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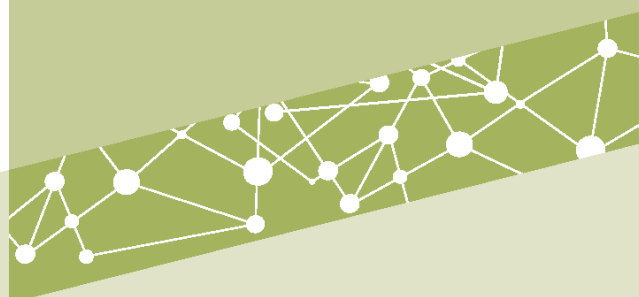
AdvancED®
Engagement
Review Report

AdvancED® Performance Accreditation

Results for:

Parkston School District
Parkston South Dakota

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Introduction

AdvancED Performance Accreditation and the Engagement Review

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 AdvancED Accreditation Process, highly skilled and trained Engagement Review Teams gather first-hand evidence and information pertinent to evaluating an institution's performance against the research-based AdvancED Performance Standards. Using these Standards, Engagement Review Teams assess the quality of learning environments to gain valuable insights and target improvements in teaching and learning. AdvancED provides Standards that are tailored for all education providers so that the benefits of accreditation are universal across the education community.

Through a comprehensive review of evidence and information, our experts gain a broad understanding of institution quality. Using the Standards, the review team provides valuable feedback to institutions that helps to focus and guide each institution's improvement journey. Valuable evidence and information from other stakeholders, including students, also is obtained through interviews, surveys and additional activities.

As a part of the Engagement Review, stakeholders were interviewed by members of the Engagement Review Team to gain their perspectives on topics relevant to the institution's learning environment and organizational effectiveness. The feedback gained through the stakeholder interviews was considered with other evidences and data to support the findings of the Engagement Review. The following chart depicts the numbers of persons interviewed representative of various stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder Groups	Number
Superintendent	1
Administrators	2
Teachers	11
Support Staff	3
Students	14
Parents/Community members	9
Total	**40**

Once all of the information is compiled and reviewed, the team develops the Engagement Review Report and presents preliminary results to the institution. Results from the Engagement Review are reported in four ratings represented by colors. These ratings provide guidance and insight into an institution's continuous improvement efforts as described below:

Color	Rating	Description
Red	Needs Improvement	Identifies key areas that need more focused improvement efforts
Yellow	Emerging	Represents areas to enhance and extend current improvement efforts
Green	Meets Expectations	Pinpoints quality practices that meet the Standards
Blue	Exceeds Expectations	Demonstrates noteworthy practices producing clear results that exceed expectations

AdvancED Continuous Improvement System

The AdvancED Continuous Improvement System (CIS) provides a systemic fully integrated solution to help institutions map out and navigate a successful improvement journey. 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. AdvancED expects institutions to use the results and the analysis of data from various interwoven components for the implementation of improvement actions to drive education quality and improved student outcomes. While each improvement journey is unique, the journey is driven by key actions. AdvancED identifies three important components of a continuous improvement process and provides feedback on the components of the journey using a rubric that identifies the three areas to guide the improvement journey. The areas are as follows:

Commitment to Continuous Improvement	Rating
The institution has collected sufficient and quality data to identify school improvement needs.	Emerging
Implications from the analysis of data have been identified and used for the development of key strategic goals.	Emerging
The institution demonstrates the capacity to implement their continuous improvement journey.	Meets Expectations

Continuous Improvement Journey Narrative

The Engagement Review Team (Team) found a variety of evidence to indicate the school's commitment to continuous improvement. Statements made during stakeholder interviews, the leadership overview, a review of various artifacts and evidence, as well as formal and informal observations revealed that the school has established an emerging process for and commitment to continuous improvement. While presenting the leadership overview, the high school principal and the elementary principal provided a report of the current status of the school district's improvement journey. However, teachers, students and parents indicated that there has been limited sharing of the school's continuous improvement journey with the stakeholders in the community. They further stated little to no involvement of community or parent groups assisting in improvement planning, including the vision, mission and belief statements has occurred.

