AdvancED

Accreditation Report

Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca High School

Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca Schools

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary

Self Assessment

Assurances Report

Student Performance Diagnostic

Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic

Executive Summary

Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school 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, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

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

Description of the School

Describe the school'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 serves?

School District #27 is a class III school district located in Syracuse, NE. The school district encompasses 251.8 square miles in Otoe, Cass, and Johnson counties. The 2012-2013 assessed valuation is $571,676,036 with a general fund levy of .9999. Current student enrollment for the 2012-2013 academic year in the district is 712 students with 246 students in grades 9-12, 257 in grades 4-8, and 209 in grades PK-3. Five (5) of these students receive all or some of their instruction at the Life Skills Center. These students are housed in four buildings. This configuration changed during the 2010-11 school year when 4th through 8th grade students moved to the newly constructed middle school building. The senior high school was constructed in 1966 with an addition completed in 1997. In 2004-2005 the Life Skills Center was opened. The free and reduced population has increased to 26%.

The school district employs 117 people, which includes 63 certified teachers and four administrators. Twenty eight teachers have masters degrees. The average years of teaching experience in the district is 16.02 years. A six-member board elected at large governs School District #27.

Approximately 55% of SDA graduates attend 4-year colleges and approximately 35% attend two-year technical and community colleges, 4% enter into the military, and the remaining 6% join the job market immediately.

The community of Syracuse and surrounding areas is made up of both professional and blue-collar workers. Much of the economy is tied to agriculture. Since Otoe and Cass County are in close proximity to Omaha and Lincoln, several area residents commute to jobs in those areas.

In addition to the communities of Syracuse, Dunbar, and Avoca, School District #27 encompasses the communities of Otoe and Unadilla. We also have students that have chosen to transfer into our district from as many as seven surrounding communities that are outside of our district lines.

School's Purpose

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

The purpose of our school is to provide a safe, secure environment in which every student will acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to become accomplished, productive members of the ever-changing, global community. We as a district believe that education is a life-long learning process. We believe in treating all people with dignity and respect and in promoting and developing positive character traits. We believe in developing positive self-esteem in all students and that we share responsibility for education with the community, family and students. The school mission is a driving force for educational decisions made in the district. Within the last three years staff reviewed the mission statement and its components. No changes or additions to the mission statement were made upon its review.

Our K-12 Continuous Improvement goal is to improve reading comprehension for all students. The standing teams that work toward the management of the goals are: Steering, Target Area Goal, Data, Technology and Communications. Our Target Area Goal team has developed action plans based on triangulated data. Our Continuous School Improvement co-chairs and the teams work together to provide leadership roles to help guide and involve all staff as they become engaged in compiling and analyzing student data. The teams will be using data from DIBELS, Direct Instruction Data K-6, State Standards Assessments, NeSA-Reading, Statewide Writing, Gates McGinitie, PLAN test, ACT and Terra Nova tests in the improvement process.

In addition to the core and vocational curriculum, the district provides students fourteen dual credit courses offered for high school and college credit simultaneously. These classes are taught in our building by Syracuse teachers.

The district holds its students to high expectations regarding not only their academic growth, but also their social, emotional and physical growth as well. These guidelines are outlined in detail in the building level student handbook.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

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

Since the last review, certified staff completed a rigorous schedule of school improvement projects that included aligning the curriculum in all areas with the NeSA standards related to reading and writing. Staff created vocabulary lists and assessments after the alignments took place so that students would be exposed to the NeSA vocabulary. Depth of Knowledge and Performance Level Descriptor training enabled staff to make decisions on the types of activities needed to teach concepts at the appropriate levels of assessment.

Teachers utilize the Check For Learning (C4L) website to assess student understanding of the concepts included in all NeSA standards.

Administrators distributed NeSA Assessment Manuals to staff to guide instruction for standard assessment.

Notable areas of achievement recently recognized are as follows: ACT scores above state and national averages, High School NeSA Reading ranked 3rd in C-1 Schools (2010), High School NeSA Reading ranked 19th (2012), High School NeSA Science ranked 13th (2012), across the district we ranked in the top 50% in all assessed areas out of 249 Nebraska school districts.

Administrators and core curriculum teachers met to determine curricular changes to accommodate student improvement in NeSA tests scores in the areas of reading, writing, math, and science.

Middle and high school science teachers met to align curricular expectations in order to facilitate a natural academic transition. The district's 2012 NeSA science scores affirmed this decision.

All seventh and eighth grade students receive reading instruction through the SRA reading program to improve vocabulary and comprehension skills. The high school also uses the SRA reading program as a remedial intervention for students who fall below the 50th percentile and parents approve that placement. The high school is currently reviewing this strategy for secondary remedial reading and progress monitoring for achievement on reading standards.

To improve mathematics at the secondary level, administrators and math teachers met to discuss closer monitoring of standards progress, reconfiguration of secondary mathematics classes, and development of a process of remediation for those students not making adequate progress. In the 2013-2014 school year, all students will be required to take three years of math while enrolled in high school. Eighth grade students are eligible to take Algebra I for high school credit depending on Terra Nova scores and teacher referral.   While this class will still count for high school credit, it would not count toward the 3 year math requirement. Pre-Algebra will only be offered to students with an IEP or accommodation plan starting with the 2013-2014 school year.

Dual enrollment classes are courses offered for high school and college credit simultaneously. These classes are taught in our building by Syracuse teachers. The exception is Certified Nursing Assistant Training which is taught by a Registered Nurse and is only offered for college credit. Medical Terminology is taught by a high school teacher but is only offered for college credit. The Introduction to Teaching course may be used toward fulfilling a major. Fourteen dual credit courses are offered to the high school students. The Health Science Academy courses and Introduction to Teaching course allow students to gain real world experience prior to graduation.

Communication is vital to keep all Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca stakeholders informed about district efforts, achievements, and events. It has been a priority to increase district communication among its stakeholders. The following lines of communication were established to assist in the process: District website, electronic marquee, Twitter, district newsletter, PowerSchool, LEARN instructional server, Student-Led Parent-Teacher conferences, fall open house, academic honors night, Rocket Reflections athletics awards night, students and teachers attending and presenting at school board meetings, PTO and booster clubs, and numerous student extra-curricular groups. We use e-mail and phone calls to allow for two-way communication with district stakeholders.

Before the construction of the new Middle School facility, the district held several community forums to discuss the bond issue. We then continued to update the community on the progress of the facility throughout the construction process.

Communication continues to be a challenge in that we would like to have more involvement of district stakeholders in the decision making processes relating to school improvement and district-wide goals.

Stakeholders are included as members of our district Safety Team, the Reconsideration Committee, and serve as volunteer tutors and mentors in all three buildings.

Additional Information

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

The commitment to newer facilities and smaller class sizes is always a priority in the district with the safety of our students in mind. The student mobility rate is higher for us than it has been in the past; therefore, the district developed programs to meet the educational, social and emotional needs of the students. Listed below are brief descriptions of some of these programs.

