

**Report of the  
Quality Assurance Review Team  
for  
Cobb County School District**

514 Glover St SE  
Marietta, Georgia 30060-2706  
United States

**Fred Sanderson, Superintendent**  
**Dr. John Abraham, Chair, Cobb County Board of Education**  
**Nikki Armato, Chair, Quality Assurance Review Team**

---

---

**Review Dates: 11/15/2009 - 11/18/2009**



*North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), and the Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation (CITA) are accreditation divisions of AdvancED.*

# Quality Assurance Review Report

## Contents

About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI .....	3
Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review .....	4
Summary of Findings .....	5
Commendations .....	6
Recommendations .....	8
Next Steps .....	10
Standards for Accreditation .....	12
Standard 1. Vision & Purpose .....	12
Standard 2. Governance & Leadership .....	13
Standard 3. Teaching & Learning .....	15
Standard 4. Documenting & Using Results .....	16
Standard 5. Resource & Support Systems .....	17
Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications & Relationships .....	19
Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement .....	21
Quality Assurance Findings .....	23
Conclusion .....	25
Appendix .....	26
Quality Assurance Review Team Members .....	26
AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems .....	26

# About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

**Background.** Founded in 1895, the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) accredit public and private schools and districts in 30 states, the Navajo Nation, Latin America, and the Department of Defense Schools worldwide.

In April 2006, the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), and National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) came together to form one strong unified organization dedicated to education quality. That unified organization, known as AdvancED, creates the world's largest education community, representing 27,000 public and private schools and districts across the United States and in 65 countries worldwide and educating 15 million students.

NCA CASI and SACS CASI serve as accreditation divisions of AdvancED. Through AdvancED, NCA CASI and SACS CASI have defined shared, research-based accreditation standards that cross state, regional, and national boundaries. Accompanying these standards is a unified accreditation process designed to help schools continuously improve.

**The Accreditation Process.** To earn and maintain accreditation from NCA CASI or SACS CASI, school districts and their schools must:

- 1) Meet the AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools.** School districts demonstrate adherence to the seven AdvancED standards which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school districts to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.
- 2) Engage in continuous improvement.** School districts and their schools implement a continuous improvement process that articulates the vision and purpose that the school district is pursuing (vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school and district effectiveness, and the school community (profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (plan); and documents and uses the results to inform what happens next (results).
- 3) Demonstrate quality assurance through internal and external review.** School districts and schools engage in a planned process of ongoing internal review and self-assessment. In addition, school districts host an external quality assurance review team once every five years. The team evaluates the school district's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards, assesses the efficacy of the school district's improvement process and methods for quality assurance, and provides commendations and recommendations to help the school district improve. The team provides an oral exit report to the school district and a written report detailing the team's recommendations. The school district acts on the team's recommendations and submits a progress report following the review.

NCA CASI and SACS CASI accreditation engages the entire school district community in a continuous process of self-evaluation and improvement. The overall aim is to help school districts and their schools maximize student success and improve organizational effectiveness.

# Introduction to the Quality Assurance Review

**Purpose.** The purpose of the Quality Assurance Review is to:

1. Evaluate the school district's adherence to the AdvancED quality standards.
2. Assess the efficacy of the district's improvement process and methods for quality assurance.
3. Identify commendations and recommendations to improve the district and its schools.
4. Make an accreditation recommendation for review by the national AdvancED Accreditation Commission.

A key aim of the Quality Assurance Review is to verify that the school district is operating with institutional integrity - that it is fulfilling its vision and mission for its students.

**School District Preparation.** To prepare for the Quality Assurance Review, the school district and the community complete the AdvancED Standards Assessment Report. The report engages the district in an in-depth self assessment of each of the seven AdvancED standards. The school district identifies and describes the evidence that demonstrates that it is meeting each standard. Through this internal review, the school district examines how its systems and processes contribute to student performance and school district effectiveness.

**Summary of Team Activities.** The Quality Assurance Review Team is led by an AdvancED certified team chair and comprised of professionals from outside the school district. The team reviews the findings of the school district's internal self-assessment, conducts interviews with representative groups of stakeholders, reviews student performance data and other documentation provided by the school district, and observes practices and daily operations. The team engages in professional deliberations to reach consensus on the school district's adherence to the standards for accreditation. The team provides an oral exit report and prepares a written Quality Assurance Review Team Report designed to help the school district and its schools improve.

**The Quality Assurance Review Team Report.** Following the visit, the review team completes the Quality Assurance Review report. After review by a nationally-trained reader, the report is submitted to the district. The report contains commendations and recommendations for improvement.

**Using the Report - Acting on the Recommendations.** The school district uses the report to guide its improvement efforts. The school district is held accountable for addressing the recommendations identified in the report. The AdvancED State Office is available to assist the school district in addressing the recommendations. Following the Quality Assurance Review Team visit, the school district must submit a progress report detailing the actions and progress it has made on the team's recommendations. The report is reviewed at the state and national level to ensure the school district is addressing the recommendations.

**Accreditation Recommendation.** The Quality Assurance Review team uses the findings from the onsite visit to make an accreditation recommendation that is reviewed at the state level and by the national AdvancED Accreditation Commission. Accreditation is granted by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission and communicated to the school district following action from the commission.

## Summary of Findings

A Quality Assurance Review Team representing the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), a division of AdvancED, visited Cobb County School District on 11/15/2009 - 11/18/2009.

During the visit, members of the Quality Assurance Review Team interviewed 194 administrators, 381 teachers, 114 support staff, 221 parents and business partners, 278 students, and 7 Board of Education members for a total of 1195 stakeholders. In addition to meeting with district personnel and stakeholders, the team visited 24 schools within the school district. During the school visits, team members interviewed school stakeholders, observed classrooms, and reviewed relevant school artifacts. The team also reviewed documents, student performance data, and other artifacts provided by the district. Specifically, the team examined the district's systems and processes in relation to the seven AdvancED standards:

- Vision and Purpose
- Governance and Leadership
- Teaching and Learning
- Documenting and Using Results
- Resource and Support Systems
- Stakeholder Communications and Relationships
- Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The AdvancED standards focus on systems with a school district and systematic methods of attaining high student performance and organizational effectiveness. The power of the standards lies in the connections and linkages between and among the standards. The Quality Assurance Review Team used the AdvancED standards to guide its review of the school district, looking not only for adherence to individual standards, but also for how the school district and its schools function as a whole and embody the practices and characteristics of a quality school district.

