

# Report of the External Review Team for Pikes Peak Christian School

5905 Flintridge Dr  
Colorado Springs  
CO 80918-1844  
US

**Mr. Matt Johns**  
**Director**

**Date: April 3, 2016 - April 6, 2016**



*Copyright (c) 2016 by Advance Education, Inc. AdvancED™ grants to the Institution, which is the subject of the External Review Team Report, and its designees and stakeholders a non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free license and release to reproduce, reprint, and distribute this report in accordance with and as protected by the Copyright Laws of the United States of America and all foreign countries. All other rights not expressly conveyed are reserved by AdvancED™.*

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
Results.....	9
Teaching and Learning Impact.....	9
Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning .....	10
Standard 5 - Using Results for Continuous Improvement.....	11
Student Performance Diagnostic.....	11
Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™).....	13
eleot™ Data Summary.....	15
Findings.....	18
Leadership Capacity.....	22
Standard 1 - Purpose and Direction .....	23
Standard 2 - Governance and Leadership.....	23
Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic.....	23
Findings.....	24
Resource Utilization.....	26
Standard 4 - Resources and Support Systems.....	26
Findings.....	27
Conclusion.....	28
Accreditation Recommendation.....	29
Addenda.....	30
Team Roster.....	30
Next Steps.....	31
About AdvancED.....	32
References.....	33

# Introduction

The External Review is an integral component of AdvancED Performance Accreditation and provides the institution with a comprehensive evaluation guided by the results of diagnostic instruments, in-depth review of data and documentation, and the professional judgment of a team of qualified and highly trained evaluators. A series of diagnostic instruments examines the impact of teaching and learning on student performance, the capacity of leadership to effect continuous improvement, and the degree to which the institution optimizes its use of available resources to facilitate and support student success. The results of this evaluation are represented in the Index of Education Quality (IEQ™) and through critical observations, namely, Powerful Practices, Opportunities for Improvement, and Improvement Priorities.

Accreditation is a voluntary method of quality assurance developed more than 100 years ago by American universities and secondary schools and designed primarily to distinguish schools adhering to a set of educational standards. Today the accreditation process is used at all levels of education and is recognized for its ability to effectively drive student performance and continuous improvement in education.

Institutions seeking to gain or retain accreditation must meet AdvancED Standards specific to their institution type, demonstrate acceptable levels of student performance and the continuous improvement of student performance, and provide evidence of stakeholder engagement and satisfaction. The power of AdvancED Performance Accreditation lies in the connections and linkages between and among the conditions, processes, and practices within a system that impact student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Standards help to delineate what matters. They provide a common language through which an education community can engage in conversations about educational improvement, system effectiveness, and achievement. They serve as a foundation for planning and implementing improvement strategies and activities and for measuring success. AdvancED Standards were developed by a committee comprised of talented educators and leaders from the fields of practice, research, and policy who applied professional wisdom, deep knowledge of effective practice, and the best available research to craft a set of robust standards that define institutional quality and guide continuous improvement. Prior to implementation, an internationally recognized panel of experts in testing and measurement, teacher quality, and education research reviewed the standards and provided feedback, guidance and endorsement.

The AdvancED External Review Team uses AdvancED Standards, associated indicators and criteria related to student performance and stakeholder engagement to guide its evaluation. The Team examines adherence to standards as well as how the institution functions as a whole and embodies the practices and characteristics expected of an accredited institution. The Standards, indicators and related criteria are evaluated using indicator-specific performance levels. The Team rates each indicator and criterion on a scale of 1 to 4. The final scores assigned to the indicators and criteria represent the average of the External Review Team members' individual ratings.

The External Review is the hallmark of AdvancED Performance Accreditation. It energizes and equips the institution's leadership and stakeholders to achieve higher levels of performance and address those areas that

may be hindering efforts to reach desired performance levels. External Review is a rigorous process that includes the in-depth examination of evidence and relevant data, interviews with all stakeholder groups, and extensive observations of learning, instruction, and operations.

## Use of Diagnostic Tools

A key to examining the institution is the design and use of diagnostic tools that reveal the effectiveness with which an institution creates conditions and implements processes and practices that impact student performance and success. In preparation for the External Review the institution conducted a Self Assessment that applied the standards and criteria for accreditation. The institution provided evidence to support its conclusions vis a vis organizational effectiveness in ensuring acceptable and improving levels of student performance.

- an indicator-based tool that connects the specific elements of the criteria to evidence gathered by the team;
- a student performance analytic that examines the quality of assessment instruments used by the institution, the integrity of the administration of the assessment to students, the quality of the learning results including the impact of instruction on student learning at all levels of performance, and the equity of learning that examines the results of student learning across all demographics;
- a stakeholder engagement instrument that examines the fidelity of administration and results of perception surveys seeking the perspective of students, parents, and teachers;
- a state-of-the-art, learner-centric observation instrument, the Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™) that quantifies students' engagement, attitudes and dispositions organized in 7 environments: Equitable Learning, High Expectations, Supportive Learning, Active Learning, Progress Monitoring and Feedback, Well-Managed Learning, and Digital Learning. All evaluators must be trained, reach acceptable levels of inter-rater reliability, and certified to use this research-based and validated instrument.

The External Review Team's findings and critical observations are shared in this report through the IEQ™ results as well as through the identification of Powerful Practices, Opportunities for Improvement, and Improvement Priorities.

