



# **Accreditation Report**

## **Worth County Schools**

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Sylvester, GA 31791-1349

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# **Executive Summary**

## **Introduction**

Every school system has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school system makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school system stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school system, and the kinds of programs and services that a school system implements to support student learning.

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

## Description of the School System

**Describe the school system's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school system serves?**

Worth County is a rural county location in southwest Georgia. It has an area of 575 miles and a population of 21,741. Worth County is the 18th largest of the 159 counties in Georgia. The county seat is Sylvester located on U.S. 82 between Albany, Georgia and Tifton, Georgia. It is 168 miles south of Atlanta and 20 miles west of I-75, Georgia's primary north-south transportation route. Sylvester is known as the "Peanut Capital of the World" for its large peanut production. Worth County is primarily an agricultural community with limited attraction for incoming industry due to its proximity to larger cities. Local leadership constantly strives to attract new business and industry to generate more employment and expand the tax base.

The unemployment rate for Worth County as of July 2013 was reported as 9.0%. This is up from 6.4% reported in 2007. Worth County population is 69.4% White, 27.5% Black, 1.5% Hispanic or Latino, and 1.0% Two or more races. Data from the 2013 Georgia County Guide reports the median household income, 2010 model-based estimate, as \$37,436 with a per capita income of \$31,219. The percentage of persons below the poverty level is 21.2% and 17.3% of the population receive food stamp or some assistance from other governmental programs. Only 39% of persons age 25 or older are reported as high school graduates. As of September 2013, the Worth County Social Worker reported 129 multi-family residents with students enrolled in the Worth County School District.

The challenges of poverty, unemployment, limited education, and limited transportation in a large geographical county adversely impact the school environment. Parents frequently do not take an active role in their child's education.

Worth County Board of Education is comprised of five elected members certified by the Georgia School Board Association. Members attend monthly board meetings. They also participate in the required Georgia School Board training, including annual whole board training. The experience of board members ranges from a member who took office in January 2013 to two members who have served 23 consecutive years on the board. Board members include a farmer, small business owner, paramedic, semi-retired transportation director, and a director of outpatient physical therapy services for a regional hospital.

Worth County School District consists of four schools: Worth County Primary (Pre-K-2), Worth County Elementary (3-5), Worth County Middle School (6-8), and Worth County High School (9-12). Worth County Middle School and Worth County High School each house an alternative program on their campuses. The district's 2013-2014 student enrollment is 3243 based upon the October data reported to Georgia Department of Education. There has been a gradual decline in student enrollment since October 2012 FTE report of 3259. Worth County School District has had a consistent decline in student enrollment. The October FTE count of 2009-2010 was 3475. It is believed that this continual decline of student enrollment is directly related to the economic decline. Of the current students, 56% are white, 37% are black, and 7 % are Hispanic, American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander or multi-racial. The male and female population is each 50%. The Free/Reduced lunch rate for FY 13 was 73.35%. For FY14 the Free/Reduced lunch rate is xxx.

The district employs 242 certified teachers and administrators and 187 classified personnel. All paraprofessionals and teachers are highly qualified. Twenty four percent of the certified staff members hold bachelor degrees, 46% hold masters degrees, 21% hold specialist degrees, and 4% hold doctorate degrees. The certified staff is made up of 14% black and 86% white; 22% male and 78% female. The classified staff consists of 35% black, 64% white, and 1% multi-racial. The gender make-up of the classified staff is 17% male and 83%

female. Thirty-four percent certified employees have 0-10 years of experience, 17% have 11-15 years of experience and 49% have 16-21+ years of experience. The district average teacher salary is \$51,974.04.

Due to economic hardship and reduction in federal and state funds, Worth County School District recently voted to increase the millage rate. Class size waivers have been requested and granted, professional development has been limited and a "more with less" attitude has been adopted to meet the economic challenges. In addition, attrition and combining work responsibilities have resulted in a smaller workforce and have prevented furlough days, a decrease in student instructional days and have helped prevent the need for reduction of workforce. In spite of budgetary constraints and concerns, the district is committed to a quality education for all students. Additional course offerings, increased technology use by students, and a slow but rising graduation rate have been achieved.

## System's Purpose

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

**Purpose:**

Worth County School District's purpose is to ensure a quality education for all students leading to graduation and productive citizenship.