The After School Club program serves students in grades 6-8. Students meet after the school day learning skills in the areas of physical fitness, art, cooking, study skills, social skills, and responsibility for themselves and others.

The Home Room program serves students in grades 7-12 to increase sense of belonging and provide instruction. Curriculum includes violence prevention, social skills, character development, prevention of substance abuse, academic responsibility, and post-secondary transition. Small home room groups foster strong relationships among students and at least one adult in the school building. Student attendance rates show improvement since the implementation of this program.

The Syracuse Mentoring program serves students in grades 7-12 matching students with an adult mentor for weekly meetings. Students and their mentors meet until the student graduates.

During the 2012-2013 school year, Directions, an at-risk program was developed to assist students identified through the Student Assistance Team. This program provides academic interventions to help meet course requirements and to increase school commitment and engagement in a small group environment.

Academic study groups promoting understanding of key concepts and preparation for formative and summative assessments are available during every high school study hall period.

The district infuses technology into the classroom setting through such avenues as the LEARN curriculum server, interactive white boards, Nooks, iPads, and mobile computer labs. The high school is piloting the "Bring Your Own Device" idea in several classrooms.

Bullying prevention is a priority in the district. Students receive instruction in grades K-6 that focus on the skills necessary to handle bullying situations both as a victim or a bystander. The 7-12 home room curriculum reinforces bullying prevention through school-wide assemblies, speakers, videos, and activities.   Students can anonymously report bullying incidences on the school website.

An annual Students Accelerating In Leadership (SAIL) conference is held for area 7th graders to learn the importance of leadership and the skills necessary to be a positive leader both in and out of school.

The district prides itself on the fact that we retain quality staff members over time. Turn over in the district most often occurs when teachers retire.

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.

Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

The school maintains and communicates a purpose and direction that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

Overall Rating: 3.33

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.1	The school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	The school'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.	•Purpose statements - past and present •Minutes from meetings related to development of the school's purpose •Survey results •Examples of communications to stakeholders about the school's purpose (i.e. website, newsletters, annual report, student handbook)	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.2	The school's leadership and staff 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. School leadership and staff share high expectations for professional practice.	•Survey results •Agendas and/or minutes that reference a commitment to the components of the school's statement of purpose •The school's statement of purpose	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.3	The school's leadership implements a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	School leaders require the use of a documented, systematic continuous improvement process for improving student learning and the conditions that support learning. All stakeholder groups work collaboratively and consistently in authentic and meaningful ways that build and sustain ownership of the school's purpose and direction. School personnel systematically maintain, use, and communicate a profile with current and comprehensive data on student and school performance. The profile contains thorough analyses of a broad range of data used to identify goals for the improvement of achievement and instruction that are aligned with the school's purpose. All improvement goals have measurable performance targets. The process includes action planning that identifies measurable objectives, strategies, activities, resources, and timelines for achieving all improvement goals. School personnel hold one another accountable for and evaluate the overall quality of the implementation of all interventions and strategies. The process is reviewed and evaluated regularly. Documentation that the process is implemented with fidelity and yields improved student achievement and instruction is available and communicated to stakeholders.	•The school data profile •Survey results •Communication plan and artifacts that show two-way communication to staff and stakeholders •Agenda, minutes from continuous improvement planning meetings •The school continuous improvement plan	Level 4

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 External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

The Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca school district is committed to continuous improvement across the board and the commitment to this process is embraced by stakeholders. All certified staff members are involved in the school improvement process. Progress is monitored on an ongoing basis for individual students. Data is collected and routinely reviewed at the annual October staff development data retreat. Strengths are documented and celebrated; but more importantly, goals are reviewed, needs identified, goals revised, and data collected, as this process is an ingrained part of the school culture.

The district mission states that: "We provide a safe, secure environment in which every student will acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to become accomplished, productive members of the ever-changing, global community."

The following are the district belief statements: "We believe education is a life-long learning process. We believe in treating all people with dignity and respect. We believe in promoting and developing positive character traits. We believe in developing positive self-esteem in all students. We believe in sharing responsibility for education with the community, family, and students."

Our promise is "Educating the Future." A future goal is to reevaluate the district mission statement involving a variety of stakeholders in this process that include business owners, parents, and other community members vital to the success of the school district.

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

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

Overall Rating: 3.33

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.1	The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the school.	Policies and practices clearly and directly support the school's purpose and direction and the effective operation of the school. Policies and practices require and have mechanisms in place for monitoring effective instruction and assessment that produce equitable and challenging learning experiences for all students. There are policies and practices requiring and giving direction for professional growth of all staff. Policies and practices provide clear requirements, direction for, and oversight of fiscal management.	•School handbooks •Governing body policies, procedures, and practices •Communications to stakeholder about policy revisions •Staff handbooks •Student handbooks	Level 4

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.	•Proof of legal counsel •Governing body policies on roles and responsibilities, conflict of interest	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.3	The governing body ensures that the school leadership has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.	The governing body protects, supports, and respects the autonomy of school leadership to accomplish goals for improvement in student learning and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations of the school. The governing body maintains a distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of school leadership.	•Roles and responsibilities of school leadership •School improvement plan developed by the school •Communications regarding board actions •Maintenance of consistent academic oversight, planning, and resource allocation •Agendas and minutes of meetings	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.4	Leadership and staff foster a culture consistent with the school's purpose and direction.	Leaders and staff align their decisions and actions toward continuous improvement to achieve the school's purpose. They expect all students to be held to high standards in all courses of study. All leaders and staff are collectively accountable for student learning. School leaders support innovation, collaboration, shared leadership, and professional growth. The culture is characterized by collaboration and a sense of community.	•Examples of collaboration and shared leadership •Survey results •Examples of decisions in support of the school's continuous improvement plan •Examples of decisions aligned with the school's statement of purpose	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the school's purpose and direction.	Leaders communicate effectively with appropriate and varied representatives from stakeholder groups, provide opportunities for stakeholders to shape decisions, solicit feedback and respond to stakeholders, work collaboratively on school improvement efforts, and provide and support meaningful leadership roles for stakeholders. School leaders' efforts result in measurable, active stakeholder participation; engagement in the school; a sense of community; and ownership.	•Communication plan •Copies of surveys or screen shots from online surveys •Survey responses •Involvement of stakeholders in a school improvement plan	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice and student success.	The primary focus of the criteria and processes of supervision and evaluation is improving professional practice and ensuring student success. Supervision and evaluation processes are consistently and regularly implemented. The results of the supervision and evaluation processes are analyzed carefully and used to monitor and effectively adjust professional practice and ensure student learning.	•Examples of professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the results from supervision and evaluation •Governing body policy on supervision and evaluation •Representative supervision and evaluation reports •Supervision and evaluation documents with criteria for improving professional practice and student success noted •Job specific criteria	Level 4

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 External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

The Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca Board of Education members attend conferences and workshops designed to educate them on the roles and responsibilities of being an effective board member. The S-D-A Board is effective at staying within their role as policy makers and giving autonomy to district administrators for the day to day operations of the schools. The administration is expected to review progress on the school improvement process and the results of various assessments. The information is shared with the board and patrons of the district.