Through its examination of the school district's adherence to the standards, the Quality Assurance Review Team prepared reports on each standard, highlighting strengths and suggestions for improvement specific to each standard. These reports can be found following this summary.

The Quality Assurance Review Team also examined the effectiveness of the district's methods for quality assurance. The team reviewed the district's practices and methods to monitor and document improvement, provide meaningful feedback and support across the district, ensure that AdvancED standards are met and strengthened, and regularly collect, use, and communicate results. The team's findings in this area can be found following the standard reports.

The team used the standard reports and quality assurance findings to identify common themes, significant accomplishments, and pressing needs facing the district. These became the basis for the overall commendations and recommendations that are provided below. The commendations and recommendations should serve as the focus for the district as it acts on the team's findings. They represent the areas that the team believes will have the greatest impact in helping the district further its improvement efforts. The standard reports and quality assurance findings can be used to help reinforce and enrich the district's understanding of the commendations and recommendations.

## Commendations

The Quality Assurance Review Team commends the Cobb County School District for the following strengths and accomplishments. While additional strengths are noted in the detailed review of each standard that appears later in this report, the commendations listed below are the strengths that the team believes are most deserving of being highlighted. The Quality Assurance Review Team commends the Cobb County School District for:

- **The Cobb County School District has shown consistent growth in student achievement and performance.**

In spite of challenges resulting from increasing diversity, high levels of mobility, and decreasing funding, Cobb County School District's students and schools have made significant strides and shown steady improvement in student learning. This is reflected in the high percentage of schools (94.7) making Adequate Yearly Progress under the No Child Left Behind Act. It is supported by improvement on a variety of standardized tests, increased graduation rates, and the number of national and state awards and designations Cobb students, staff, and schools have received. The educators in Cobb County School District demonstrate a relentless focus on the individual student and honor this value with a culture that has high expectations and embraces diversity. To make their beliefs a reality, student data is regularly collected, disaggregated, analyzed and used to determine learning and instructional needs. These needs are responded to by providing appropriate learning experiences from a wealth of initiatives and programs.

Student achievement and performance are important because student learning is the core business of a school district. Demonstration of constant gains in the area of student performance gives evidence of school quality, district excellence, and a pervasive commitment to continuous improvement.

- **The Cobb County School District possesses and sustains a high level of skilled and committed human capital.**

In 2004, at the conclusion of its first district quality assurance review, Cobb County School District was commended for having a "high quality staff." During the interval between its 2004 and 2009 visits, the district has leveraged and expanded this commendation and, as a result, is again being praised for its human capital. The staff continues to be passionate, dedicated and skilled.

Many practices were observed that provide evidence that as a district and community, the school district celebrates, nurtures, values, and invests in the talent of its professional staff. The district provides innovative and effective professional learning experiences for staff at all levels and with varying needs. Employees have access to experts in the field and a wide range of resources. School staff has been empowered to determine and develop building initiatives to improve student achievement. Leaders recognize staff members with potential and provide opportunities for them to be challenged and experience new roles with advanced responsibilities. There are opportunities for teachers to serve in leadership roles. Parents, business partners, and members of the community enhance the quality and scope of human capital through their support and involvement in the schools. The high degree of satisfaction expressed by staff and community members result in staff retention and stability.

A quality staff that exemplifies professionalism is a key element of district effectiveness and a primary vehicle for student learning. Practices that purposefully build staff capacity, create loyalty, increase longevity, and promote learning create a workforce capable of achieving the district's purpose, enhancing its quality, and sustaining its success.

- **The Cobb County School District exemplifies a professional learning community.**

The culture in Cobb County School District can be described as one where educators come together in an atmosphere of respect to grapple with issues of shared importance and value. Numerous opportunities for staff to learn with and from each other have been instituted. The way they do things in the district fosters an environment where educators assemble in live and electronic constructive formats to identify goals, engage in dialogue, think together, share practices, generate solutions, and take collective responsibility for results. District and school leaders participate in monthly Leadership and Learning programs that operate as vertical study groups. These learning experiences are designed to engage administrative staff in ongoing in-depth exploration of educationally relevant topics. Application at the school level is promoted to achieve systemic implementation and learning. Teachers are empowered to study data, determine goals, devise strategies, develop common assessments, and analyze results. This promotes collaboration and teamwork, and further fosters horizontal and vertical communication. Conditions are in place whereby a professional learning community can thrive. Staff is united in its commitment to achieve and implement the state defined curriculum and maintain a focus on the individual students.

It is through a culture that promotes collective expertise, unified action, and consistency of practice that results will be sustained and the potential of students and staff maximized.

- **The Cobb County School District has highly competent leaders who are focused on serving and supporting schools, building capacity of staff, and effectiveness of system.**

District leadership is meaningfully structured and dedicated to honoring the principles of continuous improvement and the intent of district accreditation. Evidence shows they provide direction, appropriate support, and the needed assistance to ensure all schools and operational units are equipped to meet student needs and achieve learning targets. Area superintendents are available, competent, and responsive to the needs of staff and schools. They monitor progress, supply resources, and provide assistance on a systematic and “just in time” basis. This causes staff to admire, appreciate, and view leaders as a viable resource. Professional trust and respect is evident at all levels within the Cobb County School District organization. District leadership has demonstrated consistently high levels of sound fiscal practices and provided responsible stewardship of the district’s funds and resources. This has allowed the district to focus on providing quality instruction in well-equipped facilities. Leaders utilize a wealth of diverse communication strategies and initiatives to engage stakeholders.

