



# Accreditation Engagement Review

July 01, 2024 - June 30, 2025

**Houston County School District**

Institution #215059

P. O. Box 1850/ 1100 Main Street  
Perry, Georgia 31069  
United States of America

# Accreditation Is Continuous Improvement

Cognia defines continuous improvement as "an embedded behavior rooted in an institution's culture that constantly focuses on conditions, processes, and practices to improve teaching and learning." Accreditation is a continuous improvement process that helps an institution improve teaching and learning. Using Cognia's Performance Standards, the institution examines its current effectiveness as well as its capacity and capability to achieve its vision and goals for the future.

Cognia believes all institutions can improve no matter how well they are currently performing. In the same manner that educators are expected to understand the unique needs of every learner and tailor the education experience to drive student success, every institution must be empowered

to map out and embrace their unique improvement journey. Cognia expects institutions to use the results and analyses of data from diverse sources to select and implement actions that drive improvement in education quality and student performance. Cognia recognizes that each institution's improvement journey is unique and that we can serve you best by providing key findings specific to your institution.

Around the turn of the 21st century, accreditation transformed its focus and process from a ten-year evaluation focused on the accomplishments of an institution's past decade to a forward-focused process examining what an institution is striving to accomplish in the next five years. Modern accreditation examines the current and future

capabilities and capacities of an institution in the context of its mission, purpose and direction. The Standards for Accreditation define how a good institution behaves and provides the criteria to focus improvement efforts that will lead to growing learners, teachers, and leaders.

In reality, modern accreditation is a continuous improvement process. At least every six years, the institution formally engages the Standards for Accreditation to reflect and examine its progress toward its desired future as expressed through its mission, purpose, and strategic direction.

Cognia's purpose-driven, strategic process is the most widely used continuous improvement process in the world.

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## Cognia Performance Accreditation and the Engagement Review

This report contains the findings of the Engagement Review. The findings of the report are organized in five sections: Assurances, Rating of Analyses, Cognia Performance Standards, Insights from the Review, and a Summary of Findings that includes Noteworthy Practices and Areas for Improvement.

Accreditation is pivotal to leveraging education quality and continuous improvement. Using a set of rigorous research-based standards, the accreditation process examines the whole institution—the program, the cultural context, and the community of stakeholders—to determine how

well the parts work together to meet the needs of learners. Through the Cognia Accreditation Process, highly skilled and trained evaluators gather first-hand evidence and information pertinent to evaluating an institution's performance against research-based Cognia Performance Standards. Using these standards, evaluators assess the quality of the learning environment to gain valuable insights and target improvements in teaching and learning as well as the operation of the institution.

To build a comprehensive evaluation of your institution, our experts gain a broad understanding of institution

quality through a review of documented evidence, discussions with leadership, and community feedback. Using the standards as a framework, the report provides valuable guidance to help focus your institution's improvement journey.



# Assurances

Assurances are requirements that accredited institutions must meet. The assurance statements are based on the type of institution, and the responses are confirmed by the Accreditation Engagement Review. Institutions are expected to meet all assurances and are expected to correct any deficiencies in unmet assurances.

#	ASSURANCES	YES/NO
1.	The institution has read, understands, and complies with the Cognia Accreditation and Certification Policies and Procedures.	☑ Yes
2.	The institution complies with all applicable governmental laws or regulations.	☑ Yes
3.	The institution adheres to ethical marketing and communication practices to transparently disclose current and accurate information to the public.	☑ Yes
4.	The governing authority adheres to written policies that govern its conduct, decision making, ethics, and authority; and engages in training aligned to its roles and responsibilities.	☑ Yes
5.	The institution annually submits all financial transactions for an annual audit conducted by an accounting authority external to the institution.	☑ Yes
6.	The institution annually reviews and implements written management plans for security, crisis, safety and health for onsite and virtual environments that includes expectations, communications protocols, and training for students, staff and stakeholders.	☑ Yes
7.	The institution participates in required training related to accreditation or certification by timeframes prescribed by Cognia.	☑ Yes
8.	<p>The system executes a written quality assurance process to monitor and verify that all institutions within its jurisdiction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• meet the applicable governmental requirements of the school's location;</li> <li>• meet the Cognia Accreditation and Certification Policies and Procedures;</li> <li>• meet the Cognia Accreditation and/or Certification Standards and Assurances and</li> <li>• implement its required education programs with fidelity</li> </ul>	☑ Yes

# Evaluations of Institution Analyses

Cognia expects institutions to use a systematic process to collect data and information using quality instruments and then analyze and synthesize that information to arrive at findings. From the findings, Cognia expects institutions to develop, prioritize, and implement theories of action that will sustain high-performing areas and lead to improvement in underperforming areas.

Cognia requires institutions to complete analyses on selected data sources. Each analysis is evaluated using rubrics aligned to the main activities within the analysis process.

## Stakeholder Feedback Analysis

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The institution has made an accurate appraisal of the quality of their data sources using the Evaluative Criteria.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.5
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.1
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.4
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★☆ Network Average: 2.9

### Network Comparison for Stakeholder Feedback Analysis



## Student Performance Analysis

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The institution has made an accurate appraisal of the quality of their data sources using the Evaluative Criteria.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.5
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.2
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.3
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★★ Network Average: 2.9

### Network Comparison for Student Performance Analysis



## Learning Environments Analysis

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The institution has made an accurate appraisal of the quality of their data sources using the Evaluative Criteria.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.4
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information.	★★★★ Network Average: 2.9
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.2
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★ Network Average: 2.8

### Network Comparison for Learning Environments Analysis



## Culture of Learning

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The narrative provides evidence for standards related to Culture of Learning.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.6
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information and responded to the prompts for Culture of Learning.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.2
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★ Network Average: 3.3
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★ Network Average: 2.8

### Network Comparison for Culture of Learning



## Leadership for Learning

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The narrative provides evidence for standards related to Leadership for Learning.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.5
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information and responded to the prompts for Leadership for Learning.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.1
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.2
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★★ Network Average: 2.7
Network Comparison for Leadership for Learning	
Your Institution	4.0
Cognia Network Avg.	3.1

## Engagement of Learning

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The narrative provides evidence for standards related to Engagement of Learning.	★★★★☆ Network Average: 3.5
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information and responded to the prompts for Engagement of Learning.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.1
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.2
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★★ Network Average: 2.8
Network Comparison for Engagement of Learning	
Your Institution	3.8
Cognia Network Avg.	3.1

## Growth in Learning

CRITERION	YOUR SCORE
The narrative provides evidence for standards related to Growth in Learning.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.5
The institution has analyzed and synthesized information and responded to the prompts for Growth in Learning.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.0
The institution has identified areas of noteworthy achievement and areas in need of improvement.	★★★★★ Network Average: 3.2
The institution has interpreted findings, prioritized themes, and developed theories of action.	★★★★★ Network Average: 2.8

### Network Comparison for Growth in Learning



## Performance Standards Evaluation Results

Accreditation is based primarily on the evaluation of evidence that reflects an institution's ability to meet the expectations as defined by the Cognia Performance Standards. The Performance Standards define the elements of quality that research indicates are present in an effective institution. Accreditation standards provide the guideposts to becoming a better institution. The Engagement Review evaluators apply a four-level rubric to determine the degree to which the institution demonstrates effective practices that reflect the expectations of the standard. The rubric scale is designed to indicate the current performance of the institution.

