicator for performance data on the CRCT at Cook Elementary School. Data for Cook Elementary School showed CRCT reading scores to be 90% or higher in the area of Meets and Exceeds for all grade levels.

In 2011, 64 students at Cook Middle School scored in Level 1 (Does Not Meet the Standard) on the Reading CRCT. One year later in 2012, the number decreased by 24 students to 40 scoring in Level 1. This demonstrates almost 30% improvement in expected levels of reading performance on the CRCT. Finally, over the last three years, Cook High School's EOCT scores in American Literature have increased from 85% to 90% Meets or Exceeds. These findings indicate that Reading and English Language Arts are an overall strength throughout the district.

Which subgroup(s) show a trend toward increasing performance?

Several subgroups show a trend toward increasing performance on state mandated assessments. The subgroups that show a trend toward increasing performance throughout the system are the Hispanic population and Students With Disabilities (SWD).

At Cook Elementary, data from 2010 (fourth grade) and 2011(the same group of students in fifth grade), showed the greatest increase on the Meets level of the CRCT to be the Black students subgroup. These students showed an increase of 12%. This subgroup also showed an increase in the Exceeds level of 2%. The Students with Disabilities (SWD) subgroup and the Hispanic subgroup both showed a gain of 3% in SY 2012-2013

the Meets level. While in the Exceeds level, Hispanic students showed a 3% increase and SWD students a 2% increase. Cook Middle School data also showed an increased performance in the SWD and Hispanic subgroups. Both of these subgroups have shown improvement over the last three years on the Reading and ELA parts of the CRCT. The total percent of Hispanic students who scored in the Meets and/or Exceeds Levels on the Reading CRCT in 2010 for 6th grade was 77%; 7th grade was 87%; 8th grade was 95%. In 2011, 6th grade was 93%; 7th grade was 88%; 8th grade was 94%. In 2012, 6th grade was 92%; 7th grade was 70%; and 8th grade was 80%. The total percent of Students With Disabilities who scored in the Meets and/or Exceeds Levels on the Reading CRCT in 2010 for 6th grade was 56%; 7th grade was 62%; 8th grade was 86%. In 2011, 6th grade was 46%; 7th grade was 76%; 8th grade was 92%. In 2012, 6th grade was 75%; 7th grade was 55%; 8th grade was 86%. EOCT assessments at Cook High School show that SWD students performed 28% higher in 9th grade Literature and Hispanic students 12% in American Literature.

Overall CRCT scores in Math are not as high as the overall Reading and ELA scores; however, the Hispanic subgroup showed a trend toward increasing performance on the CRCT Math tests. At Cook Elementary, Hispanic students increased on the Meets level of the CRCT by 18%. This same subgroup also increased on the Exceeds level by 3%. At Cook Middle School, the Hispanic subgroup scores in Meets and Exceeds were as follows: In 2010, 6th grade was 59%; 7th grade was 93%; 8th grade was 73%. In 2011, 6th grade was 60%; 7th grade was 94%; 8th grade was 88%. In 2012, 6th grade was 70%; 7th grade was 77%; 8th grade was 80%. Hispanic students at Cook High, however, only showed a 2% growth on Math I and Math II EOCTs.

Between which subgroups is the achievement gap closing?

According to CRCT and EOCT/GHSGT data, many subgroups of Cook County's students are making gains in closing the achievement gap. Among the most notable are Black, English Learners, and Economically Disadvantaged students.

Third through 8th grade Black students moved from 11% below All students in 2009 to 8% below in 2011 on the Math section of CRCT. Over this same three year period, this group remained only 2% to 4% below All students in the Reading/English Language Arts section of CRCT. In high school Math, Black students moved from 11% below All students in 2009 to 3% below in 2011. This group moved from 7% below All students in the Graduation rate in 2009 to just 3% below in 2011.

English Learners have also made significant gains in closing the achievement gap on the 3rd through 8th grade CRCT. In the area of Reading/English Language Arts, they moved from 13% below All students in 2009 to 9% below in 2011. Remarkably, this group moved from 20% below All students in Math to 4% below in this same time period.