The supportive style, organizational structure, and role of leadership combine to create a culture that supports collaboration and continuous improvement.

- **The Cobb County School District has effectively implemented PICASSO: a comprehensive, dynamic, and accessible curricular and instructional resource.**

The online portal PICASSO is provided through the school district and can be accessed by all teachers. It serves as a web-based resource and repository for the district’s interpretation and implementation of the Georgia Performance Standards. PICASSO is aligned with the state standards and contains units, lesson plans, pacing guides, course guides, benchmark assessments, resources, and teaching strategies. This portal also houses training materials, content area blogs, and web pages. Staff is encouraged to develop and contribute to the resources comprising PICASSO. It is continually updated as well as monitored to ensure its relevance and fidelity in supporting the teaching of the standards-based curriculum. Teachers and principals testify to the value of PICASSO. They express deep appreciation for its content, function, and accessibility. Users recognize the significance of this resource and its potential to serve as a vehicle for

networking, learning and professional sharing. PICASSO experiences widespread use throughout the district which substantiates its usefulness and importance.

An electronic, interactive, and comprehensive repository of tools and practices aligned with the curriculum provides teachers with the resources to deliver quality instruction that supports the curriculum, school goals, and individual student needs. PICASSO also serves as a means to the realization of a true community of learners.

## Recommendations

In addition to the commendations, the Quality Assurance Review Team identified the following recommendations for improvement. The team focused its recommendations on those areas that, if addressed, will have the greatest impact on improving student performance and overall effectiveness of the school district. The Cobb County School District will be held accountable for making progress on each of the recommendations noted in this section. Following this review, the school district will be asked to submit a progress report on these recommendations. The district should refer to the detail provided in the standard reports for guidance and greater depth on the recommendations.

- **Quality School Standards: Establish and institute formal procedures to guarantee that all schools in the district meet the AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools.**

A key component of the District Accreditation protocol is that the district is responsible for making sure that all of its schools meet the school standards and therefore maintain their accreditation. In 2004, the Quality Assurance Review team recommended that the district “Ensure that accreditation standards are monitored and maintained consistently at the district and school levels.” Findings indicate that the Cobb County School District has implemented an internal monitoring system but that the current focus is on ensuring schools meet all standards and expectations associated with Georgia Performance Standards which inform district goals and objectives. Data collected show little to no awareness of the AdvancED standards at the school level.

Initiating and implementing systematic methods for monitoring school standards will provide the district with a meaningful internal quality assurance process. It will engage schools in self-assessment that promotes rich professional dialogue and data to help identify improvement targets and inform continuous improvement initiatives. Assessments of school standards and analysis of their results will also provide the district with information to guide its support and allocation of resources by aligning these responsibilities with school needs. This will contribute to the district’s effectiveness in honoring the requirements and intent of District Accreditation.

- **Board Growth and Development: Devise and implement a comprehensive growth and development plan for members of the Board of Education.**

The plan should address the improvement of individual board member skills and the collective capacity of the board. Evidence shows that the board lacks experience and essential skills and that this compromises its ability to fulfill its governance and leadership role and address the challenges facing the Cobb County School District. Board members should participate in learning experiences that provide them with knowledge and understanding regarding their role. This will help them achieve common perceptions regarding clarity of purpose. Additionally, they should receive training to develop their skills in the areas of teamwork, decision-making, and stakeholder relations. Board members are very committed to providing a



high quality education for students and are dedicated to the community they serve.

Relevant and needed training will enhance the board's effectiveness and provide it with the tools to honor its purpose and maximize its impact on the quality of education in the Cobb County School District.

- **Systems Approach: Inspire, instill, and sustain a systems approach to continuous improvement with persistence and vigilance.**

In 2004, the Quality Assurance Review team recommended that the Cobb County School District develop a dynamic strategic planning framework and link district and school based planning. Evidence shows that the district has experienced growth in this area by establishing a strong foundation and structure for system-wide improvement. The strategic plan is viewed as a tool for systemic and aligned improvement. The Plan Do Study Act model has been selected as the systematic process to guide progress and improvement. Powerful themes within the priorities of performance, people, and processes have been identified. Staff members possess an understanding of systems and key concepts such as alignment and interdependence that comprise them. The Georgia Performance Standards provide staff with a common language and focus for aligning school initiatives and resources with the district focus. Findings indicate that the implementation of this strong systems approach is in its infancy. The implementation status of the various procedures and processes comprising the framework is not clear. To ensure full implementation, desired results, and sustainability the district must be relentless in its efforts to motivate, communicate, support, and monitor the impact of this effort. Systematic evaluation procedures and a culture of deliberate and reflective practice are necessary for success.

Comprehensive systems are complex and fragile. When in the early stages of development they require continuous and intentional attention in order to mature and realize their potential.

- **Vision: Launch procedures to officially adopt and fully institutionalize the vision statement and strategic plan Cobb County School District has developed.**

The district needs to take immediate action to ensure they are endorsed, communicated, and integrated into the culture of Cobb County. The Quality Assurance Review team learned that the district has articulated a rich vision for its students. The vision states: "All students will receive the respect, encouragement, and opportunities they need to build the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be successful contributing members of a global society." Findings show that the vision has not yet been officially approved by the board or implemented by the district's schools and departments. It is not referenced by stakeholders as the unified direction of the district or used by staff to guide teaching and learning. The prevailing view is that the strategic plan targets serve as the district's vision. A connection between the strategic plan and its relationship to the vision was not evident. The state defined curriculum (Georgia Performance Standards) guides teaching and learning. Collaborative processes should be used to review and validate the vision to ensure system-wide ownership, support, and collective commitment to fulfill the vision. It is important to delineate the systemic relationship between the vision and the strategic plan, school plans, goals, and actions. This will strengthen alignment and provide greater coherence within the system. It is also essential for the district to establish procedures to evaluate the faithfulness with which the vision is implemented and used to inform the work of the district and schools.