The district conducts monthly administrative meetings inviting input from each building administrator and the superintendent to ensure consistent communication among staff.

The school district, at every level, is committed to collaborative problem solving and decision making. At the heart of this process lies the students, their needs as determined by consistent and thoughtful consideration of all data sources; normative, summative, archival, and anecdotal. This data is used to drive curriculum goals, staff development goals, teacher appraisal goals and financial allocation goals.

The teacher appraisal process does an outstanding job of supporting our school improvement process overall. Teachers are self-directed in the development of professional growth goals that support high expectations for student achievement, align with the state NeSA standards, and promote the district school improvement goals.

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

The school's curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning.

Overall Rating: 3.0

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.1	The school'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. Some learning activities are individualized for each student in a way that supports achievement of expectations.	•Learning expectations for different courses •Graduate follow-up surveys •Survey results •Course schedules •Posted learning objectives •Enrollment patterns for various courses •Course descriptions •Descriptions of instructional techniques •Building instructional norms	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.2	Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	Using data from student assessments and an examination of professional practice, school personnel monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and alignment with the school's goals for achievement and instruction and statement of purpose. There is a process in place to ensure alignment each time curriculum, instruction, and/or assessments are reviewed or revised. The continuous improvement process ensures that vertical and horizontal alignment as well as alignment with the school's purpose are maintained and enhanced in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	•Surveys results •Common assessments •Curriculum guides •Curriculum writing process •Products – scope and sequence, curriculum maps •Data Retreat At-Risk Student Form, Differentiated Intervention Strategies that Support Struggling Students in the Regular Classroom	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.3	Teachers engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	Teachers 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.	•Professional development focused on these strategies •Findings from supervisor walk-thrus and observations •Agenda items addressing these strategies •Teacher evaluation criteria •Examples of teacher use of technology as an instructional resource •Interdisciplinary projects •Surveys results •Student work demonstrating the application of knowledge •Authentic assessments •Examples of student use of technology as a learning tool	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.4	School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	School leaders formally and consistently monitor instructional practices through supervision and evaluation procedures to ensure that they 1) are aligned with the school'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 •Surveys results •Curriculum maps •Examples of improvements to instructional practices resulting from the evaluation process •Administrative classroom observation protocols and logs	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.5	Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities to improve instruction and student learning.	Some members of the school staff participate in collaborative learning communities that meet both informally and formally. Collaboration occasionally occurs across grade levels and content areas. Staff members promote discussion about student learning. Learning from, 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 school personnel. School personnel express belief in the value of collaborative learning communities.	•Examples of improvements to content and instructional practice resulting from collaboration •Survey results •Common language, protocols and reporting tools •Examples of cross curricular projects, interdisciplinary instruction, and classroom action research project	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.6	Teachers implement the school's instructional process in support of student learning.	All teachers use an instructional process that informs students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Exemplars are often provided to guide and inform students. The process includes multiple measures, including formative assessments, to inform the ongoing modification of instruction and provide data for possible curriculum revision. The process provides students with specific and timely feedback about their learning.	•Survey results •Examples of learning expectations and standards of performance •Samples of exemplars used to guide and inform student learning •Teacher Appraisal Rubrics	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the school's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	Some school personnel are engaged in mentoring, coaching, and induction programs that are consistent with the school's values and beliefs about teaching, learning, and the conditions that support learning. These programs set expectations for school personnel.	• Survey results •Records of meetings and walk thrus/feedback sessions •New Teacher Orientation Handbook	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.8	The school engages families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keeps them informed of their children's learning progress.	Programs that engage families in meaningful ways in their children's education are designed, implemented, and evaluated. Families have multiple ways of staying informed of their children's learning pgoress.	•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 •Volunteer program with variety of options for participation •Mentoring Program	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.9	The school has a formal structure whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the school who supports that student's educational experience.	School personnel participate in a structure that gives them long-term interaction with individual students, allowing them to build strong relationships over time with the student and related adults. All students participate in the structure. The structure allows the school employee to gain significant insight into and serve as an advocate for the student's needs regarding learning skills, thinking skills, and life skills.	•Master schedule with time for formal adult advocate structure •Curriculum and activities of formal adult advocate structure •List of students matched to adult advocate •Survey results •Description of formal adult advocate structures •Homeroom Curriculum Calendar	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	Teachers use common grading and reporting policies, processes, and procedures based on clearly defined criteria that represent each student's attainment of content knowledge and skills. These policies, processes, and procedures are implemented consistently across grade levels and courses. Stakeholders are aware of the policies, processes, and procedures. The policies, processes, and procedures are regularly evaluated.	•Sample report cards for each grade level and for all courses •Survey results •Policies, processes, and procedures on grading and reporting •Samples communications to stakeholders about grading and reporting	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning that is aligned with the school's purpose and direction. Professional development is based on an assessment of needs of the school. The program builds capacity among all professional and support staff. The program is systematically evaluated for effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning, and the conditions that support learning.	•Survey results •Crosswalk between professional learning and school purpose and direction •Action Plans, Reading Activity Logs, Curriculum Maps, Vocabulary Lists and Assessments	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.12	The school provides and coordinates learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	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). 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	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 External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca schools continue to grow in meeting the unique needs of students. The district has implemented several changes to address these needs which include: Graduate surveys; expanded dual enrollment offerings; area leader in the development of Career Academy programs; curriculum mapping; holistic reflection and triangulation of data for the district, courses, and individuals; and communication and articulation with post-secondary education institutions.

The data teams and homeroom program have made a significant impact in viewing students as individuals with unique strengths and needs. Homeroom teachers are on the front line in communicating with parents and advocating for students. As a staff, we continue to grow in meeting student needs while also increasing expectations, rigor, and outcomes with the curriculum. Having yearly communication with graduates has provided invaluable information related to our strengths, but more importantly we have received highly productive feedback related to areas for potential growth. We have made many changes related to this feedback.

Four years ago we implemented a homeroom program in an effort to build a sense of community and belonging among our students. This program made certain that each and every student had at least one adult who knew their strengths, weaknesses, interests and levels of progress. A curriculum was developed in response to student surveys of interests and needs, as well as to teach essential skills not directly covered in the regular curriculum. We have found that this program has improved grades, attendance, and supported a high graduation rate.

District curriculum decisions are very data driven. The curriculum review process began in 2010 and is a collaborative process involving all PK-12 staff. The curriculum is currently aligned with the Nebraska state standards and makes every teacher responsible for core standards.

Staff is committed to a continuous annual review of data and utilizing that data for curriculum revision and planning for individual students. Every October all staff participate in a school-wide data retreat. Data is disaggregated by building and shared with staff. Staff members analyze the data by grade level identifying at-risk students and develop interventions to address the noted concerns. Additionally that data is used in developing district and building level staff development.