Economically Disadvantaged students have moved to 3% to 5% below All students in Math and Reading/English Language Arts at all grade levels. On 3rd through 8th grade CRCT, this group moved from 7% below in 2009 to 4% below in 2011 in Math and 9% below All students to 3% below in Reading/English Language Arts. In high school Math, Economically Disadvantaged students moved from 7% below All students in 2009 to 4% below in 2011. In this three year period, the group moved from 11% below All students in the Graduation Rate to only 4% below in 2011.

Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other data sources?

Cook Primary School and Cook Elementary School reported findings consistent with the STEEP Oral Reading Fluency Assessment and the STEEP Math Fluency data. Students continued to improve, and the achievement gap showed a decrease between the students who met or

did not meet the expected performance levels. Eighty-seven and one half percent of first grade students and 88.5% of second grade students met or exceeded on the Georgia OAS Reading assessment in the spring of 2011, while 85% first grade students and 86% of second grade students met or exceeded on the Georgia OAS Math assessment. In the spring of 2012, 90% of first and second grade students met or exceeded on the Georgia OAS Reading assessment. On the 2012 Georgia OAS Math assessment, 91% of first grade students and 95% of second grade students met or exceeded.

Eighty-one percent of students in 3rd grade met or exceeded the expected performance level in spring 2011 on STEEP Oral Reading Fluency and 80% of students met or exceeded the expected performance level. Of the same group of students in the fourth grade in the spring 2011, 97 % met or exceeded the performance level in STEEP Reading and 90% in STEEP Math. Of the same group of students in the fifth grade spring of 2012, 98% of students met or exceeded the expected performance level on STEEP Reading, and 95% met or exceeded the performance level on STEEP Math.

At Cook Middle School, the high scores on the Reading and ELA sections of the CRCT for the past three years are consistent with test results from other data sources. The Eighth Grade Writing Test scores have improved significantly over the past two years. In 2011, 70% of the students' scores were in the Meets/Exceeds Level of the writing test. In 2012, that percentage increased by 10% to 80% of the students scoring in the Meets/Exceeds Level. EOCT scores in American Literature showed an overall 4.5% increase over the last three years. Georgia High School Writing Test scores in 2012 support these findings with 93% of students performing in the Meets and Exceeds levels.

Areas in Need of Improvement

Which area(s) are below the expected levels of performance?

At Cook Primary School, STAR Reading assessment scores showed a decrease from first to second grade. Fifty-four first grade students' scores were below the expected performance level in the spring of 2011. In the spring of 2012, 58 students from the same cohort had scores below the expected performance level on the STAR Reading. STEEP Math scores for first grade were also below the expected performance level. In the spring of 2011, 217 out of 234 first grade students met or exceeded the expected performance level, while 17 students did not meet the expected performance level. In the spring of 2012, 196 out of 221 first grade students met or exceeded the expected performance level, and 25 did not meet the expected performance level.

When comparing CRCT data from the last three years, Cook Elementary School and Cook Middle School math scores were lower and fell below the level of expected performance. While all Cook Elementary students did not perform at the expected level in math, data indicates a fluctuation between expected performances of subgroups. The SWD group data supports consistent scores below performance of other subgroups who took the CRCT. When analyzing three years of Cook Middle School CRCT math data, the students who scored in the Meets/Exceeds Level range from 68% to 86%. Comparable to Cook Elementary Schools findings, the scores of the subgroups appear to be inconsistent as they do fluctuate from subgroup to subgroup and year to year. At Cook High School, Math I and Math II EOCT scores were also below the expected levels of performance.

Describe the area(s) that show a negative trend in performance.