The value of vision is that it inspires and unifies stakeholders around a powerful and shared purpose. It also serves to guide the direction and alignment of all system components, thereby enhancing organizational effectiveness. In its emergent state, Cobb County School District's vision lacks the capacity to attain its true value. The team believes that formal adoption of the vision will stimulate the unification and strengthening of the district's continuous improvement elements and initiatives.

**Review of AdvancED Standards for Quality Schools:** The team reviewed the district's adherence to each of the AdvancED standards. The findings from this review are provided in the next section of this report.

## Next Steps

The school district should:

1. Review and discuss the findings from this report with all stakeholders.
2. Ensure that plans are in place to embed and sustain the strengths noted in the commendations section to maximize their impact on the school district.
3. Develop action plans to address the recommendations made by the team. Include methods for monitoring progress toward the recommendations.
4. Use the report to guide and strengthen the school district's efforts to improve student performance and district effectiveness.
5. Following the Quality Assurance Review, submit the Accreditation Progress Report detailing progress made toward addressing the team's recommendations. The report will be reviewed at the state and national level to ensure that significant progress is being made toward the recommendations. Lack of progress can result in a change in accreditation status.
6. Continue to meet the AdvancED accreditation standards, submit required reports, engage in continuous improvement, and document results.

## Resources

AdvancED offers a range of resources to support your school district as it acts on the findings in this report. The AdvancED Resource Network, available at [www.advanc-ed.org/resourcenetwork](http://www.advanc-ed.org/resourcenetwork), provides an online network of peer-to-peer practices, best practices, and resources and tools designed to help school districts and their schools with continuous improvement.

## Celebrating Accreditation

Following the visit, the Quality Assurance Review Team submits an accreditation recommendation to AdvancED for review and action at the national level by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, which confers accreditation and communicates it to the school district. Upon receiving its accreditation, the school district should celebrate its achievement with the community. Flags, door decals, diploma seals, and other related items can be ordered from the website to help you share your accomplishment with your community.

**Summary**

The accreditation process engages the school district, its schools, and community in an ongoing journey of continuous improvement. The next steps in this journey are to build on the commendations and address the recommendations noted in this report. Doing so will enable the school district to advance in its quest for excellence and deepen the fulfillment of its mission for all students.

---

# Standards for Accreditation

The primary requirement for accreditation is that the district demonstrates that it meets the seven standards for accreditation. The findings of the Quality Assurance Review Team regarding the standards for accreditation are summarized on the following pages.

The Quality Assurance Review Team divided into standard teams to review each standard and prepare a standards report summarizing the team's findings. These standard reports, along with the quality assurance findings that follow these reports, provided the basis for the team's identification of over-arching commendations and recommendations presented earlier in this report. The reports submitted by each team are provided on the following pages for the district's review and use. Each report reflects its respective team's unique voice, perspective, and deliberations. The reports can be used to help enrich and deepen the district's understanding of the overall commendations and recommendations.

## Standard 1. Vision & Purpose

**Standard:** The system establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system.

**Description:**

Cobb County School District's vision and strategic plan are intended to provide focus and direction for all stakeholders. The vision states, "All students will receive the respect, encouragement, and opportunities they need to build the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be successful contributing members of a global society." The strategic plan includes the vision, a mission statement, guiding principles, and highlights the purpose of providing a world class education.

The board collaborated with the superintendent and the district leadership staff to develop the vision and revised strategic plan. The district has clearly defined expectations for student learning which have been disseminated to internal and external stakeholders. The superintendent indicates the district has a strong stakeholder expectation for student learning and achievement to ensure that all students learn at high levels. This is evident through the allocations of time, human, material, and fiscal resources. Interviews and artifacts provide evidence that demonstrate that the vision and revised strategic plan have been developed. Conversations with key stakeholders indicate that the vision and revised strategic plan, although discussed and disseminated to some stakeholders, have not received final approval by the board of education. The anticipated date of approval is December 2009, after which time full implementation may begin.

Because the vision and strategic plan have not been approved by the board of education and consequently implemented at the time of the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) team's review, the team recognizes that they are in an emergent state. Stakeholders continue to provide input to the board of education on both the strategic plan and strategic targets. These targets have been identified but have not been officially adopted. The QAR team looks forward to learning about the impact that the vision and plan may have on the future of the Cobb County School District.

In the interim period of time, the board and superintendent are encouraged to review the proposed vision

statement and define goals and objectives which articulate expectation for student learning so that alignment of the strategic plan is evident. The district must establish a process to ensure that the district vision and purpose remain current and aligned with its expectations for student learning and overall effectiveness of both the district and the schools.

Communication of the proposed vision and purpose is evidenced through newsletters, district and individual school websites, television, and meetings of internal stakeholders throughout the district.

**Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:**

- The district has identified an improvement model and priorities to support the strategic plan.
- The district's realization of hiring highly qualified teachers supports the emerging structure of its vision and strategic plan.
- The system's website is an effective means of communicating information to the public and staff.

**Suggestions and Opportunities for Improvement - The team offers the following suggestions and opportunities for improvement in this standard area:**

- Review the proposed vision statement and devise strategies to ensure it is supported, shared, and used to guide the strategic direction and teaching and learning process throughout the district.
- Employ additional systematic methods of acquiring and ensuring the involvement of "hard to reach" stakeholders in an effort to ensure the equitable participation of all stakeholders across the diverse community.

**Finding:** Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Emerging", indicating that the Cobb County School District has not met the accreditation requirements for the "Vision & Purpose" standard.

## Standard 2. Governance & Leadership

**Standard:** The system provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and system effectiveness.

**Description:**

Governance and leadership in the Cobb County School District are evident through collaboration between the administrators and teachers. District leadership works collaboratively with schools by providing the assistance and resources they need to assess and meet the needs of students.

The superintendent, principals, and parents recognize and commend the teachers as the major strength of the school district. The administration provides professional development and encourages new ideas. Parents indicate that teachers use multiple instructional methods to enhance their children's learning. Evidence points to these stakeholders collaborating to promote individual student progress.

