Accreditation Report

Habersham County Schools

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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?

The Habersham County School System (HCSS) is located in the hills of Northeast Georgia, 75 miles north of metro Atlanta. Nationally renowned as a favorite retirement area, the county is a two-hour drive from the Great Smokey Mountains and less than two hours from Atlanta via Highway 365/985. Many incorporated and unincorporated cities and towns make up the political divisions of the county. The population in 2010 was 43,041 with a median household income from 2006-2010 of $40,192. The county seat is in Clarkesville, while the largest city is Cornelia. Other incorporated areas include Alto, Baldwin, Demorest, Mount Airy, and Tallulah Falls. The school system has a current enrollment of 6927 (October 2012 FTE Count). A continuum of services is available to all students through an instructional program ranging from kindergarten through secondary level, as well as extensive opportunities for gifted students and students with special needs. The system is comprised of eight (8)elementary schools, three (3) middle schools, one (1) ninth grade academy and one (1) high school. Many changes involving school configurations have occurred in the past five years. In fall of 2009, Fairview Elementary moved into a new building. Another major highlight for the system was the opening of a newly constructed, state-of-the-art high school. Habersham Central High School moved into this new building in August 2011. The new high school boasts enough classroom space to meet the challenge of population growth in our community, and it provides modern instructional technology to make sure our young men and women are on equal ground with any other student body in the state of Georgia when it comes to being prepared for college and the work place. In addition to our academic classrooms, our young men and women enjoy a fully equipped fine arts and theatrical center, a 21st-Century Career/Technology/Agricultural facility, and a modern indoor athletic center.   The former high school building was renovated and now houses the Habersham Ninth Grade Academy. A third middle school, Hilliard A. Wilbanks Middle School, was opened in the fall of 2011 in the building which formerly housed the Ninth Grade Academy. North Habersham and South Habersham Sixth Grade Academies were closed and sixth grade students became part of the three middle schools.

The Habersham County School System is governed by a Board of Education elected by the voters of the entire school district to represent each of the five electoral districts. Three of the current board members are in their second term of service, one is in his first term and one began his term in January 2013. The school system has had three superintendents since the previous accreditation visit in 2008. Dr. Judy Forbes retired in June 2008. Mr. Robert Costley was superintendent from July 2008 until November 2011. Mr. Larry Hill served as interim superintendent from December 2011 until June 2012. The current superintendent, Mr. Matthew Cooper, began in July 2012. The board, Mr. Cooper, administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders have worked to create a purpose and direction for the system - One Team, One Mission, Success For ALL Students.

Habersham County Schools is fortunate to be one of the only eight of systems in the state to receive a Local Option Sales Tax (LOST). Three SPLOST referendums have been passed in our county since the inception of this law. SPLOST 4 was approved in November 2011. This SPLOST will be used to pay back the bond for county growth plus additional funds toward capital projects. Habersham County also receives an Alcohol Tax that can be used toward operational expenses.

The school system budget affords a per pupil expenditure of $9318. The percentage funded locally is almost equal to the percentage funded by the state. The local portion has grown significantly over the past five years as a result of the economic downturn and precipitous decline in revenue. In 2005, the system was experiencing a growth of 30 to 50 students per year. This trend ended in FY2010 as enrollment dropped and continued to drop until the current school year. 2012-13 enrollment increased by 50 students.

Habersham County's Latino/Hispanic population continues to grow. In 2001, Hispanics represented 12% of our school population. Currently, Hispanics represent 25% of our school population. This growing demographic has presented many challenges, particularly to the schools in the southern end of the district. The remaining student population is 66.5% white, 3% Asian, 2.2% black, 3.4% multi-racial, and <1%

American Indian.

Perhaps the most dramatic trend for HCSS has been the increase in the students eligible for free/reduced lunch (F/R). In 2008, 48.2% of our students were eligible for F/R lunch. October 2012 F/R Lunch percentage for the system was 63.64%. This is a 4% increase in the last year. Nine of our schools operate Title I Schoolwide Programs.   We recognize the challenges in educating our poverty students. Basic needs must be met for students to perform at their best. Multiple support systems are in place across the system to meet the needs of these students.

Habersham County Schools employs 577 certified teachers and 448 classified employees. The economic downturn in the last three years has resulted in the loss of 45 positions in the system during this time period. The school system entered this difficult period with a healthy fund balance but the decline in revenue has forced the system to use part of our unreserved fund balance. We are proud that even with the loss of revenue from the state we continue provide a quality education for our students.

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.

Habersham County School System, with the guidance of a new superintendent, worked collaboratively to develop a new purpose and direction and set of core beliefs at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year.

"One Team, One Mission - Success for ALL Students", provides a clear, simple focus for our system. The following core beliefs guide our work each day.

To ensure success for all students

We Believe¦

-We must work as a team to meet the needs of all students.

-All students deserve a nurturing, safe, and secure school environment.

-All students can learn.

-It is our responsibility to meet the physical, mental, emotional, and academic needs of all students.

-We must teach the knowledge and skills that prepare all students.

-Teachers must use multiple approaches to respond to the needs of all students.

-Relationships matter!

The development and growth of the Response to Intervention (RtI)program over the past three years has supported the purpose of our school system. Students at the elementary and middle school level participate in universal screenings in reading and math three times each year. Results from these screenings are analyzed to determine student needs and to identify curriculum and instructional issues. A RtI System Manual was written as a collaborative effort involving regular and special education staff. This manual has been revised twice based on suggestions from teachers and staff. The RtI program at the elementary level is critical to the identification of at risk and struggling students. Students move through the tiers of intervention based on frequent progress monitoring data. South Habersham Middle School provides additional support to students through their afterschool 21st Century Program. Habersham Central High School began the LiFT University this year with financial support from Habersham County United Way and the Work Force Readiness Initiative Task Force which provides afterschool tutoring for high school students with certified teachers. Both of these program provide transportation, which is critical for our poverty students who struggle academically.

Smartboards have been installed in all core content classrooms 3rd - 12th grades. Teachers who have embraced this technology see high levels of student engagement in their classrooms. Computer labs are located in each building. Federal funds have been used to purchase iPads at many schools to take advantage of student interest in the newest technology. HCSS recognizes that educators must have access to this technology and have professional learning opportunities to assist them with the development of instruction that capitalizes on students' interest. Each school also has a fully equipped media center.

Recognizing that student health and well being is critical to achievement, our Board of Education makes the financial commitment to fund a school nurse program beyond the funding provided by state funding. Every school has a nurse on staff for part of the school day. Nurses are strategically placed in schools where students have critical needs. Every school is equipped with an AED device and school personnel in each building have been trained on its use. CPR training is done on a monthly basis to ensure that every school has at least one trained person on-site.

An extensive counseling program is available to all students. Counselors provide one-on-one and group counseling, as well as classroom guidance to students. C.H.A.M.P.S. (Choosing Healthy Activities and Methods Promoting Safety) is offered to fifth-grade students, provided

in cooperation with the Habersham County Sheriff's Office. C.H.A.M.P.S. is an educational program developed and implemented by the Georgia Sheriffs' Association to provide Georgia's youth with guidance, and the skills, ability, and knowledge to be safe, healthy, and happy in preparation for a successful life.

A large number of supports are in place for our special needs students. Focusing on providing these supports in the least restrictive environment has allowed us to expand the opportunities to serve special needs students in co-teaching and supportive instruction classrooms. Self-contained emotional-behavior disorder classrooms are available at the elementary, middle and high school level to provide this service in-house rather than placing these students in the regional EBD school which is located in another county. We strive to serve the entire sphere of the special needs spectrum in our school system.