We have established four instructional norms as a high school building: Teaching Bell to Bell, Check for Understanding, Reinforcing Higher Order Thinking, and Active Student Engagement. Teachers are encouraged to consider these norms and integrate the school improvement goal as they develop and execute their professional growth appraisal plans.

We have implemented a number of ways to communicate with parents and engage them in their children's education and other activities. We use student progress reports, PowerSchool, the LEARN server, student-led parent conferences, and direct communication via phone calls, email, and text messages.

A goal for the school district is to develop a formalized district-wide mentoring program for new employees. This mentoring program would be consistent with the district's values and beliefs about teaching, learning and assessment.

Another goal would be to examine alternate forms of standardized testing for collecting student performance data. The district needs to determine which test would provide the most useful prescriptive data to make informed decisions about content area curriculum necessary to meet the individual needs of students.

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

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

Overall Rating: 3.14

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.1	Qualified professional and support staff are sufficient in number to fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school's purpose, direction, and the educational program.	Clearly defined policies, processes, and procedures ensure that school leaders have access to, hire, place, and retain qualified professional and support staff. School leaders use a formal, systematic process to determine the number of personnel necessary to fill all the roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school purpose, educational programs, and continuous improvement. Sustained fiscal resources are available to fund all positions necessary to achieve the purpose and direction of the school.	•Assessments of staffing needs •Survey results •Policies, processes, procedures and other documentation related to the hiring, placement and retention of professional and support staff •Documentation of highly qualified staff •School budgets for the last three years	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.2	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the school.	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are focused on supporting the purpose and direction of the school. Instructional time is protected in policy and practice. School leaders work to secure material and fiscal resources to meet the needs of all students. 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 school's purpose and direction.	•School schedule •Survey results •Examples of efforts of school leaders to secure necessary material and fiscal resources •School calendar •Alignment of budget with school purpose and direction	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.3	The school maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	School leaders have adopted or created clear expectations for maintaining safety, cleanliness, and a healthy environment and have shared these definitions and expectations with stakeholders. School personnel and students are accountable for maintaining these expectations. Measures are in place that allow for continuous tracking of these conditions. Improvement plans are developed and implemented by appropriate personnel as necessary to improve these conditions. Results of improvement efforts are evaluated.	•Survey results •Documentation of compliance with local and state inspections requirements •Documentation of emergency procedures such as fire drills, evacuation and other emergency procedures. •Safety committee responsibilities, meeting schedules, and minutes •System for maintenance requests	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.4	Students and school personnel use a range of media and information resources to support the school's educational programs.	Students and school personnel have access to media and information resources necessary to achieve the educational programs of the school. Qualified personnel are available to assist students and school 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 •Survey results •Budget related to media and information resource acquisition	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.5	The technology infrastructure supports the school's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	The technology infrastructure meets the teaching, learning, and operational needs of all stakeholders. School personnel develop and administer needs assessments and use the resulting data to develop and implement a technology plan to improve technology services and infrastructure.	•Technology plan and budget to improve technology services and infrastructure •Policies relative to technology use •Survey results	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.6	The school provides support services to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.	School personnel implement a process to determine the physical, social, and emotional needs of each student in the school. School personnel provide or coordinate programs to meet the needs of students as necessary. Measures of program effectiveness are in place, and school personnel use the data from these measures to evaluate all programs. Improvement plans related to these programs are designed and implemented when needed to more effectively meet the needs of students.	•Social classes and services, e.g., bullying, character education •Survey results •Student assessment system for identifying student needs •Agreements with school community agencies for student-family support •List of support services available to students	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.7	The school provides services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students.	School personnel implement a process to determine the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students. School personnel provide or coordinate programs necessary to meet the needs of students whenever possible. Measures of program effectiveness are in place, and school personnel use the data from these measures to evaluate all programs. Improvement plans related to these programs are designed and implemented when needed to more effectively meet the needs of students.	•Description of referral process •List of services available related to counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning •Survey results •Budget for counseling, assessment, referral, educational and career planning •Description of IEP process	Level 3

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

The school provides support services to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of all students. Services include: 7-12 homeroom program; K-12 counseling services; After School Club for grades 6-8; vocational and extra-curricular organizations; Syracuse Mentoring Program; Directions At-Risk Program; After School Academy for grades 4-8; Study-Buddies, tutoring and content area study groups; sports teams; and curriculum has been written and delivered related to career planning for all students in grades 7-12.

Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca schools have the resources necessary to ensure student success. Highly qualified teachers are provided at every grade level and curricular area along with media specialists, counselors, school nurse, and special education and life skills staff. Each building has a well-equipped media center and computer labs with staff available to assist students with retrieving required information. The technology infrastructure is reviewed annually to make sure it continues to meet the district's changing needs. The district is currently exploring an infrastructure upgrade to accommodate a building-wide Bring Your Own Device implementation.

At Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca Public Schools we have rolled out a course management server based off the open source project, Moodle. Moodle (abbreviation for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning) is an e-learning software platform that puts information at the fingertips of students more than ever before. The idea of LEARN is to act like Blackboard, WebCT, or Angel where students can access assignments or notes at any time. It also allows students to take quizzes, access a tutorial, watch a lecture, or see assignment calendars and timelines. LEARN is a valuable resource for students and parents to gain access to classroom materials outside of the school setting.

The district's certified staff collaborate to review holistic data on individual students to identify learning styles, strengths, and concerns to develop plans for meeting these needs. The Student Assistance referral and problem-solving process team addresses the students who continue to struggle in various educational, social, or emotional areas. We need to consider evaluation methods of our current student services to build longitudinal data on outcomes of programming.

Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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

Overall Rating: 3.0

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.1	The school establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	School personnel maintain and consistently use a comprehensive assessment system that produces data from multiple assessment measures, including locally developed and standardized assessments about student learning and school performance. The system ensures consistent measurement across all classrooms and courses. All assessments are proven reliable and bias free. The system is regularly and systematically evaluated for reliability and effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning, and the conditions that support learning.	•Evidence that assessments are reliable and bias free •Brief description of student assessment system including range of data produced from standardized and local assessments on student learning and school performance •Survey results •Documentation or description of evaluation tools/protocols	Level 4

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.	Systematic processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing, and applying learning from multiple data sources are used consistently by professional and support staff. Data sources include comparison and trend data that provide a complete picture of student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and the conditions that support learning. School personnel use data to design, implement, and evaluate continuous improvement plans to improve student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and organizational conditions.	•Survey results	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.3	Professional and support staff are trained in the evaluation, 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.	•Survey results	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.4	The school engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	Policies and procedures describe a process for analyzing data that determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level. Results indicate improvement, and school personnel consistently 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 •Student surveys •Evidence of student readiness for the next level •Evidence of student success at the next level •Evidence of student growth •Description of process for analyzing data to determine verifiable improvement in student learning •District Assessment Plan	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.5	Leadership monitors and communicates comprehensive information about student learning, conditions that support student learning, and the achievement of school improvement goals to stakeholders.	Leaders monitor comprehensive information about student learning, conditions that support student learning, and the achievement of school improvement goals. Leaders regularly communicate results using multiple delivery methods to all stakeholder groups.	•School quality control procedures for monitoring information about student learning, conditions that support learning, and the achievement of school improvement goals •Survey results •Sample communications to stakeholders regarding student learning, conditions that support learning, and achievement of school improvement goals •Communication plan regarding student learning, conditions that support learning, and achievement of school improvement goals to stakeholders •Minutes of board meetings regarding achievement of student learning goals	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 External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