Numerous efforts are in place to provide internal and external communication. Technology enhances contact with parents through the Internet and automated phone system. Parents complimented teachers' efforts to communicate with them through e-mail, phone calls, and written materials.

Professional trust is evident throughout the school district. Principals trust and rely on the support they

receive by area superintendents. Teachers spoke highly of the empowerment by their principals and superintendent. Parents complimented the efforts of their children's teachers and principals to communicate with them and promote their students' growth both academically and socially.

Findings indicate that individual board members are dedicated to the success of the district and are motivated to fulfill their important role. The board's ability to act on this high level of commitment is compromised by its lack of individual and collective skills in competencies critical to effective governance. The Cobb County Board of Education must become collaborative and skilled as a board. The school system's effectiveness will be enhanced by board development, collaboration and approval of a vision.

In January of 2009, the board initiated the development of a revised strategic plan and vision statement. These important documents were crafted to unify and guide the work of the district, departments, and schools in their efforts to meet individual needs of all students. Information collected revealed that the formal approval and implementation of this dynamic systems approach is in its early stages. The strategic plan is scheduled for a vote in December 2009. Leadership must be determined in its efforts to ensure the vision and strategic plan are approved and implemented so that desired outcomes can be achieved.

**Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:**

- The Cobb County School District has highly qualified teachers who work collaboratively to promote individual student achievement.
- The district employs strong school-based leadership who consistently work to maintain safe, orderly environments conducive to learning and academic growth.
- The school district employs a plethora of communication tools that are used to share time-sensitive information relative to school and system operations.
- SPLOST funds have been used in a way to effectively offset costs associated with new construction and ongoing facility replacement initiatives.
- The support for student achievement by area superintendents and Central Office administrators is clearly evident, strongly articulated, and very much appreciated by school leadership teams and parents.
- The curriculum used by the district correlates with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). School-level administrators and teachers have the autonomy to enhance the GPS standards used to further support student learning.
- The Cobb County School District has maintained a fiscally sound financial management operation.

**Suggestions and Opportunities for Improvement - The team offers the following suggestions and opportunities for improvement in this standard area:**

- Engage the board in professional development regarding its role, responsibilities, decision making processes, and teamwork.
- Move expeditiously to obtain board adoption of the vision and strategic plan of the Cobb County School District.
- Guarantee that central office leadership more closely reflects the ethnic diversity of the school community.

**Finding:** Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational", indicating that the Cobb County School District has met the accreditation requirements for the "Governance & Leadership" standard.

## Standard 3. Teaching & Learning

**Standard:** The system provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

### **Description:**

The Cobb County School District utilizes the Georgia State Performance Standards as learning expectations for all students in all core subject areas. Use of the state performance standards provides consistency for Cobb County School District's mobile and transient student population. There is a district-wide commitment to the implementation and use of the Georgia State Performance Standards.

The online portal PICASSO is provided through the school district and can be accessed by all teachers. This serves as a repository and functions as the comprehensive curriculum. It is continually updated as well as monitored to ensure currency and relevance to support the teachings of a standards-based curriculum.

The district offers a wealth of curricular, extra-curricular, and specialized programs and human resources to ensure that the diverse student needs are met.

There is a pervasive commitment to and familiarity with the use of data to inform curricular and instructional decisions at all levels. There are structures in place that support the district's focus on using data to monitor growth and respond to the needs of individual students. This is evidenced through data teams at the school level, data walls, and students' self-awareness of achievement gained from access to and use of PINNACLE, a student-information system.

The district has conveyed and articulated a clear priority for the use of differentiated instruction and the development and use of formative assessments. In support of these priorities they have provided professional development opportunities and met with teachers and administrators to discuss the use of balanced assessments. There is no evidence of structures in place to assess the degree of implementation of differentiated instruction and formative assessment.

District administration has asserted that the development of higher order thinking skills is a priority and looks to the Georgia Performance Standards as the source for providing direction for instruction in this area across disciplines. There is limited evidence at the school level that there are mechanisms with the potential to assess and evaluate the development of higher order thinking.

### **Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:**

- The use of Georgia Performance Standards to drive curricular and instructional decisions provides consistency in curriculum.
- Teachers have a commitment to and wide-spread use of standards-based instruction.
- Accessibility to PICASSO provides a comprehensive and dynamic curricular and instructional resource.
- The district has a commitment to use the data to inform curricular and instructional decision-making.

### **Suggestions and Opportunities for Improvement - The team offers the following suggestions and opportunities for improvement in this standard area:**

- Improve the ability to assess the effectiveness of initiatives to increase the use of differentiated instruction and formative assessment
- Develop a structure to monitor the development of student's higher order thinking skills.

**Finding:** Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational", indicating that the Cobb County School District has met the accreditation requirements for the "Teaching & Learning" standard.

## Standard 4. Documenting & Using Results

**Standard:** The system enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and system effectiveness.

### Description:

The district enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses the results to improve student performance, school effectiveness, and district operations.

The balanced assessment plan is aligned with the district expectations. This includes state and national assessments, district benchmarks, and local common assessments. There is a district assessment committee to oversee the structure of the assessment program.

Each school has developed a data team that collaboratively analyzes student performance data to make instructional decisions. Instructional strategies and resources are identified and used to make instructional adjustments. Data is used to plan and align instruction with the learning needs of individual students.

The district provides a system of communication which uses a variety of methods to report student performance and system effectiveness to all stakeholders. The district provides this communication through the use of Pinnacle, PICASSO, and the newly developed "On-Trac" program. The Standards Based Report Cards at PK-3rd grade and the CCSD report cards for grades 4-12 also provide information for parents.

The Cobb County School District assessment system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, identify gaps between expectations for student learning and student performance, and evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction. Data from the Response to Intervention program is used to determine strategies to improve student performance.

### Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:

- Benchmark assessments have been developed by the district.
- Stakeholder surveys are used to support the development of the Strategic Plan and for program evaluation.
- The district has developed a balanced assessment plan.
- The use of the data team process at each school provides valuable feedback for guiding instruction.
- The academic portal "On-Trac" allows access to pertinent data.
- Standards-based report cards used in grades PK-3 and the district report card for grades 4-12 provide valuable feedback on student performance.
- District Report Card communicates results of improvement efforts to the public.