Students identified as gifted and talented are provided a wide range of services beginning in elementary school. A gifted center, The Discovery Center, is housed at Fairview Elementary and serves gifted and talented students Kindergarten through 5th grade. Students travel to the center one day each week and work with gifted certified teachers. Honor's math and language arts are offered in middle school. Advance Placement classes and Honor's classes are available 9th through 12th grade. We currently offer 12 Advance Placement classes to our high school students. Honor's and AP courses are offered in all academics as well as AP Spanish, AP Music Theory and AP Studio Art. High school students may also participate in a Dual Enrollment Program with Piedmont College and earn college credit for these courses.

A state-of-the-art vocational program is housed at Habersham Central High School. Program offerings include agriculture, architecture, automotive, broadcasting & video production, business, culinary arts, early childhood education, engineering, marketing, and work-based learning. These programs of study provide high school students multiple opportunities to explore career possibilities.

Our newly adopted mission of One Team, One Mission - Success for ALL Students is providing a laser focus for our system that will result in more opportunities and higher achievement for the students of Habersham County

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.

Habersham County School System has had many notable achievements since 2009. The most exciting has been an increase in our overall student achievement as reflected in test results from the Georgia Criterion Reference Competency Test (CRCT), the Georgia 5th and 8th grade writing tests, high school End of Course Tests (EOCT) and the Georgia High School Graduation Writing Test (GHSWT). This indicates that our students are learning and achieving at high levels.

Trend data for the Georgia CRCT shows an 8% to 10% increase in reading scores, and a 9% to 21% increase in English Language Arts scores in grades 3rd, 4th and 5th. Math scores also increased in 4th grade by 11%. While these gains are impressive, we are most pleased with the increase in the number of students who have moved into the Exceeds category on the CRCT. Habersham County Schools saw an increase in the percent of students exceeding in 27 of 30 grade level/subject areas as reflected in the Spring 2012 CRCT results.

The graduation rate for Habersham Central High School (HCHS) students has increased 14% in the last three years. Our high school End of Course Tests also reflect an increase in student achievement with positive trends in for every subgroup on every End of Course Test. The meets and exceeds rates on the Georgia High School Writing Test was 92% for 2012 and the exceed rates doubled from the previous year. HCHS had 17 Advance Placement Scholars and has added an AP course offering each year for the past three years. The HCHS class of 2012 received $1.2 million in scholarships.

While overall achievement results have been positive, our system continues to focus on the needs of several of our sub-groups. English Language Learners (ELL), Hispanics and Students with Disabilities (SWD) have also increased in student achievement as reflected in state assessments, but a significant achievement gap still exists for these students in many areas such as the graduation rate for Hispanics and SWD. Many initiatives have been instituted to continue to address the needs of these at-risk students. All schools have participated and implemented Thinking Maps, a cognitive mapping learning strategy that helps students organize their thinking. Schools with high ELL populations have participated in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), which helps teachers to design and deliver lessons that address the academic and linguistic needs of English learners. A cohort of teachers is participating in the Georgia ESOL for Content Area Teachers (GECAT) project which is a collaborative effort with The University of Georgia. Participating teachers will have ESOL endorsement added to their teaching certificates upon completion of this project.

Habersham County School System is fortunate to have strong community and parental support, as indicated in the AdvancED parent survey results. Our parents are very supportive of our school system and teachers. Parent involvement is very strong at the elementary level and tends to decrease as students move into middle and high school. It is critical that we begin to examine this trend and develop plans to provide parents with opportunities to be more involved at the middle and high school level in ways other than sports.

We are also privileged to have very strong community support for our school system. In an effort to capitalize on this support, the Habersham County Schools Strategic Plan includes initiatives to maximize local learning opportunities for our students. Many of our high school graduates leave Habersham County to work in other geographic areas. This trend creates a void in our work force in the community. The Strategic Plan includes initiatives to create job-shadowing opportunities for high school students and to open a dialogue with local industry to discover connections that can be expanded between the school system and the community. The school system also will establish and promote local field trip learning opportunities for all grade spans.

In 2012, fourteen community partners including local governments, The Habersham County Board of Education, The Habersham County

Chamber of Commerce, North Georgia Technical College, Piedmont College, and The Habersham Industrial Development Authority entered into an agreement with the Archway Partnership of the University of Georgia. This partnership will provide a mechanism for community leaders to problem solve, develop strategies, obtain resources, and implement solutions.

The implementation of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) has been, and will continue to be, the major focus for our system. We recognize that the implementation of these standards represents an increase in rigor for our students. The majority of our professional learning resources have been dedicated to providing teachers with collaborative work time to develop common understandings about CCGPS. Teachers must fully understand what students need to know, understand, and do to master the standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics CCGPS. Other content area teachers must work to develop the writing skills and critical reading skills required to have deep understandings of the content. Full implementation of CCGPS will not happen in one year, or even a few years. As a system, we are committed to providing the support and resources for long-term implementation of CCGPS. We believe that this curriculum is what is best for our students and will allow us to truly achieve Success for ALL Students in Habersham County Schools.

Additional Information

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

As an organization, Habersham County School System believes it is important to recognize and reward the hard work and dedication of our students and employees. We endeavor during the year to provide numerous opportunities at the system level to encourage and support groups and individuals in our system.

A system retirement reception is held each year to recognize those certified and classified employees who have dedicated many years of service to education and our school system. Each school displays memorabilia for each retiree from his/her years in education. Friends and family of the retirees are invited to join the system in honoring these individuals.

A Teacher of the Year and Support Person of the Year selection is done each year.
Ballots for an individual are cast from each school or department. One individual is selected as they system Teacher of the year and one as the Support Person of the Year. A banquet is held each spring and all the individual school and department winners receive a small gift from the system. Family members are invited to attend.

Monthly recognitions are done at Board of Education meetings for the Extra Mile Award, for certified employees, and the Service Above Self Award, for classified employees. These awards are sponsored by the local Rotarians. Anyone in the system may nominate an individual for going above and beyond normal work responsibilities. These employees receive a certificate from the Board and a gift certificate for a local restaurant.

Student recognition is also an integral part of monthly Board of Education meetings. Students from schools attend the meetings and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. A segment of each board meeting is set aside to recognize outstanding students in academics, sports, fine arts, vocational and agricultural fields.

HCSS has been a participating system with the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) since 2005. GLISI builds leadership capacity, improves organizational effectiveness, and helps systems create the conditions that improve student achievement. Nine system or school GLISI teams have participated in Base Camp and Summit Workshops with GLISI. Teams at these workshops learn to implement a systemic and data-driven improvement process to address the challenges that face the system. Training emphasizes creating a performance culture in the district, developing people by giving specific feedback as measured by clear criteria, creating conditions for success in the system, and measuring and monitoring progress through the use of SMART goals. High School level teacher teams attended Base Camp and Summit Workshops this year to learn how to share leadership responsibility for improving student achievement. This work is aligned to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission Teacher Career Ladder and Teacher Leader Standards. Our system and school level work with GLISI has provided a common vocabulary regarding student achievement and success.

The "fundamentals" of use of time, discipline and attendance, along with the implementation of Common Core Georgia Performance Standards, have been our clear focus for the 2012-2013 school year. This focus will guide our system toward higher levels of learning for our Raider Nation and will lead to Success for ALL Students in Habersham County Schools.

