



AdvancED[®]
Standards
for Quality



SPECIAL PURPOSE
INSTITUTIONS





AdvancED® Standards for Quality

SPECIAL PURPOSE
INSTITUTIONS

*“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”
- Aristotle*

Each and every day, educators and administrators in Special Purpose Institutions seek new ways to help students reach their greatest potential. No longer are parents, communities or even students satisfied with the minimum requirements. Educators and administrators must be prepared to meet this demand and continue to improve as they strive for excellence.

The commitment to continuous improvement is a dynamic effort, consistently requiring attention and revision. AdvancED expects this commitment from the educational institutions we serve, and we expect it of ourselves. To that end, once every five years, AdvancED reviews, and revises if necessary, the Standards that serve as the foundation of the AdvancED Accreditation Process.

These *AdvancED Standards for Quality Special Purpose Institutions* not only provide the foundation for the AdvancED Accreditation Process but also represent the continued evolution of accreditation as a powerful tool for driving effective practices in support of student learning.

About AdvancED

The world’s leader in accreditation and school improvement, AdvancED believes that students must be prepared to succeed in a constantly evolving and diverse world and that educational institutions have a deep responsibility to deliver quality education to students from all walks of life.

We have been experts in accreditation and school improvement since 1885 and bring this 100+ years of experience and expertise through three US-based accreditation agencies — the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI).

The AdvancED Accreditation Process, a protocol embraced around the world, is a clear and comprehensive program of evaluation and external review, supported by research-based Standards and dedicated to helping schools, school systems and education providers continuously improve.

AdvancED’s position as a thought leader in education continues to expand as we provide a national and international voice to inform and influence policy and practice on issues related to education quality.



We believe in the power of education.

Anatomy of a Standard

The *AdvancED Standards for Quality Special Purpose Institutions* include the Standard, indicator, and related performance level.

The **Standards** are research-based, comprehensive quality statements that describe conditions that are necessary for educational institutions to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness. These Standards support an education process that is truly visionary; characterizing how organizations should operate to promote a culture of continuous learning that is fluid – engaging leaders, staff and students.

The **indicators and related performance levels** give thorough descriptions of exemplary practices and processes, together providing a comprehensive picture of each Standard.

Together, the five Standards and accompanying indicators and performance levels focus on practices within the institution and systematic methods of driving excellence in student performance and organizational effectiveness.





No one Standard or set of indicators and performance levels is complete without considering all five as a collective whole. Embracing their inherent “connectedness” is critical to understanding and application. The *AdvancED Standards for Quality Special Purpose Institutions* and the AdvancED Accreditation Process offer institutions a roadmap for the pursuit of excellence in education and student learning, unleashing their own power to transform.

AdvancED Standards for Quality Special Purpose Institutions

Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

The institution 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.

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

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

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

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

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

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

Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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



Standards for the Future

“We believe education can change a person’s life. We seek to serve institutions that are dedicated to a standards-based approach to quality improvement for the ultimate benefit of their students.”

Dr. Mark A. Elgart
President and CEO
AdvancED

Through our own commitment to improvement, AdvancED revises its Standards to ensure that they remain relevant and current as the foundation of the AdvancED Accreditation Process. There are very practical reasons to review the Standards – our knowledge of effective practices changes, and research reveals new information about factors that contribute to student achievement.

However, revising the Standards also opens the door to considering future trends in education and AdvancED’s own research and findings from the institution visits at our more than 30,000 accredited schools and school systems that we have conducted over the last five years. Feedback from the field also provided rich experiences and expertise that allowed us to look at creating Standards for the future, not just today.

The revision process that resulted in these Standards included in-depth study of content by renowned authors including Dr. Robert Marzano, Dr. Yong Zhao, Linda Darling-Hammond and Dr. Michael Fullan. We considered content from the *Partnership for 21st Century Skills*, the *2020 Forecast* and the Council of Chief State School Officer’s *Educational Leadership Policy Standards*. Next our draft Standards went under critical review by educational thought leaders Dr. W. James Popham, Dr. David Berliner, Dr. Yong Zhao and Ms. Kathleen Paliokas.

This rich and deep revision process produced a set of Standards that will challenge institutions to reach higher, to examine closer and to demonstrate the fidelity and integrity of best practices. No longer will institutions meet AdvancED Standards of best practices, they will demonstrate continuous improvement in the use of those best practices. The *AdvancED Standards for Quality Special Purpose Institutions* significantly increase the focus on teaching and learning; incorporate 21st Century Skills; embed high expectations for professional practice; and focus on rigor, equity, student engagement and depth and application of knowledge.

More than half of the indicators within the Standards focus on teaching and learning and continuous improvement. Each indicator has descriptive performance levels, and both institutions and the visiting External Review Teams will evaluate the institution against each indicator, not just the Standards.

Key Educational Concepts in Standards

1. All schools commit to rigor, equity, student engagement and depth and application of knowledge.
2. All schools commit to developing learning skills, thinking skills and life skills for all students.
3. The school improvement plan requires identification of goals for improvement of achievement and instruction.
4. The governing authority operates consistent with established roles and responsibilities; must be ethical and free of conflict of interest.
5. Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities.
6. All schools have formal structures whereby each student is well-known.
7. Grading and reporting must be based on clear criteria for attainment of knowledge and skills.
8. Institutions have a student assessment system with local and standardized assessments, resulting in a range of data about student learning.
9. Professional and support staff are trained in evaluation, interpretation and use of data.
10. Schools must demonstrate, using data, growth in student learning, student readiness for the next level and student success at the next level.



Accreditation Process

At AdvancED we believe accreditation is pivotal to leveraging institutional improvement. There is no question that the institution and the learning environment are at the heart of teaching and learning.

Institution leaders engaged in AdvancED Accreditation will:

- Take stock of themselves in relation to a set of research-based quality standards
- Establish a vision, assess their current reality, implement an improvement plan, monitor progress and evaluate results
- Enhance their best thinking with the insights and perspectives of an External Review Team

Two key changes will be part of the AdvancED Accreditation Protocol. First, all institutions will be required to provide student performance data as part of their Self Assessment. They also will be required to conduct surveys and provide the results of those surveys with their Self Assessment. In addition to the External Review Team assessment on the Standards and indicators during the External Review, the student performance results along with the survey results will be included in the determination of accreditation status.

Second, institutions in the School Accreditation model will be required to complete a Self Assessment. The results of those assessments will be used by the External Review Team visiting the institution and may be factored into the evaluation of the institution.

Through accreditation, AdvancED provides an effective engine for creating systematic and systemic improvement efforts. Increasing student achievement involves more than improving instruction. It is a result of how well all the parts of the institution work together to meet the needs of students.

Accreditation Resources

Within this booklet, institutions will find resources to guide their efforts toward achieving AdvancED School Accreditation. Evidence guidelines within each Standard are provided to assist institutions in demonstrating how they meet the *AdvancED Standards for Quality Special Purpose Institutions*. Institutions should provide evidence that supports their own self assessment of their performance levels. Put simply, the evidence guides should be used as guidelines for possible evidence with the flexibility to individualize how each institution demonstrates quality education.

In the back of this booklet, institutions will find a helpful glossary that describes and defines words and phrases used within the Standards and outlines expectations within performance levels through these definitions.

In addition to this booklet, there are many online resources available to Special Purpose Institutions to support the accreditation process.

For more information regarding resources for accreditation, visit www.advanc-ed.org, or contact the AdvancED Accreditation Division at 888.41 EDNOW (888.413.3669) or contactus@advanc-ed.org.

Standard 1

Purpose and Direction

The institution 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 1.1

The institution engages in a systematic, inclusive and comprehensive process to review, revise and communicate an educational purpose for student success.