## Index of Education Quality

In the past, accreditation reviews resulted in an accreditation recommendation on status. Labels such as advised, warned, probation, or all clear were used to describe the status of a school relative to the AdvancED Standards and other evaluative criteria. Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, AdvancED introduced a new framework to describe the results of an accreditation review. Consistent with the modern focus of accreditation on continuous improvement with an emphasis on student success, AdvancED introduced an innovative and state-of-the-art framework for diagnosing and revealing institutional performance called the Index of Education Quality (IEQ™). The IEQ™ comprises three domains of performance: 1) the impact of teaching and learning on student performance; 2) the capacity of leadership to guide the institution toward the achievement of its

vision and strategic priorities; and 3) use of resources to support and optimize learning. Therefore, your institution will no longer receive an accreditation status. Instead, your institution will be accredited with an IEQ™ score. In the case where an institution is failing to meet established criteria, the accreditation will be under review thereby requiring frequent monitoring and demonstrated improvement.

The three domains of performance are derived from the AdvancED Standards and associated indicators, the analysis of student performance, and the engagement and feedback of stakeholders. Within each domain institutions can connect to the individual performance levels that are applied in support of the AdvancED Standards and evaluative criteria. Within the performance levels are detailed descriptors that serve as a valuable source of guidance for continuous improvement. Upon review of the findings in this report and building on their Powerful Practices, institutional leaders should work with their staff to review and understand the evidence and rationale for each Opportunity for Improvement and Improvement Priority as well as the corresponding pathway to improvement described in the performance levels of the selected indicator(s).

The IEQ™ provides a new framework that recognizes and supports the journey of continuous improvement. An institution's IEQ™ is the starting point for continuous improvement. Subsequent actions for improvement and evidence that these have had a positive impact will raise the institution's IEQ™ score.

## Benchmark Data

Throughout this report, AdvancED provides benchmark data for each indicator and for each component of the evaluative criteria. These benchmark data represent the overall averages across the entire AdvancED Network for your institution type. Thus, the AdvancED Network average provides an extraordinary opportunity for institutions to understand their context on a global scale rather than simply compared to a state, region, or country.

It is important to understand that the AdvancED Network averages are provided primarily to serve as a tool for continuous improvement and not as a measure of quality in and of itself. Benchmark data, when wisely employed, have a unique capacity to help institutions identify and leverage their strengths and areas of improvement to significantly impact student learning.

## Powerful Practices

A key to continuous improvement is the institution's ability to learn from and build upon its most effective and impactful practices. Such practices serve as critical leverage points necessary to guide, support and ensure continuous improvement. A hallmark of the accreditation process is its commitment to identifying with evidence, the conditions, processes and practices that are having the most significant impact on student performance and institutional effectiveness. Throughout this report, the External Review Team has captured and defined Powerful Practices. These noteworthy practices are essential to the institution's effort to continue its journey of improvement.

# Opportunities for Improvement

Every institution can and must improve no matter what levels of performance it has achieved in its past. During the process of the review, the External Review Team identified areas of improvement where the institution is meeting the expectations for accreditation but in the professional judgment of the Team these are Opportunities for Improvement that should be considered by the institution. Using the criteria described in the corresponding rubric(s) to the Opportunity for Improvement, the institution can identify what elements of practice must be addressed to guide the improvement.

## Improvement Priorities

The expectations for accreditation are clearly defined in a series of the rubric-based AdvancED Standards, indicators and evaluative criteria focused on the impact of teaching and learning on student performance, the capacity of the institution to be guided by effective leadership, and the allocation and use of resources to support student learning. As such, the External Review Team reviewed, analyzed and deliberated over significant bodies of evidence provided by the institution and gathered by the Team during the process. In the professional judgment of the Team as well as the results of the diagnostic process, the Team defined, with rationale, Improvement Priorities. The priorities must be addressed in a timely manner by the institution to retain and improve their accreditation performance as represented by the IEQ™. Improvement Priorities serve as the basis for the follow-up and monitoring process that will begin upon conclusion of the External Review. The institution must complete and submit an Accreditation Progress Report within two years of the External Review. The report must include actions taken by the institution to address the Improvement Priorities along with the corresponding evidence and results. The IEQ™ will be recalculated by AdvancED upon review of the evidence and results associated with the Improvement Priorities.

## The Review

The team visited the campus of Pikes Peak Christian from April 3-6. The 3 team members prepared for the visit by reviewing documents that had been uploaded to the workspace. In addition the school provided each team member with a thumb drive that contained all of the evidences to support the School accreditation report prior to the visit. The lead evaluator had frequent online contact with the school director. Each team member was assigned classrooms for observation and one or more Standards to evaluate. This involved the collection of evidences in regard to the indicators that they were assigned. After the collection of information the team met to assign a numerical value for each indicator.

The team members wish to thank the administration, staff and Board for their hospitality. All requests from the team members were met with a quick response. The director, Matt Johns is to be complimented for the level of preparation. The school provided access to evidences related to each standard and produced a very comprehensive Accreditation report. The parents and students participated in the visit by interviews with the team and provided valuable insight into the qualities of the institution.

Stakeholders were interviewed by members of the External Review Team to gain their perspectives on topics relevant to the institution's effectiveness and student performance. The feedback gained through the

stakeholder interviews was considered with other evidences and data to support the findings of the External Review. The following chart depicts the numbers of persons interviewed representative of various stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder Interviewed	Number
Superintendents	1
Board Members	4
Chief Executive Officer/President	1
Administrators	4
Instructional Staff	10
Support Staff	4
Students	16
Parents/Community/Business Leaders	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>

# Results

## Teaching and Learning Impact

The impact of teaching and learning on student achievement is the primary expectation of every institution.

The relationship between teacher and learner must be productive and effective for student success. The impact of teaching and learning includes an analysis of student performance results, instructional quality, learner and family engagement, support services for student learning, curriculum quality and efficacy, and college and career readiness data. These are all key indicators of an institution's impact on teaching and learning.