Assessment results guide curriculum and scheduling decisions in all of the district's buildings. The District Assessment Plan lists a timeline of tests and assessments used. Progress is monitored and reported to the Board of Education at regular meetings and to the public through
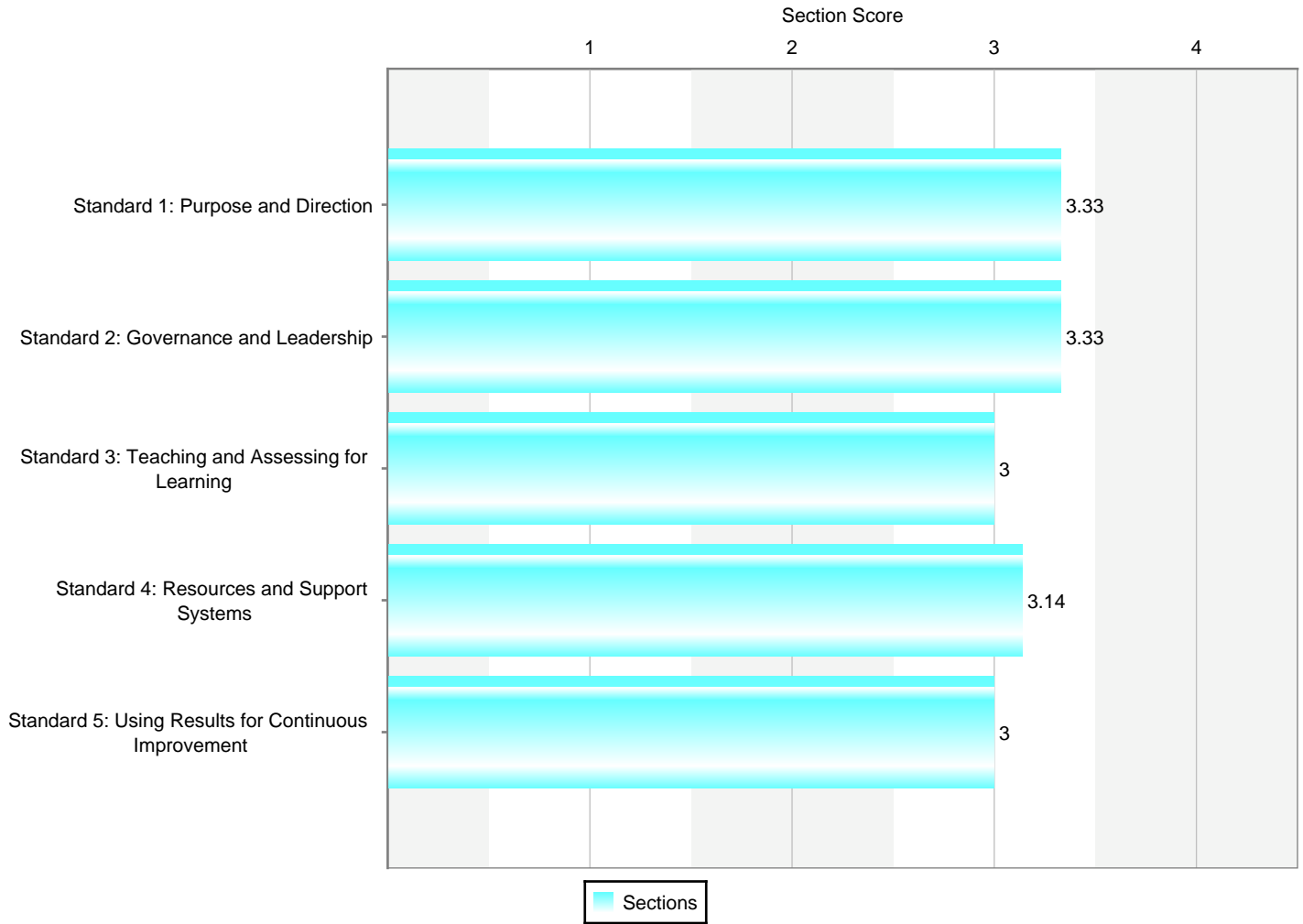
newsletters and the district website.

Tests and assessments used in the district are as follows: NeSA, PSAT, Terra Nova, Gates-Mac-Ginitie, ACT, PLAN, ASVAB, DIBELS, PreK GOLD and C4Learning.

Using results for continuous improvement is a strength in the district. We have been collecting and analyzing data for over ten years and have used that data to make decisions about curriculum and instruction. It has driven our decision-making for those ten years at every level; however, we have expanded the use of that data to include problem-solving individual student needs and interventions, developing individual teacher professional growth goals and plans, prioritizing district goals and assignment of resources.

Not only is leadership at every level involved in data collection and analysis, this is indeed a collaborative process from a district, building, staff, and student standpoint.

Report Summary

Scores By Section

Section Score

	Score
Standard 1: Purpose and Direction	3.33
Standard 2: Governance and Leadership	3.33
Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning	3
Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems	3.14
Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement	3

Sections

Assurances Report

AdvancED Assurances

Assurance	Certified	Comment/Attachment
The institution has read, understands, and complies with the AdvancED Policies and Procedures.	Yes	The Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca Schools district administrators, steering team, and school improvement co-chairs have read, understand, and comply with the AdvancED Policies and Procedures set forth from AdvancED.
The institution monitors all financial transactions through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system.	Yes	Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca Public Schools monitors all financial transactions through an annual audit conducted by JoAnn K. Henke, CPA in Lincoln, Nebraska. The audit produces an annual financial report. Bonded treasurer Jerry Werner reviews the district records monthly with the administrative secretary in order to reconcile the accounts.

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 Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca Public Schools district-wide school improvement goal is: All students will improve reading comprehension across K-12 curriculum areas. Three interventions support this goal: Students will improve vocabulary skills in grades K-12, Students will use a variety of learning strategies to comprehend content material in grades K-12, and Students will improve reading fluency in grades K-6. Administrators, staff, and Educational Service Unit #4 support personnel collaborate to implement a variety of instructional activities and strategies for ongoing, continuous improvement. SDA School Improvement Action Plans.pdf
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	Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca Public Schools provides all staff with an Emergency Response Binder containing: Safety and Security Management Plan, Crisis Assistance Team Plan, Emergency Response Packet, and Emergency Procedures Handout. Building principals administer a variety of routine drills throughout the school year in order to train staff and students about the necessary procedures for all emergency situations.