- Level 4** The process for review, revision and communication of the institution's special purpose is clearly documented, and a record of the use and results of the process is maintained. The process is formalized and implemented with fidelity on a regular schedule. The process includes participation by representatives selected at random from all stakeholder groups. The special purpose statement clearly focuses on student success.
- Level 3** The institution's process for review, revision and communication of the special 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.
- Level 2** The institution has a process for review, revision and communication of its special purpose. The process has been implemented. The process includes participation by representatives from stakeholder groups. The purpose statement focuses primarily on student success.
- Level 1** The institution does not have a process to review, revise or communicate an educational special purpose. No process has been implemented. Stakeholders are rarely asked for input regarding the purpose of the institution. The purpose does not focus on student success.

Examples of Evidence

- Purpose statements – past and present
- Minutes from meetings related to development of the institution's purpose
- Documentation or description of the process for creating the institution's purpose including the role of stakeholders
- Communication plan to stakeholders regarding the institution's purpose
- Examples of communications to stakeholders about the institution's purpose (e.g., website, newsletters, annual report, student handbook)
- Survey results

Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

INDICATOR 1.2

Leadership and personnel commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning that supports challenging, equitable and adaptable specialized educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking and life skills.

Level 4 Commitment to shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning is clearly evident in documentation and decision making. This commitment is always reflected in communication among leaders and staff. Challenging and adaptable educational programs and equitable learning experiences are implemented in a measurable way so that all students achieve learning, thinking and life skills necessary for success. Evidence indicates a strong commitment to instructional practices that include active student engagement, a focus on depth of understanding, and the application of knowledge and skills. Leadership and personnel hold one another accountable to high expectations for professional practice.

Level 3 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 and adaptable 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. Leadership and personnel share high expectations for professional practice.

Level 2 Commitment to shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning is sometimes evident in documentation. This commitment is sometimes reflected in communication among leaders and most staff. Some challenging and adaptable educational programs and equitable learning experiences are implemented so that all students achieve learning, thinking and life skills. Evidence indicates some commitment to instructional practices that include active student engagement, a focus on depth of understanding, and the application of knowledge and skills. Leadership and personnel maintain high expectations for professional practice.

Level 1 Minimal or no evidence exists that indicates the culture of the institution is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning. Educational programs challenge few or no students and are provided in a way that few students achieve learning, thinking and life skills necessary for success. Learning experiences for students are rarely equitable. Instructional practices rarely include active student engagement, a focus on depth of understanding, and the application of knowledge and skills. Little or no commitment to high expectations for professional practice is evident.

Examples of Evidence

- The institution's statement of purpose
- Agendas and/or minutes that reference a commitment to the components of the institution's statement of purpose
- Institution philosophy about teaching and learning
- Documentation that overviews methodologies used in the institution, instructional practices and expected outcomes
- Copies of publications
- Survey results

Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

INDICATOR 1.3

Leadership and personnel implement a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.

- Level 4** 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 institution's purpose and direction. Personnel systematically maintain, use and communicate a profile with current and comprehensive data on student and institution 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 institution'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. 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.
- Level 3** Leaders implement a documented, systematic continuous improvement process for improving student learning and the conditions that support learning. All stakeholder groups are engaged in the process. Personnel maintain a profile with current and comprehensive data on student and institution performance. The profile contains analyses of data used to identify goals for the improvement of achievement and instruction that are aligned with the institution's purpose. Improvement goals have measurable performance targets. The process includes action planning that identifies measurable objectives, strategies, activities, resources and timelines for achieving improvement goals. Leaders hold all personnel accountable for and evaluate the overall quality of the implementation of all interventions and strategies. The process is reviewed and evaluated. Documentation that the process yields improved student achievement and instruction is available and communicated to stakeholders.
- Level 2** Leaders implement a continuous improvement process for improving student learning and the conditions that support learning. Some stakeholder groups are engaged in the process. Personnel maintain a profile with data on student and institution performance. The profile contains data used to identify goals for the improvement of achievement and instruction that are aligned with the institution's purpose. Improvement goals have performance targets. The process includes action planning that identifies measurable objectives, strategies, activities, resources and timelines for achieving improvement goals. Leaders hold personnel accountable for and evaluate the overall quality of the implementation of interventions and strategies. The process is sometimes reviewed and evaluated. Some documentation that the process yields improved student achievement and instruction is available.
- Level 1** A continuous improvement process for improving student learning and the conditions that support learning is used randomly and/or ineffectively. Stakeholders are not engaged in the process. The profile is rarely updated or used by personnel. The profile contains little or no useful data. Improvement goals include some or no performance targets. Goals selected for improvement, if they exist, reflect the minimum required by governmental or organizational oversight agencies. Leaders sometimes hold personnel accountable for and evaluate the overall quality of the implementation of interventions and strategies. There is no regular process for review or evaluation. Documentation linking the process to improved student achievement and instruction is unclear or non-existent.

Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

INDICATOR 1.3

Leadership and personnel implement a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.

Examples of Evidence

- Agenda and/or minutes from continuous improvement planning meetings
- Communication plan and artifacts that show two way communication to personnel and stakeholders
- The institution data profile
- The institution continuous improvement plan
- Strategic plan
- Historical data about implemented processes and systems
- Survey results

Standard 2

Governance and Leadership

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

INDICATOR 2.1

The governing authority establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the institution.

- Level 4** Policies and practices clearly and directly support the institution's purpose and direction and the institution's effective operation. The institution has a systematic, inclusive and comprehensive process and clearly defined criteria for the review and approval of contracts and agreements with external course, instruction and/or service providers. 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 for all personnel. The institution has clear policies and practices for maintaining safe and secure environments and has shared these expectations with all stakeholder groups. Policies and practices provide clear requirements, direction for and oversight of fiscal management.
- Level 3** Policies and practices support the institution's purpose and direction and the institution's effective operation. The institution has a comprehensive process and clearly defined criteria for the review and approval of contracts and agreements with external course, instruction and/or service providers. Policies and practices promote effective instruction and assessment that produce equitable and challenging learning experiences for all students. There are policies and practices regarding professional growth for all personnel. The institution has policies and practices for maintaining safe and secure environments and has shared these expectations with stakeholder groups. Policies and practices provide requirements, direction for and oversight of fiscal management.
- Level 2** Policies and practices generally support the institution's purpose and direction and the institution's effective operation. The institution has a process for the review and approval of contracts and agreements with external course, instruction and/or service providers. Most policies and practices promote effective instruction and assessment that produce equitable and challenging learning experiences for all students. There are policies and practices regarding professional growth for some personnel. The institution has some policies and practices for maintaining safe and secure environments and has shared these expectations with most stakeholder groups. Policies and practices provide requirements and oversight of fiscal management.

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

INDICATOR 2.1

The governing authority establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the institution.

Level 1 Little connection exists between policies and practices of the governing authority and the purpose, direction and effective operation of the institution. The institution does not have a clearly defined process for the review and approval of contracts and agreements. Policies and practices seldom or never address effective instruction and assessment that produce equitable and challenging learning experiences for students. There are few or no policies and practices regarding professional growth of personnel. The institution has few or no policies and practices for maintaining safe and secure environments and may or may not have shared these expectations with stakeholder groups. Policies provide requirements of fiscal management.

Examples of Evidence

- Governing authority policies, procedures and practices
- Institution handbook
- Personnel handbook
- Student handbook
- Communications to stakeholder about policy revisions
- Policy for selecting course, instruction and service providers
- Institution crisis plan

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

INDICATOR 2.2

The governing authority operates responsibly and functions effectively.