- Comparison of analytical and achievement data informs instructional decisions.
- PICASSO, a web-based resource portal, allows access to important data and instructional resources.
- The district has successfully increased the graduation rate and number of schools meeting Adequate Yearly Progress requirements
- The district uses the Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards (GAPSS) process to monitor implementation of the state standards.

**Suggestions and Opportunities for Improvement - The team offers the following suggestions and opportunities for improvement in this standard area:**

- Engage in a systemic process of progress reporting at all levels, with a minimum of one mid-grading period report.
- Further develop the “On-Trac” system so that it incorporates the benchmark data and previous state assessment data, and implement the use of student responders to import formative assessment.
- Develop the use of data teams in the high schools to help teachers understand how to use the data for instructional practices. The elementary and middle school data teams are operational.

**Finding:** Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational", indicating that the Cobb County School District has met the accreditation requirements for the "Documenting & Using Results" standard.

## Standard 5. Resource & Support Systems

**Standard:** The system has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students.

**Description:**

Evidence indicates the Cobb County School District has sufficient human, material, and fiscal resources to support a curriculum and instructional program that reflects the values of the district. Staffing formulas and the needs of schools are constantly reviewed and adjusted as needed with an allotment system that provides additional support to schools with challenges. Interviews with employees indicated the district was resource rich. One employee said, “We have what we need.” Great appreciation was expressed that instruction was sheltered from the difficult economic times.

An exemplary level of service and dedication of employees is evident throughout the system. This strong support and commitment permits the district to focus on resources and services necessary to support the mission and to ensure achievement for all students. An extraordinary allocation of resources supports the teaching and learning process as well as all district operations. The investment of human, physical, and financial resources in combination with varied support systems exemplifies the commendable way in which the district supports the needs of students. Recognition should be given to area assistant superintendents for their service to schools. Principals repeatedly expressed their value. The district’s reputation has encouraged higher education agencies such as Kennesaw State University to partner with the system on future projects.

Teachers work together within each school to collaborate on teaching and learning initiatives. It is within this environment that they learn with and from each other and are able to share practices. Administrative staff meets regularly in vertical study groups to engage in learning around identified and relevant themes.

As observed in the classrooms and discussed in interviews with administrators and parents, the system has recruited highly qualified teachers, indicating the recruiting process is effective. A video, “Teach Cobb: It’s Better at the Top,” is utilized as a recruitment tool. The one-year induction process for new teachers, which includes a four-day summer program, is to be commended. It is evident that Cobb County School District values cultivating leaders as demonstrated by the results of the Rising Stars Program.

Numerous professional learning activities are provided in technology, special education, best practices, and support services to meet the needs of all staff members, but a clear long-range professional learning plan aligned with the continuous improvement plan of the district should be refined to guide overall professional learning with a clear evaluation plan. In order to ensure that the district’s vision is addressed, the school district should have a district professional learning plan to provide meaningful, focused, and ongoing training and supportive professional development for all faculty and staff members that is clearly communicated to all stakeholders.

The financial office in the district reports that financial regulations and procedures are in place to safeguard financial transactions. Audits are conducted on a regular basis to ensure adherence to proper budgetary processes. Records support the conclusion that financial resources are adequate to support the instructional program, maintain the facilities, and assure successful implementation of the schools’ continuous improvement plans. The district administration has done a nice job of keeping a tight budget without deficit spending. While the economic needs of the district have been challenging, the budget process has remained transparent, and crucial needs for improving services to children have not been neglected. In one school, Hayes Elementary, a school within a school was created and additional administrators added to support the tremendous number of students.

Systems are in place to ensure that budget, security, maintenance, technology, and support services are aligned with the district vision of excellence. Students benefit from extensive resources to advance their academic, behavioral, emotional, and social development. In visiting the school facilities, the team noted equitable and superior facilities that support student learning. The Cobb County School District administrators and stakeholders share pride in clean and safe facilities. Visits to several district schools confirmed that equipment and services focusing on meeting the needs of all students are in place. Facilities range in age but are well-maintained, and space is used judiciously. The maintenance department adequately addresses repairs and upgrades. A SPLOST plan provides direction for future facility improvements.

Interviews with staff, observations, and interviews of students along with tours of buildings revealed that state-of-the-art technologies are provided in the district. It was also evident that technical support is readily available in the system. Those interviewed expressed that the technology infrastructure and equipment are of high quality and are evaluated regularly for improved updates. PICASSO, a web-based system used to house curricular units, course guides, web pages, and blogs, enhances classroom instruction. The academic portal allows teachers and administrators to access students’ grades, scores on benchmark tests, and demographics.

Safety is maintained throughout the district through well-maintained facilities, written crisis procedures, and frequent drills for various emergency situations. The security plan has been communicated and implemented in the district to ensure the safety of students and school staff. Emergency drills are practiced frequently. Stakeholders, staff, and students report that they feel safe in the schools.

The support services in the system are of high quality, as evidenced by discussion with staff at all levels. The International Welcome Center is to be commended for providing transition and integration support for

refugee, immigrant, and migrant families. There is collaboration among the teachers, administrators, and various support staff to identify and meet the health, nutritional, counseling, and special learning needs of each student. Stakeholders indicated there was clear communication through materials such as parent/student handbooks, newsletters, the school and teacher websites, and parent conferences.

**Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:**

- An effective process is in place for recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers.
- The induction process afforded to new teachers provides a strong foundation for future growth.
- The teachers and support staff of the Cobb County School District have a sincere commitment to the education and support of the students.
- The district values technology as an instructional tool and is investing resources in providing up-to-date equipment to schools.
- Sound financial practices provide strong stewardship of the district's funds and resources.
- The Special Education Summit is one example of a collaborative effort between schools and community agencies to inform the public about the needs of special learners.
- Facilities are well-maintained, immaculate, student-centered, and inviting to stakeholders.