The rubric is scored from Level 4 to Level 1. Descriptions are provided in the table below.

RATING	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
★★★★★	4	Demonstrating noteworthy systematic and systemic practices producing clear results that positively impact learners.
★★★★☆	3	Engaging in practices that provide evidence of expected effectiveness that is reflected in the standard.
★★★☆☆	2	Developing or improving practices that provide evidence that effort approaches desired level of effectiveness.
★★☆☆☆	1	Reflecting areas with insufficient evidence and/or limited activity leading toward improvement.

# Cognia Performance Standards Ratings

## Culture of Learning Standards

A good institution nurtures and sustains a healthy culture for learning. In a healthy culture, learners, parents, and educators feel connected to the purpose and work of the institution as well as behave in alignment with the stated values and norms. The institution also demonstrates evidence that reflects the mission, beliefs, and expectations of the institution (e.g., student work; physical appearance of the institution; participation in institution activities; parents' attendance at institution functions).

### Keys to Culture of Learning

A healthy culture is evident where:

- Stakeholders are actively engaged and supportive of the institution's mission
- Learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests are the focal point
- Stakeholders are included and supported

#### Standard 1

**Leaders cultivate and sustain a culture that demonstrates respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion, and is free from bias.**

YOUR RATING



Network Average: 3.3

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Leaders consistently model the attributes and implement practices that shape and sustain the desired institution culture, clearly setting expectations for all staff members. Leaders and professional staff members consistently implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that embody the values of respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion and are free from bias.
3	3 - Leaders regularly model the attributes and implement practices that shape and sustain the desired institution culture, clearly setting expectations for all staff members. Leaders and professional staff members routinely implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that embody the values of respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion and are free from bias.
2	2 - Leaders occasionally model the attributes and implement practices that shape and sustain the desired institution culture, clearly setting expectations for all staff members. Leaders and professional staff members sometimes implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that embody the values of respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion and are free from bias.
1	1 - Leaders rarely model the attributes and implement practices that shape and sustain the desired institution culture, clearly setting expectations for all staff members. Leaders and professional staff members seldom implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that embody the values of respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion and are free from bias.



## Standard 2

**Learners' well-being is at the heart of the institution's guiding principles such as mission, purpose, and beliefs.**

YOUR RATING  
★★★★  
Network Average: 3.4

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
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4	4 - Staff members continually demonstrate commitment to learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests. The institution's practices, processes, and decisions are documented and regularly reviewed for consistency with its stated values.
3	3 - Staff members routinely demonstrate commitment to learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests. The institution's practices, processes, and decisions are documented and are consistent with and based on its stated values.
2	2 - Staff members occasionally demonstrate commitment to learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests. The institution's practices, processes, and decisions are consistent with and based on its stated values.
1	1 - Staff members seldom demonstrate commitment to learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests. The institution's practices, processes, and decisions may not be based on its stated values.

## Standard 3

**Leaders actively engage stakeholders to support the institution's priorities and guiding principles that promote learners' academic growth and well-being.**

YOUR RATING  
★★★★  
Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
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4	4 - Leaders establish and sustain conditions that consistently result in support and active participation among stakeholders. Leaders consistently collaborate with stakeholders to advance identified priorities. Institutions implement a formal process to choose areas of focus based on analyzed data on learners' needs and consistent with guiding principles.
3	3 - Leaders establish and sustain conditions that regularly result in support and active participation among stakeholders. Leaders routinely collaborate with stakeholders to advance identified priorities. Institutions choose areas of focus based on analyzed data on learners' needs and consistent with guiding principles.
2	2 - Leaders establish conditions that occasionally result in support and participation among stakeholders. Leaders sometimes collaborate with stakeholders to advance identified priorities. Institutions choose areas of focus sometimes based on data on learners' needs and consistent with guiding principles.
1	1 - Leaders establish conditions that rarely result in support and participation among stakeholders. Leaders seldom collaborate with stakeholders. Institutions choose areas of focus rarely based on data about learners.

## Standard 4

**Learners benefit from a formal structure that fosters positive relationships with peers and adults.**

YOUR RATING  
 ★★☆☆  
 Network Average: 3.1

### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

4	4 - A formal structure is planned and consistently implemented to promote a culture and climate in which learners receive support from adults and peers. Peer and adult interactions and behaviors consistently demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for one another's well-being.
3	3 - A formal structure is planned and regularly implemented to promote a culture and climate in which learners receive support from adults and peers. Peer and adult interactions and behaviors routinely demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for one another's well-being.
2	2 - A formal structure may be planned but is minimally implemented to promote a culture and climate in which learners receive support from adults and peers. Peer and adult interactions and behaviors sometimes demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for one another's well-being.
1	1 - A formal structure is not planned or implemented to promote a culture and climate in which learners receive support from adults and peers. Peer and adult interactions and behaviors rarely demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for one another's well-being.

## Standard 5

**Professional staff members embrace effective collegiality and collaboration in support of learners.**

YOUR RATING  
 ★★☆☆  
 Network Average: 3.0

### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

4	4 - The institution's documented operating practices cultivate and set expectations for collegiality and collaboration and are monitored for fidelity of implementation. Professional staff members consistently interact with respect and cooperation, learn from one another, and consider one another's ideas. Professional staff members intentionally and consistently work together in self-formed or assigned groups to review information, identify common problems, and implement solutions on behalf of learners.
3	3 - The institution's documented operating practices cultivate and set expectations for collegiality and collaboration. Professional staff members regularly interact with respect and cooperation, often learn from one another, and routinely consider one another's ideas. Professional staff members often work together in self-formed or assigned groups to review information, identify common problems, and implement solutions on behalf of learners.
2	2 - The institution's operating practices somewhat cultivate and set expectations for collegiality and collaboration. Professional staff members generally interact with respect and cooperation, periodically learn from one another, and somewhat consider one another's ideas. Professional staff members sometimes work together in self-formed or assigned groups to review information, identify common problems, and implement solutions on behalf of learners.
1	1 - The institution's operating practices rarely cultivate and set expectations for collegiality and collaboration. Professional staff members may or may not interact with respect and cooperation, learn from one another, or consider one another's ideas. Professional staff members rarely work together in self-formed or assigned groups to review information, identify common problems, and implement solutions on behalf of learners.