- Level 4** The governing authority has implemented a process to evaluate its decisions and actions to ensure they are in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities, a formally adopted code of ethics and free of conflict of interest. Governing authority member(s) are required to participate in a systematic, formal professional development process regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing authority and which includes conflict resolution, decision-making, supervision and evaluation, and fiscal responsibility. The governing authority complies with all policies, procedures, laws and regulations and functions for the benefit of the institution.
- Level 3** The governing authority 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 authority member(s) participate in a systematic, formal professional development process regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing authority. The governing authority complies with all policies, procedures, laws and regulations and functions for the benefit of the institution.
- Level 2** The governing authority ensures that its decisions and actions are in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities, are ethical and free of conflict of interest. Governing authority member(s) participate in professional development regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing authority and its member(s). The governing authority complies with all policies, procedures, laws and regulations.
- Level 1** The governing authority has no method for or does not ensure that decisions and actions are free of conflict of interest, are ethical and in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities. Governing authority member(s) rarely or never participate in professional development regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing authority. Evidence indicates the governing authority does not always comply with policies, procedures, laws and regulations.

Examples of Evidence

- Governing authority policies on roles and responsibilities, conflict of interest
- Governing code of ethics
- Communication plan to inform all personnel on code of ethics, responsibilities, conflict of interest
- Governing authority agendas and minutes relating to training
- Governing authority training plan
- Assurances, certifications
- Proof of legal counsel
- List of assigned personnel for compliance
- Historical compliance data
- Communications about program regulations
- Findings of internal and external reviews of compliance with laws, regulations and policies

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

INDICATOR 2.3

The governing authority ensures that the leadership has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage the operations effectively.

- Level 4** The governing authority consistently protects, supports and respects the autonomy of leadership to accomplish the goals for achievement and instruction and to manage the operations of the institution. The governing authority maintains a clear distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of leadership.
- Level 3** The governing authority protects, supports and respects the autonomy of leadership to accomplish the goals for improvement in student learning and instruction and to manage the operations of the institution. The governing authority maintains a distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of leadership.
- Level 2** The governing authority generally protects, supports and respects the autonomy of leadership to accomplish goals for improvement in student learning and instruction and to manage the operations of the institution. The governing authority usually maintains a distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of leadership.
- Level 1** The governing authority rarely or never protects, supports and respects the autonomy of leadership to accomplish goals for improvement in student learning and instruction or to manage the operations of the institution. The governing authority does not distinguish between its roles and responsibilities and those of leadership or frequently usurps the autonomy of leadership.

Examples of Evidence

- Institution continuous improvement plan
- Agendas and minutes of meetings
- Roles and responsibilities of institution leadership
- Maintenance of consistent academic oversight, planning and resource allocation
- Survey results regarding functions of the governing authority
- Stakeholder input and feedback
- Communications regarding governing authority actions

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

INDICATOR 2.4

Leadership and personnel foster a culture consistent with the institution's purpose and direction.

- Level 4** Leaders and personnel deliberately and consistently align their decisions and actions toward continuous improvement to achieve the institution's special purpose. They encourage, support and expect all students to be held to high standards in all courses of study. All stakeholders are collectively accountable for the student experience, student engagement and learning in the special purpose environment. Leaders actively and consistently support and encourage innovation, collaboration, shared leadership and rigorous professional growth. The culture is characterized by collaboration and a sense of community among all stakeholders.
- Level 3** Leaders and personnel align their decisions and actions toward continuous improvement to achieve the institution's special purpose. They expect all students to be held to high standards in all courses of study. All leaders and personnel are collectively accountable for the student experience, student engagement and learning in the special purpose environment. Leaders support innovation, collaboration, shared leadership and professional growth. The culture is characterized by collaboration and a sense of community.
- Level 2** Leaders and personnel make some decisions and take some actions toward continuous improvement. They expect all students to be held to standards. Leaders and personnel express a desire for collective accountability for the student experience, student engagement and learning in the special purpose environment. Leaders sometimes support innovation, collaboration, shared leadership and professional growth. The culture is characterized by a minimal degree of collaboration and limited sense of community.
- Level 1** Decisions and actions seldom or never support continuous improvement. Leaders and personnel may or may not expect students to learn. There is no evidence of or desire for collective accountability for the student experience, student engagement and learning. Leaders seldom or never support innovation, collaboration, shared leadership and professional growth. The culture is characterized by a minimal degree of collaboration and little or no sense of community.

Examples of Evidence

- Examples of collaboration and shared leadership
- Examples of decisions aligned with the institution's statement of purpose
- Examples of decisions in support of the institution's continuous improvement plan
- Academic policies and practices
- Staff handbook
- Documentation and/or recordings of student orientation
- Eligibility requirements for students
- Academic prerequisites
- Survey results

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

INDICATOR 2.5

Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the institution's purpose and direction.

Level 4 Leaders consistently communicate effectively with appropriate and varied representatives from stakeholder groups consistent with the special purpose of the institution. Leaders consistently provide opportunities for stakeholders to shape decisions, solicit feedback and respond to stakeholders, work collaboratively on continuous improvement efforts, and provide and support meaningful leadership roles for stakeholders. Leaders' proactive and persistent efforts result in measurable, active stakeholder participation; positive engagement; a strong sense of community; and ownership.

Level 3 Leaders communicate effectively with appropriate and varied representatives from stakeholder groups consistent with the special purpose of the institution. Leaders provide opportunities for stakeholders to shape decisions, solicit feedback and respond to stakeholders, work collaboratively on continuous improvement efforts, and provide and support meaningful leadership roles for stakeholders. Leaders' efforts result in measurable, active stakeholder participation; engagement; a sense of community; and ownership.

Level 2 Leaders sometimes communicate effectively with stakeholder groups. Leaders sometimes provide opportunities for stakeholders to shape decisions, solicit feedback from stakeholders, work collaboratively on continuous improvement efforts, and provide some leadership roles for stakeholders. Leaders' efforts result in some stakeholder participation and engagement.

Level 1 Leaders rarely or never communicate with stakeholder groups. Little or no work on continuous improvement efforts is collaborative, and stakeholders have little or no opportunity for leadership. Leaders' efforts result in limited or no stakeholder participation and engagement.

Examples of Evidence

- Survey responses
- Communication plan
- Examples of communication with stakeholder groups
- Minutes from meetings with stakeholders
- Involvement of stakeholders in development of continuous improvement plan
- Stakeholder participation in events

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

INDICATOR 2.6

Leadership and personnel supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice and student success.

- Level 4** 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.
- Level 3** The focus of the criteria and processes of supervision and evaluation is improving professional practice and improving student success. Supervision and evaluation processes are regularly implemented. The results of the supervision and evaluation processes are used to monitor and effectively adjust professional practice and improve student learning.
- Level 2** The criteria and processes of supervision and evaluation include references to professional practice and student success. Supervision and evaluation processes are implemented at minimal levels. The results of the supervision and evaluation processes are used sometimes to monitor and effectively adjust professional practice and improve student learning.
- Level 1** The criteria and processes of supervision and evaluation have little or no focus on improving professional practice or student success. Supervision and evaluation processes are randomly implemented, if at all. Results of the supervision and evaluation processes, if any, are used rarely or never.

Examples of Evidence

- Job specific criteria
- Supervision and evaluation documents with criteria for improving professional practice and student success noted
- Representative supervision and evaluation reports
- Governing authority policy on supervision and evaluation
- Examples of professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the results from supervision and evaluation

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

INDICATOR 2.7

The institution promotes, markets and operates with truthful and ethical practices in fulfillment of its purpose.

- Level 4** All operating procedures of the institution are clearly supported by truthful and ethical practices. All communications to all stakeholder groups consistently provide truthful, accurate, clear, timely and relevant information.
- Level 3** All operating procedures of the institution are supported by truthful and ethical practices. Communications to stakeholder groups provide truthful, accurate, clear, timely and relevant information.
- Level 2** Operating procedures of the institution may be periodically questioned requiring clarification and substantiation. Some communications to some stakeholder groups are unclear, require clarification and/or are untimely, resulting in poor messaging.
- Level 1** There is little or no evidence to suggest the institution has operating procedures that are supported with truthful and ethical practices. Communications to stakeholder groups rarely provide clear and accurate information.