**Suggestions and Opportunities for Improvement - The team offers the following suggestions and opportunities for improvement in this standard area:**

- Plan now for providing additional resources that may be necessary to adequately meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population.
- Continue to expand innovative instruction through the use of 21st century technology in all schools as funds are available.
- Establish systemic and systematic procedures to gather input for the need and desire for professional learning aligned with district goals and continuous improvement planning. The district would benefit from the development of a process to collect, analyze, and communicate professional development results, the impact on student growth, and the degree and satisfaction by staff.
- Refine the long-range professional learning plan for the district to provide meaningful, focused, and ongoing training and supportive professional development for each staff member that is additionally supported by school professional learning efforts, includes a clear evaluation plan, and is clearly communicated to all stakeholders.

**Finding:** Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational", indicating that the Cobb County School District has met the accreditation requirements for the "Resource & Support Systems" standard.

## Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications & Relationships

**Standard:** The system fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

**Description:**

Cobb County School District (CCSD) as an institution has taken on the challenge of stakeholder communications and relationships with determination. From interviews conducted with district leadership, school administration, teachers, students, and community members, it is evident that the district has provided many ways through which information is communicated to stakeholders.

CCSD effectively uses resources to keep the community informed. COBB edTV, CobbCast Online Blog, district and school websites, InTouch automated dialing system, iPARENT calling system, Pinnacle, press releases, and numerous public forums are part of a comprehensive communications plan. The district and its schools have strong community and business partnerships who work together to promote student achievement.

Parents, business, and community members are interested in the decisions and actions effecting the governance and operations of the district. They appreciate relevant and timely information and give evidence of active involvement in school initiatives and programs. The superintendent and board of education value community engagement and have instituted a variety of communication vehicles such as a communications office, public meetings, town halls, and focus groups. The board and district leadership must be vigilant in their effort to ensure the community receives important, truthful, accurate, and unbiased information at all times.

The Cobb County School District provides focus and information to stakeholders throughout the school community through the use of media. The district recognizes that community involvement and engagement can only be accomplished through effective and widespread communication. CCSD demonstrates a commitment to making connections to schools, parents, and the community as a whole. Interviews with administrators, teachers, students, and parents revealed a strong tie to the pulse of the district in keeping the community informed.

The QAR team reviewed the system tools and artifacts which are available to stakeholders in a variety of formats. There is an effort to create positive relationships from district leadership on down to the schools and throughout the community. Expectations for student learning and goals for improvement are communicated and are a priority. Surveys are sent to stakeholders to gather feedback and better improve the district's effectiveness as well as disseminate information to the community-at-large.

**Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:**

- Parental involvement is encouraged and supported.
- District and school partnerships offer additional opportunities for stakeholder involvement and support student achievement.
- A Community outreach effort is made to foster collaboration within the district.
- Technology is used effectively as a communication tool to inform stakeholders.

**Suggestions and Opportunities for Improvement - The team offers the following suggestions and opportunities for improvement in this standard area:**

- Design and employ systematic methods for communicating with "hard to reach" stakeholders to ensure the equitable delivery of information and participation of all stakeholders within the diverse community.
- Provide additional opportunities for shared decision making by providing collaboration opportunities among all stakeholders.
- Employ communication strategies that ensure stakeholders receive correct information as to decisions made, actions taken, and the rationale behind them.

**Finding:** Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational", indicating that the Cobb County School District has met the accreditation requirements for the "Stakeholder Communications & Relationships" standard.

## Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

**Standard:** The system establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.

### **Description:**

Cobb County School District has begun a continuous improvement process through the development of a new strategic planning framework that begins at the district level and provides direction for alignment to all schools. The strategic plan includes the district's vision, mission, and guiding principles. It is focused on student achievement, learning environments, efficient use of resources, a strong workforce, and effective communications. At the time of the visit, the fully developed plan was available for stakeholder review and input, with an official vote and approval scheduled three weeks later. Departments, individual schools, and teams of classroom teachers are expected to align strategies to meet the specific needs of individual students as identified by data sources collected. Findings indicate that the implementation of this strong systems approach is in its early stages. To ensure desired results are achieved and sustained, the district must be persistent in its efforts to support and monitor continuous improvement.

The district also utilizes the GAPSS process to support schools and attributes this process to the reduction of schools not reaching the AYP mark from 21 to 5 in a year's time. Cobb County School District's students have shown steady improvement in their levels of learning and performance. These gains are supported by increases in performance on both formative and summative assessments as well as improved graduation rates.

Cobb County School District has made a focused commitment to allocating needed planning time, support services, and professional development across the system through professional learning days and early release times. School level interviews provided a strong utilization of this time with focused research-based professional development conducted. While the district vision and strategic plan for continuous improvement has been shared with individual schools, this process is newly initiated and has not formally identified monitoring, documentation, and evaluation of effectiveness and impact. Communication with the internal and external community regarding the ongoing progress and adjustments for continued improvement are critical as the district moves forward.

### **Strengths - The team noted the following successful practices deserving of recognition:**

- The district recognizes the need for designated time to provide research-based professional development and planning for continuous improvement efforts system-wide.
- The district has provided exemplary support and assistance to individual schools in support of continuous improvement efforts.

### **Suggestions and Opportunities for Improvement - The team offers the following suggestions and opportunities for improvement in this standard area:**

- Provide a broad constituency engagement in the district and school level continuous improvement process, including necessary communication of these efforts and ongoing progress.
- Develop and utilize monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure continuous improvement is ongoing across the system and school sites.

**Finding:** Based on the evidence reviewed, the Quality Assurance Review Team has assigned the overall assessment level of "Operational", indicating that the Cobb County School District has met the accreditation requirements for the "Commitment to Continuous Improvement" standard.

# Quality Assurance Findings

The Quality Assurance Review Team examined the effectiveness of the district's methods for quality assurance. The team reviewed the district's practices and methods to monitor and document improvement, provide meaningful feedback and support across the district, ensure that AdvancED standards are met and strengthened, and regularly collect, use, and communicate results. The team provides the following findings in this area.