## Standard 6



**Professional staff members receive the support they need to strengthen their professional practice.**

YOUR RATING  
 ★★☆☆☆  
 Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
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4	4 - Professional staff members consistently receive adequate resources and assistance based on data and information unique to the individual. A formal structure ensures that professional staff members receive personalized mentoring and coaching from leaders and peers.
3	3 - Professional staff members receive adequate resources and assistance based on data and information unique to the individual. Professional staff members receive personalized mentoring and coaching from leaders and peers.
2	2 - Professional staff members receive some resources and assistance based on data and information unique to the individual. Professional staff members periodically receive mentoring and coaching from leaders and peers.
1	1 - Professional staff members receive few or no resources and assistance based on data and information unique to the individual. Professional staff members rarely receive mentoring and coaching from leaders and peers.

#### Network Comparison for Culture of Learning Standards



## Leadership for Learning Standards

The ability of a leader to provide leadership for learning is a key attribute of a good institution. Leaders who engage in their own learning while tangibly supporting the learning process for learners and teachers have a significant positive impact on the success of others. Leaders must also communicate the learning expectations for all learners and teachers continuously with consistency and purpose. The expectations are embedded in the culture of the institution, reflected by learners', teachers', and leaders' behaviors and attitudes toward learning.

### Keys to Leadership for Learning

Leadership for learning is demonstrated when school leaders:

- Communicate expectations for learning
- Influence and impact the culture in positive ways
- Model and engage in learning while supporting others to do so

## Standard 7

### Leaders guide professional staff members in the continuous improvement process focused on learners' experiences and needs.

YOUR RATING  
★★★★  
Network Average: 2.8

#### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

4	4 - Leaders consistently engage professional staff members in developing, communicating, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting the continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process is based on analyzed trend and current data about learners' academic and non-academic needs and the institution's organizational effectiveness. Leaders and professional staff members consistently implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that improve learning and engage stakeholders.
3	3 - Leaders regularly engage professional staff members in developing, communicating, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting the continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process is based on analyzed data about learners' academic and non-academic needs and the institution's organizational effectiveness. Leaders and professional staff members routinely implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that improve learning and engage stakeholders.
2	2 - Leaders occasionally engage professional staff members in developing, communicating, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting the continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process is sometimes based on data about learners' academic and non-academic needs and the institution's organizational effectiveness. Leaders and professional staff members sometimes implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that improve learning and engage stakeholders.
1	1 - Leaders seldom engage professional staff members in developing, communicating, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting the continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process is rarely based on data about learners' academic and non-academic needs and the institution's organizational effectiveness. Leaders and professional staff members rarely implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that improve learning and engage stakeholders.

## Standard 8

### The governing authority demonstrates a commitment to learners by collaborating with leaders to uphold the institution's priorities and to drive continuous improvement.

YOUR RATING  
★★★★★  
Network Average: 3.2

#### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

4	4 - The governing authority's policies and decisions are regularly reviewed to ensure an uncompromised commitment to learners and the institution's identified priorities. The governing authority and institution leaders use their respective roles and responsibilities to consistently and intentionally collaborate to further the institution's improvement.
3	3 - The governing authority's policies and decisions demonstrate a commitment to learners and support the institution's identified priorities. The governing authority and institution leaders use their respective roles and responsibilities to collaboratively further the institution's improvement.
2	2 - The governing authority's decisions demonstrate some commitment to learners and sometimes support the institution's identified priorities. The governing authority and institution leaders use their respective roles and responsibilities to focus the institution's improvement.
1	1 - The governing authority's decisions demonstrate minimal commitment to learners and rarely support the institution's identified priorities. The governing authority and institution leaders seldom collaborate on the institution's improvement.



## Standard 9

### Leaders cultivate effective individual and collective leadership among stakeholders.

YOUR RATING



Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Leaders consistently recognize and actively encourage leadership potential among stakeholders. Leaders create conditions that ensure formal and informal leadership opportunities, and provide customized support for individuals and groups to improve their leadership skills. Stakeholders show initiative and eagerness to take on individual or shared responsibilities that support the institution's priorities.
3	3 - Leaders frequently recognize and encourage leadership potential among stakeholders. Leaders create conditions that regularly offer formal and informal leadership opportunities, and support individuals and groups to improve their leadership skills. Stakeholders demonstrate a willingness to take on individual or shared responsibilities that support the institution's priorities.
2	2 - Leaders occasionally recognize and encourage leadership potential among stakeholders. Leaders sometimes create conditions that offer leadership opportunities and support individuals and groups to improve their leadership skills. Stakeholders sometimes volunteer to take on individual or shared responsibilities that support the institution's priorities.
1	1 - Leaders seldom recognize and encourage leadership potential among stakeholders. Leaders rarely create conditions that offer leadership opportunities and support individuals and groups to improve their leadership skills. Stakeholders rarely volunteer to take on individual or shared responsibilities that support the institution's priorities.

## Standard 10

### Leaders demonstrate expertise in recruiting, supervising, and evaluating professional staff members to optimize learning.

YOUR RATING



Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Leaders intentionally and consistently identify, develop, and retain qualified professional staff members who contribute to the institution's culture and priorities. Leaders consistently use analyzed data from a variety of sources to forecast future staffing needs and employ best practices to attract a diverse pool of candidates. Leaders implement and monitor documented practices and procedures for supervision and evaluation that improve professional staff members' performance to optimize learning.
3	3 - Leaders identify, develop, and retain qualified professional staff members who contribute to the institution's culture and priorities. Leaders routinely use data from a variety of sources to forecast future staffing needs and employ best practices to attract a diverse pool of candidates. Leaders regularly implement practices and procedures for supervision and evaluation that improve professional staff members' performance to optimize learning.
2	2 - Leaders hire qualified professional staff members who contribute to the institution's culture and priorities. Leaders sometimes use data to forecast future staffing needs. Leaders supervise and evaluate professional staff members to improve performance.
1	1 - Leaders hire qualified professional staff members without consideration of contribution to the institution's

culture and priorities. Leaders rarely use data to forecast future staffing needs. Leaders seldom supervise and evaluate professional staff members to improve performance.