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: 3.0

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.	•District purpose statements - past and present •Survey results •Examples of communications to stakeholders about the district's purpose (i.e. website, newsletters, annual report, student handbook) •Communication plan to stakeholders regarding the district's purpose •Minutes from meetings related to development of the district's purpose and direction •Documentation or description of the process for creating the district's purpose including the role of stakeholders •Copy of strategic plan referencing the district purpose and direction and its effectiveness •System Core beliefs, School Handbooks, School improvement plans	Level 3

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.	•Examples of school purpose statements if different from the district purpose statement •Survey results •Examples of written stakeholder communications or marketing materials that portray the school purpose and direction •Agendas and/or minutes that reference a commitment to the components of the schools' purpose statements •Academics Benchmarks, CRCT scores, Graduation rates, Insight reports	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.	•Examples of schools' continuous improvement plans •The district strategic plan •Survey results •Statements of shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning •Professional development plans and implementation timelines on topics related to equity, organizational effectiveness, and improved instruction and programs •Statements or documents about ethical and professional practices •Continuous Improvement Plan	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.4	Leadership at all levels of the system implement a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	Leaders at all levels of the system implement a documented, systematic continuous improvement process for improving student learning and the conditions that support learning. All stakeholder groups are engaged in the process. Personnel maintain a profile with current and comprehensive data on student, school, and system performance. The profile contains analyses of data used to identify goals for the improvement of conditions that support student learning and that are aligned with the system's purpose. Improvement goals have measurable performance targets. The process includes action planning that identifies measurable objectives, strategies, activities, resources, and timelines for achieving improvement goals. Leaders hold all personnel accountable for and evaluate the overall quality of the implementation of all interventions and strategies. The process is reviewed and evaluated. Documentation that the process yields improved student achievement and conditions that support student learning is available and communicated to stakeholders.	•District Quality Assurance Review plans that document two-way communication on district and school effectiveness and learning, thinking, and life skills •The district strategic plan •Survey results •The district data profile •Professional development plans and implementation timelines on topics related to equity, organizational effectiveness, and improved instruction and programs •Communication plan and artifacts that show two-way communication to staff and stakeholders •Agenda, minutes from continuous improvement planning meetings •Examples of schools continuous improvement plans •Mission Statements, Learning plan, Newspaper Articles, CRCT Trend Data, Title one planning meeting, Habersham County Web page, Haberhsam County Score Card, Student Focus Group,	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.

Having a new superintendent in our system this year encouraged the review, revision, and development of a new Purpose and Direction Statement for our system: One Team, One Mission - Success for ALL Students. Based on research the Standard One Committee recognized the importance of having the Purpose and Direction statement focus on student success. This statement has developed into a fluid, collaborative document that is available to all stakes holders in a multitude of formats (1.1, 1.2, 1.4).

The process for establishing the school systems Purpose and Direction was a collaborative effort built through consensus with stakeholders (1.4). Based on their shared values and beliefs concerning teaching and learning (1.3) representatives from the community, schools, and the central office came together to review existing evidence (1.1) as well as discuss expectations for continuous improvement throughout our system, as reflected in our Continuous Improvement Plans (1.2, 1.3,1.4). After the district Purpose and Direction statement was formulated each school's Purpose and Direction statement was reviewed at the school level through a comprehensive process with all the stakeholders. Parents, teachers, community members, and administrators took part in developing a Purpose and Direction statement over several sessions that aligned with that of the district (1.2).

Stakeholder's beliefs and expectations are clearly documented, shared and articulated in a variety of ways throughout the HCSS: written literature (1.4), student handbooks, faculty meetings, newsletters, newspaper articles, banners, letter heads, the Schools Improvement Plans, the District Score Card, and the District Strategic Plan (1.3, 1.4) to name a few. Continuous Improvements Plans as well as Professional Development Plans (1.3) at all the school levels reflect HCSS's commitment to improvement instructional practices, knowledge, and skills expected of our students and teachers that are reviewed and reflected on throughout the school year (1.3). All employees participate in training of standards for ethical and professional conduct and understand and share values and beliefs about teaching and learning (1.1.)

Sharing HCSS Purpose and Direction began with sharing our success through expansive data collection and management (1.3, 1.4) systems. Through the data management systems our administrators and teachers are able to drill down to specific students and into specific, focused areas of strengths and needs. The Georgia Student Longitudinal Data System provides trend data on every student in our system. Sharing this information with stakeholders is accomplished through personal portals for parents, web page, and process reports (1.4). Data Information provides performance and service updates to all stakeholders, media releases, and updated progress reports throughout the year (1.4).

The District Website (1.2, 1.4) maintains and shares information. It is rich in resources tailored for all stakeholders. Through a network of Power School Links, parents, students, employees, and visitors are guided through static as well as ever-changing updated sources of information. Systematic dissemination of information drives and educates stakeholders and provides a basis for stakeholder support. The website is also school-specific and differentiates information by examining school-level information. A school website (1.2, 1.4) allows parents and students to access information that is more personal to a family or community. Attached to the website is an extensive grade portal (1.3) providing current academic information. While much communication is done electronically, hard copies of all required information is provided when requested.

In addition to our websites, HCSS sends out surveys to our students, parents and employees so we can receive feedback on how we are doing. Through online and paper surveys we ask our stakeholders to evaluate our performance in an effort to provide high quality service.

As with any system HCSS has areas of strengths and weakness. HCSS evidence shows that the school system statement is clearly focused on student success at all levels. Strengths of HCSS have been evident in the established history that strives to constantly improve opportunities for student learning (noted in previous vision and mission statements 1.4). In addition, our evidence shows that communication with stakeholders is an area of strength (1.1, 1.2,1.3.1.4). All stakeholder groups are represented (students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community leaders), however the process used to select these stakeholders could be more random. This will be addressed at the school and district levels through requests for participation on the school and district web sites for future committees members. A systematic review of the Purpose and Direction statement would also add to HCSS strengths. This process will be reviewed at the beginning of each school year both at the district and school levels.

Ongoing professional development in data collection and program implementation will help sustain HCSS's strengths and present progress. Another area of weakness for HCSS is in the area of educational programing. Developing measurable ways to monitor implementation of educational programs and equitable learning experiences would increase HCSS's proficiency levels and sustainability. This will be discussed during future the schools continual improvement plan meetings.

Governance and Leadership

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

Overall Rating: 2.83

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

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	The governing body has a process to ensure that its decisions and actions are in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities, a code of ethics, and free of conflict of interest. Governing body members participate in a systematic, formal professional development process regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing body and its individual members. The governing body complies with all policies, procedures, laws, and regulations, and functions as a cohesive unit.	•List of assigned staff for compliance •Governing authority minutes relating to training •Proof of legal counsel •Governing code of ethics •Assurances, certifications •Governing authority training plan •Communication plan to inform all staff on code of ethics, responsibilities, conflict of interest •Governing authority policies on roles and responsibilities, conflict of interest •Findings of internal and external reviews of compliance with laws, regulations, and policies •Board Operating Procedures	Level 3

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 generally 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 usually maintains a distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of system and school leadership.	•District strategic plan •Stakeholder input and feedback •Survey results regarding functions of the governing authority and operations of the district •Social media •Roles and responsibilities of school leadership •Roles and responsibilities of district leadership •Examples of school improvement plans •Agendas and minutes of meetings •Communications regarding governing authority actions •Informative Newspaper Articles	Level 2

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.	Most leaders and staff within the system make some decisions and take some actions toward continuous improvement. They expect all personnel and students to be held to standards. Leaders and staff express a desire for collective accountability for maintaining the conditions that support student learning. Leaders sometimes support innovation, collaboration, shared leadership, and professional growth. The culture is characterized by a minimal degree of collaboration and limited sense of community.	•Examples of decisions aligned with the district's purpose and direction •Examples of collaboration and shared leadership •Survey results •Examples of decisions aligned with the district's strategic plan •Examples of improvement efforts and innovations in the educational programs •Professional development offerings and plans	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	Leaders consistently communicate effectively with appropriate and varied representatives from stakeholder groups, provide opportunities for stakeholders to shape decisions, solicit feedback and respond to stakeholders, work collaboratively on system and school improvement efforts, and provide and support meaningful leadership roles for stakeholders. System and school leaders' proactive and persistent efforts result in measurable, active stakeholder participation, positive engagement in the system and its schools, a strong sense of community, and ownership.	•Minutes from meetings with stakeholders •Copies of surveys or screen shots from online surveys •Survey responses •Involvement of stakeholders in a school improvement plan •Examples of stakeholder input or feedback resulting in district action •Involvement of stakeholders in district strategic plan	Level 4

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.	•Examples of professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the results from supervision and evaluation •Supervision and evaluation documents with criteria for improving professional practice throughout the system and student success noted •Governing body policy on supervision and evaluation •Representative supervision and evaluation reports •Job specific criteria •Surveys showing stakeholder involvement	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 Habersham County School Board establishes and updates policies and conveys these policies to all stakeholders by a first reading and publication for public input for thirty (30) days before final adoption. The Board empowers the Superintendent to revise and develop policies as needed to support effective instruction to ensure student performance, support sound financial management, encourage and develop professional development of all staff members, and develop and expand challenging learning experiences for all students.