A review of numerous artifacts and evidences revealed that the school has gathered and analyzed data to identify areas for improvement. The Team was able to review multiple sources of data relative to the continuous improvement journey. This included internal and external stakeholder surveys, meeting minutes, school board meeting minutes, as well as various additional artifacts. Other data reviewed included student achievement, enrollment trends, promotion and retention rates, attendance, graduation and dropout rates, behavior, personnel and financial data.

Internally, the school has begun to move forward in its continuous improvement journey through the development and implementation of plans to meet the target areas of a school-wide strategic plan. The Team does believe that as the school continues on its continuous improvement journey and reaches out more fully to the community and parents for input and support, they can reach their goal "To empower all to succeed in a changing world."

AdvancED Standards Diagnostic Results

The AdvancED Performance Standards Diagnostic is used by the Engagement Review Team to evaluate the institution's effectiveness based on AdvancED's Performance Standards. The diagnostic consists of three components built around each of the three Domains: **Leadership Capacity**, **Learning Capacity** and **Resource Capacity**. Point values are established within the diagnostic and a percentage of the points earned by the

institution for each Standard is calculated from the point values for each Standard. Results are reported within four ranges identified by the colors representing Needs Improvement (Red), Emerging (Yellow), Meets Expectations (Green), Exceeds Expectations (Blue). The results for the three Domains are presented in the tables that follow.

Leadership Capacity Domain

The capacity of leadership to ensure an institution's progress toward its stated objectives is an essential element of organizational effectiveness. An institution's leadership capacity includes the fidelity and commitment to its purpose and direction; the effectiveness of governance and leadership to enable the institution to realize its stated objectives; the ability to engage and involve stakeholders in meaningful and productive ways; and the capacity to implement strategies that improve learner and educator performance.

Leadership Capacity Standards		Rating
1.1	The institution commits to a purpose statement that defines beliefs about teaching and learning including the expectations for learners.	Emerging
1.2	Stakeholders collectively demonstrate actions to ensure the achievement of the institution's purpose and desired outcomes for learners.	Emerging
1.3	The institution engages in a continuous improvement process that produces evidence, including measurable results of improving student learning and professional practice.	Emerging
1.4	The governing authority establishes and ensures adherence to policies that are designed to support institutional effectiveness.	Meets Expectations
1.5	The governing authority adheres to a code of ethics and functions within defined roles and responsibilities.	Meets Expectations
1.6	Leaders implement staff supervision and evaluation processes to improve professional practice and organizational effectiveness.	Exceeds Expectations
1.7	Leaders implement operational process and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness in support of teaching and learning.	Exceeds Expectations
1.8	Leaders engage stakeholders to support the achievement of the institution's purpose and direction.	Meets Expectations
1.9	The institution provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness.	Meets Expectations
1.10	Leaders collect and analyze a range of feedback data from multiple stakeholder groups to inform decision-making that results in improvement.	Emerging

Learning Capacity Domain

The impact of teaching and learning on student achievement and success is the primary expectation of every institution. An effective learning culture is characterized by positive and productive teacher/learner relationships; high expectations and standards; a challenging and engaging curriculum; quality instruction and comprehensive support that enable all learners to be successful; and assessment practices (formative and summative) that monitor and measure learner progress and achievement. Moreover, a quality institution evaluates the impact of its learning culture, including all programs and support services, and adjusts accordingly.