**Direction:**

- The direction for Worth County School District is for the graduation rate to reach 80% or above, and for students to meet or exceed established accountability measures.
- This direction will be achieved by providing high expectations, a relevant and rigorous curriculum, data driven standards-based instructional practices, appropriate interventions, and celebrations of success as we move forward.
- As a result of our success, we will attract and retain high quality teachers, provide a foundation for community economic growth, and prepare graduates for post-secondary success.

**Beliefs:**

- All students can learn and are unique learners;
- Education is a shared responsibility of the student, home, school and community;
- School should maintain a safe and structured learning environment;
- All students should meet or exceed educational standards provided by a rigorous and relevant curriculum;
- All decisions should be driven by accurate and relevant data;
- College and career readiness activities prepare students for the future workforce;
- Students engaged in co- and extra-curricular activities perform better;
- Readily accessible technology resources improve teaching and learning;
- The system should employ and retain highly qualified personnel who demonstrate a high degree of professionalism;
- Job embedded professional learning results in improved instruction and increased student achievement;
- Prompt and regular attendance by all leads to improved performance;
- Effective and open communication is essential for the achievement of educational goals.

Many Worth County entities work cooperatively with Worth County School District for the success and betterment of the school system and thus the community as a whole. Community is also important to Worth County School District employees who reciprocate care, interest, finances, and involvement in various community/county organizations. These include but are not limited to Worth County Chamber of Commerce, Worth County Health Department Board of Directors, The Margaret Jones Library Board, Worth County Family Connections, and the Recreational Department. The City of Sylvester provides two School Resource Officers (SROs) for Worth County School District as well as a Public Relations Director. These relationships help the district promote and accomplish the purpose to educate students to become productive citizens through leadership and teaching by example.

The purpose, direction and beliefs guide the educational decisions affecting all students. Students are provided a variety of opportunities to develop academically and socially. Programs are available to students who may have special needs challenges, students who may be gifted, students who may require additional academic interventions through the Response to Intervention Program, or students who need additional support i.e. English for Speakers of Other Languages, Migrant or Early Intervention programs. Worth County School District also works closely with the local Southwest Georgia Community Action Council, Inc. Head Start Program to provide not only required Special  
SY 2013-2014

Education services, but to also insure a smooth transition of these young students to Worth County School District.

Worth County School District believes and recognizes the importance of co- and extra-curricular activities in helping students accomplish the goals of a quality education and of graduation and productive citizenship. The district values fine arts programs and knows the impact they have regarding academic success. The district has maintained fine arts programs including choral music, art, and band at each school. Beginning at Worth County Primary School, students are introduced to the importance of technology and computer skills. Physical education programs at each school also enhance a quality education and helps keep students fit and focused. At the middle and high school levels students may take advantage of Career, Technical, and Agricultural courses as well as JROTC. Clubs and athletics also promote the development of future Worth County citizens. Community and parent stakeholders confirm the importance of these programs through their involvement in Parent Teacher Organizations, Booster Organizations, Academic Achievement Club, Partners in Education, as well as serving as volunteers in schools.

Communication between the schools and homes is enhanced through district and school websites, email, the local newspaper, open house events, parent-teacher conference days, and the district call-out system, One Call Now. Worth County School District uses PowerSchool for student records. Parents may have access to their child's attendance and academic progress through this web-based program. Teachers also use student agendas to communicate with parents. Unfortunately, as is typical in most school districts, parents of students in Worth County Primary School and Worth County Elementary School are more actively involved than parents of older students. To help nurture and strengthen the partnership between school and home, Worth County School District employs Parent Involvement Coordinators at each school. Coordinators provide programs for parents and share information of opportunities and events through newsletters, call-out, school webpage, and Facebook. Each school has a Facebook website to promote communication. Parents, business persons, and other stakeholders are also an integral part of each school's School Council. Counselors and a system-wide social worker work with teachers and administrators to help identify and meet student needs and to promote a trusting, cooperative relationship with parents and the school district.

A safe learning environment is a major component necessary to providing a quality education. Worth County School District takes seriously the entrustment of children by parents each day. The district works cooperatively with local emergency departments as well as GEMA to have a safety plan for each school and promote a safe environment. Each school has also completed the Georgia Department of Education Safety Assessment. Security camera systems have been upgraded or replaced, and computerized check-in systems have been installed at each school and the district office. Recently a community Safety-Facilities work session was held to discuss additional safety concerns. Following that meeting Worth County School District principals, technology director, maintenance director, superintendent, and Board Members agreed to move forward to provide additional safety upgrades and improvements to provide Worth County students a safe learning environment.