In 2012, the Board self assessed the operating procedures put in place to ensure growth in the following areas: Governance Structure, Strategic Planning, Board and Community Relations, Policy Development, and Personnel. (2.1, 2.2, 2.4)   Conservative fiscal management has contributed to the system operating in difficult economic times utilizing resources available. No resources have been sought from

sources other than conventional resources.

The Board participates in annual training provided by the Georgia School Boards Association. (GSBA) This training focuses on a variety of professional learning opportunities for members, such as fiscal responsibility, Board member roles and responsibilities, policy development, Superintendent evaluation, and community relations. (2.2) An area of improvement centers around establishment of effective communication protocol with all stakeholders to the point that communication is extended to all stakeholders in an effective and efficient manner. (2.2, 2.4) The Board also self assessed the need to develop community forums to solicit input and distribute information to all stakeholders in a format that is comfortable and accessible to everyone. (2.2,2.5)

Booster clubs, Parent, Teacher, and Student Organizations, and School Councils are effectively participating in supporting school programs. Booster clubs exist for academic and athletic support to ensure students are extended opportunities to participate in all interest areas. Supporting all aspects of the students' school career enables students to develop to their fullest potential in all areas. At elementary level, PTA's offer much support for all aspects of the elementary educational program. Many sources of support can be seen in academic, social and emotional development of students. (2.5) A website has been developed to enable students to report bullying anonymously. This website enables students to feel secure and protected and contribute to the establishment of a safe school environment for all students. This effectively promotes Success For All Students. (2.5) The Bulletin Board published by The Northeast Georgian promotes the educational programs and successes of all schools and students within the system. Schools submit information for the publication as does the Superintendent and Central Office personnel. (2.5)

Various school improvement plans indicate a variety of programs and procedures to promote improvement in schools. No two improvement plans are identical and are individualized to meet the needs of the individual schools. The District Strategic Plan incorporates all aspects of the individual plans of schools to promote both individual improvement for schools and overall improvement for all components of the school system (2.3) Individual schools develop their websites that focus on each school and the school's programs. Facebook is used by the high school as a social media instrument. The local newspaper is also utilized to communicate school information to the community as is the local radio stations and television station. (2.3)

Collaboration between schools and programs is used in a limited sense due to time constraints and scheduling. Improvement in this area is necessary to promote improvement in program organization among all schools and staff members. A strategy to employ should include scheduled meetings to solicit input from individual schools collectively that will ensure complicity with an established organizational plan that contributes to individuality and at the same time promotes attainment of collective goals.(2.4,2.6)

A strong sense of community support for both school program and system initiatives is evident from the sense of ownership displayed by parents and community members. Stakeholders readily assume leadership roles and work collaboratively with each other at a high level. (2.5)

The Board through their self-assessment determined to develop an effective evaluation instrument for the Superintendent. The Board chose to seek training from Pioneer RESA to set the parameters of the Superintendent's evaluation instrument. This process began in the Summer Retreat of 2012 and is on-going this year. The plan is also designed to continue to be changed and improved from year to year as emphasis on evaluation changes. (2,6) Habersham County utilizes a local Teacher Appraisal Instrument that has been developed locally and approved for use by the State Department of Education. This Appraisal Instrument employs a pre-evaluation conference, a formative conference, and a summative conference for each certified teacher. The teacher chooses a standard to work on for improvement, develops a plan to improve and grow each year and presents artifacts and evidence in the summative conference at the end of the school year. If a standard is not completed in a school year, then the standard can be continued into the next school year. This Appraisal System, although was created to foster individual growth, lacks substance for sustaining growth and continued improvement of evaluates. (2.6) The Habersham School

System will employ the Teacher Keys and Leader keys Instruments developed by the State of Georgia beginning in 2013-14. (2.6)

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: 2.42

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.	•Course or program descriptions •Survey results •Student work across courses or programs •Posted learning objectives •Course, program, or school schedules •Descriptions of instructional techniques •Response to Intervention system, Discovery Center, Advance Placement enrollment, Honors Courses, Jr. Honors Courses, Professional Learning Plans	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.2	Curriculum, instruction, and assessment throughout the system are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	System personnel monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and alignment with the goals for achievement and instruction and statements of purpose. A process is implemented sometimes to ensure alignment when curriculum, instruction, and/or assessments are reviewed or revised at the system or school level. There is limited evidence that the continuous improvement process ensures vertical and horizontal alignment and alignment with the system's purpose in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	•Lesson plans aligned to the curriculum •Surveys results •Common assessments •Program descriptions •Teacher evaluation criteria relating to prescribed instructional designs and proprietary practices •Curriculum guides •Products – scope and sequence, curriculum maps •Instructional frameworks, student profile cards, benchmarks through Study Island, Georgia Standards.org website, universal screenings, School Keys GAPSS observation tool,	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.3	Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	Teachers throughout the district 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.	•Examples of teacher use of technology as an instructional resource •Interdisciplinary projects •Surveys results •Student work demonstrating the application of knowledge •Teacher evaluation criteria relating to prescribed instructional designs and proprietary practices •Examples of professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the approved or prescribed instructional strategies and programs •Authentic assessments •Examples of professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the results from supervision and evaluation •Findings from supervisor formal and informal observations •Examples of student use of technology as a learning tool •In Praise of Learning process, eWalk observations, various technology programs used throughout the system,	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	System and school leaders formally and consistently monitor instructional practices through supervision and evaluation procedures 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.	•Supervision and evaluation procedures •Recognition of teachers with regard to these practices •Surveys results •Peer or mentoring opportunities and interactions •Documentation of collection of lesson plans, grade books, or other data record systems •Curriculum maps •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 •Annual Summaries from appraisal conferences, eWalk observations, teacher Professional Growth Plans	Level 3

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.	•Survey results •Professional development funding to promote professional learning communities •Agendas and minutes of collaborative learning committees •Evidence of informal conversations that reflect collaboration about student learning •Weekly team meeting minutes, professional learning days, school improvement team meetings, monthly administrative meetings, calendars from schools.	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	Most teachers in the system use an instructional process that informs students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Exemplars are sometimes provided to guide and inform students. The process may include multiple measures, including formative assessments, to inform the ongoing modification of instruction. The process provides students with feedback about their learning.	•Survey results •Examples of learning expectations and standards of performance •Examples of assessments that prompted modification in instruction •Samples of exemplars used to guide and inform student learning •rubrics for assessing writing, reading and math journals, universal screenings, benchmarks, instructional frameworks	Level 2

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.	Some 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 system personnel.	•Records of meetings and informal feedback sessions •Survey results •Professional learning calendar with activities for instructional support of new staff •Descriptions and schedules of mentoring, coaching, and induction programs with references to district and school beliefs and values about teaching and learning •new teacher induction program, coaching cycle calendar, minutes from coaching meetings with district administration	Level 2