A high-quality and effective educational system has services, practices, and curriculum that ensure teacher effectiveness. Research has shown that an effective teacher is a key factor for learners to achieve their highest potential and be prepared for a successful future. The positive influence an effective educator has on learning is a combination of "student motivation, parental involvement" and the "quality of leadership" (Ding & Sherman, 2006). Research also suggests that quality educators must have a variety of quantifiable and intangible characteristics that include strong communication skills, knowledge of content, and knowledge of how to teach the content. The institution's curriculum and instructional program should develop learners' skills that lead them to think about the world in complex ways (Conley, 2007) and prepare them to have knowledge that extends beyond the academic areas. In order to achieve these goals, teachers must have pedagogical skills as well as content knowledge (Baumert, J., Kunter, M., Blum, W., Brunner, M., Voxx, T., Jordan, A., Klusmann, U., Krauss, S., Nuebrand, M., & Tsai, Y., 2010). The acquisition and refinement of teachers' pedagogical skills occur most effectively through collaboration and professional development. These are a "necessary approach to improving teacher quality" (Colbert, J., Brown, R., Choi, S., & Thomas, S., 2008). According to Marks, Louis, and Printy (2002), staff members who engage in "active organizational learning also have higher achieving students in contrast to those that do not." Likewise, a study conducted by Horng, Klasik, and Loeb (2010), concluded that leadership in effective institutions "supports teachers by creating collaborative work environments." Institutional leaders have a responsibility to provide experiences, resources, and time for educators to engage in meaningful professional learning that promotes student learning and educator quality.

AdvancED has found that a successful institution implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning. The curriculum provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process. Teachers provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. Teachers give students feedback to improve their performance.

Institutions with strong improvement processes move beyond anxiety about the current reality and focus on priorities and initiatives for the future. Using results, i.e., data and other information, to guide continuous improvement is key to an institution's success. A study conducted by Datnow, Park, and Wohlstetter (2007) from the Center on Educational Governance at the University of Southern California indicated that data can shed light on existing areas of strength and weakness and also guide improvement strategies in a systematic and strategic manner (Dembosky, J., Pane, J., Barney, H., & Christina, R., 2005). The study also identified six

key strategies that performance-driven systems use: (1) building a foundation for data-driven decision making, (2) establishing a culture of data use and continuous improvement, (3) investing in an information management system, (4) selecting the right data, (5) building institutional capacity for data-driven decision making, and (6) analyzing and acting on data to improve performance. Other research studies, though largely without comparison groups, suggested that data-driven decision-making has the potential to increase student performance (Alwin, 2002; Doyle, 2003; Lafee, 2002; McIntire, 2002).

Through ongoing evaluation of educational institutions, AdvancED has found that a successful institution uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures. The system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine strategies to improve student performance. The institution implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the school with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained, and the institution demonstrates progress in improving student performance and institution effectiveness.

## **Standard 3 - Teaching and Assessing for Learning**

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
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.	3.00	2.81
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.	2.00	2.49
3.3	Teachers engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	4.00	2.60
3.4	School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	3.00	2.70
3.5	Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities to improve instruction and student learning.	2.00	2.57
3.6	Teachers implement the school's instructional process in support of student learning.	3.00	2.57
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the school's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	3.00	2.54
3.8	The school engages families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keeps them informed of their children's learning progress.	4.00	3.06

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
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.	4.00	2.98
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.	3.00	2.75
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	2.33	2.53
3.12	The school provides and coordinates learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	2.00	2.61

## 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.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
5.1	The school establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	3.00	2.66
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.	2.00	2.37
5.3	Professional and support staff are trained in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data.	1.00	2.06
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.	2.00	2.46
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.	3.00	2.71