Examples of Evidence

- Website
- Marketing campaign artifacts to include brochures, advertisements, signage and direct mail pieces
- Social media sites
- Admissions policies and procedures
- Grievance policy and practices
- Survey results

Standard 3

Teaching and Assessing for Learning

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

INDICATOR 3.1

The curriculum provides equitable and challenging academic content and authentic learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking and life skills.

Level 4 Curriculum and learning experiences in each course/class provide all students with challenging and equitable opportunities to develop learning, thinking and life skills that align with the institution's special purpose. Evidence clearly indicates that students are engaged in real life learning experiences. Like courses/classes have the same high learning expectations. All learning activities are individualized for each student in a way that supports achievement of expectations.

Level 3 Curriculum and learning experiences in each course/class provide all students with challenging and equitable opportunities to develop learning, thinking and life skills. There is some evidence to indicate that students are engaged in real life learning experiences. Like courses/classes have equivalent learning expectations. Some learning activities are individualized for each student in a way that supports achievement of expectations.

Level 2 Curriculum and learning experiences in each course/class provide most students with challenging and equitable opportunities to develop learning, thinking and life skills. There is little evidence to indicate that students are engaged in real life learning experiences. Most like courses/classes have equivalent learning expectations. Little individualization of learning activities for each student is evident.

Level 1 Curriculum and learning experiences in each course/class provide few or no students with challenging and equitable opportunities to develop learning, thinking and life skills. There is no evidence to indicate that students are engaged in real life learning experiences. Like courses/classes do not always have the same learning expectations. No individualization for students is evident.

Examples of Evidence

- Descriptions of instructional methodologies and techniques
- Teacher expectations
- Individual student achievement data
- Course of study
- Course catalog including prerequisites
- Course enrollment patterns
- Course syllabi with learning expectations
- Course learning guides
- Representative samples of student work across curriculum
- Survey results from current and past students, including graduates, if applicable

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

INDICATOR 3.2

Curriculum, instruction and assessments are designed, monitored and revised systematically in response to data from multiple assessments and an examination of professional practices.

Level 4 Using data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practices, personnel systematically design, monitor and revise curriculum, instruction and assessment to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and alignment with the institution's goals for achievement and instruction and statement of purpose. There is a systematic, collaborative process in place that requires the use of multiple measures, including formative assessments, to assess that student learning is consistent with course objectives, inform the ongoing modification of instruction, and provide data for possible curriculum revision. There is also a systematic, collaborative process in place that ensures alignment each time curriculum, instruction and/or assessments are reviewed or revised.

Level 3 Using data from student assessments and an examination of professional practices, personnel design, monitor and revise curriculum, instruction and assessment to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and alignment with the institution's goals for achievement and instruction and statement of purpose. There is a process in place that requires the use of multiple measures, including formative assessments, to assess that student learning is consistent with course objectives, inform the ongoing modification of instruction, and provide data for possible curriculum revision. There is also a process in place that ensures alignment each time curriculum, instruction and/or assessments are reviewed or revised.

Level 2 Personnel design, monitor and revise curriculum, instruction and assessment to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and alignment with the institution's goals for achievement and instruction and statement of purpose. The process may include multiple measures, including formative assessments, to assess that student learning is consistent with course objectives, inform the ongoing modification of instruction, and provide data for possible curriculum revision. A process is sometimes implemented to ensure alignment when curriculum, instruction and/or assessments are reviewed or revised.

Level 1 Personnel rarely or never monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction and assessment to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment or alignment with the institution's goals for achievement and instruction and statement of purpose. The process includes limited measures to assess that student learning is consistent with course objectives or to inform the ongoing modification of instruction. No process exists to ensure alignment when curriculum, instruction and/or assessments are reviewed or revised.

Examples of Evidence

- Curriculum development process
- Curriculum revision process
- A description of the systematic review process for curriculum, instruction and assessment
- Curriculum guides
- Products – scope and sequence, curriculum maps, syllabi
- Assessment overview and results
- Common assessments
- Surveys results
- Standards-based report cards

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

INDICATOR 3.3

Teachers engage students in their learning by using various methods and instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.

Level 4 All teachers systematically use various methods and instructional strategies that clearly inform students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Teachers are consistent and deliberate in planning and using various methods and instructional strategies that require student collaboration, self-reflection, development of critical thinking skills, and the integration of content and skills with other disciplines. Teachers consistently monitor student progress, provide feedback that is specific and immediate, and personalize instructional strategies and interventions that address the individual learning needs of each student.

Level 3 All teachers use various methods and instructional strategies that clearly inform students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Teachers plan and use various methods and instructional strategies that require student collaboration, self-reflection, development of critical thinking skills, and the integration of content and skills with other disciplines. Teachers monitor student progress, provide feedback that is specific and immediate, and provide instructional strategies and interventions that address student learning needs.

Level 2 Most teachers use various methods and instructional strategies that clearly inform students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Teachers sometimes plan and use various methods and instructional strategies that promote student collaboration, self-reflection, development of critical thinking skills, and the integration of content and skills with other disciplines. Teachers monitor student progress, provide feedback, and sometimes provide instructional strategies and interventions that address student learning needs.

Level 1 Teachers rarely or never use various methods and instructional strategies that clearly inform students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Teachers rarely plan and use various methods and instructional strategies that promote student collaboration, self-reflection, development of critical thinking skills, and the integration of content and skills with other disciplines. Little or no evidence exists that teachers monitor student progress, provide feedback, and/or provide instructional strategies and interventions that address student learning needs.

Examples of Evidence

- Teacher expectations and evaluation criteria
- Findings from walk-thrus, observations and course audits
- Student work demonstrating the application of knowledge
- Examples of teacher communication and feedback with students
- Examples of teacher use of technology and media resources as an instructional resource
- Examples of student use of technology and media resources as a learning tool
- Interdisciplinary projects
- Authentic assessments
- Professional development focused on these strategies
- Agenda items addressing these strategies
- Survey results

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

INDICATOR 3.4

Leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.

- Level 4** Leaders formally and consistently monitor instructional practices through supervision and evaluation procedures beyond learning environment observations to ensure that they 1) are aligned with the institution'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, 4) use content-specific standards, and 5) use appropriate professional practices. Leaders use multiple sources of data about instructional effectiveness and student learning as part of the supervision and evaluation process.
- Level 3** Leaders formally and consistently monitor instructional practices through supervision and evaluation procedures to ensure that they 1) are aligned with the institution'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, 4) use content-specific standards, and 5) use appropriate professional practices. Leaders use data about instructional effectiveness and student learning as part of the supervision and evaluation process.
- Level 2** Leaders monitor instructional practices through supervision and evaluation procedures to ensure that they 1) are aligned with the institution'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, 4) use content-specific standards, and 5) use appropriate professional practices. Leaders use data as part of the supervision and evaluation process.
- Level 1** Leaders occasionally or randomly monitor instructional practices through supervision and evaluation procedures to ensure that they 1) are aligned with the institution'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, 4) use content-specific standards, and 5) use appropriate professional practices. Leaders rarely use data as part of the supervision and evaluation process.

Examples of Evidence

- Supervision and evaluation procedures
- Reports containing classroom evaluation data
- Curriculum maps
- Curriculum guides
- Peer or mentoring opportunities and interactions
- Recognition of teachers with regard to these practices
- Administrative classroom observation protocols and logs
- Examples of improvements to instructional practices resulting from the evaluation process
- Survey results

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

INDICATOR 3.5

Professional and support personnel participate in collaborative learning communities to improve instruction and student learning.