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.	•List of varied activities and communications modes with families, e.g., info portal, online, newsletters, parent centers, academic nights, open house, early release days •Parental/family/caregiver involvement plan including activities, timeframes, and evaluation process •Survey results •Calendar outlining when and how families are provided information on child's progress •Examples of learning expectations and standards of performance •Volunteer program with variety of options for participation •Samples of exemplars used to guide and inform student learning •One Call Now, Title I Parent Involvement Plans, Parent Involvement Coordinators, school newsletters, Parent Night sign in sheets	Level 3

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.	•Master schedule with time for formalized structure •case manager list, advisor/advisee high school program, RtI process, list of mentors	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.	•Sample report cards for each program or grade level and for all courses and programs •Survey results •Sample communications to stakeholders about grading and reporting •Grading procedures in handbooks, Description of grading with courses in Powerschool, BOE policy on grading, course syllabi, promotion/retention policy	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	Most staff members participate in a program of professional learning that is aligned with the system's purpose and direction. Professional development is based on needs of the system. The program builds capacity among staff members who participate. The program is regularly evaluated for effectiveness.	•Survey results •Evaluation tools for professional learning •District professional development plan involving the district and all schools •Brief explanation of alignment between professional learning and identified needs •Thinking Maps at all schools, School Improvement Plans, Professional Learning Plans, PD Express, Academic Coaches	Level 2

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.	•Data used to identify unique learning needs of students •Survey results •Training and professional learning related to research on unique characteristics of learning •List of learning support services and student population served by such services •Schedules, lesson plans, or example student learning plans showing the implementation of learning support services •Response to Intervention program, Matrix for gifted qualifications, Matrix for Advance program, universal screenings, progress monitoring tools	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.

Habersham County Schools began implementation of a standards based curriculum and instructional approach with the roll out of the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) in the 2005 - 2006 school year. The GPS provide clear expectations of what students must know, understand and do in order to demonstrate mastery of the standards. GPS requires students to think critically and use higher-order thinking skills, as well as communicate, problem-solve and make connections with other information.(3.1, 3.3) The transition to the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Literacy began with the 2012-2013 school year. Job embedded professional learning for staff began in the 2011-2012 school year.(3.5) This implementation ensures that Georgia students will be qualified to compete with students throughout the United States and globally.

Awareness walk templates are used by administrators as a tool to provide feedback to teachers on the level of standards-based implementation.(3.4, 3.2) Instructional frameworks, based on those initially developed by the GaDOE, were developed to assist teachers in planning the opening, work session, and closing for an instructional period.(3.6) Teachers participate in collaborative professional learning throughout the system to develop common understandings of standards-based instruction.(3.5) Standards-based assessment practices give teachers data to provide immediate feedback to students regarding their performance.

In 2009, HCSS began implementation of the Response to Intervention (RtI) process to provide interventions to students who were not successful in tier one (a standards-based classroom) instructional settings. Universal screenings, completed three times each year - fall, winter and spring - provide data regarding the implementation of curriculum, the effectiveness of current instructional practices, and the level of mastery of each student. When indicated by the universal screening data, adjustments are made in curriculum, instruction, or student's placement in the tiers of intervention. Students involved in interventions are progress monitored to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention.(3.9, 3.6, 3.12) The RtI model has been implemented at the elementary and middle school levels. We are continuing to work on implementation at the high school level.

Every school in HCSS has received training in Thinking Maps, a language of eight visual patterns based on fundamental thought processes. Each Thinking Map is related to a specific thought process. As schools across the system are in various years of implementation, from year one to year three, the level of implementation seen in each building varies.(3.3)

Smartboard technology was placed in every 3rd through 12th grade core content classroom across the school system in 2009-2010. Our teachers have embraced this technology and student engagement is high in classrooms where the teacher utilizes the Smartboard technology regularly.(3.3)

System collaboration opportunities are provided in many ways. In 2008-2009, ALL teachers participated in collaborative curriculum design throughout the year, meeting each teacher training day to evaluate and design curriculum maps based on the state curriculum maps. Core content teachers from different schools have met through summer workshops and professional learning days periodically in the last four years. Grade level meetings at the elementary level give teachers opportunities to develop common understandings of the CCGPS, as well as the time to develop common assessments across grade levels and/or content. Middle school team teachers have common planning time that allows them to do the same. Our high school operates a block schedule with 90 minutes of planning time. This time has been used to provide collaboration time for teachers of common disciplines. Professional learning funds are distributed to schools and are used to set aside days throughout the year for teacher collaboration.(3.5, 3.11)

New HCSS teachers participate in induction prior to pre-planning based on the work of the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement. Instructional Coach programs exist at all Title I schools but at no other schools. This provides limited systematic coaching and mentoring. Current induction procedures are in need of revision. (3.7)

HCSS engages families in a variety of ways. The system website provides information about the school system. Links to the individual school websites are included. Forms of parent communication include OneCall Now, weekly folders, student agendas, conferences, classroom newsletters, and mass emails. Parent programs include an open house at each school during pre-planning, academic nights, testing information nights, GA College 411, LiFT University, and many others. PowerSchool, our student information system, provides parents with real time access to grades and attendance throughout the school year.(3.8)

Specific segments of our student population are known by at least one adult in each building either the classroom teacher, advisor/advisee, case manager, counselor, intervention teacher, coaches or club sponsors. However, there is a need to formalize this process or evaluate the effectiveness of each of these relationships.(3.9)

Teachers at elementary grades 1st through 5th within some schools have developed common grading and reporting policies, but this is not consistent across all schools. Teachers in middle and high school have more limited collaboration time with teachers of the same subject and few common grading and reporting policies are in place at those grade spans.(3.10) We recognize this as a definite weakness and schools are beginning to meet as grade levels and content areas to develop common vocabulary and understandings regarding grading policies and procedures, but this work will take time to evolve into a system-wide document.

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: 2.38

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.1	The system engages in a systematic process to recruit, employ, and retain a sufficient number of qualified professional and support staff to fulfill their roles and responsibilities and support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, and educational programs.	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.	•District quality assurance procedures for monitoring qualified staff across all schools •School budgets or financial plans for last three years •Survey results •Policies, processes, procedures and other documentation related to the hiring, placement and retention of professional and support staff for the district and schools •Documentation of highly qualified staff •District budgets or financial plans for the last three years •Financ HQ monitoring- recruitment- retention & reporting, audits, accounting meetings, procedural instructions, GSBA Insurance coverage, fixed asset depreciation list, Teacher equity plan, School audits, tax digest, financial risk management, professional learning plan sample	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.	•Examples of school schedules •Survey results •Alignment of district budget with district purpose and direction •Examples of efforts of school leaders to secure necessary material and fiscal resources •Examples of school calendars	Level 3

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 some expectations for maintaining safety, cleanliness, and a healthy environment, and have shared these definitions and expectations with most stakeholders. Selected system and school personnel are accountable for maintaining these expectations. Some measures are in place that allow for tracking of these conditions. Personnel work to improve these conditions. Results of improvement efforts are monitored.	•School safety committee responsibilities, meeting schedules, and minutes •Policies, handbooks on district and school facilities and learning environments •Documentation of compliance with local and state inspections requirements •Example maintenance schedules for schools	Level 2

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 some policies related to strategic resource management. The system has a long-range strategic planning process. The strategic planning process is reviewed for effectiveness when necessary. Strategic plans are implemented effectively by the governing body and system leaders.	•District strategic plan showing the areas of budget, facilities, quality control, and other strategic systems •Policies, handbooks on district and school facilities and learning environments •fiscal responsibilities, 5 year technology plan	Level 2