#### Standard 11

**Leaders create and maintain institutional structures and processes that support learners and staff members in both stable and changing environments.**

YOUR RATING



Network Average: 3.1

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
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- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 4 | 4 - Leaders consistently demonstrate awareness of potential influences on institution stability and engage stakeholders in planning and implementing strategies to maintain stability and respond to change. The institution's structure and processes are documented, monitored, and thoroughly communicated so that learners and staff members know what to do and expect in everyday circumstances. The institution's structure and processes include emergency and contingency plans that support agile and effective responses to both incremental and sudden change. |
| 3 | 3 - Leaders regularly demonstrate awareness of potential influences on institution stability and engage stakeholders in planning and implementing strategies to maintain stability and respond to change. The institution's structure and processes are documented and communicated so that learners and staff members know what to do and expect in everyday circumstances. The institution's structure and processes include emergency and contingency plans that support responses to both incremental and sudden change.   |
| 2 | 2 - Leaders sometimes demonstrate awareness of potential influences on institution stability and engage stakeholders in planning and implementing strategies to maintain stability and respond to change. The institution's structure and processes are occasionally documented and communicated so that learners and staff members know what to do and expect in everyday circumstances. The institution's structure and processes include emergency and contingency plans to respond to change.  |
| 1 | 1 - Leaders seldom demonstrate awareness of potential influences on institution stability. The institution's structure and processes are not well documented or communicated so that learners and staff members know what to do and expect in everyday circumstances. The institution's structure and processes may not include emergency and contingency plans to respond to change.  |

#### Standard 12

**Professional staff members implement curriculum and instruction that are aligned for relevancy, inclusion, and effectiveness.**

YOUR RATING



Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
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- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 4 | 4 - Professional staff members systematically implement, review, and adjust curriculum and instruction based on recognized and evidence-based content standards. Curriculum and instructional practices are regularly assessed through a formal, systematic process to assure alignment, relevancy, inclusiveness, and effectiveness for all learners. |
| 3 | 3 - Professional staff members implement, review, and adjust curriculum and instruction based on recognized and evidence-based content standards. Curriculum and instructional practices are regularly assessed to assure alignment, relevancy, inclusiveness, and effectiveness for all learners.   |

2	2 - Professional staff members implement curriculum and instruction based on recognized and evidence-based content standards. Curriculum and instructional practices are sometimes assessed to assure alignment, relevancy, inclusiveness, and effectiveness for all learners.
1	1 - Professional staff members implement locally adopted curriculum and instruction. Curriculum and instructional practices are rarely or not assessed to assure alignment, relevancy, inclusiveness, and effectiveness for all learners.

### Standard 13

**Qualified personnel instruct and assist learners and each other in support of the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.**

YOUR RATING



Network Average: 3.0

#### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

4	4 - All staff members demonstrate commitment to enhancing their professional practice over and above the required knowledge and skills for their positions. Staff members work collaboratively to instruct and assist learners and colleagues in support of the institution's guiding principles. Staff members' individual and collective decisions and behaviors consistently demonstrate alignment and coherence with the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.
3	3 - All staff members demonstrate the required knowledge and skills for their positions. Staff members work cooperatively to instruct and assist learners and colleagues in support of the institution's guiding principles. Staff members' individual and collective decisions and behaviors demonstrate alignment and coherence with the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.
2	2 - Most staff members demonstrate the required knowledge and skills for their positions, and a plan is being implemented to ensure that all staff members are qualified for their positions. Staff members sometimes work cooperatively to instruct and assist learners and colleagues in support of the institution's guiding principles. Staff members' individual and collective decisions and behaviors sometimes demonstrate alignment and coherence with the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.
1	1 - Some staff members do not demonstrate the required knowledge and skills for their positions, and a plan does not exist to ensure that all staff members are qualified for their positions. Staff members rarely work cooperatively to instruct and assist learners and colleagues in support of the institution's guiding principles. Staff members' individual and collective decisions and behaviors rarely demonstrate alignment and coherence with the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.

### Standard 14

**Curriculum and instruction are augmented by reliable information resources and materials that advance learning and support learners' personal interests.**

YOUR RATING



Network Average: 3.0

#### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

4	4 - Professional staff members consistently suggest and provide thoughtfully selected information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process and support learners' personal interests. A systematic process is used to identify and verify that information resources and materials are selected from credible sources.
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3	3 - Professional staff members suggest and provide thoughtfully selected information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process and support learners' personal interests. These information resources and materials are selected from credible sources and based on verifiable information.
2	2 - Professional staff members sometimes suggest and provide information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process and/or support learners' personal interests. These information resources and materials are usually selected from credible sources and based on verifiable information.
1	1 - Professional staff members rarely suggest and provide information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process or support learners' personal interests. These information resources and materials are rarely selected from credible sources or may not be based on verifiable information.

#### Standard 15

**Learners' needs drive the equitable allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources.**

YOUR RATING  
 ★★☆☆  
 Network Average: 3.0

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Professional staff members engage in a systematic process to analyze learners' needs and current trend data to adjust the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources to ensure equity for learning. Adjustments to resource allocation are consistently based on current data at any point in time.
3	3 - Professional staff members routinely analyze learners' needs and current trend data to adjust the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources to ensure equity for learning. Adjustments to resource allocation are routinely based on current data and at predetermined points in time.
2	2 - Professional staff members sometimes analyze learners' needs and current trend data to adjust the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources to ensure equity for learning. Adjustments to resource allocation are sometimes based on current or updated data.
1	1 - Professional staff members rarely analyze learners' needs and trend data to adjust the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources. Resources are rarely allocated in alignment with documented learners' needs or to ensure equity for learning.

#### Network Comparison for Leadership for Learning Standards





## Engagement of Learning Standards

A good institution ensures that learners are engaged in the learning environment. Learners who are engaged in the learning environment participate with confidence and display agency over their own learning. A good institution adopts policies and engages in practices that support all learners being included in the learning process.

### Keys to Engagement of Learning

Engagement is demonstrated when all learners:

- Are included in the learning process
- Participate with confidence
- Have agency over their learning

#### Standard 16

**Learners experience curriculum and instruction that emphasize the value of diverse cultures, backgrounds, and abilities.**

YOUR RATING  
★★★★☆  
Network Average: 2.9

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
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4	4 - Respect for the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is embedded in every aspect of the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are authentically integrated in the curricular content and instructional practices.
3	3 - Respect for the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is clearly present in the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are intentionally included in the curricular content and instructional practices.
2	2 - Respect for the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is somewhat present in the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are inconsistently included in the curricular content and instructional practices.
1	1 - Respect for the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is rarely present in the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are not included in the curricular content and instructional practices.

#### Standard 17

**Learners have equitable opportunities to realize their learning potential.**

YOUR RATING  
★★★★☆  
Network Average: 3.0

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
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4	4 - Professional staff members develop relationships with and understand the needs and well-being of individual learners. Academic and non-academic experiences are tailored to the needs and well-being of individual learners. Learners are challenged and supported to strive towards maximal levels of achievement and self-efficacy without barriers or hindrances by schedules or access to academic and non-academic offerings.
3	3 - Professional staff members know their learners well enough to develop and provide a variety of academic and non-academic experiences. Learners have access and choice in most academic and non-academic

opportunities available according to grade levels or through expected sequencing of courses. Learners rarely encounter barriers when accessing academic and non-academic experiences most suited to their individual needs and well-being. Learners are challenged and supported to strive towards individual achievement and self-efficacy.

2 - Professional staff members give consideration to varying learner needs and well-being when developing and providing academic and non-academic experiences. Learners have access to some variety in academic and non-academic opportunities available according to grade levels or through expected sequencing of courses. Learners may encounter barriers when accessing some academic and non-academic experiences most suited to their individual needs and well-being. Learners are sometimes challenged and supported to strive towards individual achievement and self-efficacy.