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	There have been changes in our institution that have had a positive effect on our ability to meet the standards and policies. Mike Wentz became the middle school principal in 2008. A new middle school building opened for the 2010-2011 school year changing the configuration of the grade levels to PK-3, 4-8 and 9-12. In addition, in 2007 the district acquired the Pre-Kindergarten program from Unadilla. By 2009, grades 7-12 had implemented a home room program. In 2012 Directions, an at-risk program, was added to the high school curriculum.

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.	8.0

Label	Question	Value
6. Overall Student Performance Score	Enter the average overall student performance score from the Student Performance Worksheet.	38.0

Areas of Notable Achievement

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

According to the Nebraska Department of Education, any improvement score with a "plus" is good. After completing a study of state assessment results over ten states, the following guidelines emerged:

Average improvement of +0.00 to +0.15999 was "common".

Average improvement of +0.15999 to +0.38 was "uncommon" (good).

Average improvement of > +0.38 was "rare" (very good).

The same curve was evident in the negative side also. Using the above guidelines, the following areas fell above the expected levels of performance.

Rare (Very Good):

+.50 - Terra Nova Reading - Class of 2016

+.48 - Terra Nova Language - Class of 2016

+.74 - Terra Nova Math - Class of 2016

+.44 - Terra Nova Math - Class of 2017

+.50 - Terra Nova Math - Class of 2018

+.65 - PLAN Reading

+.43 - PLAN Math

+.67 - PLAN Science

+.93 - PLAN English

+.42 - NeSA Reading - Class of 2012

+.40 - NeSA Math - Class of 2018

+.63 - NeSA Math - Class of 2019

Uncommon (Good):

+.34 - Terra Nova Reading - Class of 2013

+.32 - Terra Nova Reading - Class of 2017

+.31 - Terra Nova Language - Class of 2017

+.18 - Terra Nova Language - Class of 2018

+.16 - Terra Nova Math - Class of 2015

+.33 - NeSA Reading - Class of 2017

+.21 - NeSA Reading - Class of 2019

+.36 - NeSA Math - Class of 2016

+.16 - NeSA Math - Class of 2017

+.25 - DIBELS - Class of 2019

Common (Good):

+.09 - Terra Nova Reading - Class of 2014

+.12 - Terra Nova Reading - Class of 2018

+.05 - Terra Nova Language - Class of 2015

+.15 - Terra Nova Math - Class of 2013

+.03 - Gates MacGinitie

+.12 - NeSA Reading - Class of 2014

+.11 - NeSA Reading - Class of 2015

+.04 - NeSA Reading - Class of 2020

+.13 - NeSA Math - Class of 2020

+.10 - DIBELS - Class of 2018

+.13 - DIBELS - Class of 2020

The following areas at Syracuse Public Schools performed at or above the expected levels of performance as per directed by the Nebraska Department of Education in regards to the Nebraska State Assessment tool (NeSA) during the 2011-12 school year. Categories are determined by using the NDE protocol of Elementary (Grades 3-5), Middle School (Grades 6-8) and High School (Grade 11):

NeSA Reading - Elementary 71%   Goal 67%

NeSA Reading - Middle School 86%   Goal 67%

NeSA Reading - High School 72%   Goal 61%

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

Because this is our first year of using the ASSIST program and the Student Performance Worksheet we will use this information as our baseline for future data collection and analysis.

However, when looking at the data collected, we are seeing an improvement in reading and language scores over time. The improvement in these scores directly correlates to the implementation of the SRA reading program at the middle school during the 2009-2010 school year, followed by implementation at the high school level the next year.

The addition of strategies in all content areas such as: pre/post vocabulary testing, text structure strategies, the use of graphic organizers, quarterly activity reading logs, vocabulary list and assessment alignment to the standards, and curriculum mapping support these notable achievements.

Which area(s) indicate the overall highest performance?

The areas listed below indicate the overall highest performance on the Student Performance Worksheet.

+.50 - Terra Nova Reading - Class of 2016

+.48 - Terra Nova Language - Class of 2016

+.74 - Terra Nova Math - Class of 2016

+.44 - Terra Nova Math - Class of 2017

+.50 - Terra Nova Math - Class of 2018

+.65 - PLAN Reading

+.43 - PLAN Math

+.67 - PLAN Science

+.93 - PLAN English

+.42 - NeSA Reading - Class of 2012

+.40 - NeSA Math - Class of 2018

+.63 - NeSA Math - Class of 2019

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

At this point we have not focused on specific subgroups of students when collecting or analyzing data. Instead, we focus on individual students through the annual data retreat, follow up student assistance meetings, and through the Directions At-Risk program.

In the future we will determine which subgroups would be most meaningful for the district to analyze which may include male/female, free/reduced lunch, and regular ed/SPED.

Using NeSA data from 2010, 2011 and 2012, after analyzing overall scoring increases and decreases, all subgroups showed a trend toward increasing performance. Results are listed below:

*Please note that the SPED and Hispanic subgroups have very small sample numbers which may skew the data to some extent.

Male - Reading +3% - Math +13.4%

Female - Reading +4.3% - Math +13.2%

Hispanic - Reading +5.5% - Math +25%

White/Non-Hispanic - Reading +4.22% - Math +13%

Free/Reduced - Reading +8.89% - Math +20.2%

Non Free/Reduced - Reading +3.78% - Math +9.4%

SPED - Reading +12.67% - Math +34.6%

Between which subgroups is the achievement gap closing?

As a district we will continue to work toward compiling data to expand our analysis of the data from specific subgroups.

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

The data sources reported above are the sources we are using at this time. We will explore using additional data sources and determine which subgroups to analyze throughout the district.

Areas in Need of Improvement

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

According to the Nebraska Department of Education, any improvement score with a "negative" is below the expected levels of performance. After completing a study of state assessment results over ten states, the following guidelines emerged:

Average decrease of -0.00 to -0.15999 was "common".

Average decrease of -0.15999 to -0.38 was "uncommon".

Average decrease of > -0.38 was "rare".

The same curve was evident in the positive side also. Using the above guidelines, the following areas fell below the expected levels of performance.

Common:

-.03 - Terra Nova Reading - Class of 2015

-.15 - Terra Nova Language - Class of 2014

-.09 - Terra Nova Math - Class of 2019

-.01 - NeSA Reading - Class of 2018

-.08 - DIBELS - Class of 2021

Uncommon:

-.25 - Terra Nova Reading - Class of 2019

-.31 - Terra Nova Math - Class of 2014

Rare:

-.42 - Terra Nova Language - Class of 2013

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

Because this is our first year of using the ASSIST program and the Student Performance Worksheet we will use this information as our baseline for future data collection and analysis.

However, when looking at the data collected, we are not seeing an overall negative trend in performance based on the on-line NeSA assessment data from 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Which area(s) indicate the overall lowest performance?