Through these practices and programs, the district provides all students an exemplary, high standards educational opportunity. The diverse needs of all students are met in a positive, safe environment. In Worth County School District, the focus is on "Every Child, Every Day."

## Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

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

Worth County School District (WCSD) has had several notable achievements and improvements over the past three years. The most challenging achievement has been the preservation of a full 180 day calendar for students as well as preserving 10 workdays/professional learning days for teachers. Another notable system achievement has been the commitment to the necessity of professional learning. Though Georgia Professional Standards does not currently require Professional Learning Units (PLUs) for recertification purposes, Worth County School District committed to the requirement of at least 2 PLUs per year for teachers and paraprofessionals and at least 1 job embedded PLU for principals and administrative staff. WCSD also continues the practice of employing a School Improvement Coordinator at each school to assist teachers, provide valuable curricular training, and help evaluate data to determine possible gaps in learning. The commitment to professional learning and a traditional school calendar is a direct example of the system's obligation to the Worth County School District Belief that states "Job embedded professional learning results in improved instruction and increased student achievement."

Worth County School District has also improved and enhanced the gifted program. At Worth County Primary School (WCPS) and Worth County Elementary School (WCES) two models are used to reach students. A resource model and cluster model are used at these schools. Worth County Middle School (WCMS) has also increased the number of teachers who have gifted certification. This allows the middle school to use a gifted team approach. Due to teachers moving from the system, Worth County High School (WCHS) has experienced a decrease in the number of gifted certified teachers. The high school is encouraging other teachers to add this certification in order to better serve students. WCSD assists in the cost to teachers for this certification.

In 2012, Worth County School District received notice that it had been named to the 3rd Annual AP Honor Roll for expanding opportunity and improving performance for AP students. One of the challenges in this area at the high school is having teachers who are qualified to teach AP courses and having students who are willing to commit to these rigorous courses. Often rather than choosing AP courses, students will chose Dual Enrollment or ACCEL courses since these courses afford college credit while students are not required to pass an additional exam.

The importance of technology is acknowledged in the Belief Statements and is a point of pride for WCSD. Worth County School District initiated a Bring Your Own Device program at WCES. Parents, students and teachers have enjoyed the rewards of this program and it has since been expanded to other schools. To further the commitment to the importance of technology, WCSD has invested in upgrading and adding computers, laptops, and iPads for students and staff. Not only have devices been purchased, the commitment extends to the employment of personnel who work directly with teachers to improve and enhance their use of technology in the classroom and so improve instruction as well as increase student achievement. Commitment to the importance of technology has also been extended to parents through training initiatives conducted by Parent Involvement Coordinators and held either in school computer labs or at the computer lab at the board office.

Worth County School District's overarching goal is to have students graduate from high school and become productive citizens. Improving the graduation continues to be a challenge. The graduation rate of 2012 showed improvement at the rate of 72.7%. However, graduation rate for 2011 was 70.2%. Worth County High School received a graduation rate of 70% for 2012. These percentages are based on a 5 year cohort. WCSD recognizes that there is much work to be done to fulfill the direction goal of 80% graduation rate and that each school has a vital role in preparing students for graduation.

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Another accomplishment that lends itself to the direction goal of 80% graduation rate is hiring and retaining Highly Qualified Teachers and Paraprofessionals. Currently WCSD boast 100% Hi-Q status for teachers and paraprofessionals.

Commitment to rigorous, relevant curriculum with data driven standards-based instructional practices is evidenced through increased test scores. Third grade science CRCT scores increased from 70% meeting/exceeding to 76% meeting/exceeding. Third grade social studies scores increased from 55% meeting/exceeding to 86% meeting/exceeding on the CRCT. Social studies scores in fourth grade increased from 62% to 76%. Data indicates that fifth grade CRCT results showed 88% of students who met or exceeded the standards for reading.