1 - Professional staff members give little or no consideration to individual learner needs and well-being when developing and providing academic and non-academic experiences. Academic and non-academic opportunities are limited and standardized according to grade levels or a predetermined sequencing of courses. Learners frequently encounter a variety of barriers when accessing academic and non-academic offerings that would be well suited to their individual needs and well-being. Learners are rarely challenged to strive towards individual achievement and self-efficacy.

## Standard 18

**Learners are immersed in an environment that fosters lifelong skills including creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.**

YOUR RATING



Network Average: 2.9

### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

4 - Conditions across all aspects of the institution promote learners' lifelong skills. Learners engage in ongoing experiences that develop the non-academic skills important for their next steps in learning and for future success. A formal structure ensures that learning experiences collectively build skills in creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.

3 - Conditions within most aspects of the institution promote learners' lifelong skills. Learners engage in experiences that develop the non-academic skills important for their next steps in learning and for future success. Collectively, the learning experiences build skills in creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.

2 - Conditions within some aspects of the institution promote learners' lifelong skills. Learners engage in some experiences that develop non-academic skills important for their next steps in learning and for future success. Some learning experiences build skills in creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.

1 - Learners engage in environments that focus primarily on academic learning objectives only. Little or no emphasis is placed on non-academic skills important for next steps in learning and for future success. Learning experiences rarely build skills in creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, or design thinking.

## Standard 19

**Learners are immersed in an environment that promotes and respects student voice and responsibility for their learning.**

YOUR RATING  
  
 Network Average: 2.6

### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

4	4 - Conditions across all aspects of the institution promote learners' active discovery and expression of their needs and interests. Learners give input into the instructional and learning activities they pursue and the methods in which they learn. Learners consistently identify their learning targets and monitor their progress.
3	3 - Conditions within most aspects of the institution are learner-centered and promote learners' active discovery and expression of their needs and interests. Learners give input into most of the instructional and learning activities available to them. Learners are frequently involved in identifying their learning targets and monitoring their progress.
2	2 - Conditions within some aspects of the institution are learner-centered and promote learners' active discovery and expression of their needs and interests. Learners have some opportunity for input into the instructional and learning activities available to them. Learners are sometimes involved in identifying their learning targets and monitoring their progress.
1	1 - Learners engage in environments that are heavily instructor-centered. Learners have little or no input into the instructional and learning activities available to them. Learners are rarely expected to monitor their learning progress.

## Standard 20

**Learners engage in experiences that promote and develop their self-confidence and love of learning.**

YOUR RATING  
  
 Network Average: 2.9

### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

4	4 - Learners consistently pursue challenging opportunities that may not always result in success, knowing that they will be supported when needed. Learners readily and consistently show motivation, curiosity, and excitement about their learning.
3	3 - Most learners pursue opportunities that may not always result in success, knowing they will be supported. Most learners show motivation, curiosity, and excitement about their learning.
2	2 - Some learners pursue opportunities that may not always result in success, but only with significant, individual support. Some learners show motivation, curiosity, and excitement about their learning.
1	1 - Most learners primarily pursue opportunities they believe to be risk-free or heavily guaranteed to be successful. Most learners show little motivation, curiosity, or excitement about their learning.

## Standard 21

**Instruction is characterized by high expectations and learner-centered practices.**

YOUR RATING  
  
 Network Average: 2.8

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Learners engage in instructional activities, experiences, and interactions based on their individual needs and interests. Professional staff members consistently deliver instruction designed for learners to reach their potential.
3	3 - Most learners engage in instructional activities, experiences, and interactions based on their individual needs and interests. Professional staff members routinely deliver instruction designed for learners to reach their potential.
2	2 - Learners engage in instructional activities, experiences, and interactions based on needs and interests typical of most students. Professional staff members infrequently deliver instruction designed for learners to reach their potential.
1	1 - Instructional activities are primarily designed around curriculum objectives with little or no focus on learner needs and interests. Professional staff members rarely deliver instruction designed for learners to reach their individual potential.

## Standard 22

**Instruction is monitored and adjusted to advance and deepen individual learners' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.**

YOUR RATING  
  
 Network Average: 2.7

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
4	4 - Professional staff members consistently monitor and adjust instruction based on each learner's response to instruction and achievement of desired learning targets. Professional staff members use a formal, systematic process for analyzing trend and current data to deepen each learner's understanding of content at increasing levels of complexity.
3	3 - Professional staff members regularly monitor and adjust instruction based on each learner's response to instruction and achievement of desired learning targets. Professional staff members routinely analyze trend and current data to deepen each learner's understanding of content.
2	2 - Professional staff members sometimes monitor and adjust instruction based on each learner's achievement of desired learning targets. Professional staff members sometimes analyze data to deepen each learner's understanding of content.
1	1 - Professional staff members rarely monitor and adjust instruction. Professional staff members rarely analyze data to deepen each learner's understanding of content.

**Professional staff members integrate digital resources that deepen and advance learners' engagement with instruction and stimulate their curiosity.**

YOUR RATING  
 ★★☆☆  
 Network Average: 2.8

LEVEL DESCRIPTION

4	4 - Professional staff members seamlessly and deliberately integrate digital resources that add value to the learning process and encourage learners' active engagement in the learning process. Digital resources consistently support learners' pursuit of interests and deepen or extend curriculum topics to stimulate learners' curiosity.
3	3 - Professional staff members intentionally select and integrate digital resources that add value to the learning process and encourage learners' active engagement in the learning process. Digital resources routinely support learners' pursuit of interests and deepen or extend curriculum topics to stimulate learners' curiosity.
2	2 - Professional staff members occasionally select and integrate digital resources that add value to the learning process or encourage learners' active engagement in the learning process. Digital resources sometimes support learners' pursuit of interests and deepen or extend curriculum topics to stimulate learners' curiosity.
1	1 - Professional staff members select and integrate few or no digital resources or select digital resources that rarely add value to the learning process or encourage learners' active engagement in the learning process. Digital resources rarely support learners' pursuit of interests or deepen or extend curriculum topics to stimulate learners' curiosity.

Network Comparison for Engagement of Learning Standards



## Growth in Learning Standards

A good institution positively impacts learners throughout their journey of learning. A positive impact on the learner is reflected in readiness to engage in and preparedness for the next transition in their learning. Growth in learning is also reflected in learners' ability to meet expectations in knowledge and skill acquisition.

### Keys to Growth in Learning

Growth is evident when:

- Learners possess non-academic skills that ensure readiness to learn
- Learners' academic achievement reflects preparedness to learn
- Learners attain knowledge and skills necessary to achieve goals for learning

## Standard 24

**Leaders use data and input from a variety of sources to make decisions for learners' and staff members' growth and well-being.**

YOUR RATING  
★★★★  
Network Average: 2.9

### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

4	4 - Leaders consistently demonstrate skill and insight in considering a variety of information, choosing relevant and timely information, and interpreting data. Leaders make intentional decisions by consistently taking into account data and additional factors that have an impact on learners and staff members such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.
3	3 - Leaders regularly demonstrate skill and insight in considering a variety of information, choosing relevant and timely information, and interpreting data. Leaders make decisions by routinely taking into account data and additional factors that have an impact on learners and staff members such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.
2	2 - Leaders sometimes demonstrate skill and insight in considering and choosing information and interpreting data. Leaders make decisions that occasionally take into account data and additional factors that have an impact on learners and staff members such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.
1	1 - Leaders rarely demonstrate skill and insight in considering and choosing information and interpreting data. Leaders make decisions that rarely take into account data and additional factors that have an impact on learners and staff members such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.