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 provide students and school and system personnel access to media and information resources. The system attempts to hire qualified personnel to assist students, school, and system personnel in learning about the tools and locations for finding and retrieving information.	•Schedule of staff availability to assist students and school personnel related to finding and retrieving information •Data on media and information resources available to students and staff •District education delivery model intended for school implementation including media and information resources to support the education program •RESA offerings of workshops, ROTC, system websites, one call, Powerschool	Level 2

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.	•Brief description of technology or web-based platforms that support the education delivery model •Brief description of learning management systems or data management systems that support the effective use of student assessment results, school effectiveness, and district effectiveness •District technology plan and budget to improve technology services and infrastructure for the district-level and school-level •Policies relative to technology use at the district-level and school-level •cyber bullying, board policy	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.7	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of support systems to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.	The system has a process to determine the physical, social, and emotional needs of students and then selects or designs and implements programs to meet the needs of as many students as possible. System and school personnel regularly evaluate programs. Improvement plans related to these programs are sometimes designed and implemented to more effectively meet the needs of all students.	•Social classes and services, e.g., bullying, character education •Student assessment system for identifying student needs •List of support services available to students •Family connections, Character Ed, Interpretor services, Mobile Dental Clinic, Food 2 Kids, Heat Assistance, Sources of Strength	Level 2

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 a process to determine the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of students and then selects or designs and implements programs to meet the needs of as many students as possible. System and school personnel regularly evaluate programs. Improvement plans related to these programs are sometimes designed and implemented to more effectively meet the needs of all students.	•Description of referral process •District quality assurance procedures that monitor program effectiveness of student support services •Description of IEP process •RTI manual, sign in and agendas, Paraprofessional support, Graduate First participation, Georgia 411	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.

Habersham County School System (HCSS) recognizes that highly effective teachers have a direct impact on student achievement. HCSS works to secure highly qualified employees to operate an effective, efficient, and safe school system. The system offers a competitive salary and benefits package. A strong induction program, including a two-day New Educator Orientation and mentoring program, supports new teachers. To improve recruitment, we need to expand the pool of qualified applicants for HCS by actively seeking in-system paraprofessionals and substitutes, educate them on the benefits of teaching, and inform them of programs available to become Highly Qualified/Certified. Habersham County will continue to partner with local colleges/universities for the placement of student teachers and hiring of their graduates. Employment applications are reviewed a web-based program called Searchsoft. Administrators conduct interviews, check references, and make recommendations to HR for the employment of staff at their school who will best meet the needs of their students.(4.1)

Fiscal resources are available to fund positions necessary to achieve the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools and educational programs. The annual budget is prepared in accordance with Georgia law and tied directly to the purpose and direction of HCSS. Annual budget development involves input from all stakeholders. Funding and allocation of resources is tied to the district strategic plan and local school improvement plans. Funding for staffing and supplies are based on allocation formulas tied directly to enrollment counts. Schools submit professional learning plans outlining the plan and objectives, data that supports the need, and the actions and desired outcomes to receive professional learning funds. Instructional time is protected in policy and practice with the use of scheduling that maximizes instruction time. The 5-year facilities plan shows the willingness to provide the material resources needed to accomplish the system goals. (4.2)

HCSS provides modern, fully functional technology infrastructures and updated equipment. The technical support staff meets the teaching, learning and operational needs of all stakeholders throughout our system. The technology plan is revised based on data in order to better meet and improve the technology needs of the school system.(4.6)

HCSS provides a safe, clean and healthy learning and working environment. The maintenance and custodial director supervise these conditions, however, all staff are accountable for maintaining these expectations. (4.3)

HCSS has a risk assessment document that complies with Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts. It details procedures regarding internal controls, fraud risk, and financial reporting objectives. This document is revised annually and reviewed by auditors during the audit process each year. Strategic plans for technology and facilities are reviewed and revised on a 5-year cycle. The system disaster recovery plan/safety plan is revised each year. Formal evaluations for the risk assessment document are done annually. Formal procedures need to be developed to evaluate and analyze the effectiveness of other strategic plans in the system.(4.4)

The county currently provides and coordinates multiple informational resources through diverse delivery mediums. Technology and administration evaluates the effectiveness of these resources and personnel. The system currently has qualified staff to assist students and school and system personnel in learning about the tools and locations for finding and retrieving information.(4.5)

There is a process for identifying students at-risk and those needing assistance with a physical, social, or emotional issue. School counselors, social workers, psychologists, and nurses work closely with classroom teachers, administrators, and other staff, as well as parents, in identifying students in need, whether it is through a referral or an at-risk assessment where factors such as attendance, grades,

behavior, etc. are reviewed. Programs exist to meet the needs of students and families, such as the Mobile Dental Clinic, Heat Assistance program for families, Sources of Strength (a suicide prevention program), Food 2 Kids program for children that may not have enough to eat on the weekends, and group counseling provided by school counselors. There is a need to do a more comprehensive evaluation of programs.(4.7)

Processes and procedural manuals are available for Response to Intervention (RTI), Student Support Teams, and Special Education to assist in meeting students needs academically and behaviorally. Coordination of services is monitored by both special education and curriculum departments at the system level and within each of the schools. Schools have an RTI, SST and 504 person identified to manage the scheduling of meetings. School psychologists are assigned to schools and attend Tier 3 meetings as well as SST meetings. The RtI process could be improved by evaluating the effectiveness of the interventions and supports within the school and the community. All elementary and middle schools embrace the RTI process and have designated time allocated to the needs of the students. The high school has interventions in place, but needs to improve documentation of this. A stronger process is needed to better serve students as needs arise. Another weakness is inconsistent use of available technology to track students in the RTI process. If RtI students move to a referral, the information must be handled and input again.(4.8)

There is evidence that structures, processes, and procedures are in place for resources and support systems. However, the team acknowledges there is room for improvement and a need for more evaluation of our processes to make sure we are utilizing our resources while continuing to seek better methods of meeting students needs.

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: 2.4

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.	•Brief description of student assessment system including range of data produced from standardized and local or school assessments on student learning and school performance •Evidence that assessments are reliable and bias free •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

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.	•Examples of use of data to design, implement, and evaluate continuous improvement plans and apply learning •List of data sources related to district effectiveness •Written protocols and procedures for data collection and analysis	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.	•Training materials specific to the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data •Documentation of attendance and training related to data use	Level 2

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.	A process exists for analyzing data that determine verifiable improvement in student learning including readiness for and success at the next level. Results indicate mixed levels of improvement, and system and school personnel sometimes 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.	•Examples of use of results to evaluate continuous improvement action plans •Agendas, minutes of meetings related to analysis of data •Evidence of student readiness for the next level •Evidence of student growth	Level 2

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.	•Minutes of meetings regarding achievement of student learning goals •Sample communications to stakeholders regarding student learning, conditions that support learning, and achievement of school improvement goals •Examples of district marketing tools and websites that cite student achievement results or that make promises regarding student achievement	Level 3

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

Habersham County School System (HCSS) uses a process of continuous improvement to allow us to continue to fulfill our mission of Success for ALL Students. Data collected under the state's College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) measuring student achievement and performance, as well as other measures such as Progress Scores, Achievement Gap Closure, Financial Efficiency ratings, and School Climate ratings (student and stakeholder surveys, attendance data, discipline data) enable our system to evaluate school curriculum and programming and to adapt to student needs.