Worth County Primary School has been awarded the 2010 Platinum Award for highest percentage of students meeting and exceeding standards and the 2011 Title I Distinguished School Award for 11 years as a Distinguished School. Within its master schedule, WCPS has included a designated Intervention block in an effort to provide teachers with protected instructional time to be used to focus specifically on the needs of students who need additional skills practice, as well as students who are ready for opportunities to extend standards. This intervention block allows teachers protected time to work on the differentiated needs of their students.

WCPS has a working outdoor classroom that is used throughout the school year by the classroom teachers, the science lab, and our gifted resource classroom. The Outdoor Classroom Program is continuously expanding. WCPS was host to a Southwest GA School Gardens Focus Group on January 16, 2013, sponsored by the UGA College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences.

To help students master the curriculum at WCMS, several notable efforts have been initiated. WCMS provides an 8.5 program to assist struggling students who have not mastered the curriculum for success at the 9th grade level. While receiving instruction in 8th grade level curriculum, these students are also afforded the opportunity to complete 9th grade courses. This gives these students an edge in stronger mastery of the necessary curriculum as well as having high school credit in possibly three high school courses when they are promoted to the 9th grade. Other 8th grade students are also eligible to earn 9th grade course credits.

Efforts to increase End-of-Course Test results have also seen rewards. Georgia High School Writing Test Scores for WCHS show 84% meets/exceeds in 2010, 94% in 2011 and 96.2% in 2012. While the other academic areas have shown improvement, the scores still lag behind state averages and are not at the level to promote a graduation rate of 80% or better.

Involvement of stakeholders is an ongoing challenge for WCSD. Evidence of improvement in this critical area is seen in the Partners In Education membership has grown to 51 members. There is also evidence of increased participation through Parent/Teacher Organizations as well as through the WCHS Achievement Booster Club. Use of school websites has also improved communication efforts as well as involvement from stakeholders.

## **Additional Information**

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

None.

# Self Assessment

## **Introduction**

AdvancED's Self Assessment (SA) diagnostic is based on the AdvancED Standards of Quality, which serves as the foundation of the accreditation and continuous improvement process. The SA is a valuable tool for collaboratively engaging staff members and stakeholders in purposeful, honest dialogue and reflection to assess the institution's adherence to the Standards, and guide its continuous improvement efforts. The SA includes the institution's self-ratings of and the evidence cited for each of the indicators, comments that explain the indicator's ratings and an overall narrative for each Standard. The results of the SA are reviewed by the External Review Team as one essential component of the preparation process for the institution's External Review.

## Purpose and Direction

The system maintains and communicates at all levels of the organization a purpose and direction for continuous improvement that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

Overall Rating: 3.0

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.1	The system engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a system-wide purpose for student success.	The system's process for review, revision, and communication of the purpose statement is documented. The process is formalized and implemented on a regular schedule. The process includes participation by representatives from all stakeholder groups. The purpose statement focuses on student success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•District purpose statements - past and present</li> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Written District Quality Assurance Review procedures and documents that monitor its schools' adherence to the district purpose and direction</li> <li>•Examples of communications to stakeholders about the district's purpose (i.e. website, newsletters, annual report, student handbook)</li> <li>•Minutes from meetings related to development of the district's purpose and direction</li> <li>•Copy of strategic plan referencing the district purpose and direction and its effectiveness</li> </ul>	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.2	The system ensures that each school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	System policies and procedures outline the expectations for schools regarding a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process for review, revision, and communication of a purpose for student success. System personnel monitor and maintain data about each school and provide feedback for the improvement of the implementation of the process to school personnel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Agendas and/or minutes that reference a commitment to the components of the schools' purpose statements</li> <li>•Written District Quality Assurance Review procedures and documents that monitor schools' adherence to the district purpose and direction and that of the school</li> <li>•Examples of written stakeholder communications or marketing materials that portray the school purpose and direction</li> </ul>	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.3	The school leadership and staff at all levels of the system commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking, and life skills.	Commitment to shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning is evident in documentation and decision making. This commitment is regularly reflected in communication among leaders and staff. Challenging educational programs and equitable learning experiences are implemented so that all students achieve learning, thinking, and life skills necessary for success. Evidence indicates a commitment to instructional practices that include active student engagement, a focus on depth of understanding, and the application of knowledge and skills. System leadership and staff share high expectations for professional practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Communication plan and artifacts that show two-way communication to staff and stakeholders about educational programs and equitable learning experiences</li> <li>•District Quality Assurance Review plans that document two-way communication on district and school effectiveness and learning, thinking, and life skills</li> <li>•Examples of schools' continuous improvement plans</li> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Statements or documents about ethical and professional practices</li> <li>•Professional development plans and implementation timelines on topics related to equity, organizational effectiveness, and improved instruction and programs</li> <li>•Statements of shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning</li> <li>•The district strategic plan</li> </ul>	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.4	Leadership at all levels of the system implement a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	Leaders at all levels of the system implement a documented, systematic continuous improvement process for improving student learning and the conditions that support learning. All stakeholder groups are engaged in the process. Personnel maintain a profile with current and comprehensive data on student, school, and system performance. The profile contains analyses of data used to identify goals for the improvement of conditions that support student learning and that are aligned with the system's purpose. Improvement goals have measurable performance targets. The process includes action planning that identifies measurable objectives, strategies, activities, resources, and timelines for achieving improvement goals. Leaders hold all personnel accountable for and evaluate the overall quality of the implementation of all interventions and strategies. The process is reviewed and evaluated. Documentation that the process yields improved student achievement and conditions that support student learning is available and communicated to stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Examples of schools continuous improvement plans</li> <li>•District Quality Assurance Review plans that document two-way communication on district and school effectiveness and learning, thinking, and life skills</li> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Professional development plans and implementation timelines on topics related to equity, organizational effectiveness, and improved instruction and programs</li> <li>•Agenda, minutes from continuous improvement planning meetings</li> <li>•Communication plan and artifacts that show two-way communication to staff and stakeholders</li> <li>•The district data profile</li> <li>•The district strategic plan</li> </ul>	Level 3