## Standard 25

**Leaders promote action research by professional staff members to improve their practice and advance learning.**

YOUR RATING  
★★★★★  
Network Average: 2.5

### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

4	4 - Leaders intentionally create and preserve a culture that invites inquiry, reflection, and dialogue about instructional problems and issues relevant to the institution and/or individual learning environments. Professional staff members, as a group or as individuals, consistently engage in action research using an inquiry-based process that includes identifying instructional areas of improvement, collecting data, and reporting results to make informed instructional changes. Leaders provide and engage in learning opportunities customized for professional staff members about action research.
3	3 - Leaders regularly create and preserve a culture that invites inquiry, reflection, and dialogue about instructional problems and issues relevant to the institution and/or individual learning environments. Professional staff members, as a group or as individuals, routinely engage in action research using an inquiry-based process that includes identifying instructional areas of improvement, collecting data, and reporting results to make informed instructional changes. Leaders provide and engage in learning opportunities for professional staff members to implement action research.
2	2 - Leaders occasionally create and preserve a culture that invites inquiry, reflection, and dialogue about instructional problems and issues relevant to the institution and/or individual learning environments. Professional staff members, as a group or as individuals, sometimes engage in action research using an inquiry-based process that includes identifying instructional areas of improvement, collecting data, and reporting results to make informed instructional changes. Leaders provide and engage in some learning opportunities for professional staff members to implement action research.

- 1 1 - Leaders rarely create a culture that invites inquiry, reflection, and dialogue about instructional problems and issues relevant to the institution or learning environments. Professional staff members seldom engage in action research to make informed instructional changes. Leaders provide and engage in few or no learning opportunities for professional staff members about action research.

## Standard 26

**Leaders regularly evaluate instructional programs and organizational conditions to improve instruction and advance learning.**

YOUR RATING  
  
 Network Average: 2.7

### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

- 4 4 - Leaders consistently implement a documented process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders use a formal, systematic process for analyzing current and trend data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.
- 3 3 - Leaders routinely implement a documented process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders use analyzed current and trend data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.
- 2 2 - Leaders occasionally implement a process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders sometimes use data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.
- 1 1 - Leaders rarely implement a process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders seldom use data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.

## Standard 27

**Learners' diverse academic and non-academic needs are identified and effectively addressed through appropriate interventions.**

YOUR RATING  
  
 Network Average: 2.9

### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

- 4 4 - The institution consistently addresses the range of developmental, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs to support learners' ability to learn. Strategies and interventions for these needs are formally and systematically planned and implemented based on analyzed information, data, and instructional best practices to ensure learners' success.
- 3 3 - The institution routinely addresses the range of developmental, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs to support learners' ability to learn. Strategies and interventions for these needs are regularly planned and implemented based on analyzed information, data, and instructional best practices to ensure learners' success.
- 2 2 - The institution sometimes addresses the range of developmental, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs to support learners' ability to learn. Strategies and interventions for these needs are occasionally planned and implemented based on information, data, and instructional best practices to ensure learners' success.

- 1 1 - The institution rarely addresses the range of developmental, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs to support learners' ability to learn. Strategies and interventions for these needs are seldom planned and implemented based on information, data, or instructional best practices.

## Standard 28

**With support, learners pursue individual goals including the acquisition of academic and non-academic skills important for their educational futures and careers.**

YOUR RATING



Network Average: 2.9

### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

- 4 4 - Professional staff members consistently engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential and to identify meaningful, attainable goals that support academic, career, personal, and social skills. Learners consistently choose activities and monitor their own progress, demonstrating active ownership of their stated goals.
- 3 3 - Professional staff members regularly engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential and to identify meaningful, attainable goals that support academic, career, personal, and social skills. Learners routinely choose activities and monitor their own progress, demonstrating active ownership of their stated goals.
- 2 2 - Professional staff members sometimes engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential and to identify meaningful, attainable goals that support academic, career, personal, and social skills. Learners occasionally choose activities and monitor their own progress, demonstrating active ownership of their stated goals.
- 1 1 - Professional staff members rarely engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential and to identify meaningful, attainable goals that support academic, career, personal, and social skills. Learners do not choose activities or monitor their own progress toward goals.

## Standard 29

**Understanding learners' needs and interests drives the design, delivery, application, and evaluation of professional learning.**

YOUR RATING



Network Average: 2.6

### LEVEL DESCRIPTION

- 4 4 - Professional learning is learner-centered, customized around the needs of individual or groups of professional staff members, and focuses on improving pedagogical skills and knowledge to better address learners' needs and interests. A documented process to select, deliver, implement, and evaluate professional learning is being fully implemented and monitored for fidelity.
- 3 3 - Professional learning is learner-centered, designed around the principle that professional staff members need opportunities to focus on improving pedagogical skills and knowledge to better address learners' needs and interests. A documented process to select, deliver, implement, and evaluate professional learning is being fully implemented.
- 2 2 - Professional learning is occasionally learner-centered, designed around the principle that professional staff members need opportunities to focus on improving pedagogical skills and knowledge to better address learners' needs and interests. A documented process to select, deliver, implement, and evaluate professional learning exists but is not fully implemented.



- 
- 1 1 - Professional learning is rarely learner-centered and may or may not focus on improving pedagogical skills and knowledge to better address learners' needs and interests. A documented process to select, deliver, implement, and evaluate professional learning does not exist.
- 

Standard 30

**Learners' progress is measured through a balanced system that includes assessment both for learning and of learning.**

YOUR RATING



Network Average: 2.8

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LEVEL DESCRIPTION

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- 4 4 - Professional staff members and learners collaborate to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives based on assessment data gathered through formal and informal methods. Assessment data are systematically used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.
- 
- 3 3 - Professional staff members and learners regularly use assessment data gathered through formal and informal methods to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives. Assessment data are routinely used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.
- 
- 2 2 - Professional staff members occasionally use assessment data gathered through formal and informal methods to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives. Assessment data are sometimes used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.
- 
- 1 1 - Professional staff members seldom use assessment data to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives. Assessment data are rarely or inconsistently used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.
- 

Network Comparison for Growth in Learning Standards

Your Institution

3.3

Cognia Network Avg.