Learning Capacity Standards	Rating

Learning Capacity Standards		Rating
2.1	Learners have equitable opportunities to develop skills and achieve the content and learning priorities established by the institution.	Meets Expectations
2.2	The learning culture promotes creativity, innovation and collaborative problem-solving.	Emerging
2.3	The learning culture develops learners' attitudes, beliefs and skills needed for success.	Meets Expectations
2.4	The institution has a formal structure to ensure learners develop positive relationships with and have adults/peers who support their educational experiences.	Meets Expectations
2.5	Educators implement a curriculum that is based on high expectations and prepares learners for their next levels.	Meets Expectations
2.6	The institution implements a process to ensure the curriculum is aligned to standards and best practices.	Emerging
2.7	Instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learners' needs and the institution's learning expectations.	Exceeds Expectations
2.8	The institution provides programs and services for learners' educational futures and career planning.	Exceeds Expectations
2.9	The institution implements, evaluates, and monitors processes to identify and address the specialized social, emotional, developmental, and academic needs of students.	Exceeds Expectations
2.10	Learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated.	Meets Expectations
2.11	Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to demonstrable improvement of student learning.	Emerging
2.12	The institution implements a process to continuously assess its programs and organizational conditions to improve student learning.	Meets Expectations

Resource Capacity Domain

The use and distribution of resources support the stated mission of the institution. Institutions ensure that resources are distributed and utilized equitably so that the needs of all learners are adequately and effectively addressed. The utilization of resources includes support for professional learning for all staff. The institution examines the allocation and use of resources to ensure appropriate levels of funding, sustainability, organizational effectiveness, and increased student learning.

Resource Capacity Standards		Rating
3.1	The institution plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the institution's effectiveness.	Meets Expectations
3.2	The institution's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.	Needs Improvement
3.3	The institution provides induction, mentoring, and coaching programs that ensure all staff members have the knowledge and skills to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.	Emerging
3.4	The institution attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the institution's purpose and direction	Meets Expectations

Resource Capacity Standards		Rating
3.5	The institution integrates digital resources into teaching, learning, and operations to improve professional practice, student performance, and organizational effectiveness.	Meets Expectations
3.6	The institution provides access to information resources and materials to support the curriculum, programs, and needs of students, staff, and the institution.	Meets Expectations
3.7	The institution demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning and use of resources in support of the institution's purpose and direction.	Emerging
3.8	The institution allocates human, material, and fiscal resources in alignment with the institution's identified needs and priorities to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.	Exceeds Expectations

Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®) Results

The eProve™ Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®) is a learner-centric classroom observation tool that comprises 28 items organized in seven environments aligned with the AdvancED Standards. The eleot provides useful, relevant, structured, and quantifiable data on the extent to which students are engaged in activities and/or demonstrate knowledge, attitudes, and/or dispositions that are conducive to effective learning. Classroom observations are conducted for a minimum of 20 minutes. Results from eleot are reported on a scale of one to four based on the degree and quality of the engagement.

eleot® Observations	
Total Number of eleot® Observations	
Environments	**Rating**
Equitable Learning Environment	2.95
Learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs	2.57
Learners have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support	3.24
Learners are treated in a fair, clear and consistent manner	3.62
Learners demonstrate and/or have opportunities to develop empathy/respect/appreciation for differences in abilities, aptitudes, backgrounds, cultures, and/or other human characteristics, conditions and dispositions	2.38
High Expectations Environment	2.88
Learners strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher	2.76
Learners engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	3.05
Learners demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work	2.81
Learners engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing)	2.86
Learners take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning	2.90
Supportive Learning Environment	3.37
Learners demonstrate a sense of community that is positive, cohesive, engaged, and purposeful	3.00
Learners take risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)	3.52
Learners are supported by the teacher, their peers and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks	3.43

eleot® Observations	
Total Number of eleot® Observations	
Environments	**Rating**
Learners demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher	3.52
Active Learning Environment	2.77
Learners' discussions/dialogues/exchanges with each other and the teacher predominate	2.81
Learners make connections from content to real-life experiences	2.81
Learners are actively engaged in the learning activities	3.29
Learners collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments	2.19
Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment	2.81
Learners monitor their own learning progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored	2.43
Learners receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work	3.05
Learners demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content	3.05
Learners understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed	2.71
Well-Managed Learning Environment	3.32
Learners speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other	3.62
Learners demonstrate knowledge of and/or follow classroom rules and behavioral expectations and work well with others	3.62
Learners transition smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another	2.71
Learners use class time purposefully with minimal wasted time or disruptions	3.33
Digital Learning Environment	1.30
Learners use digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning	1.38
Learners use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning	1.29
Learners use digital tools/technology to communicate and/or work collaboratively for learning	1.24