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

Worth County School District's (WCSD) purpose statement is clearly focused on student success and we are committed to a shared purpose and direction in the improvement of student performance and system effectiveness. In developing the system's strategic plan and continuous improvement cycle, the district's leadership and the school leadership teams have established expectations for student learning aligned with the district's purpose. These expectations are supported by the system, school personnel, Board of Education members, parents, students and community members. The purpose is: "to ensure a quality education for all students leading to graduation and productive citizenship." The district's purpose drives decision-making that is focused on student success.

WCSD ensures that schools engage in a systematic process to review, revise and communicate the district's purpose for student success. The system provides guidance on the development of the School Improvement/Schoolwide Plan (SI/SW Plan) which includes an examination of the purpose statement to ensure alignment with the SI/SW Plan. System leaders collect and analyze data from each school through monthly School Improvement meetings and Administrative meetings, semi-annual focus walks, and quarterly school council meetings; provide feedback on the results; and allocate resources in achieving student success. Stakeholders are surveyed regularly on topics related to student achievement and other issues through needs assessments and school councils. We have a large data room at the central office where system personnel regularly have meetings. Board of Education members and other organizations (i.e. Kiwanis) have received an orientation to and explanation of the data that are displayed in the room. Each school administrative and leadership team has a data room and notebook which are regularly updated. Both contain all test score data. The Curriculum Director provides professional learning on data analysis so that schools can analyze their data to look for trends and areas of improvement. System leaders review data regularly at BOE meetings to ensure the system remains focused on continuous improvement.

The system demonstrates a commitment of shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning as evidenced in documentation and decision-making. The system communicates regularly with staff and stakeholders about school events, meetings, and special happenings through the system and school websites, social media, the local newspaper, monthly parent newsletters, and a monthly BOE report by the Superintendent. WCSD also uses One Call Now for emergencies and announcements. Two school parent conference days are included in the official school calendar. School is dismissed early on those days for parent consultation and performance of the individual child/student is discussed. Each school has an open house at the beginning of each school year.

The system is committed to instructional practices that include active student engagement, a focus on depth of instruction, and application of knowledge and skills. The primary focus of the school district is the implementation of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS). The system has technology support personnel, including instructional technologists, who are working with staff members on how technology can support the CCGPS implementation. They also help teachers discover new ways to engage students using remote response devices, interactive white boards, iPads and other bring your own technology (BYOT) devices. System and school leaders demonstrate high expectations for professional practice as evidenced by the school and system improvement plans, professional learning plans, survey results and the accomplishments in the Executive Summary.

WCSD will continue our improvement cycle through analyzing data; setting measurable and achievable goals; planning strategies with resources and actions; implementing benchmarks and deliverables; and evaluating by monitoring success and adjusting as needed.