The areas that indicate the overall lowest performance are:

Uncommon:

-.25 - Terra Nova Reading - Class of 2019

-.31 - Terra Nova Math - Class of 2014

Rare:

-.42 - Terra Nova Language - Class of 2013

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

At this point we have not focused on specific subgroups of students when collecting or analyzing data. Instead, we focus on individual students through the annual data retreat, follow up student assistance meetings, and through the Directions At-Risk program.

In the future we will determine which subgroups would be most meaningful for the district to analyze which may include male/female, free/reduced lunch, and regular ed/SPED.

After analyzing the NeSA data from 2010, 2011 and 2012, although there may have been a subgroup that showed a decrease in achievement, it was offset by an increase in achievement during subsequent testing years. Some of the decreases are noted below:

*Please note that the SPED and Hispanic subgroups have very small sample numbers which may skew the data to some extent.

The class of 2020 showed decreases in almost all scoring areas in Reading from 2011 to 2012. Summaries of the decreases are listed below:

Male - Reading -3%

Female - Reading -7%

Hispanic - Reading - No Change

White/Non-Hispanic -5%

Free/Reduced - Reading -18%

Non Free/Reduced - Reading -1%

SPED - Reading -1%

The class of 2018 showed decreases in almost all scoring areas in Reading from 2010 to 2011, however, from 2011 to 2012, almost all areas showed an increase to begin to close the gap that was created during the first testing year. Summaries of the results are listed below:

Male - Reading -9%, +9%

Female - Reading -11%, +5%

Hispanic - Reading - No Change, +33%

White/Non-Hispanic -10%, +5%

Free/Reduced - Reading -11%, No Change

Non Free/Reduced - Reading -7%, +8%

SPED - Reading -3%, -8%

Between which subgroups is the achievement gap becoming greater?

As a district we will continue to work toward compiling data to expand our analysis of the data from specific subgroups.

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

The data sources reported above are the sources we are using at this time. We will explore using additional data sources and determine which subgroups to analyze throughout the district.

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 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?

Purpose and Direction - Highest Levels of Satisfaction/Approval

Stakeholder survey data indicates a high level of satisfaction, particularly among staff and parents, related to school purpose and its relationship to student success. Parents believe the purpose is focused on school success and understand that there is a plan in place to improve student learning. Staff members who implement this plan on a daily basis believe that data monitoring related to these efforts results in actions that directly impact student learning. Students feel strongly that these efforts result in high quality programming that will lead to future success.

Governance and Leadership - Highest Levels of Satisfaction/Approval

The highest level of satisfaction in this area is found in questions related to high expectations and governing body compliance. All satisfaction scores fell in the top third of the continuum.

Teaching and Assessing for Learning - Highest Levels of Satisfaction/Approval

Parent and student surveys both indicated a high level of satisfaction in this category, particularly related to issues involving teacher communication of expectations and progress. Both stakeholder groups rated use of multiple methods for assessment of learning and efforts to report student progress in a meaningful, understandable ways highly. Challenging expectations and curriculum were also strengths as viewed by these groups. Surprisingly, staff rated this area more conservatively, yet evaluations are reflective of relative strengths in challenging curriculum, use of technology, communication of expectations, consistent grading policies, needs and data-based learning support, student advocacy, continues professional learning based on identified school needs, and communication with stakeholders (all areas rated at 70% approval or higher).

Resources and Support Systems - Highest Levels of Satisfaction/Approval

All stakeholder groups communicated a high level of agreement related to school facility maintenance, its safety, and how this supports student learning. Availability of effective learning resources (qualified staff, technology, media, curriculum) to support school goals and learning outcomes was another area of high affirmation. Finally, all stakeholder groups expressed high levels of agreement that students had opportunities to participate in activities that interested them.

Using Results for Continuous Improvement - Highest Levels of Satisfaction/Approval

This is another area of school performance that is perceived positively. Over 80% of the parents ranked indicators in this area as agree or strongly agree. Parents believe that they are well-informed about the achievement of school goals and their student's learning progress. They also believe that their student is well-prepared for the next school year. Staff ranked data collection and analysis by the district to determine achievement of district school improvement goals and to monitor student achievement in a favorable manner. These indicators yielded an average rating near or above 80% positive. Students ranked this area lower, but still indicated that the school prepares them for success in the next school year (79%).

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

The school improvement steering team was advised to wait until the current AdvancED stakeholder feedback surveys were available to administer to our students, staff, and stakeholders. In October 2012, all staff, students and parents were given the opportunity to complete the on-line survey. We are unable to determine trends showing increasing stakeholder satisfaction and approval relating to the revised AdvancED standards as we are using the 2012-2013 survey data as our baseline. It is our goal to formulate trends as we continue to administer annual stakeholder surveys.

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

Purpose and Direction - Stakeholders Consistencies

All stakeholders believed that the schools purpose and goals correlated with student learning and success. The purpose of the school appears to be dear to all stakeholders. Evidence of this comes from surveys conducted as part of our school improvement process.

Governance and Leadership - Stakeholder Consistencies

The perception of parents and students in this area appear to be more highly correlated than perceptions of staff. Parents and students both reported higher satisfaction with school expectations, although the lowest staff score was only 3.63, still in the top third of the continuum. Staff, however, reported higher satisfaction with the compliance of the governing body with policies, laws and regulations. Again, confirmation of these perceptions comes exclusively through data collected through stakeholder surveys.

Teaching and Assessing for Learning - Stakeholder Consistencies

As stated earlier, based on stakeholder survey feedback, parent and student response counts reflected the highest level of correlation. Staff feedback scored favorably in the same areas, but not as highly as the other two sub-groups. The staff feedback also ranked use of technology, needs/data-based learning support, and support structure to connect students with at least one adult advocate at 70% approval or higher.

Resources and Support Systems - Stakeholder Consistencies

All stakeholders rated this area similarly, the indicators averaging an approval percentage of 81.98% for parents, 78.4% for students, and

78.7% for staff; the highest rated indicator - "the school provides opportunities to participate in activities that interest them." receiving an 86% approval rating for parents, 83.2% for staff and 84.2% for students. All three groups were consistent in ranking "access to resources and technology to support learning," as well as "the school building and grounds are safe, clean and supportive of learning," at a consistently high level. Parents and staff also ranked the "provision of qualified staff to support student learning" highly and students ranked "access to counseling, career planning and other programs" highly. Overall, this was an area of perceived strength for the school. These survey results are supported by evidence and ratings gathered through the Advanced Ed Self-Assessment diagnostic.

Using Results for Continuous Improvement - Stakeholder Consistencies

Staff members and parent groups both ranked indicators in this area highly and averages in this area were nearly identical among the three groups. Students ranked the area a bit lower, but this was in response to indicators related to consideration of student opinion in school improvement planning. All groups felt that the school prepared students for success in the next school year and parents and staff believe that data is collected and analyzed to determine progress toward district goals and student achievement.