- Level 4** Peer accountability ignites commitment to professional learning. All professional and support personnel participate in collaborative learning communities that meet both informally and formally on a regular schedule. Frequent collaboration occurs across curricular departments and/or levels. The professional and support personnel implement a formal process that promotes productive 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 are a part of the daily routine of personnel. Personnel can clearly link collaboration to improvement results in instructional practice and student performance.
- Level 3** A formal accountability process ensures that collaborative learning communities exist. All professional and support personnel participate in collaborative learning communities that meet both informally and formally. Collaboration often occurs across curricular departments and/or levels. The professional and support personnel have been trained to implement a formal process that promotes discussion about student learning. Learning from and using the results of inquiry practices such as action research, the examination of student work, reflection, study teams and peer coaching occur regularly among most personnel. Personnel indicate that collaboration causes improvement results in instructional practice and student performance.
- Level 2** Leaders encourage the existence of collaborative learning communities. Some of the professional and support personnel participate in collaborative learning communities that meet both informally and formally. Collaboration occasionally occurs across curricular departments and/or levels. The professional and support personnel promote discussion about student learning. Learning from and using the results of inquiry practices such as action research, the examination of student work, reflection, study teams and peer coaching sometimes occur among most personnel. Personnel express belief in the value of collaborative learning communities.
- Level 1** Collaborative learning communities may or may not exist. Collaborative learning communities randomly self-organize and meet informally. Collaboration seldom occurs across departments and/or levels. The professional and support personnel rarely discuss 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 rarely occur among personnel. Personnel see little value in collaborative learning communities.

Examples of Evidence

- Agendas and minutes of collaborative learning communities
- Calendar/schedule of learning community meetings
- Common language, protocols and reporting tools
- Examples of improvements to content and instructional practice resulting from collaboration
- Examples of cross curricular projects, interdisciplinary instruction and classroom action research project
- Peer coaching guidelines and procedures
- Survey results

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

INDICATOR 3.6

Teachers implement the institution's instructional process in support of student learning.

- Level 4** All teachers systematically use an instructional process that clearly informs students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Exemplars are provided to guide and inform students. The process requires the use of 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 immediate feedback about their learning.
- Level 3** 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.
- Level 2** Most teachers use an instructional process that informs students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Exemplars are sometimes provided to guide and inform students. The process may include multiple measures, including formative assessments, to inform the ongoing modification of instruction. The process provides students with feedback about their learning.
- Level 1** Few teachers use an instructional process that informs students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Exemplars are rarely provided to guide and inform students. The process includes limited measures to inform the ongoing modification of instruction. The process provides students with minimal feedback of little value about their learning.

Examples of Evidence

- Samples of exemplars used to guide and inform student learning
- Examples of learning expectations and standards of performance
- Examples of assessments that prompted modification in instruction
- Course syllabi and/or curriculum map
- Teacher observation data
- Survey results

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

INDICATOR 3.7

Mentoring, coaching and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the institution's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

- Level 4** All personnel are engaged in systematic mentoring, coaching and induction programs that are consistent with the institution's values and beliefs about teaching, learning and the conditions that support learning. These programs set high expectations for all personnel and include valid and reliable measures of performance.
- Level 3** Personnel are engaged in mentoring, coaching and induction programs that are consistent with the institution's values and beliefs about teaching, learning and the conditions that support learning. These programs set expectations for all personnel and include measures of performance.
- Level 2** Some personnel are engaged in mentoring, coaching and induction programs that are consistent with the institution's values and beliefs about teaching, learning and the conditions that support learning. These programs set expectations for personnel.
- Level 1** Few or no personnel are engaged in mentoring, coaching and induction programs that are consistent with the institution's values and beliefs about teaching, learning and the conditions that support learning. Limited or no expectations for personnel are included.

Examples of Evidence

- Descriptions and schedules of mentoring, coaching and induction programs with references to institution beliefs and values about teaching and learning
- Descriptions of instructional methodologies
- Professional learning calendar with activities for instructional support of new personnel
- Personnel manuals with information related to new hires including mentoring, coaching and induction practices
- Mentor/coach expectations
- Records of meetings and synchronous course observations
- Survey results

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

INDICATOR 3.8

The institution engages parents or guardians in meaningful ways in their children’s education and keeps them informed of their children’s learning progress. In the case of adult students, the students are informed of their learning progress rather than the family.

- Level 4** Programs that engage parents or guardians in meaningful ways in their children’s education are designed, implemented and evaluated. Parents or guardians have multiple ways of staying informed of their children’s learning progress. For adult students, the process provides the students with specific and timely feedback about their learning.
- Level 3** Programs that engage parents or guardians in meaningful ways in their children’s education are designed and implemented. Personnel regularly inform parents or guardians of their children’s learning progress. For adult students, the process regularly provides students with feedback about their learning progress.
- Level 2** Programs that engage parents or guardians in their children’s education are available. Personnel provide information about children’s learning. For adult students, the process provides the students with feedback about their learning.
- Level 1** Few or no programs that engage parents or guardians in their children’s education are available. Personnel provide little relevant information about children’s learning. For adult students, the process provides the students little relevant feedback about their learning.

Examples of Evidence

- Volunteer program with variety of options for participation
- Parental/family/adult student involvement plan including activities, timeframes and evaluation process
- Calendar outlining when and how families are provided information on child’s progress
- Schedule of when and how adult students are made aware of academic progress
- List of varied activities and communications modes with families and adult students (e.g., information portal, websites, newsletters, parent meetings, open house, social media, emails)
- Communication logs
- Sample teacher communications
- Survey results

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

INDICATOR 3.9

The institution has a formal structure whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate who supports that student's educational experience.

- Level 4** Personnel participate in a structure that gives them consistent interaction with individual students and related adults. All students participate in the structure. The structure allows personnel to gain significant insight into and serve as an advocate for the student's needs regarding learning skills, thinking skills, life skills and safety.
- Level 3** Personnel participate in a structure that gives them consistent interaction with individual students. All students may participate in the structure. The structure allows personnel to gain insight into and serve as an advocate for the student's needs regarding learning skills, thinking skills, life skills and safety.
- Level 2** Personnel participate in a structure that gives them interaction with individual students. Most students participate in the structure. The structure allows personnel to gain insight into the student's needs regarding learning skills, thinking skills, life skills and safety.
- Level 1** A minimal structure, if any, exists for personnel to build interaction with individual students. Few students, if any, participate in the structure. Few or no students have a member of personnel who advocates for their needs regarding learning skills, thinking skills, life skills and safety.

Examples of Evidence

- Description of formal adult advocate structures
- List of students matched to adult advocate
- Curriculum and activities of formal adult advocate structure
- Master schedule with time for formal adult advocate structure
- Communication logs
- Survey results

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

INDICATOR 3.10

Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined policies that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills.

Level 4 All teachers consistently 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. All stakeholder groups are systematically informed of the policies, processes and procedures. The policies, processes and procedures are formally and regularly evaluated.

Level 3 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. Stakeholder groups are informed of the policies, processes and procedures. The policies, processes and procedures are regularly evaluated.

Level 2 Most teachers use common grading and reporting policies, processes and procedures based on criteria that represent each student's attainment of content knowledge and skills. Most stakeholders are informed of the policies, processes and procedures. The policies, processes and procedures may or may not be evaluated.

Level 1 Few or no teachers use common grading and reporting policies, processes and procedures. Stakeholder groups may or may not be informed the policies, processes and procedures. No process for evaluation of grading and reporting practices is evident.

Examples of Evidence

- Policies, processes and procedures on grading and reporting
- Sample communications to stakeholders about grading and reporting
- Sample report cards and progress reports for each grade level and for all courses
- Evaluation process for grading and reporting practices
- Survey results

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

INDICATOR 3.11

Professional and support personnel participate in a continuous program of professional learning.