2.8

# Insights from the Review

The evaluators engaged in professional discussions and deliberations about the effectiveness of the processes, programs, and practices within the institution to arrive at the findings of the report. Guided by evidence, the evaluators arrived at findings that will inform your institution's continuous improvement efforts. The findings are aligned to research-based criteria designed to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness.

The findings are organized into narratives around four Key Characteristics critical to the success of any educational institution: culture of learning, leadership for learning, engagement of learning, and growth in learning. The narratives also provide the next steps to guide your institution's improvement journey in its efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities for all learners. The feedback provided in this Accreditation Engagement Review Report will assist your institution in reflecting on its current improvement efforts and adapting and adjusting your plans to continuously strive for improvement.

## Culture of Learning

**Professional staff embrace collegiality to support learners' growth and well-being.** The district identified the need to reset professional learning communities (PLCs) post-Covid, in 2021. At that time, there was a strategic effort to involve all stakeholders in the process of receiving feedback to craft the district's mission, vision, value statements, and strategic planning goals. Analyzed stakeholder feedback from the board of education, the superintendent's executive cabinet, leaders, and others were leveraged to collaboratively set the future-focused vision for the district. Evidence in the Accreditation Portfolio included the district's mission to produce high achievement for all through continuous growth. The narrative summary highlighted the district's opening staff session to kick off the 2022-23 school year wherein the superintendent unveiled Houston County's new direction and strategic plan. The Executive Summary showcased the district's current strategic plan which spans 2023-28 and addresses student achievement, operations, learning, and growth. As part of the plan, mid-year reporting occurs to measure impact through a review of plans, actions, and outcomes. Leaders establish a culture that encourages active participation of stakeholders to support learners. Houston County Schools host leadership summits for certified and classified staff.

The purpose of the summits is to improve student achievement outcomes and organizational effectiveness. Collaboration with school leaders and leadership teams is part of the certified staff experience. The narrative explained the importance of including classified staff in the summits. The district is seeking to build capacity and foster collaboration in areas such as transportation, school nutrition, and maintenance, for example. This work supports the retention of highly qualified staff and aligns with the strategic plan submitted into evidence in the Accreditation Portfolio. Steps 9 and 10 of the plan outline the district's focus on retaining classified and certified staff. Houston County Schools shared that the purpose of the summits is to support the development of innovative practices and to encourage active leadership to collaboratively shape the future of the district. Professional staff collaborate to learn from one another to advance the system's priorities. The district began implementation of professional learning communities (PLCs) in 2017. The narrative outlined the district's commitment to focus on learning, having a collaborative culture with collective responsibility, and being results oriented. The district shared its collective commitments are the foundation for the work they engage in and are reviewed and revised each year if needed. Updates are driven by data as well as state and/or district initiatives. The organization has committed to the investment by identifying content cadre leaders in each school to encourage peer learning and collaboration. In April 2023, Houston County Schools was named a Solution Tree Model PLC at Work district. Leaders shared that PLCs are not an event but a process that is embedded in the district's culture. Additionally, the process allows the district to leverage its strategic improvement plan, have a district-wide common language for professional learning, and ensure alignment between actions and the mission and vision. The review team suggests Houston County Schools share its successful model with other school systems to support collaboration and growth beyond the district to support continuous growth.

## Leadership for Learning

**The organization fosters leadership development to support continuous improvement.** Houston County Schools developed the LEADing-Edge program to build professional capacity of school and district leaders. This systemwide training occurs 4-5 times per year and is grounded in its strategic plan goals. The program includes topics of learning such



as human resources, student achievement data, and instructional practices. A LEADing-Edge program presentation was provided as evidence and highlighted a variety of topics that participants learned about. This included Georgia's College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI), the system's strategic plan and balanced scorecard, Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot®) data and strategies, and the Cognia Self-Assessment. To ensure consistent messaging, accessibility, and attendance by all, multiple sessions are offered to participants. The district shared several positive impacts of the program including developing leaders and their ability to lead quality professional learning and conversations about instruction and data-driven decisions. It is the expectation of Houston County Schools that principals and assistant principals redeliver LEADing-Edge content to teachers. Leaders engage professional staff in practices that support stakeholders in the continuous improvement process. In 2013, the system created a leadership development program for aspiring assistant principals and principals. Since that time, the district began leveraging the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) to provide support for aspiring principals. The district has continued to host the aspiring assistant principal program, and they are currently supporting cohort 11. The superintendent's executive cabinet leads monthly sessions for participants and opportunities to shadow current assistant principals to engage future leaders in new learning. Evidence in the Accreditation Portfolio included sample communication with meeting topics and dates sent to all leadership participants. Leaders provide formal opportunities for leadership development to support the institution's priorities. September 2022 kicked off cohort 1 of the Houston County Teacher Leadership Academy. The program, currently in cohort 3, hosts one teacher leader per school, and 113 teachers have gone through the program to date. Information in the narrative highlighted the program's focus on teacher-leader standards developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium. In addition to monthly professional learning, participants engage in a capstone experience focused on a problem at their school location. The capstone is developed in collaboration with the principal to identify a problem and the implementation of an initiative aimed at solving that problem and improving outcomes. Evidence submitted included a leadership agenda with reflective notes referencing what actions should be taken to improve the program. The review team suggests the possible inclusion of aspiring assistant

principals in the collaborative leadership conversations specific to the action research capstone project.

## Engagement of Learning

**Learners engage in experiences that stimulate curiosity.** The College and Career Academy, which opened in 1999, serves all five high schools in the district. Students experience pathways in healthcare, education, welding, engineering, and more. Collaboration with industry partners to meet workforce needs is a centerpiece of the college and career academy model. Robins Airforce Base supports Project Synergy which offers internships that give students the ability to learn under software engineers and scientists. A partnership with Frito-Lay supports the development of an industrial maintenance skilled workforce through an apprenticeship program. College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) data reveals Houston County's pathway completions increased by 4.16 points compared to the state's increase of 1.19 points. Data highlighting a consistent increase in career, technical, and agricultural education (CTAE) pathway completers since 2022 was provided to the review team. The data reflects 691 completers in Fiscal Year 2022, 696 in 2023, and 1,006 in 2024. Learning experiences build skills in curiosity and design thinking to support students' future success. In the fall of 2024, Houston County started the Accelerated Scholars program for advanced high school learners. With an advanced focus on math and science, learners benefit from rigorous coursework, college preparedness, and personalized instruction. Eighty-five students currently participate in the program taking courses such as Advanced Placement (AP) calculus, Honors Advanced Algebra/AP Pre-Calculus, and AP Physics I and II. Program expansion for 2025-26 is already underway with additional course sections added. The district shared the overwhelmingly positive response from staff, students, parents, and families. Recently, the district received an e-mail communication from a parent who stated, "My son just found out he got into Georgia Tech and is on cloud nine. He attributes much of it to being able to be in the advanced classes and being able to outline that he was taking both physics and calculus classes this year. I believe that was one of the goals of the program; to assist students with getting into top colleges." An informational video, posted on the district website and hosted by system leaders, explains the impetus for the program, information about course offerings, and the benefits of participation. Learners engage in experiences to support learning for future success.