## Student Performance Diagnostic

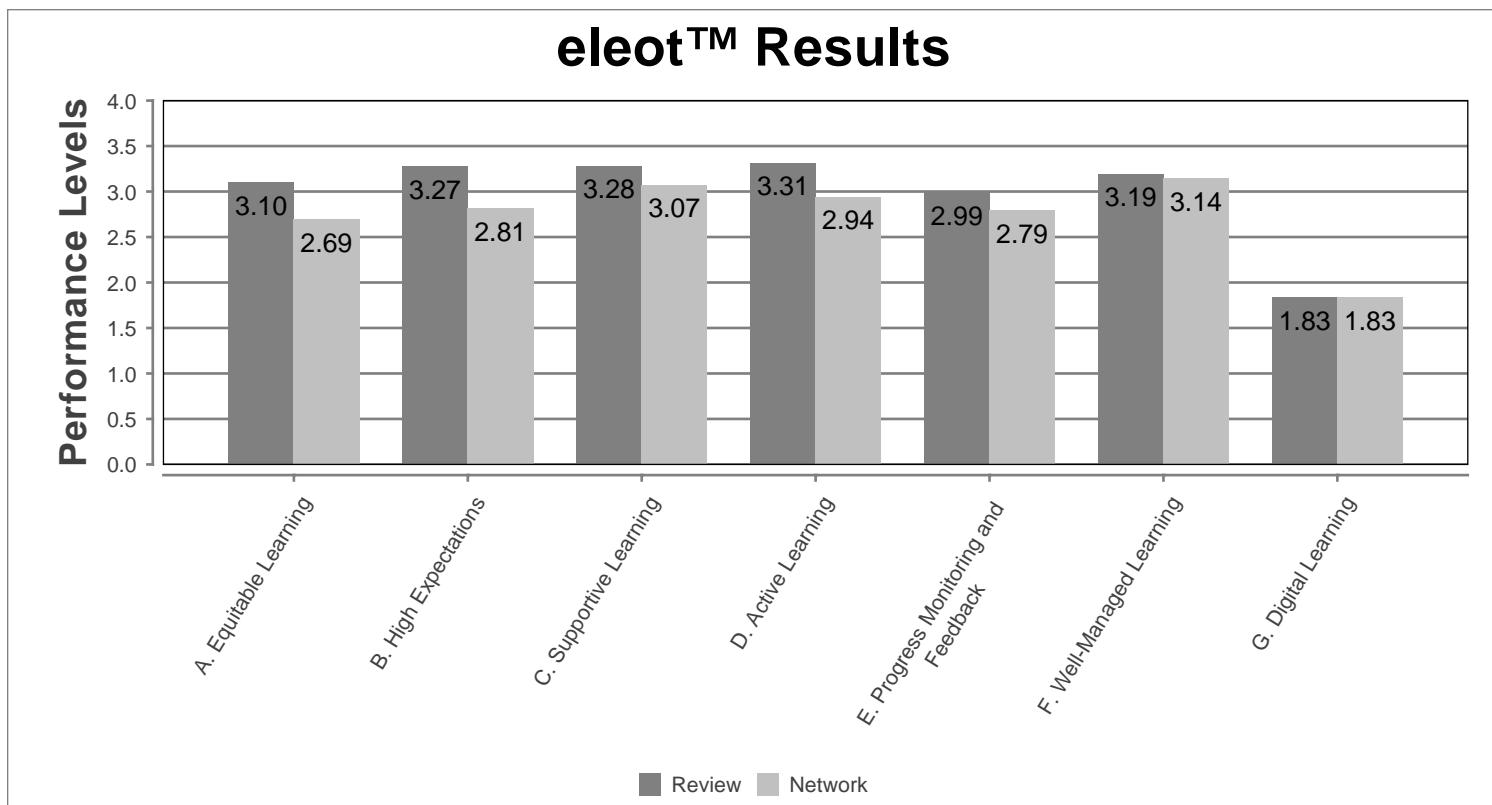
The quality of assessments used to measure student learning, assurance that assessments are administered with procedural fidelity and appropriate accommodations, assessment results that reflect the quality of learning, and closing gaps in achievement among subpopulations of students are all important indicators for evaluating overall student performance.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Assessment Quality	3.00	3.06
Test Administration	4.00	3.45
Equity of Learning	4.00	2.70
Quality of Learning	3.00	2.92

## Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™)

Every learner should have access to an effective learning environment in which she/he has multiple opportunities to be successful. The Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot™) measures the extent to which learners are in an environment that is equitable, supportive, and well-managed. An environment where high expectations are the norm and active learning takes place. It measures whether learners' progress is monitored and feedback is provided and the extent to which technology is leveraged for learning.

Observations of classrooms or other learning venues are conducted for a minimum of 20 minutes per observation. Every member of the External Review Team is required to be trained and pass a certification exam that establishes inter-rater reliability. Team members conduct multiple observations during the review process and provide ratings on 30 items based on a four-point scale (4=very evident; 3=evident; 2=somewhat evident; and 1=not observed). The following provides the aggregate average score across multiple observations for each of the seven learning environments included in eleot™ as well as benchmark results across the AdvancED Network.



The team conducted 18 classroom observations. The overall observation of the classrooms was very impressive and the average of each rating category was at or above the net average. The highest average was 3.31 for the Active Learning environment which indicated active engagement of the students. The High Expectations and the Supportive Learning environment had average scores of 3.27 and 3.28 which indicates that the students are challenged and supported in the classroom.

The 8th grade Science classroom demonstrated the ability of the students to work as teams in the design of a machine that could crush an object such as a jawbreaker. The students were charged with the design and actual building of the machine. Discussion within each group and with the teacher was evident.

A second example was the operation of a flipped classroom in the 8th grade English classroom. Each student at the Secondary level is provided an Ipad and receives information including reading assignments before the class meets . The class time is spent in discussing the assignment and oral testing.

The observation of the classrooms indicates a high level of instruction which engages and challenges the students. The level of accomplishment is supported by test results at each grade level.

**eleot™ Data Summary**

A. Equitable Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.00	Has differentiated learning opportunities and activities that meet her/his needs	11.11%	77.78%	11.11%	0.00%
2.	3.56	Has equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	61.11%	33.33%	5.56%	0.00%
3.	3.28	Knows that rules and consequences are fair, clear, and consistently applied	44.44%	38.89%	16.67%	0.00%
4.	2.56	Has ongoing opportunities to learn about their own and other's backgrounds/cultures/differences	11.11%	50.00%	22.22%	16.67%
<b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.10</b>						

B. High Expectations			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.44	Knows and strives to meet the high expectations established by the teacher	50.00%	44.44%	5.56%	0.00%
2.	3.39	Is tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	44.44%	50.00%	5.56%	0.00%
3.	2.83	Is provided exemplars of high quality work	22.22%	50.00%	16.67%	11.11%
4.	3.39	Is engaged in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks	50.00%	38.89%	11.11%	0.00%
5.	3.28	Is asked and responds to questions that require higher order thinking (e.g., applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	38.89%	50.00%	11.11%	0.00%
<b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.27</b>						

C. Supportive Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.33	Demonstrates or expresses that learning experiences are positive	38.89%	55.56%	5.56%	0.00%
2.	3.44	Demonstrates positive attitude about the classroom and learning	50.00%	44.44%	5.56%	0.00%
3.	3.00	Takes risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	16.67%	66.67%	16.67%	0.00%
4.	3.61	Is provided support and assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks	61.11%	38.89%	0.00%	0.00%
5.	3.00	Is provided additional/alternative instruction and feedback at the appropriate level of challenge for her/his needs	16.67%	66.67%	16.67%	0.00%

**Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.28**

D. Active Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.67	Has several opportunities to engage in discussions with teacher and other students	72.22%	22.22%	5.56%	0.00%
2.	2.67	Makes connections from content to real-life experiences	16.67%	44.44%	27.78%	11.11%
3.	3.61	Is actively engaged in the learning activities	61.11%	38.89%	0.00%	0.00%

**Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.31**

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.28	Is asked and/or quizzed about individual progress/learning	27.78%	72.22%	0.00%	0.00%
2.	3.11	Responds to teacher feedback to improve understanding	22.22%	66.67%	11.11%	0.00%
3.	3.11	Demonstrates or verbalizes understanding of the lesson/content	16.67%	77.78%	5.56%	0.00%
4.	2.72	Understands how her/his work is assessed	11.11%	55.56%	27.78%	5.56%
5.	2.72	Has opportunities to revise/improve work based on feedback	16.67%	55.56%	11.11%	16.67%
<b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 2.99</b>						

F. Well-Managed Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	3.50	Speaks and interacts respectfully with teacher(s) and peers	61.11%	27.78%	11.11%	0.00%
2.	3.67	Follows classroom rules and works well with others	66.67%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%
3.	2.72	Transitions smoothly and efficiently to activities	22.22%	38.89%	27.78%	11.11%
4.	2.83	Collaborates with other students during student-centered activities	27.78%	38.89%	22.22%	11.11%
5.	3.22	Knows classroom routines, behavioral expectations and consequences	33.33%	55.56%	11.11%	0.00%
<b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 3.19</b>						

G. Digital Learning			%			
Item	Average	Description	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Observed
1.	2.00	Uses digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	22.22%	11.11%	11.11%	55.56%
2.	1.72	Uses digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	5.56%	22.22%	11.11%	61.11%
3.	1.78	Uses digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning	5.56%	16.67%	27.78%	50.00%

**Overall rating on a 4 point scale: 1.83**

## Findings

### Improvement Priority

After collection and analysis of assessment data the information should be shared with all stakeholders, including parents, board members and the community. The sharing of this data is important to promote growth. (Indicator 5.2, SF2. Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis , SP2. Test Administration)

#### Primary Indicator

Indicator 5.2

#### Evidence and Rationale

Evidences are: Accreditation report, interviews with administrators and review of assessment results.

### Improvement Priority

Staff members must be trained in evaluating, interpreting and using data from different assessment sources. This can be addressed in professional staff development.

(Indicator 5.3, SP4. Equity of Learning)

#### Primary Indicator

Indicator 5.3

#### Evidence and Rationale

Evidences are: Accreditation report and staff interviews

### Improvement Priority

The school must develop a process to track student growth on a year by year basis. Test scores can be utilized each year to show student progress. Alumni surveys can be used to show college readiness after leaving Pikes Peak Christian School.

(Indicator 5.4, SP3. Quality of Learning)

*Primary Indicator*

Indicator 5.4

*Evidence and Rationale*

Evidences are: Accreditation report, Evidences of growth and success and observations of data.

**Improvement Priority**

The school must provide access to a program of professional development based on the needs of the school.

(Indicator 3.11)

*Primary Indicator*

Indicator 3.11

*Evidence and Rationale*

Evidences are: Accreditation report, interviews with staff and administration and staff surveys.

**Improvement Priority**

The school must provide additional training for staff and volunteers that will allow the identification of students with special learning needs. The parents should be provided a list of learning support services for the student population.

(Indicator 3.12)

*Primary Indicator*

Indicator 3.12

*Evidence and Rationale*

Evidences are: Accreditation report, Interviews with Counselors and Administrators and a partial list of services.

**Opportunity For Improvement**

Although there is some evidence of collaboration between teachers, a plan needs to be developed to establish collaborative learning communities within the school.

(Indicator 3.5)

*Primary Indicator*

Indicator 3.5

**Evidence and Rationale**

Evidences include the Accreditation report, school in service calendar, examples of improvement and staff survey results.

**Opportunity For Improvement**

The faculty should receive in service training in the use of test data to modify and to align curriculum. The information provided by the testing vendor should be examined and evaluated. An annual process and schedule for departments, teachers and administrators should be established.

(Indicator 3.2)

**Primary Indicator**

Indicator 3.2

**Evidence and Rationale**

Evidences include the Accreditation report, administrator interviews and survey results

**Opportunity For Improvement**

The school should develop an organized program providing mentoring, coaching and induction for new teachers.

(Indicator 3.7)

**Primary Indicator**

Indicator 3.7

**Evidence and Rationale**

Evidences include: In service training agenda, Staff manual and Staff survey results.

**Powerful Practice**

Each student is assigned to a teacher and regular meetings are scheduled.

(Indicator 3.9)

**Primary Indicator**

Indicator 3.9

**Evidence and Rationale**

Evidences are: review of assignment list and interviews of administrators and home room teachers'

**Powerful Practice**

The school provides families with a variety of communication methods. This includes RenWeb, newsletters and complete calendars. There is a strong variety of options for volunteer participation.

(Indicator 3.8)

*Primary Indicator*

Indicator 3.8

*Evidence and Rationale*

Evidences include school calendars, parent and student interviews and a guide to volunteer programs.

**Powerful Practice**

The school should be commended for the excellence of instruction in the classroom. ELEOT observations of classrooms indicated student engagement and teacher passion for learning.