At Cook Primary School, first grade STEEP Oral Reading Fluency, STEEP Math Fluency, and STAR Math all show a negative trend in performance. At Cook Elementary School, there is a decrease in multiple subject areas of CRCT scores when students go from third grade to fourth grade. However, when students enter 5th grade, the scores show a slight increase. Cook Middle School math scores are inconsistent in showing a negative trend. A review of the data indicates that scores have fluctuated among grade levels and subgroups. At Cook High School, EOCT scores in multiple courses show a decrease between semesters.

Which area(s) indicate the overall lowest performance?

Cook Primary School data results show that second grade STAR Reading indicates the overall lowest performance. In the spring of 2011, 67 students did not meet the expected performance level. Fifty-eight students in 2012 did not meet the expected performance level. Cook Elementary School's overall lowest performance areas are Math and Science. The scores for these subjects indicate that 83% met or exceeded the performance level in Science and 83% met or exceeded the performance level in Math compared to 92% of students that met or exceeded in Reading and 86% met or exceeded in Social Studies.

While the district has seen growth in math in some areas, student achievement in this subject remains below the expected levels of performance in other areas. At Cook Middle School, the overall lowest performing area is Math. The subgroup with the lowest performance is Students With Disabilities. When analyzing three years of CRCT math data, the Students With Disabilities (SWD) subgroup scored in the Meets/Exceeds level range from only 10% to 40%. The SWD subgroup also had the lowest performance at Cook High School. Additionally, the SWD subgroup scores showed a decline in Economics from FY10 to FY11 by 46%.

Which subgroup(s) show a trend toward decreasing performance?

Unfortunately, the Students With Disabilities (SWD) subgroup is showing a trend toward decreasing performance at the elementary and middle school levels. On the 3rd through 8th grade CRCT, this group moved from 22% below All students in the area of Math in 2009 to 25% below in 2011. In Reading/English Language Arts, these students moved from 16% below All in 2009 to 20% below in 2011.

Although high school SWD students showed slight gains in performance, they remained significantly below All students. In Reading/English Language Arts, they moved from 43% below All students in 2010 to 34% below in 2011. (There were not enough SWD students at Cook High in 2009 to report subgroup data.) In 2010, the SWD Graduation rate was 42% below All students, and their rate was 30% below All in 2011.

Between which subgroups is the achievement gap becoming greater?

Overall, the achievement gap remains the greatest between our White and Students With Disabilities (SWD) subgroups. On the 3rd through 8th grade Math CRCT, the subgroups remained separated by 30% from 2009 to 2011. In Reading/English Language Arts, the White subgroup outperformed the SWD subgroup by 18% in 2009 and by 22% in 2011.

In high school Math, the White subgroup Meeting and Exceeding rate was 30% higher than the SWD subgroup rate in 2009 and 12% higher in 2011. In Reading/English Language Arts, the White subgroup outperformed the SWD subgroup by 45% in 2009 and by 42% in 2011. The White subgroup's Graduation rate was 47% higher than that of the SWD subgroup in 2009 and 30% higher in 2011. While these scores do show improvement at the high school level, the gaps between the two subgroups continued to be significant.

Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other data sources?

Data findings conclude that the overall student performance showed a slight negative level of performance in the areas of STEEP Math Fact Fluency in first grade and STAR Math in first grade. When comparing Cook Elementary School data from CRCT for the past three years, math scores were lower than expected levels of performance. Findings are consistent when reviewing data from STEEP. Students who scored in the Meets and Exceeds categories varied among subgroups.

At Cook Middle School, the CRCT math scores were also below the expected levels of performance. When analyzing three years of CRCT Math data, Cook Middle School (CMS) students who scored in the Meets/Exceeds level fluctuated from 68% to 86%. Percentages of students scoring in the Meets/Exceeds level also varied from year to year, and some subgroups outscored others. These findings are consistent with Cook Middle School baseline data gathered from an online math assessment taken on Study Island. The online pretest results indicated more students scoring in levels one and two than levels three and four. Math I and Math II EOCT performances at Cook High School were also low with Meets or Exceeds scores never above 68% over the last three years. This data confirms that math is an area in which the district needs to continue to focus.