The Learning Management System (LMS), Canvas, is utilized to deliver content and facilitate collaboration in learning. Digital tools such as i-Ready and IXL are used to provide personalized learning experiences to students. The district employs curriculum integration specialists to collaborate with teachers on the effective implementation of technology in the classroom. Through its analysis of data, the district identified a theory of action to strategically utilize digital tools to enhance student engagement in classrooms. The review team encourages the system to implement professional learning to leverage technology resources to add value to learning and engage students.

### **Growth in Learning**

**Leaders leverage a balanced assessment system to make decisions to support learners.** The district systematically collects, analyzes, and utilizes data to make decisions about teaching and learning. Houston County utilizes a balanced scorecard model for system and school reporting. Balanced scorecards were developed to track and monitor assessment data to determine progress toward identified goals and to inform next action step planning. The district uses the Strategic Measures of System Success (SMoSS), and schools use the Strategic Measures of Student Success (SMoSS) for their data collection and analysis process. Growth targets are incorporated in the system and school scorecards. Data from classroom observations, attendance, surveys, and student achievement data are used to inform progress toward goals. Leaders gather a variety of data to determine learners' progress and the district's achievement toward identified goals. Houston County's district and school effectiveness team created data dashboards for internal stakeholder use. Administrators, school counselors, and teachers use dashboards to access academic and non-academic data such as demographics, behavior, attendance, and performance assessments. The data dashboards are utilized to identify specific areas of student need and potential patterns to make strategic decisions. The training of staff has occurred to support how information can be used to make data-informed decisions. The effort also supports the implementation of interventions. Professional staff consider a variety of information when making decisions to support learners. The district leverages universal screening for all students to determine intervention needs. Teams of educators support Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), and the system has an established process for Response to Intervention (RTI), if students do not respond adequately to MTSS interventions. Examples

of interventions across the district include areas such as reading, math, and behavior. According to the narrative, personalized interventions are based on the identification of students' individual learning gaps. Targeted instruction supports growth. The district has many areas of identified positive growth and achievement; however, achievement gaps in subgroups were noted as part of the student performance analysis. The review team encourages the system to conduct further data analysis of subgroups specific to MTSS and RTI interventions to determine their impact.

# Summary of Findings

The review process focused on establishing evidence of effective practice and performance of the institution in relation to the accreditation standards.

## Noteworthy Practices

In conducting the review, the evaluator identified Noteworthy Practices that reflect significant areas of strength in the work of the institution. Although there are numerous examples of the institution's level of quality, the recognition of Noteworthy Practices reflects the greatest strengths of the institution.

- 1

**The school system has been committed to the implementation of professional learning communities since 2017, actively involving stakeholders who embrace collegiality and collaboration in support of learners. The district’s collective commitment to learning and evidence of improvement in student learning resulted in the organization being named a Solution Tree Model PLC at Work district in 2023.**

Standard 3

Standard 5
- 2

**For more than 10 years, Houston County Schools has consistently and actively encouraged leadership potential among stakeholders through their leadership development programs for teacher leaders, aspiring assistant principals, and principals. The district’s focus on building capacity has resulted in 113 teacher leader academy participants and 111 leadership development participants with 56 being promoted to a school or district-level leadership role.**

Standard 9

## Areas for Improvement

Using the information collected and reviewed, the evaluator identified the following Areas for Improvement that will help the institution improve. The Areas for Improvement will be revisited when the institution conducts Cognia's Progress Report.

- 1

**Design and implement professional learning on ways to leverage technology tools to enhance learning.**

Standard 23
- RATIONALE

If teachers engage in professional learning to effectively leverage technology tools in instruction, then active engagement may extend learning experiences.



# Accreditation Status and Index of Education Quality®

Cognia will review the results of the Accreditation Engagement Review to make a final determination concerning the accreditation status of your institution based on these findings. Cognia provides the Index of Education Quality (IEQ) as a holistic measure of overall performance.

Your Institution's IEQ	SCORE	DESCRIPTION
<b>338</b>	<b>Below 220</b>	An IEQ score below 220 indicates that the institution has several Areas for Improvement and should focus their improvement efforts on those areas and the related Standards and/or Assurances. The institution will be required to present evidence of improvement to Cognia within one year through a Progress Monitoring Review. Additional Progress Reports may be required if satisfactory improvement is not achieved.
Cognia's IEQ Network Average: <b>296</b>	<b>220 - 300</b>	An IEQ in the range of 220-300 suggests the institution has some Areas for Improvement and may include one or more Noteworthy Practices. Institutions must address the Areas for Improvement and provide evidence of actions taken and results to Cognia in a required Progress Report due three years following the review. Additional progress monitoring may be required if satisfactory improvement is not achieved.
	<b>Above 300</b>	An IEQ above 300 indicates the institution meets Cognia's expectations for accreditation that include one or more Areas for Improvement and may include one or more Noteworthy Practices. Institutions must address the Areas for Improvement and provide evidence of actions taken and results to Cognia in a required Progress Report due three years following the review. Additional progress monitoring may be required if satisfactory progress is not achieved.

## Your Next Steps

Accreditation is a continuous improvement process. The Engagement Review provides independent, objective guidance in relation to the Performance Standards and the institution's improvement journey. Upon receiving the Accreditation Engagement Review Report, the institution is expected to implement the following steps:

- Review and share the findings in this report with stakeholders.
- Use the findings from the report to guide and strengthen your institution's improvement efforts.
- Celebrate the successes noted in the report.
- Continue the improvement journey.
- Report to Cognia on your progress toward improvement.





# Evaluator Roster

The Engagement Review is conducted by professionals with varied backgrounds and professional experiences. All evaluators complete Cognia training and elect certification to ensure knowledge and understanding of the Cognia tools and processes. The following professional(s) served on the Engagement Review:

EVALUATOR NAME	BRIEF BIOGRAPHY
Jennifer Hernandez Lead Evaluator	Dr. Jennifer Hernandez serves as the executive director of academic achievement for a K-12 public school system. In this role, she leads a team that supports all aspects of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and technology. Additionally, she is an adjunct professor and leadership coach with Thomas University working with graduate students seeking Tier I Leadership Certification. During her tenure as principal, Dr. Hernandez’s school received multiple recognitions that include being named the first Georgia STEM-certified school, a Georgia School of Excellence, and a National Blue Ribbon School. The International Association of STEM Leaders recognized her as an Elementary Principal of the Year, and she was featured in the National Association of Elementary School Principals magazine for her work leading the arts in STEM. Dr. Hernandez is a graduate of Old Dominion University where she earned a bachelor’s degree in interdisciplinary studies and a master’s degree in education. She completed her educational specialist degree in administration and supervision and educational doctorate in leadership and management. As a Cognia regional accreditation evaluator, Dr. Hernandez values the opportunity to support institutions on their journey toward continuous improvement.
Travis Nesmith	



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