- Level 4** All professional and support personnel participate in a rigorous continuous program of professional learning that is aligned with the institution's purpose and direction. Professional development is based on an assessment of needs of the institution and each individual. The program builds measurable capacity among all professional and support personnel. The program is rigorously and systematically evaluated for effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning and the conditions that support learning.
- Level 3** All professional and support personnel participate in a continuous program of professional learning that is aligned with the institution's purpose and direction. Professional development is based on an assessment of needs of the institution. The program builds capacity among all professional and support personnel. The program is systematically evaluated for effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning and the conditions that support learning.
- Level 2** Most professional and support personnel participate in a continuous program of professional learning that is aligned with the institution's purpose and direction. Professional development is based on the needs of the institution. The program builds capacity among personnel who participate. The program is regularly evaluated for effectiveness.
- Level 1** Few or no personnel participate in professional learning. Professional development, when available, may or may not address the needs of the institution. The program may or may not build capacity among personnel members. If a program exists, it is rarely and/or randomly evaluated.

Examples of Evidence

- Crosswalk between professional learning and institution purpose and direction
- Brief explanation of alignment between professional learning and identified needs
- Schedules and agendas of professional learning activities
- Evaluation tools for professional learning
- Results of evaluation of professional learning program
- Survey results

Standard 4

Resources and Support Systems

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

INDICATOR 4.1

Qualified professional and support personnel are sufficient in number to fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the institution's purpose and direction and student success.

- Level 4** Clearly defined policies, processes and procedures ensure that leaders have access to, hire, place and retain qualified professional and support personnel. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and documented to support effective delivery of quality education. Leaders use a formal, systematic process to determine the number of personnel necessary to fill all the roles and responsibilities necessary to support the institution purpose, educational programs, delivery of instruction and continuous improvement. Sustained fiscal resources are available to fund all positions necessary to achieve the purpose and direction of the institution.
- Level 3** Policies, processes and procedures ensure that leaders have access to, hire, place and retain qualified professional and support personnel. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and documented to support effective delivery of quality education. Leaders systematically determine the number of personnel necessary to fill all the roles and responsibilities necessary to support the institution purpose, educational programs, delivery of instruction and continuous improvement. Sustained fiscal resources are available to fund positions critical to achieve the purpose and direction of the institution.
- Level 2** Policies, processes and procedures describe how leaders are to access, hire, place and retain qualified professional and support personnel. Roles and responsibilities support delivery of quality education. Leaders determine the number of personnel necessary to fill the roles and responsibilities necessary to support the institution purpose, educational programs, delivery of instruction and continuous improvement. Sustained fiscal resources are available to fund most positions critical to achieve the purpose and direction of the institution.
- Level 1** Policies, processes and procedures are often but not always followed by leaders to access, hire, place and retain qualified professional and support personnel. Roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined. Leaders attempt to fill the roles and responsibilities necessary to support the institution purpose, educational programs and continuous improvement. Sustained fiscal resources rarely are available to fund positions critical to achieve the purpose and direction of the institution.

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

INDICATOR 4.1

Qualified professional and support personnel are sufficient in number to fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the institution's purpose and direction and student success.

Examples of Evidence

- Policies, processes, procedures and other documentation related to the hiring, placement and retention of professional and support personnel
- Institution budgets for the last three years
- Documentation of highly qualified personnel
- Documentation of student to teacher ratios
- Assessments of staffing needs
- Survey results

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

INDICATOR 4.2

Instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the institution.

- Level 4** Instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources are focused solely on supporting the purpose and direction of the institution and student success. Requirements for student engagement and course completion are fiercely protected in policy and practice. Leaders exhaust every option to secure student support resources and fiscal resources to meet the needs of all students. Leaders measurably 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 special purpose operations concentrate on achieving the institution's purpose and direction and student success.
- Level 3** Instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources are focused on supporting the purpose and direction of the institution and student success in the special purpose institution environment. Requirements for student engagement and course completion are protected in policy and practice. Leaders work to secure student support resources and fiscal resources to meet the needs of all students. 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 special purpose operations include achieving the institution's purpose and direction and student success.
- Level 2** Instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources are sometimes focused on supporting the purpose and direction of the institution and student success in the special purpose institution environment. Requirements for student engagement and course completion are usually protected in policy and practice. Leaders attempt to secure student support resources and fiscal resources to meet the needs of all students. Leaders express a desire to allocate instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources so that all students have equitable opportunities to attain challenging learning expectations. Efforts toward the continuous improvement of instruction and special purpose operations sometimes include achieving the institution's purpose and direction and student success.
- Level 1** Little or no link exists between the purpose of the institution and the instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources. Requirements for student engagement and course completion are not protected in policy and practice. Leaders use available student support resources and fiscal resources to meet the needs of students. Leaders spend little or no effort allocating instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources so that all students have equitable opportunities to attain challenging learning expectations. Efforts toward the continuous improvement of instruction and special purpose operations rarely or never include achievement of the institution's purpose and direction and student success.

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

INDICATOR 4.2

Instructional time, material resources and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the institution.

Examples of Evidence

- Examples of leadership efforts to secure necessary material and fiscal resources
- Alignment of budget with institution purpose and direction
- Documentation about how technology system implementation and changes are made
- Historical data about technology system implementation, changes and reliability
- Reports related to course completion reports, graduation rates and achievement results
- Survey results

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

INDICATOR 4.3

The institution maintains learning environments, services and equipment that are safe, clean and healthy for all students and staff.

Level 4 Institution leaders have adopted or collaboratively created clear definitions and expectations for maintaining safety, cleanliness and a healthy environment and have shared these definitions and expectations with all stakeholders. All personnel and students are accountable for maintaining these expectations. Valid measures are in place that allow for continuous tracking of these conditions. Improvement plans are developed and implemented by appropriate personnel to continuously improve these conditions. The results of improvement efforts are systematically evaluated regularly.

Level 3 Institution leaders have adopted or created clear expectations for maintaining safety, cleanliness and a healthy environment and have shared these definitions and expectations with stakeholders. 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.

Level 2 Institution leaders have some expectations for maintaining safety, cleanliness and a healthy environment and have shared these definitions and expectations with most stakeholders. Selected personnel are accountable for maintaining these expectations. Some measures are in place that allow for tracking of these conditions. Personnel work to improve these conditions. Results of improvement efforts are monitored.

Level 1 Institution leaders have few or no expectations for maintaining safety, cleanliness and a healthy environment. Stakeholders are generally unaware of any existing definitions and expectations. Little or no accountability exists for maintaining these expectations. Few or no measures that assess these conditions are in place. Few or no personnel work to improve these conditions.

Examples of Evidence

- Maintenance schedules
- Records of depreciation of equipment
- System for maintenance requests
- Safety committee responsibilities, meeting schedules and minutes
- Documentation of compliance with local and state inspections requirements
- Documentation of emergency procedures such as fire drills, evacuation and other emergency procedures.
- Survey results

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

INDICATOR 4.4

Students and institution personnel use a range of information and media resources to support the educational programs.

- Level 4** Students and institution personnel have access to embedded information and media resources necessary to achieve the educational programs. Personnel are available in sufficient numbers to assist students and institution personnel in learning about the tools and locations for finding and retrieving information.
- Level 3** Students and institution personnel have access to information and media resources necessary to achieve the educational programs. Personnel are available to assist students and institution personnel in learning about the tools and locations for finding and retrieving information.
- Level 2** Students and institution personnel have access to information and media resources necessary to achieve most of the educational programs. Limited assistance is available to assist students and personnel in learning about the tools and locations for finding and retrieving information.
- Level 1** Students and institution personnel have access to limited information and media resources. Little or no assistance is available for students and personnel to learn about the tools and locations for finding and retrieving information.

Examples of Evidence

- Data on media and information resources available to students and staff
- Schedule of staff availability to assist students and institution personnel related to finding and retrieving information
- Budget related to media and information resource acquisition
- Survey results

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

INDICATOR 4.5

The technology infrastructure supports the institution's teaching, learning and operational needs.