(Indicator 3.3)

*Primary Indicator*

Indicator 3.3

*Evidence and Rationale*

ELEOT appraisals in the classroom and interviews with parents and students. Also survey results and alignment of lesson plans to curriculum.

# Leadership Capacity

The capacity of leadership to ensure an institution's progress towards its stated objectives is an essential element of organizational effectiveness. An institution's leadership capacity includes the fidelity and commitment to its institutional purpose and direction, the effectiveness of governance and leadership to enable the institution to realize its stated objectives, the ability to engage and involve stakeholders in meaningful and productive ways, and the capacity to enact strategies to improve results of student learning.

Purpose and direction are critical to successful institutions. A study conducted in 2010 by the London-based Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) reported that "in addition to improving performance, the research indicates that having a sense of shared purpose also improves employee engagement" and that "lack of understanding around purpose can lead to demotivation and emotional detachment, which in turn lead to a disengaged and dissatisfied workforce."

AdvancED has found through its evaluation of best practices in more than 32,000 institutions around the world that a successful institution commits to a shared purpose and direction and establishes expectations for student learning that are aligned with the institutions' vision and supported by internal and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and overall institution effectiveness.

Governance and leadership are key factors in raising institutional quality. Leaders, both local administrators and governing boards/authorities, are responsible for ensuring all learners achieve while also managing many other facets of an institution. Institutions that function effectively do so without tension between the governing board/authority, administrators, and educators and have established relationships of mutual respect and a shared vision (Feuerstein & Opfer, 1998). In a meta-analysis of educational institution leadership research, Leithwood and Sun (2012) found that leaders (school and governing boards/authority) can significantly "influence school conditions through their achievement of a shared vision and agreed-on goals for the organization, their high expectations and support of organizational members, and their practices that strengthen school culture and foster collaboration within the organization." With the increasing demands of accountability placed on institutional leaders, leaders who empower others need considerable autonomy and involve their communities to attain continuous improvement goals. Leaders who engage in such practices experience a greater level of success (Fink & Brayman, 2006). Similarly, governing boards/authorities that focus on policy-making are more likely to allow institutional leaders the autonomy to make decisions that impact teachers and students and are less responsive to politicization than boards/authorities that respond to vocal citizens (Greene, 1992).

AdvancED's experience, gained through evaluation of best practices, has indicated that a successful institution has leaders who are advocates for the institution's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction and allocate resources to implement curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders encourage collaboration and shared responsibility for school improvement among stakeholders. The institution's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation.

## 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.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
1.1	The school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	3.00	2.73
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.	4.00	2.96
1.3	The school's leadership implements a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	2.00	2.56

## Standard 2 - Governance and Leadership

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

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
2.1	The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the school.	3.00	2.96
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	2.00	2.91
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.	3.00	3.15
2.4	Leadership and staff foster a culture consistent with the school's purpose and direction.	3.00	3.09
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the school's purpose and direction.	3.00	2.79
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice and student success.	3.00	2.74

## Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic

Stakeholder Feedback is the third of three primary areas of evaluation in AdvancED's Performance Accreditation model. The AdvancED surveys (student, parent, and teacher) are directly correlated to the AdvancED Standards and indicators. They provide not only direct information about stakeholder satisfaction but also become a source of data for triangulation by the External Review Team as it evaluates indicators.

Institutions are asked to collect and analyze stakeholder feedback data, then submit the data and the analyses to the External Review Team for review. The External Review Team evaluates the quality of the administration of the surveys by institution, survey results, and the degree to which the institution analyzed and acted on the results.

Evaluative Criteria	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
Questionnaire Administration	4.00	3.35
Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	3.00	3.04

## Findings

### Improvement Priority

The governing Board must develop and implement a plan for evaluation of all administrators.  
(Indicator 2.6)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 2.6

Evidence and Rationale

Evidence includes interviews with administrators and the internal assessment presented by the school.

### Improvement Priority

The school must develop a defined process for the collaboration of all stakeholders in the development and modification of the school improvement plan. In a school that has achieved great harmony and unity, and receives such strong support from the family base, this will be a strong asset.  
(Indicator 1.3)

Primary Indicator

Indicator 1.3

Evidence and Rationale

Parent interviews indicate that they have not been included in the development of the school improvement plan.

## Opportunity For Improvement

The members of the Board should develop a professional development plan which includes a strong Board training program.

(Indicator 2.2)

*Primary Indicator*

Indicator 2.2

*Evidence and Rationale*

Evidences include examination of Board minutes, Board Policy manual and interviews of Board members.

**Powerful Practice**

Board policies and practices show strong support for the schools purpose and direction. The administration, staff and students are to be commended for the promotion of effective instruction.

(Indicator 2.1)

*Primary Indicator*

Indicator 2.1

*Evidence and Rationale*

The review of Board policy manuals, staff and student handbooks and the interviews of parents and administrators provide evidence for this statement.

**Powerful Practice**

Leadership and staff align decisions and actions toward continuous improvement to achieve the schools purpose. The school culture is characterized by a strong sense of community. The school is to be commended for the focus on continual improvement.

(Indicator 2.4)

*Primary Indicator*

Indicator 2.4

*Evidence and Rationale*

Evidences include interviews with administrators, staff and parents. Review of Policies adopted by the Board indicate a goal of continuous improvement.

## Resource Utilization

The use and distribution of resources must be aligned and supportive of the needs of an institution and the students served. Institutions must ensure that resources are aligned with the stated mission and are distributed equitably so that the needs of students are adequately and effectively addressed. The utilization of resources includes an examination of the allocation and use of resources, the equity of resource distribution to need, the ability of the institution to ensure appropriate levels of funding and sustainability of resources, as well as evidence of long-range capital and resource planning effectiveness.