One area in need of improvement includes participation from all stakeholder groups in developing and maintaining a system-wide purpose for student success. Another area in need of improvement includes all stakeholder groups being engaged in the continuous process that supports student learning. Although WCSD held three community meetings in three strategically located communities within Worth County, WCSD needs to gather input from the community throughout the entire continuous improvement cycle to support student learning.

WCSD has plans to implement a more systematic and structured approach to reviewing and revising the district's purpose and direction. The district will invite representatives from all stakeholder groups to review the purpose and direction each spring. This process will ensure that student success continues to be at the core of all decision-making. The superintendent will communicate the results of this review to all stakeholders for additional feedback. WCSD will document the review process with meeting agendas and meeting minutes. School councils will review the district's purpose on an annual basis. WCSD will provide an opportunity on the district website to encourage more stakeholder input throughout the year.

## Governance and Leadership

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

Overall Rating: 2.83

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.1	The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the system and its schools.	Policies and practices support the system's purpose and direction and the effective operation of the system and its schools. Policies and practices promote conditions that support student learning, effective instruction, and assessment that produce equitable and challenging learning experiences for all students. There are policies and practices regarding professional growth of all staff. Policies and practices provide requirements, direction for, and oversight of fiscal management at all levels of the system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Professional development plans</li> <li>•Governing body policies, procedures, and practices</li> <li>•Staff handbooks</li> <li>•Communications to stakeholder about policy revisions</li> <li>•School handbooks</li> </ul>	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	The governing body has a process to ensure that its decisions and actions are in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities, a code of ethics, and free of conflict of interest. Governing body members participate in a systematic, formal professional development process regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing body and its individual members. The governing body complies with all policies, procedures, laws, and regulations, and functions as a cohesive unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Governing authority minutes relating to training</li> <li>•Proof of legal counsel</li> <li>•Governing authority training plan</li> <li>•Assurances, certifications</li> <li>•Governing authority policies on roles and responsibilities, conflict of interest</li> <li>•Governing code of ethics</li> </ul>	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.3	The governing body ensures that the leadership at all levels has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.	The governing body protects, supports, and respects the autonomy of system and school leadership to accomplish goals for improvement in student learning and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations of the system and its schools. The governing body maintains a distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of system and school leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•District strategic plan</li> <li>•Examples of school improvement plans</li> <li>•Social media</li> <li>•Agendas and minutes of meetings</li> </ul>	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.4	Leadership and staff at all levels of the system foster a culture consistent with the system's purpose and direction.	Leaders and staff throughout the system align their decisions and actions toward continuous improvement to achieve the system's purpose. They expect all personnel to maintain high standards and to hold students to high standards in all courses of study. All leaders and staff are collectively accountable for maintaining and improving conditions that support student learning. Leaders throughout the system support innovation, collaboration, shared leadership, and professional growth. The culture is characterized by collaboration and a sense of community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Examples of decisions aligned with the district's strategic plan</li> <li>•Professional development offerings and plans</li> <li>•Examples of collaboration and shared leadership</li> <li>•Examples of decisions aligned with the school's purpose statement</li> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Examples of decisions in support of the schools' continuous improvement plans</li> <li>•Examples of decisions aligned with the district's purpose and direction</li> </ul>	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the system's purpose and direction.	Leaders sometimes communicate effectively with stakeholder groups, provide opportunities for stakeholders to shape decisions, solicit feedback from stakeholders, work collaboratively on school improvement efforts, and provide some leadership roles for stakeholders. System and school leaders' efforts result in some stakeholder participation and engagement in the system and its schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Copies of surveys or screen shots from online surveys</li> <li>•Involvement of stakeholders in a school improvement plan</li> <li>•Involvement of stakeholders in district strategic plan</li> <li>•System and School Websites; Social Media</li> </ul>	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice in all areas of the system and improved student success.	The focus of the criteria and processes of supervision and evaluation is improving professional practice throughout the system and improving student success. Supervision and evaluation processes are regularly implemented. The results of the supervision and evaluation processes are used to monitor and effectively adjust professional practice throughout the system and improve student learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Governing body policy on supervision and evaluation</li> <li>•Job specific criteria</li> <li>•Representative supervision and evaluation reports</li> </ul>	Level 3