eleot® Narrative

The Engagement Review Team performed 21 walkthroughs utilizing the eleot® tool. Each classroom observation utilizing the eleot® tool was at least 20 minutes. The Engagement Review Team conducted informal observations in the library, hallways and several additional classrooms. The combined average score for the 7 learning environments was 2.83 on a 4.0 scale. Ratings from the observations ranged from a high of 3.37 on Supportive Learning Environment and 3.32 on Well-Managed Learning Environment to a low of 1.30 on Digital Learning Environment. Eleot® observations revealed a high level of support in classroom environments.

All stakeholder groups indicated teacher relationship and student engagement as strengths of the school. Interaction between students and teachers and students and students were highly respectful and classroom teachers were able to focus on instruction rather than managing problem behavior. Students appeared very comfortable answering questions and asking for assistance, and overall, teachers engaged students throughout the lessons. Some examples of eleot® observations conducted by the Parkston AdvancED team are noted here. Students understood the rules for working together, which were obviously structured by teachers in advance.
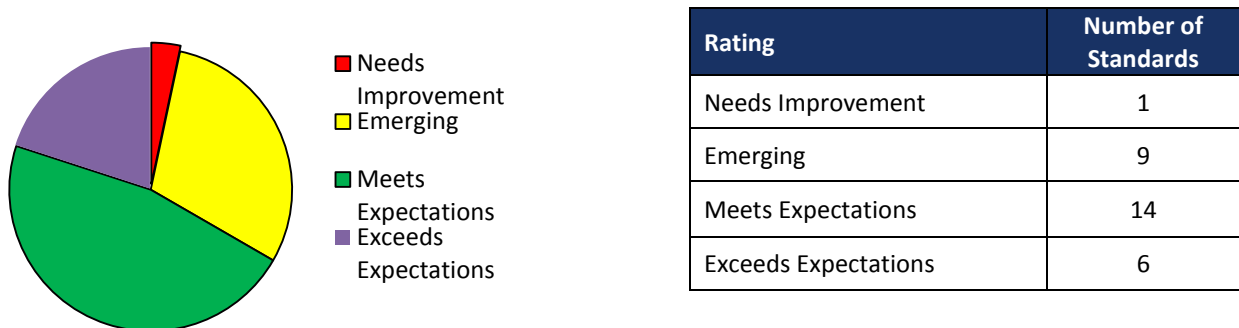
Teachers' clarity and communication of student expectations paved the way for student success. eleot observations conducted in the school classrooms found evidence of respectful interactions between teachers and students and highly supportive learning environments. During transitions it was evident that teachers, staff, and administration were using active supervision in the hallways with all students. Staff promoted conversation and

created a safe, friendly and open environment for students. Students at Parkston school were just as easy to talk to as the staff and they were often encouraged to engage in conversation with the Team. It is apparent that the school has created a culture of respectful, safe, and responsible students. Although the Team observed many strong instructional practices and high student engagement, there was less emphasis on rigor. Overall, however, the eleot observations indicate a highly positive, supportive learning environment for all students at the school.

Findings

The chart below provides an overview of the institution ratings across the three Domains.

Rating	Number of Standards
Needs Improvement	1
Emerging	9
Meets Expectations	14
Exceeds Expectations	6

Powerful Practices

Powerful Practices reflect noteworthy observations and actions that have yielded clear results in student achievement or organizational effectiveness and are actions that exceed what is typically observed or expected in an institution.