## Description

The Cobb County School District employs a number of practices and methods for monitoring and improving planning, instruction, and learning. The district and each of its schools are responsible for developing strategic plans. All plans are submitted to the district. Schools are expected to collaboratively develop the plan, align it with the district plan, revise and update it, share it with the community, and publish results. Area superintendents assist with the development of plans and with the mid-year reviews. Plans are formally assessed at the middle and end of the year. The district monitors professional development plans and the action plans developed by every department.

All schools are held accountable for meeting the Georgia Performance Standards. The Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards is used to monitor and evaluate effectiveness. This process involves formal reviews that consist of a two day school visit by district staff. The district has set a goal of having every school visited within the next five years with initial visits taking place this school year. Also beginning this year, every school will conduct a self-assessment of the standards using a GAPSS analysis rubric. This provides a system for monitoring every school by studying the implementation and impact of state standards.

Data teams at each school are responsible for reviewing data on student performance and using it to adjust the delivery of curriculum and instruction. Data teams analyze standards and develop common assessments and strategies. They maintain and use data specific to the student population at their school.

District staff comprised of Leadership and Learning, Executive Cabinet, and Division of Accountability and Research are collectively responsible for evaluating and responding to school performance data. The district reviews data from the school's instructional assessments and diagnostic district benchmark assessments in conjunction with standardized state and national assessments. Information is used to evaluate progress, allocate resources, and determine professional development needs. Schools needing help are identified and appropriate support is provided. Discrepancies among sub-groups are recognized so appropriate action can be taken. The district uses data to publicize growth, set targets, allocate resources, monitor results and identify trends.

Other internal quality assurance methods that emerged during data collection include CLASS Keys teacher evaluation, school learning walks, cyclical program and content area evaluation, annual system-wide performance surveys, an assortment of required reports, and vehicles for ongoing public input. There was no evidence to indicate that AdvancED standards for quality schools are discussed or assessed.

## Strengths

- School level data teams are responsible for collecting, analyzing, and using school data to inform and enhance instruction.
- The district recognizes the importance of empowering and holding schools accountable for the development and impact of their strategic plans and provide the structure for assistance and monitoring.

## Suggestions and Opportunities for Improvement

- Establish the use of the AdvancED standards for schools as a self-assessment and as a source of data for district planning.
- Fully implement those quality assurance procedures that are in the early stages of implementation. These include plans for the annual GAPPS self-assessment and five year on-site review, use of system-wide data teams and full implementation of cyclical evaluation of all programs.



## Conclusion

The commendations and recommendations in this report are designed to focus the school district on those areas that will have the greatest impact on student performance and system effectiveness. While powerful in potential, the commendations and recommendations only have meaning when acted upon by the school district and its schools. The strength of this report lies in the school district's commitment to using the findings to continuously improve. The key is action. The school district is encouraged to use the report as a call to action, a tool to sustain momentum in the ongoing process of continuous improvement.

The team identified several recommendations for improvement that the school district will need to address. Following this review, the school district will be required to submit a progress report summarizing its progress toward addressing the team's recommendations.

The Quality Assurance Review Team expresses appreciation to the District Administration, members of the professional staff, students, parents and other community representatives for hosting the review team. The team wishes the school and its students much success in the quest for excellence through SACS CASI accreditation with AdvancED.

# Appendix

## Quality Assurance Review Team Members

- Dr. Nikki Armato, Chair (AdvancED)
- Amanda Ware, Vice Chair (DeKalb County School System)
- Mrs. Dana McGraw, Team Member (Fulton County Schools)
- Dana Bedden, Team Member (Richmond County School System)
- Delores Washington, Team Member (DeKalb High School of Technology - North)
- Mr. Gregory Curry, Team Member (Morrow Middle School)
- Mr. Joseph Redding, Team Member (Creme de la Creme - Nesbit Ferry)
- Mrs. Judy Johnston, Team Member (Strong Rock Christian School)
- Dr. Judy Forbes, Team Member (Habersham County Schools)
- Mrs. Karen Williams, Team Member (M. J. Kaufman Elementary School)
- Dr. Kathy Spencer, Team Member (Onslow County Schools)
- Lawrence Herring, Team Member
- Dr. Margaret Blackmon, Team Member
- Mrs. Mary Beth Huber, Team Member (Calcasieu Parish School System)
- Pam Gray-Bennett, Team Member (AdvancED)
- Dr. Pamela Nash, Team Member (Madison Metropolitan School District)
- Mr. Paul Lawler, Team Member (AdvancED)
- Ms. Priscilla Fernandez, Team Member (NCA-CASI)
- Dr. Rufus Johnson, Team Member (Department of Juvenile Justice)
- Dr. Sammy Lee Felton, Team Member
- Colonel Scott Mahone, Team Member (Mercer University)
- Mrs. Therese Reddekopp, Team Member (Northgate High School)
- Dr. Tygar Evans, Team Member (Rome High School)
- Mr. Victor Frias, Team Member (Boyd H. Anderson High School)
- Dr. William Thurman, Team Member (Cabot Public Schools)
- Mrs. Wina Low, Team Member (Carrollton City Schools)
- Mrs. Yvette Hill, Team Member (Paulding County School District)

## AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems

The AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems are comprehensive statements of quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for school districts to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness. As school districts reach higher levels of implementation of the standards, they will have a greater capacity to support ever-increasing student performance and organizational effectiveness. Each of the seven standards listed below has corresponding indicators and impact statements which can be accessed at [www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org).

### Vision and Purpose

The system establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system.

### **Governance and Leadership**

The system provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and system effectiveness.

### **Teaching and Learning**

The system provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

### **Documenting and Using Results**

The system enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and system effectiveness.

### **Resource and Support Systems**

The system has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students.

### **Stakeholder Communications and Relationships**

The system fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

### **Commitment to Continuous Improvement**

The system establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.