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

The Worth County Board of Education works diligently to guarantee that policies and procedures are in place that promote and support student performance and system effectiveness. The Board works to ensure that policies and support practices are in place that enable us to

offer a quality education for all students. These policies and practices allow for effective administration at the district and school level. They provide for effective supervision, instruction, assessment, and fiscal management. The system and school professional learning plans address professional growth for all staff and are supported by Board policy. Board policies, the Worth County Schools Personnel Handbook, the Worth County School District Professional Learning Plan, individual school professional learning plans, and school handbooks/agendas are sources of evidence. These areas of strength will be sustained by staying abreast of state Board of Education policy changes and Georgia School Boards Association policy alerts to make sure policies and procedures are in compliance with current laws. System and school leaders will continue to offer appropriate and effective professional learning opportunities to all staff. Professional learning goals are identified in system and school professional learning plans which are revised annually. Leaders throughout the system will continue to follow Board policy and procedures on fiscal management.

Our Board members participate in professional learning activities during winter and summer conferences provided by the Georgia School Board Association. Veteran board members receive nine hours of training while new board members receive 15 during their first year. A review of policies concerning the board code of ethics and conflict of interests is conducted each year as a part of the Local Board Training Plan. Board members have legal counsel present during board meetings. This provides assurance that they are acting in accordance with policies, procedures, laws, and regulations. Some examples of evidence include the Local Board Training Plan and Board policy. Board members will continue to receive pertinent training on an annual basis from GaDOE approved entities.

The Board gives system and school leaders the support and autonomy to implement changes that promote continuous improvement in student learning and instruction. Worth County School District (WCSD) has established a collaborative system improvement planning process that is focused on the needs of the system through long-range strategic planning. Goals for the system and school improvement plans are guided by the Balanced Scorecard that was completed during strategic planning in 2013. Principals in collaboration with the Human Resources Director, assistant principals, and teachers interview and make recommendations for staff members within their schools. Worth County School District utilizes a zero-based budgeting process. Principals are responsible for developing and monitoring of their respective budgets with collaboration from Directors and fiscal guidance from the Finance Director. This gives principals the ability to utilize their fiscal resources to meet school improvement goals for achievement and instruction and to effectively manage day-to-day operations. The Worth County Schools strategic plan, school improvement plans, and survey results regarding functions of the governing authority and operations of the district are a few examples of evidence. Board members and leaders will continue to align decisions and actions toward continuous improvement. The Board will continue to work maintain a distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of system and school leadership.

Worth County Schools' leaders and staff make a conscious effort to align decisions and actions toward continuous improvement to achieve our purpose and direction. Ensuring a quality education for all students is the focal point for all that we do. This is accomplished through implementation of our strategic plan and the Worth County School District Continuous Improvement Plan. Part of the direction for Worth County Schools is to provide high expectations, a relevant and rigorous curriculum, and data driven standards-based instructional practices. The implementation of the more rigorous Common Core Georgia Performance Standards during the 2013-2014 helped with this effort. Instructional practices and methods of assessment are being enhanced to meet the required rigor of the revised curriculum. Common formative and summative assessments are administered to provide guidance to teachers and administrators about instructional needs. Leaders and staff throughout the system participate in professional learning opportunities that are aligned to the System Professional Learning Plan. Collaboration and shared leadership are encouraged at the system and school levels. Monthly staff meetings are conducted every month by our Superintendent which includes all directors and principals. School Improvement meeting takes place on a monthly basis as well. Participants include School Improvement Coordinators from each school, principals, and directors. Each principal has regular leadership team meetings in each of their schools. We will continue to sustain these areas of strength through continuous revision of curriculum units and assessments, increasing the use of performance based tasks/assessments, and continued collaboration and discussion during vertical alignment meetings in grades K-12.

Improving professional practice in all areas of Worth County Schools is an important factor for leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes. Our supervision and evaluation processes are regularly implemented. Focused-walks are conducted at least once a year at each school by system and school administrators. The results of the focused-walks provide a "status check" for standards-based classroom instruction. Principals review the data with faculty members and make plans for improvement accordingly. The results of the supervision and evaluation processes have always been used to monitor professional practice consistently. Worth County Schools are implementing the Teacher Keys and Leader Keys Effectiveness Systems (TKES and LKES) during the 2013-2014 school year. Student growth and academic achievement are major components of this evaluation system. This system assists us in being more efficient and consistent with monitoring and adjusting professional practice as well as ensuring student learning. Worth County Schools will sustain and improve supervision and evaluation processes with continued training and implementation of the TKES and LKES.