A noted area of strength for Standard 5 (Using Results for Continuous Improvement) for our system is the development and implementation of a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system. HCSS uses formative and summative student assessments to monitor student progress and to evaluate and modify instruction and curriculum. We administer all standardized testing as required by the state as well as nationally-normed mental ability and achievement assessments at selected grade levels. In 2011-12, HCSS administered the following assessments: Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs); Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT); Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests - Modified (CRCT-M); End -of-Course Tests (EOCT); The Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA); Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHSGT); Georgia Basic Skills Tests (BST); Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS); Georgia Writing Assessments (Grade 8 and 11); Grade Five (5) Writing Assessment; National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); College Admissions Placement Tests; Cognitive

Abilities Test (CogAT); Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS); College Board Advanced Placement Examinations (AP); Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT); Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT); American College Test (ACT); and the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASBAB). Students also have opportunities to take the SAT and the ACT at off-site locations.

HCSS supports individual school and teacher-made local assessments (frameworks/benchmarks) via the Online Assessment System (OAS), Study Island, USA Test Prep, AIMSweb, as well as teacher-designed tests.
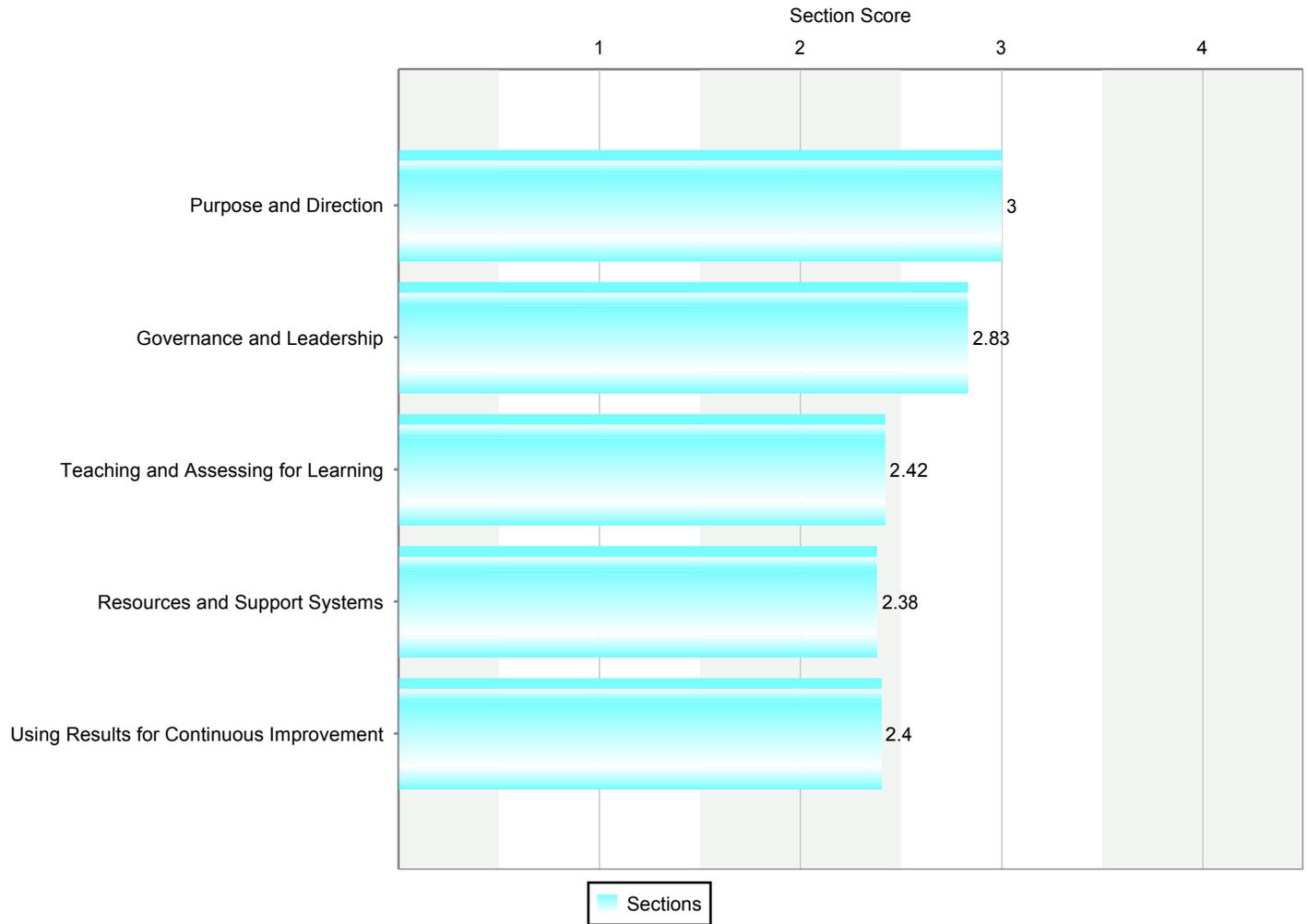
HCSS administrators and teachers routinely evaluate instructional activities in light of student performance and success to ensure that our actions meet students' needs. We use data on discipline, attendance, and student performance to evaluate other aspects of our program in a continuous improvement process. Teachers make routine use of benchmark assessment data to guide instructional decisions. Trend data is also used to monitor longitudinal progress. For example, teachers of advanced placement (AP) courses use AP Instructional Planning Reports to monitor student performance and guide instructional planning. Pioneer RESA Insight Reports provide comparative data for student performance on the CRCT in relationship to RESA average scores. Monitoring instruction is essential to ensure growth and to improve learning experiences. Student performance data is also utilized in guiding student placement into advanced courses in an effort to best match services to student needs.

Additionally, communication of results to stakeholders is an area of strength for our system. Modes of communication include: system leadership (principals') meetings; monthly BOE School Improvement reports; system website (www.habershamschools.com); individual school websites, and the published annual report. The local newspaper, The Northeast Georgian, highlights education in our county through its quarterly supplement, The Bulletin Board. Standardized test results are regularly sent home to parents.

There are areas in which we can improve in the realm of Standard 5. Two areas that we have identified for improvement are system-level professional learning to support effective utilization of data and formalized, written procedures to guide administrators and teachers in a more systematic and consistent use of data in instructional planning.

Report Summary

Scores By Section

Section Score

	1	2	3	4

Purpose and Direction — 3

Governance and Leadership — 2.83

Teaching and Assessing for Learning — 2.42

Resources and Support Systems — 2.38

Using Results for Continuous Improvement — 2.4

Sections

Assurances Report

AdvancED Assurances

Assurance	Certified	Comment/Attachment
The institution has read, understands, and complies with the AdvancED Policies and Procedures.	Yes	All administrators in the system have read, understand and comply with the assurances
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	Monitoring School Improvement for SACS.docx
The institution monitors all financial transactions through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system.	Yes	
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	
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)	Yes	
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: •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	Yes	

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).	•Evidence of randomness of sample if sample population is selected •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?

The range of average scores for parent response was a low of 3.95 to a high of 4.35, indicating overall high satisfaction with the schools within the system. Parents indicated the strongest satisfaction with Standard 4, Indicator 3 - The system maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, healthy environment for all students and staff. Also ranked with a high level of satisfaction were Standard 4, Indicator 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 and Standard 1, Indicator 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 program and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking, and life skills.

The range of average scores for staff responses was a low of 3.76 to a high of 4.52, which indicates overall high satisfaction on the part of staff within the school system. Staff indicated the highest average satisfaction with Standard 1, Indicator 1 - The system engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a system-wide purpose for student success. Also highly ranked were Standard 4, Indicator 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. Ranked equally high was Standard 1, Indicator 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 program and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking, and life skills. It is interesting that both parents and staff ranked Standard 4.1 and Standard 1.3 with high satisfaction.

The range of average scores for student responses was a low of 2.62 to a high of 2.97 for elementary students and a low of 3.65 to a high of 4.16 for middle and high school students. This would indicate an overall high level of satisfaction within the student populations at all schools. Standard 1, Indicator 1 - The system engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a system-wide purpose for student success was ranked highest at the early elementary level. Standard 4, Indicator 4 - The system maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, healthy environment for all students and staff was ranked highest for elementary students and Standard 5, Indicator 4 - The system engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level was ranked highest for middle and high school students.