Powerful Practice #1
The Parkston School has instruction that is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learner's needs and the institution's expectations.
Primary Standard: 2.7

Evidence:
Through classroom observations, it was obvious that teachers had developed and implemented lessons that engaged the learners throughout their class time.   The Parkston School has high test scores in Smarter Balanced and ACT. These high scores indicate that learners have the opportunity to gain necessary knowledge and skills on an individual basis to meet the high expectations of the Parkston School and their stakeholders. Discussions with staff and parents revealed that the school is well aware of individual learners' strengths and weaknesses.   School staff will work with each learner to reach their potential and will communicate with individual learners' parents as needed.

Powerful Practice #2
The Parkston School implements, evaluates, and monitors processes to identify and address the specialized social, emotional, developmental, and academic needs of students.

Primary Standard: 2.9

Evidence:
The Parkston Elementary has a system in place to identify and assist students who might be struggling with their learning. The use of Teacher Assistance Team (TAT) ensures that each learner in the school will get the support

that is needed for their education. The Parkston High School students have opportunity to take AP and Dual Credit courses that will benefit their future beyond graduation. High School students also have opportunities to go out into the community and shadow jobs aligned with their interest. Local businesses are very supportive in welcoming these opportunities.   Students also have the opportunity to attend MCTEA. The Parkston School has high expectations for student behavior with the use of The Trojan Way. All staff are trained in Olweus anti-bullying program.   Through classroom observations it was evident that all students were well-mannered and treated each other and staff with respect.

Opportunities for Improvement

Opportunities for Improvement are those actions that will guide and direct institutions to specific areas that are worthy of additional attention.

Opportunity for Improvement #1
Develop and incorporate classroom practices using formative data to differentiate instruction for learners within each classroom.

Primary Standard: 2.11, 2.7

Evidence:
 eleot results indicated that differentiated learning opportunities or activities to meet the needs of individual learners within the scope of each classroom were not highly evident. Summative data is used as evidenced by classroom assessments and ACT scores along with teacher and administrator interviews.. However, formative data is not readily available for differentiated instruction in the classroom. These findings were also reflected in student interviews and surveys.

Improvement Priorities

Improvement priorities are developed to enhance the capacity of the institution to reach a higher level of performance and reflect the areas identified by the Engagement Review Team to have the greatest impact on improving student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Improvement Priority #1
Develop and Implement a systematic, inclusive and strategic plan for developing a professional learning structure that promotes collaboration to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.

Primary Standard: 3.2

Evidence:
A review of the artifacts, results from stakeholder surveys and comments during the interviews revealed that the organization does not a have a systematic process in place to provide time for staff to collaborate. The Engagement Review team determined that there is informal collaboration taking place, but no formal time for collaboration and professional growth. Additionally, staff is not given time to look for content support outside the district to be able to implement the latest best practices.

Accreditation Recommendation and Index of Educational Quality™ (IEQ™)

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

AdvancED provides the Index of Education Quality™ (IEQ™) as a holistic measure of overall performance based on a comprehensive set of standards and review criteria. A formative tool for improvement, it identifies areas of success as well as areas in need of focus. The IEQ is comprised of the Standards Diagnostic ratings from the three Domains: 1) Leadership Capacity; 2) Learning Capacity; and 3) Resource Capacity and the results of eleot classroom observations. The IEQ results are reported on a scale of 100 to 400 and provides information about how the institution is performing compared to expected criteria.

Institution IEQ	320.87

Conclusion Narrative

The Parkston School District has established a positive, caring culture while focusing on its mission statement "To empower all to succeed in a changing world." Students and teachers reported an appreciation for the support from administration and students and parents expressed pride in committed and passionate teachers. When asked about the best aspect of the school, nearly all parents responded "the teachers."

As a small school, many students and staff have known each other many years. Parkston is in the process of creating a culture of inclusion, however, students new to the school reported a feeling of being outsiders. The district is aware of this issue and currently has plans in motion to help new students become assimilated into the school and community. Struggling students reported the greatest strength of the school was that teachers and that administrators refused to give up on students. Teachers expressed and appreciation for this supportive culture, as well, stating that they feel as though they are valued contributors to the success of the school. Parent interviews reinforced this appreciation of a commitment to and passion for a positive and effective school culture.