- Level 4** The technology infrastructure is modern, fully functional and meets the teaching, learning and operational needs of all stakeholders. Institution personnel develop and administer needs assessments and use the resulting data to develop and implement a technology plan to continuously improve technology services and infrastructure.
- Level 3** The technology infrastructure meets the teaching, learning and operational needs of all stakeholders. Institution personnel develop and administer needs assessments and use the resulting data to develop and implement a technology plan to improve technology services and infrastructure.
- Level 2** The technology infrastructure meets the teaching, learning and operational needs of most stakeholders. Institution personnel have a technology plan to improve technology services and infrastructure.
- Level 1** The technology infrastructure meets the teaching, learning and operational needs of few stakeholders. A technology plan, if one exists, addresses some technology services and infrastructure needs.

Examples of Evidence

- Technology plan and budget to improve technology services and infrastructure
- Assessments to inform development of technology plan
- Policies relative to technology use
- Sample assignments demonstrating the use of technology
- Survey results

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

INDICATOR 4.6

The institution provides students with support systems to enable student success in the learning environment.

- Level 4** The institution implements a clearly defined induction program that is personalized for each student. Information from the induction program is used to develop personalized support systems and academic plans to meet the needs of all students. Valid and reliable measures of support system effectiveness are in place, and personnel use the data from these measures to regularly evaluate support system effectiveness. Improvement plans related to the induction program and support systems are designed and implemented to more effectively meet the needs of all students.
- Level 3** The institution implements an induction program for all students. Information from the induction program is used to develop support systems and academic plans to meet the needs of students as necessary. Measures of support system effectiveness are in place, and personnel use the data from these measures to evaluate support system effectiveness. Improvement plans related to the induction program and support systems are designed and implemented when needed to more effectively meet the needs of all students.
- Level 2** The institution implements an induction program. Information from the induction program is used to develop support systems to meet the needs of students when possible. The support systems are evaluated. Improvement plans related to the support systems are sometimes designed and implemented to meet the needs of students.
- Level 1** The institution may or may not implement an induction program. Information from the induction program, if available, is rarely used for developing support systems to meet student needs. Support systems are rarely or never evaluated. Improvement plans related to these support systems are rarely or never developed.

Examples of Evidence

- List of support services available to students
- Licenses and qualifications of third party service providers
- Agreements with community agencies for student-family support
- Social classes and services, e.g., bullying, character education
- Student assessment system for identifying student needs
- Schedule of family services, e.g., parent classes, survival skills
- Survey results

Standard 5

Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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

INDICATOR 5.1

The institution establishes and maintains a clearly defined student assessment system.

- Level 4** Personnel maintain and consistently use a comprehensive assessment system that produces data from multiple assessment measures about student learning and institution performance. 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.
- Level 3** Personnel maintain and use an assessment system that produces data from multiple assessment measures about student learning and institution performance. Most assessments, especially those related to student learning, are proven reliable and bias free. The system is regularly evaluated for reliability and effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning and the conditions that support learning.
- Level 2** Personnel use an assessment system that produces data from multiple assessment measures about student learning and institution performance. Some assessments, especially those related to student learning, are proven reliable and bias free. The system is evaluated for effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning and the conditions that support student learning.
- Level 1** Personnel maintain an assessment system that produces data from assessment measures about student learning and institution performance. Assessments are seldom proven reliable and bias free. The system is rarely or never evaluated for effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning or the conditions that support student learning.

Examples of Evidence

- Brief description of student assessment system including range of data produced from standardized and local assessments on student learning and institution performance
- Evidence that assessments are reliable and bias-free
- Documentation or description of evaluation tools/protocols
- Survey results

Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

INDICATOR 5.2

Professional and support personnel continuously collect, analyze and apply learning using a range of data sources that include trend data about student learning, instruction and program evaluation for continuous improvement.

- Level 4** Systematic processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing and applying learning from all data sources are documented and used consistently by professional and support personnel. Data sources include trend data that provide a comprehensive and complete picture of student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs and the conditions that support student learning. All personnel use data to design, implement and evaluate continuous improvement plans to improve student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs and the organizational conditions of the institution.
- Level 3** Systematic processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing and applying learning from all data sources are used consistently by professional and support personnel. Data sources include trend data that provide a complete picture of student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs and the conditions that support student learning. Institution personnel use data to design, implement and evaluate continuous improvement plans to improve student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs and the organizational conditions of the institution.
- Level 2** Some processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing and applying learning from data sources are used by professional and support personnel. Data sources include limited trend data about student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs and the conditions that support student learning. Institution personnel use data to design, implement and evaluate continuous improvement plans.
- Level 1** Few or no processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing and applying learning from data sources are used by professional and support personnel. Data sources include limited or no trend data about student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs and the conditions that support student learning. Institution personnel rarely use data to design and implement continuous improvement plans.

Examples of Evidence

- Written protocols and procedures for data collection and analysis
- List of data sources related to student learning, instruction, program effectiveness and conditions that support learning
- Examples of use of data to design, implement and evaluate continuous improvement plans
- Survey results

Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

INDICATOR 5.3

Professional and support personnel are trained in the evaluation, interpretation and use of relevant data.

- Level 4** All professional and support personnel are regularly and systematically assessed and trained in a rigorous, individualized professional development program related to the evaluation, interpretation and use of relevant data.
- Level 3** All professional and support personnel are assessed and trained in a rigorous professional development program related to the evaluation, interpretation and use of relevant data.
- Level 2** Most professional and support personnel are assessed and trained in a professional development program related to the evaluation, interpretation and use of relevant data.
- Level 1** Few or no professional and support personnel are trained in the evaluation, interpretation and use of relevant data.

Examples of Evidence

- Training materials specific to the evaluation, interpretation and use of data
- Documentation of attendance and training related to data use
- Professional learning schedule specific to the use of data
- Policies specific to data training
- Survey results

Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

INDICATOR 5.4

The institution engages in a continuous improvement process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning.

- Level 4** Policies and procedures clearly define and describe a process for analyzing data that determine verifiable improvement in student learning. Results indicate significant improvement, and personnel systematically and consistently use these results to design, implement and evaluate the results of continuous improvement action plans related to student learning.
- Level 3** Policies and procedures describe a process for analyzing data that determine verifiable improvement in student learning. Results indicate improvement, and personnel consistently use these results to design, implement and evaluate the results of continuous improvement action plans related to student learning.
- Level 2** A process exists for analyzing data that determine verifiable improvement in student learning. Results indicate mixed levels of improvement, and personnel sometimes use these results to design, implement and evaluate the results of continuous improvement action plans related to student learning.
- Level 1** An incomplete or no process exists for analyzing data that determine improvement in student learning. Results indicate no improvement, and personnel rarely use results to design and implement continuous improvement action plans related to student learning.

Examples of Evidence

- Description of process for analyzing data to determine verifiable improvement in student learning
- Agendas/minutes of meetings related to analysis of data
- Evidence of student growth
- Evidence of student readiness for the next level
- Evidence of student success at the next level
- Examples of use of results to evaluate continuous improvement action plans
- Student surveys

Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

INDICATOR 5.5

Leadership monitors and communicates information about student learning, conditions that support student learning and the achievement of improvement goals to stakeholders.

- Level 4** Leaders monitor comprehensive information about student learning, conditions that support student learning and the achievement of improvement goals. Leaders regularly communicate results using multiple delivery methods and in appropriate degrees of sophistication for all stakeholder groups.
- Level 3** Leaders monitor information about student learning, conditions that support student learning and the achievement of improvement goals. Leaders regularly communicate results using multiple delivery methods to all stakeholder groups.
- Level 2** Leaders monitor some information about student learning, conditions that support student learning and the achievement of improvement goals. Leaders sometimes communicate results to stakeholder groups.
- Level 1** Leaders rarely monitor information about student learning, conditions that support student learning and the achievement of improvement goals. Leaders rarely communicate results to stakeholder groups.