Areas in Need of Improvement

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

Purpose and Direction - Area(s) indicative of lowest level of satisfaction/ approval

When reviewing the stakeholder feedback, the indicator with the lowest level of agreement was the same for both parents and staff, 73.2% and 76.6% agreement respectively "the school purpose is formally reviewed and revised with involvement from parents/ all stakeholders." Although the percentage of agreement was not exceptionally low, it is reflective of a perceived relative weakness as compared with other indicators. Student perceptions of the indicator, "In my school all students are treated with respect," was the second lowest score on any of the surveys."

Governance & Leadership - Area(s) indicative of lowest level of satisfaction/ approval

Again, parents and staff both evaluated indicators addressing opportunities for stakeholders to become involved in the school lower than others, although these indicators were scored nearly 74% favorable by both groups. Staff also responded to indicators addressing use of supervising feedback and evaluation to improve teaching and learning at a lower level of agreement yet the scores were 72% and 75% respectively. Finally, students responded to two indicators in this area at a lower level of agreement: school rules are applied equally and students treat adults with respect both fell at about 70% agreement.

Teaching and Assessing for Learning-Area(s) indicative of lowest level of satisfaction/ approval

The indicator receiving the lowest level of satisfaction in the parent category was 74.8% positive agreement and was related to teachers individualizing instruction. This was similar to the students responses where all indicators fell at or above 72% agreement with the exception of "all of my teachers change their teaching to meet my learning needs" at 59.8% agreement (the lowest-rated item among all stakeholders.) Staff members overall scored their items a bit less favorably, about 66% of the items scored at 70% or higher agreement and 33% of the items scoring about 60% agreement. Indicators receiving the lowest levels of favorability could be categorized in the area of professional development and support. Indicators that could be categorized in the area of professional development and support include support of new staff members, peer coaching, collaborative learning communities, formal discussion about student learning and professional learning programs. Other concerns related to the use of multiple assessments to modify and revise instruction, personalizing instructional strategies/intervention to address individual student learning needs and engaging families in their student's learning progress.

Resources and Support Systems-Area(s) indicative of lowest level of satisfaction/ approval

Overall, this section of the survey yielded the highest level of agreement. For the parents, the indicator with the lowest approval rating is related to the school's effective use of financial resources. However, the rating was 76.8% agreement which is very positive. This section received an overall 81.98% approval rating. For the students, two indicators related to student character, student respect for the property of others and students' willingness to help others, even if they are not friends, received 62.8% and 62.2% agreement ratings respectively. Staff also rated resources and support systems indicators more highly, with a 78.69% agreement. The staff rated the indicators, "our school provides a plan for the acquisition and support of technology to support the school's operational needs," the lowest with a 74.8% agreement rating.

Using Results for Continuous Improvements-Area(s) indicative of lowest level of satisfaction/ approval

This category of the survey also received high agreement ratings. However, there is little consistency among the stakeholder groups and their concerns. Parents average indicator rating was 80.6% agreement; the lowest, "our school ensures that all staff members monitor and report the achievement of school goals," was 80%. Staff rated this category at an average agreement of 78.3%. The lowest indicator was "our school ensures all staff members are trained in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data," had an agreement rating of 70.2% and this is consistent with the Self Assessment rating instrument. Finally, the students rated this category the lowest, with an average of 71.7%. The lowest-rated student indicators were "my school considers students' opinions when planning ways to improve the school" and "my school shares information about school success with my family and community members," scoring a 65.4% and 74.8% agreement ratings respectively. It will be important to gather additional input related to these indicators to determine interventions.

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

The school improvement steering team was advised to wait until the current AdvancED stakeholder feedback surveys were available to administer to our students, staff, and stakeholders. In October 2012, all staff, students and parents were given the opportunity to complete the on-line survey. We are unable to determine trends showing decreasing stakeholder satisfaction and approval relating to the revised AdvancED standards as we are using the 2012-2013 survey data as our baseline. It is our goal to formulate trends as we continue to administer annual stakeholder surveys.

What are the implications for these stakeholder perceptions?

The implications for these stakeholder perceptions are listed in the following section regarding which reported findings are consistent with findings from other sources.

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

Purpose and Direction - Implications and Stakeholder Consistencies

First, it will be important to gather additional data on both of these indicators in order to develop a plan of intervention. Use of focus groups may be helpful in developing a comprehensive, detailed perspective on what the specific issues. Monitoring these issues long-term will also be important to determine progress in addressing them. Again, parent and staff responses to involvement of all stakeholder questions were very similar. A case could be made that there is a correlation between the respectful treatment indicator and the indicator related to considering students opinions when planning ways to improve the school. All of these indicator ratings are consistent with evaluations within the self assessment instrument completed by the district.

Governance & Leadership - Implications and Consistencies

The less favorable ratings related to stakeholder involvement reinforce the need to collect additional data in this area to determine specific needs and concerns. This appears to be an area of consistent relative concern. It will be important to examine this issue from multiple perspectives and develop a course of action that builds a sense of ownership and involvement regarding school purpose and decision making. Supervisory feedback and evaluation related to student learning is another area where additional data is needed. The district has a specific, detailed appraisal process providing rubrics for planning and preparation.

Teaching and Assessing for Learning - Implications and Consistencies

Staff and students had more concerns related to the individualization of instruction. It will be important to explore this issue further. As stated earlier, the lowest rated item out of the stakeholder ratings was "all of my teachers change their teaching to meet my learning needs," - a 59.8% agreement rating. Staff rated "all teachers in our school personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs of students," with a 67.2% agreement. Self-assessment indicators might rate this area as a relative strength with the implementation of the Student Assistance Process, the use of data-retreat teams, and special education accommodation plans. Staff also rated indicators in the area of feedback on learning less favorably. Indicators such as specific, timely feedback about learning, engaging families in their children's learning progress, and informing stakeholders of policies, processes, and procedures related to grading and reporting had an average agreement rating of 69.4%. This is a contrast to parent response to the same issues yielding an 81.3% agreement rate and a student rate of agreement at 75.1%. Staff concerns about professional development and support should also be an area of focus and discussion. It will be important to spend time discussing the purpose of the professional development process and its relationship to school improvement and the improvement of learning.

Resources and Support Systems - Implications and Consistencies

There was no real consistency among the stakeholders' lowest rated indicators. As stated earlier, all of the stakeholders groups rated this area the most highly, but the lower-rated indicators varied for each group. The area of student character, as viewed by students, is an area that must be explored to generate more specific concerns and potential interventions. In terms of the use of financial resources and technology planning, the district will need to review the methods by which this information is shared with stakeholders in order to determine whether those methods are effective and user-friendly.

Using Results for Continuous Improvements - Implications and Consistencies

The less favorable ratings related to stakeholder involvement reinforce the need to collect additional data in this area to determine specific needs and concerns. This appears to be an area of consistent relative concerns it will be important to examine this issue from multiple perspectives and develop a course of action that builds that sense of ownership and involvement regarding school purpose and decision making. Supervisory feedback and evaluation related to student learning is another area where additional data is needed. Although the district has a specific, detailed appraisal process providing rubrics for planning and preparation, the classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities; it is apparent that staff still question whether the process results in improved teaching.