While there were many positive activities taking place, the Team identified opportunities for growth. One such area was in providing formal time for teacher collaboration and professional growth. Additionally, staff is not given time to look for content support outside the district to be able to implement the latest best practices.   Another opportunity for growth noted by the Team Is to provide students differentiated learning opportunities. The Team noted that differentiation in the average classroom was seldom evident and this was confirmed by the low eleot score is this area. Classrooms were well-managed, but instruction was delivered via a traditional teacher-centered classroom model. Students often seemed overly engaged in worksheets and notetaking and were observed listening to classroom lectures. Student-centered learning and opportunities for collaboration were observed less frequently. A desire for student-centered classrooms and more meaningful learning activities were echoed in student interviews and surveys. Athough the school is working on its communication with the community stakeholders and parents, the Team learned through reading the SQF and the parent interviews that many people in the community were not aware of the school's activities and on-going plans and goals.

Overall, Parkston School District has established a sound structure for continuous improvement. School leaders,

personnel and stakeholders are committed to excellence in education. Ongoing improvement is a target in all areas of academic, social and emotional growth. The school has established a shared vision for student success, empowerment and readiness for the next level. The Team is confident that a continued focus on continuous improvement will lead the school to even greater levels of success.

Next Steps

The results of the Engagement Review provide the next step to guide the improvement journey of the institution in their efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities for all learners. The findings are aligned to research-based criteria designed to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness. The feedback provided in the Accreditation Engagement Review Report will assist the institution in reflecting on their current improvement efforts and to adapt and adjust their plans to continuously strive for improvement.

Upon receiving the Accreditation Engagement Review Report the institution is encouraged to implement the following steps:

- Review and share the findings with stakeholders.
- Develop plans to address the Improvement Priorities identified by the Engagement Review Team.
- Use the findings and data from the report to guide and strengthen the institution's continuous improvement efforts.
- Celebrate the successes noted in the report
- Continue your Improvement Journey

Team Roster

The Engagement Review Teams are comprised of professionals with varied backgrounds and professional experiences. All Lead Evaluators and Engagement Review Team members complete AdvancED training and eleot® certification to provide knowledge and understanding of the AdvancED tools and processes. The following professionals served on the Engagement Review Team:

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Dennis Nath	Dennis Nath received his Master's degree in Media and Technology from Mankato State University, Mankato, Minnesota. He retired after serving 32 years as the district library media specialist for the Mitchell School District in Mitchell, SD. He was recruited to design and furnish a media center/library for Hayah International Academy in Cairo, Egypt, and spent the 2008-2009 school year in the Mideast. Dennis has been a member of AdvancED evaluation teams since 2009 and has assisted on numerous visits in 10 states and serves as a lead evaluator in his home state of South Dakota.
Danyelle Brown	Danyelle Brown has been a part of secondary education since 1999. She is passionate about student learning and has been a classroom teacher for 18 years and has had the opportunity to lead many teams within her school district to ensure that all students have access to curriculum, technology and great instruction. Danyelle's passion for helping teachers in the classroom has led her to her roles as department chair and the chair of the School Improvement Committee at her school. Danyelle continues to be a life-long learner and attends many conferences to enhance technology in her classroom and others. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics Education and a Master's degree in Instructional Technology.

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Jason Kolousek	Jason Kolousek has been an educator for 20 years. He spent 9 years teaching in the classroom and the last 11 years as a Principal. Jason was an elementary principal for 8 of those years and has been a Middle School/High School Principal for the last 3 years. Jason earned his Bachelors Degree from Dakota State and Masters Degree from University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In 2009, Jason had the opportunity to serve on a review team at Agar-Blunt-Onida School District.

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About AdvancED

AdvancED is a non-profit, non-partisan organization serving the largest community of education

professionals in the world. Founded on more than 100 years of work in continuous improvement,

AdvancED combines the knowledge and expertise of a research institute, the skills of a management

consulting firm and the passion of a grassroots movement for educational change to empower

Pre-K-12 schools and school systems to ensure that all learners realize their full potential.