All survey data indicates high overall satisfaction on the part of all stakeholders in the school system.

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

No system level data is currently available to show a trend toward increasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval. Past survey results have been gathered for individual schools but has not been aggregated at the system level.

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

Past school level parent, staff and student surveys, where conducted, have indicated a high level of satisfaction with the individual schools.

Areas in Need of Improvement

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

Parents indicated the lowest satisfaction with Standard 3, Indicator 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 and Standard 2, Indicator 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. Also ranked lower was Standard 3, Indicator 12 - The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.

Staff satisfaction was lowest for Standard 3, specifically Indicator 3.7 with a score of 3.76 - Mentoring, coaching and induction programs support improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning. Standard 3 Indicator 5 - The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels received an average score of 3.98. Also ranked low was Standard 3, Indicator 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, with a score of 3.95.

At the early elementary and elementary level student surveys were lowest for Standard 3, Indicator 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, with a score of 2.62 on a scale of 1 to 3. While not alarmingly low, this still indicates an area of growth for our system. Middle and high school students ranked the system lowest on Standard 3, Indicator 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.

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

No system level data is currently available to show a trend toward increasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval. Past survey results have been gathered for individual schools but has not been aggregated at the system level.

What are the implications for these stakeholder perceptions?

Teaching and Assessing for learning was consistently scored lower by staff than any other Standard, although none of the ratings averaged below 3.76. This would indicate this is an area for potential growth for our school system.

Both staff and student survey results indicate that the system must look for opportunities to more fully engage parents in their children's education and must provide multiple ways to keep parents informed on student progress. Although these scores were not in the lower end of the survey range, this still presents our system with the challenge to provide more information to parents and create more opportunities for parents to be involved in school and system activities.

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

No system level data is currently available to show a trend toward increasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval. Past survey results have

been gathered for individual schools but has not been aggregated at the system level.

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).	4.0

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.	34.0

Areas of Notable Achievement

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

When using the AdvancED Student Performance Worksheet to analyze student achievement data, it appears that overall student performance across assessments and grade levels is trending in a positive direction. Only thirteen of fifty-two listed assessments indicated a negative improvement score and these ranged from -0.01 to -0.09, which would not be considered statistically significant. However, the same could be said for positive improvement scores, ranging from 0.01 to 0.50. This would seem to indicate only slight improvement in the remaining thirty-nine assessments analyzed.

The state of Georgia has been granted a waiver for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act by the United States Department of Education and the College and Career Readiness Index (CCRPI) will replace the Adequate Yearly Progress calculation method previously used to determine a school system's achievement status. Pioneer Regional Education Service Agency has analyzed 2012 Criterion Reference Competency Test data to provide our system and schools with preliminary performance, as measured by the CCRPI. When considering 2012 performance compared to anticipated performance targets established in the ESEA waiver, there are few areas that are above these set targets. Habersham County met the State and Subgroup Performance Goal for the Asian subgroup in English Language Arts, the Black State and Subgroup Performance Goal in Reading and English Language Arts, and the American Indian State and Subgroup Performance Goal in Reading and Math.

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

The AdvancED Student Performance Worksheet indicates that positive trends exits for students participating in the Criterion Reference Competency Test - Modified (CRCT-M). This test is given only to students with disabilities who have an Individual Education Plan. Only two percent of a system's SWD students may be administered the CRCT-M, so this impacts a relatively low number of students. When taking other sources of data into consideration, the most positive trend for the system has been an increase in the number of students scoring in the exceeds categories on state mandated tests.

Our system is fortunate to have the services of Pioneer Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) which provides our system with the Insight Report program which is a cohort comparison which includes only students with CRCT scores for consecutive years in consecutive grade levels. The zero baseline for these reports is the regional average percent correct, relative to year, grade and subject. We find these reports to be very beneficial for data comparisons. Areas that indicate a positive trend include all grades 4th through 8th in reading with 7th grade having the greatest gain from 2011 to 2012 with a 2.11% gain for the cohort. In English Language Arts, gains were achieved in 4th, 6th and 8th grade, with 6th grade achieving a 3.8% gain. Mathematics showed gains in all grades levels 4th through 8th, with the greatest gain in 7th grade at 4.84%.

Which area(s) indicate the overall highest performance?

When comparing results on state assessments from 2011 to 2012, several grade levels and subject areas results indicate substantial positive growth. Fourth grade scores for Reading, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies rose from a range of .35% to 2.79%, with 91.7% of fourth graders meeting or exceeding standards. Third grade scores in all four subject areas rose in the exceeds

category from a range of 4.72% to 6.72%. Seventh and Eighth grade scores were also high, with 96% or more students meeting or exceeding standards in Reading and English Language Arts.

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

Students with disabilities demonstrated increasing gains in reading and English Language Arts in all grades 4th through 8th, according to the Pioneer RESA Insight Reports. Gains were also shown in 5th through 8th grade mathematics for this same subgroup. English Language Learners experienced slight gains in 5th, 6th and 8th grade reading, slight gains in 4th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade English Language Arts and also in 4th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade mathematics.

Between which subgroups is the achievement gap closing?

While our system is demonstrating gains in all subgroups, significant closing of the achievement gap is not occurring with any particular group.

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

These reported findings are consistent with multiple sources of data, including Pioneer RESA, the state data reporting system, the Student Longitudinal Data System, and data reported by the Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement.

Areas in Need of Improvement

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

The state of Georgia has been granted a waiver for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act by the United States Department of Education and the College and Career Readiness Index (CCRPI) will replace the Adequate Yearly Progress calculation method previously used to determine a school system's achievement status. Pioneer Regional Education Service Agency has analyzed 2012 Criterion Reference Competency Test data to provide our system and schools with preliminary performance, as measured by the CCRPI. When considering 2012 performance compared to anticipated performance targets established in the ESEA waiver, there are few areas that are above these set targets. Although the system is above the 2012 targets for the ALL students category for grades 3rd through 8th, virtually all subgroups are below the target goals. The CCRPI index identifies areas of concerns by two methods, areas where EITHER the State or Subgroup target was not met, or areas that BOTH the State and Subgroup targets were not met. The following areas are projected to flag for not meeting BOTH the State and Subgroup target for 2012 - Blacks in mathematics, Hispanics in all subject areas, and ELL students in all subject areas.

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

When comparing results on state assessments from 2011 to 2012, few grade levels and subject areas results show a negative trend. Sixth grade science cohort showed a 3.7% decrease in achievement relative to the Pioneer RESA cohort. Fifth grade science demonstrated a 1.36% decrease and 6th grade science demonstrate a 2.05% decrease in achievement relative to the Pioneer RESA cohort.

Which area(s) indicate the overall lowest performance?

Science and social studies demonstrate the lowest performance with 79.5% meeting and exceeding in science and 79.9% meeting and exceeding in social studies for grades 3rd through 8th.

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

While our system is demonstrating gains in all subgroups, significant closing of the achievement gap is not occurring with any particular subgroup.

Between which subgroups is the achievement gap becoming greater?

Our system has no subgroups where the achievement gap is widening. However, significant closing of the achievement gap is not occurring with any particular subgroup.

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

These reported findings are consistent with multiple sources of data, including Pioneer RESA, the state data reporting system, the Student Longitudinal Data System, and data reported by the Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement.

Habersham County Schools Strategic Plan 2012-13

Overview

Plan Name

Habersham County Schools Strategic Plan 2012-13

Plan Description

Initial work on this plan began in Fall 2012 with input was sought from system and school level administrators, board of education members, teachers and staff.