Institutions, regardless of their size, need access to sufficient resources and systems of support to be able to engage in sustained and meaningful efforts that result in a continuous improvement cycle. Indeed, a study conducted by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (Pan, D., Rudo, Z., Schneider, C., & Smith-Hansen, L., 2003) "demonstrated a strong relationship between resources and student success... both the level of resources and their explicit allocation seem to affect educational outcomes."

AdvancED has found through its own evaluation of best practices in the more than 32,000 institutions in the AdvancED Network that a successful institution has sufficient human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables students to achieve expectations for student learning, meets special needs, and complies with applicable regulations. The institution employs and allocates staff members who are well qualified for their assignments. The institution provides a safe learning environment for students and staff. The institution provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff members to improve their effectiveness and ensures compliance with applicable governmental regulations.

### 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.

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
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.	3.00	2.95
4.2	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the school.	4.00	2.96
4.3	The school maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	3.00	3.11
4.4	Students and school personnel use a range of media and information resources to support the school's educational programs.	3.00	2.78
4.5	The technology infrastructure supports the school's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	3.00	2.52

Indicator	Description	Review Team Score	AdvancED Network Average
4.6	The school provides support services to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.	2.00	2.81
4.7	The school provides services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students.	3.00	2.75

## Findings

### Improvement Priority

School personnel must implement a clearly defined process to determine the physical, emotional and social needs of the students you are serving.

(Indicator 4.6)

#### Primary Indicator

Indicator 4.6

#### Evidence and Rationale

Evidences are: Counselor and staff interviews and list of Social classes provided.

### Powerful Practice

The school is to be commended for providing the environment that meets the needs of the student in the classroom. This includes instructional time and fiscal resources that are required..

(Indicator 4.2)

#### Primary Indicator

Indicator 4.2

#### Evidence and Rationale

Evidence is : Accreditation document, observations and staff interviews

# Conclusion

The success of the students was evident based on classroom observations and evaluation of test scores over a period of years. The school is very effective in aligning the education process with the purpose of the school. Parent surveys indicate the level of success related to the education process

The challenges faced by the school are increasing their enrollment and providing all of the resources necessary to maintain a quality program. The school must develop a quality recruiting program and provide the parents with access to a volunteer service program.

The school has a high quality education program which can only become stronger by incorporating the Improvement Priorities into the School improvement plan. As these Priorities are incorporated they will increase student success by providing for the development of a Strategic Plan that will project into the future.

## Improvement Priorities

The institution should use the findings from this review to guide the continuous improvement process. The institution must address the Improvement Priorities listed below:

- After collection and analysis of assessment data the information should be shared with all stakeholders, including parents, board members and the community. The sharing of this data is important to promote growth.
- School personnel must implement a clearly defined process to determine the physical, emotional and social needs of the students you are serving.
- Staff members must be trained in evaluating, interpreting and using data from different assessment sources. This can be addressed in professional staff development.
- The governing Board must develop and implement a plan for evaluation of all administrators.
- The school must develop a defined process for the collaboration of all stakeholders in the development and modification of the school improvement plan. In a school that has achieved great harmony and unity, and receives such strong support from the family base, this will be a strong asset.
- The school must develop a process to track student growth on a year by year basis. Test scores can be utilized each year to show student progress. Alumni surveys can be used to show college readiness after leaving Pikes Peak Christian School.
- The school must provide access to a program of professional development based on the needs of the school.
- The school must provide additional training for staff and volunteers that will allow the identification of students with special learning needs. The parents should be provided a list of learning support services for the student population.

# Accreditation Recommendation

## Index of Education Quality

The Index of Education Quality (IEQ™) provides a holistic measure of overall performance based on a comprehensive set of indicators and evaluative criteria. A formative tool for improvement, it identifies areas of success as well as areas in need of focus.

The IEQ™ comprises three domains: 1) the impact of teaching and learning on student performance; 2) the leadership capacity to govern; and 3) the use of resources and data to support and optimize learning.

The overall and domain scores can range from 100-400. The domain scores are derived from: the AdvancED Standards and indicators ratings; results of the Analysis of Student Performance; and data from Stakeholder Feedback Surveys (students, parents, and staff).

	External Review IEQ Score	AdvancED Network Average
Overall Score	293.16	278.34
Teaching and Learning Impact	287.30	268.94
Leadership Capacity	300.00	292.64
Resource Utilization	300.00	283.23

The IEQ™ results include information about how the institution is performing compared to expected criteria as well as to other institutions in the AdvancED Network. The institution should use the information in this report, including the corresponding performance rubrics, to identify specific areas of improvement.

Consequently, the External Review Team recommends to the AdvancED Accreditation Commission that the institution earn the distinction of accreditation for a five-year term. AdvancED will review the results of the External Review to make a final determination including the appropriate next steps for the institution in response to these findings.