Examples of Evidence

- Leadership monitoring process of information about student learning, conditions that support learning and the achievement of institution improvement goals
- Communication plan regarding student learning, conditions that support learning and achievement of institution improvement goals to stakeholders
- Sample communications to stakeholders regarding student learning conditions that support learning and achievement of institution improvement goals
- Executive summaries of student learning reports to stakeholder groups

AdvancED Master Glossary

Term	Definition
accreditation	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
Accreditation Progress Report (APR)	A formal written detailed account of the institution's progress in addressing the required actions from the External Review Team
accreditation status	A designation provided by AdvancED that helps further define the meaning of accreditation
action research	An ongoing inquiry process conducted by practitioners to examine problems or challenges in school settings
adult advocate	School-based adult who aids and/or assists a student for the purpose of improving his/her academic progress and personal development by advising and mentoring
authentic assessment	A continuous evaluation of student learning based on pre-determined criteria, such as a rubric, that requires students to demonstrate their understanding of content or acquisition of skills in meaningful or "real-life" contexts
autonomy	The authority to make decisions without input from others
best practices	Classroom instructional and organizational strategies that have been demonstrated and accepted by the professional community to be effective in improving student learning
code of ethics	A written set of principles for members of an organization that prescribes acceptable behaviors that are in accordance with the institution's values
collaboration	Two or more people purposefully working together on a shared goal
collaborative learning community	A practice or strategy whereby a group of students or teachers work together to improve student learning
comprehensive assessment system	A system and process for gathering, managing, analyzing and disseminating data from multiple measures to guide and inform instructional decisions
content-specific standards of practice	Instructional strategies that are recommended for improved student learning in a certain subject area
continuous improvement	A collaborative and structured process that provides direction for an institution that includes (1) its profile, (2) an identification of goals with measurable performance targets, and (3) an identification of measurable objectives, strategies, activities, resources, and timelines to ensure achievement of goals
critical thinking	Ability to question, analyze, conceptualize, synthesize, and evaluate information
cross-cutting themes	Unifying or dominant ideas
direction	The process or way in which an institution creates and fulfills its purpose
equitable	Making fair and impartial decisions for students, teachers, and stakeholders in the context of the institution
examination of student work	The careful and close analysis of student work for the purpose of making instructional decisions that result in improved student achievement
exemplar	An example of sample work typically provided by a teacher to guide students during their learning process

AdvancED Master Glossary

Term	Definition
External Review	A process that is conducted on-site by a team of qualified and trained educators to evaluate the school's adherence to the AdvancED Standards for Quality; 2) assess the efficacy and impact of the school's continuous improvement process; 3) assess the effectiveness of the school's methods for quality assurance; 4) identify strengths deserving of commendations and provide required actions to improve the school and 5) make an accreditation recommendation for national review
External Review Report	A report generated by the External Review Team based on data gathered from a school or school system's External Review
External Review Team	Nationally qualified and trained volunteer educators who are selected for their expertise and fit to the school to assess the school's adherence to the AdvancED Standards for Quality
formal structure whereby each student is well-known	Structured time or program in which a student meets regularly with an adult advocate to discuss his/her academic progress and individual needs
formative assessments	A continuous process of evaluating student learning to make adjustments in teaching to meet student learning needs
governing body	A group of people responsible for oversight and policy setting in a school or system
horizontal alignment	The coordination and arrangement of the curriculum and assessments for a common grade level
individualized learning	Instructional strategies and learning activities that are modified for a student to meet his/her academic needs
induction	A structured, formalized support system for beginning or new employees to the institution
inquiry practices	A multi-step instructional process in which students define, explore, and discover possible solutions to a problem where the focus is on the process rather than the outcome
intervention	An intentional activity or strategy identified to meet goals for improvement
learning expectation	A competency or skill level students should demonstrate after instruction
learning, thinking and life skills	Competencies such as problem-solving, communicating, collaborating, leading and respecting others that are integrated in the curriculum to prepare students for their success in the future
like courses/classes	The same curriculum, program of study or content provided for the same level or grade
multiple assessments	A minimum of two teacher-made, common and/or standardized forms of evaluations used to gain information about student learning and to inform instruction
organizational condition	The way things are in an institution; often defined by its culture or climate
peer coaching	Planned, collegial interactions between two or more educators who observe and discuss each other's teaching practice in an effort to deepen their understanding and delivery of instructional practices and to improve student learning

AdvancED Master Glossary

Term	Definition
Performance Level	A component of the Standards and indicators that serves as a guide to help assess an institution's adherence to the Standards or the institution's current reality
personalization	Custom tailoring of information, instruction or the curriculum to the individual student
professional staff	System or school-based employees that are required to have a specialized certificate, license or college degree to function in their positions and who have responsibilities that impact student learning
profile	A description of the institution's students, their performance, school effectiveness and the school and community contexts for learning
protocol	A procedural process, strategy or method for examining, usually collectively, a practice or a product such as student work
purpose	The reason an institution exists as defined by a mission, beliefs, values, philosophy, learning competencies and/ or goals
readiness and success at the next level	The preparation and degree of achievement students must demonstrate for advancement to a subsequent grade level, program or instructional level
reliability	An assessment's degree of consistency to measure student performance each time it is administered
school	An educational unit including any public, private, proprietary, not-for-profit, pre-K to 12, high school, middle school/junior high, elementary, special purposes, supplementary, charter, distance or international entity
school leadership	The principal, school head or other persons who contribute toward the purpose and direction of the school and enlist and guide teachers, students and parents toward achieving common educational goals
school personnel or school staff	Employees of a school who are required to have a specialized certificate, license, or college degree to function in their positions and who have responsibilities that impact student learning
school system	A public or private educational unit of schools administered together for the purpose of providing education
Self Assessment (SA)	The continuous and collaborative process for an institution to use the standards and indicators as a guide for improvement and a determination of its current reality
stakeholder involvement	Staff, students, parents, community members and others who have engaged in various forms of decision-making in a school or in the system
stakeholders	Staff, students, parents, community members and others who have a vested interest in the institution
Standard statement	Each of the five Standards written as one sentence
standards-based report card	A summary of a student's progress in achieving a stated set of learning criteria
student engagement in learning	The willingness of a student to fully participate in the learning process or instructional activity
support staff	System or school-based employees who provide assistance to the professional staff, students and community members and have responsibilities that do not require a specialized certificate, license or college degree (e.g., clerical, custodial, school nutrition)

AdvancED Master Glossary

Term	Definition
system	An interconnected set of elements that is coherently organized in a way that achieves something; a system must consist of three kinds of things: elements, interconnections and a function or purpose
system personnel or system staff	Employees of a school system who are required to have a specialized certificate, license or college degree to function in their positions and who have responsibilities that impact student learning
systems thinking	A discipline for seeing whole; a framework for seeing interrelationships, for seeing patterns of change rather than static “snapshots”
technology as instructional resources	The use of a variety of technological media to support instruction, increase student engagement and improve student achievement
technology as a learning tool	The use of technological media for the purposes of engaging students in the learning process and increasing student achievement
term accreditation	The length of time AdvancED grants for an accreditation cycle
trend data	Factual information, numerical or narrative, that conveys patterns or directions about student learning, instruction and/or organizational conditions
valid	An assessment’s degree of consistency to measure what the assessment was designed to measure, such as specific content or skills
values and beliefs about teaching and learning	Strongly held convictions shared by the institution’s staff that guide and inform curricular, instructional and organizational decisions and improvement planning
vertical alignment	The coordination and arrangement of the curriculum and assessments across grade levels



9115 Westside Parkway
Alpharetta, GA 30009
888.41ED NOW (888.413.3669)

www.advanc-ed.org