# Addenda

## Team Roster

Member	Brief Biography
Gary Estep	Served as a NCSA Commissioner for 20 years and as a Board member of Lubbock Christian School for more than 15 years. Retired from Lubbock Christian University as a Professor of Biology and Academic Dean after 42 years of service. Part of accreditation review teams at both the k-12 and the University level.
Mr. Lanny Paul Witt	Holds an undergraduate degree in secondary education from Abilene Christian University and a Master's of Education in educational administration from East Texas State University. Is currently the High School Principal at Lipscomb Academy. He led Boyd-Buchanan for five years, began his career teaching history and Spanish as well as coaching football in public schools in east Texas for 10 years. Following that, Witt was president of East Texas Christian Academy in Tyler, Texas. In 2000, he was named president of Southwest Christian School in Fort Worth, Texas. Prior to joining the Boyd-Buchanan administration, Witt served as secondary school principal at Alabama Christian Academy in Montgomery, Ala.  Witt is a member of the National Christian School Association accreditation commission and has served as a deacon at Alta Mesa and Shiloh Road Churches of Christ. Witt served as an elder at Clear Creek Church of Christ in Chattanooga Tennessee and has led mission trips to Mexico and taught adult Bible classes for the past 28 years. He has a Rule 31 Certificate in Conflict Management from Lipscomb University and is currently working on a Master of Arts in Christian Practices degree from Lipscomb.
Mr. Peter Harry Dahlstrom	
Mrs. Karen Pipes	I am beginning my 22nd year in education with the last ten being in Christian education. I served as an elementary teacher in public education, as well as a coordinator for a Head Start grant. I serve as the K-12 principal for WCS.

## Next Steps

1. Review and discuss the findings from this report with stakeholders.
2. Ensure that plans are in place to embed and sustain the strengths noted in the Powerful Practices section to maximize their impact on the institution.
3. Consider the Opportunities for Improvement identified throughout the report that are provided by the team in the spirit of continuous improvement and the institution's commitment to improving its capacity to improve student learning.
4. Develop action plans to address the Improvement Priorities identified by the team. Include methods for monitoring progress toward addressing the Improvement Priorities.
5. Use the report to guide and strengthen the institution's efforts to improve student performance and system effectiveness.
6. Following the External Review, submit the Accreditation Progress Report detailing progress made toward addressing the Improvement Priorities. Institutions are required to respond to all Improvement Priorities. The report will be reviewed at the appropriate state, national, and/or international levels to monitor and ensure that the system has implemented the necessary actions to address the Improvement Priorities. The accreditation status will be reviewed and acted upon based on the responses to the Improvement Priorities and the resulting improvement.
7. Continue to meet the AdvancED Standards, submit required reports, engage in continuous improvement, and document results.

## About AdvancED

AdvancED is the world leader in providing improvement and accreditation services to education providers of all types in their pursuit of excellence in serving students. AdvancED serves as a trusted partner to more than 32,000 public and private schools and school systems – enrolling more than 20 million students - across the United States and 70 countries.

In 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), both founded in 1895, and the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) came together to form AdvancED: one strong, unified organization dedicated to education quality. In 2011, the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) that was founded in 1917 became part of AdvancED.

Today, NCA CASI, NWAC and SACS CASI serve as accreditation divisions of AdvancED. The Accreditation Divisions of AdvancED share research-based quality standards that cross school system, state, regional, national, and international boundaries. Accompanying these standards is a unified and consistent process designed to engage educational institutions in continuous improvement.

## References

- Alwin, L. (2002). The will and the way of data use. *School Administrator*, 59(11), 11.
- Baumert, J., Kunter, M., Blum, W., Brunner, M., Voxx, T., Jordan, A., Klusmann, U., Krauss, S., Nuebrand, M., & Tsai, Y. (2010). Teachers' mathematical knowledge, cognitive activation in the classroom, and student progress. *American Educational Research Journal*, 47(1), 133-180.
- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. (2012). Shared purpose: the golden thread? London: CIPD.
- Colbert, J., Brown, R., Choi, S., & Thomas, S. (2008). An investigation of the impacts of teacher-driven professional development. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 35(2), 134-154.
- Conley, D.T. (2007). Redefining college readiness (Vol. 3). Eugene, OR: Educational Policy Improvement Center.
- Datnow, A., Park, V., & Wohlstetter, P. (2007). Achieving with data: How high-performing school systems use data to improve instruction for elementary students. Los Angeles, CA: Center on Educational Governance, USC.
- Dembosky, J., Pane, J., Barney, H., & Christina, R. (2005). Data driven decision making in Southwestern Pennsylvania school districts. Working paper. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Ding, C. & Sherman, H. (2006). Teaching effectiveness and student achievement: Examining the relationship. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 29 (4), 40-51.
- Doyle, D. P. (2003). Data-driven decision making: Is it the mantra of the month or does it have staying power? *T.H.E. Journal*, 30(10), 19-21.
- Feuerstein, A., & Opfer, V. D. (1998). School board chairmen and school superintendents: An analysis of perceptions concerning special interest groups and educational governance. *Journal of School Leadership*, 8, 373-398.
- Fink, D., & Brayman, C. (2006). School leadership succession and the challenges of change. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 42 (62), 61-89.
- Greene, K. (1992). Models of school-board policy-making. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 28 (2), 220-236.
- Horng, E., Klasik, D., & Loeb, S. (2010). Principal time-use and school effectiveness. *American Journal of Education* 116, (4) 492-523.
- Lafee, S. (2002). Data-driven districts. *School Administrator*, 59(11), 6-7, 9-10, 12, 14-15.
- Leithwood, K., & Sun, J. (2012). The Nature and effects of transformational school leadership: A meta-analytic review of unpublished research. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48 (387). 388-423.
- Marks, H., Louis, K.S., & Printy, S. (2002). The capacity for organizational learning: Implications for pedagogy and student achievement. In K. Leithwood (Ed.), *Organizational learning and school improvement* (p. 239-266). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- McIntire, T. (2002). The administrator's guide to data-driven decision making. *Technology and Learning*, 22(11), 18-33.
- Pan, D., Rudo, Z., Schneider, C., & Smith-Hansen, L. (2003). Examination of resource allocation in education: connecting spending to student performance. Austin, TX: SEDL.