An area that needs improvement is that of more effective engagement of stakeholders in support of Worth County School District's purpose and direction. System and school leaders make efforts to contact and inform stakeholders through social media, such as Facebook and Twitter; system and school websites; emails; letters; system newsletter, Worth the Read; and student agendas. These efforts result in some stakeholder participation and engagement, but there needs to be more consistency throughout the system. The system needs to work toward finding means to communicate with appropriate and varied representatives from stakeholder groups, providing opportunities for stakeholders to shape decisions, work collaboratively on system and school improvement efforts, and providing and supporting meaningful leadership roles for stakeholders. Worth County Schools will make a more concerted effort to provide stakeholders with more opportunities for input in decision making processes such as system and school improvement plans and ongoing strategic planning efforts. Leaders will develop a plan that will solicit more active participation that is positive and measurable throughout the system.

## Teaching and Assessing for Learning

The system's curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning across all grades and courses.

Overall Rating: 2.42

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.1	The system's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level.	Curriculum and learning experiences in each course/class provide all students with challenging and equitable opportunities to develop learning skills, thinking skills, and life skills. There is some evidence to indicate curriculum and learning experiences prepare students for success at the next level. Like courses/classes have equivalent learning expectations across the system. Teachers in all schools individualize some learning activities for each student in a way that supports achievement of expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Course, program, or school schedules</li> <li>•Student work across courses or programs</li> <li>•Course or program descriptions</li> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Lesson plans</li> <li>•Teacher evaluation criteria relating to prescribed instructional designs and proprietary practices</li> <li>•Posted learning objectives</li> <li>•Descriptions of instructional techniques</li> </ul>	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.2	Curriculum, instruction, and assessment throughout the system are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	Using data from student assessments and an examination of professional practice, system and school personnel monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and alignment with goals for achievement and instruction and statements of purpose. There is a process in place to ensure alignment each time curriculum, instruction, and/or assessments are reviewed or revised at the system or school level. The continuous improvement process ensures that vertical and horizontal alignment as well as alignment with the system's purpose are maintained and enhanced in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Curriculum guides</li> <li>•A description of the systematic review process for curriculum, instruction, and assessment</li> <li>•Common assessments</li> <li>•Standards-based report cards</li> <li>•Surveys results</li> <li>•Program descriptions</li> <li>•Teacher evaluation criteria relating to prescribed instructional designs and proprietary practices</li> <li>•Products – scope and sequence, curriculum maps</li> <li>•Lesson plans aligned to the curriculum</li> </ul>	Level 3

# Accreditation Report

Worth County Schools

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.3	Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	Teachers in most schools sometimes use instructional strategies that require student collaboration, self-reflection, and development of critical thinking skills. Teachers personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs of groups of students when necessary. Teachers sometimes use instructional strategies that require students to apply knowledge and skills, integrate content and skills with other disciplines, and use technologies as instructional resources and learning tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Examples of professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the results from supervision and evaluation</li> <li>•Authentic assessments</li> <li>•Examples of teacher use of technology as an instructional resource</li> <li>•Examples of student use of technology as a learning tool</li> <li>•Student work demonstrating the application of knowledge</li> <li>•Surveys results</li> <li>•Examples of professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the approved or prescribed instructional strategies and programs</li> <li>•Teacher evaluation criteria relating to prescribed instructional designs and proprietary practices</li> </ul>	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.4	System and school leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	System and school leaders monitor instructional practices through supervision and evaluation procedures to ensure that they 1) are aligned with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning, 2) are teaching the approved curriculum, 3) are directly engaged with all students in the oversight of their learning, and 4) use content-specific standards of professional practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Curriculum maps</li> <li>•Supervision and evaluation procedures</li> <li>•Peer or mentoring opportunities and interactions</li> <li>•Surveys results</li> <li>•Professional development offerings and plans tied to the prescribed education program, instructional strategies, developmentally appropriate practices, and student success</li> </ul>	Level 2

# Accreditation Report

Worth County Schools

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.5	The system operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.	Some system staff participate in collaborative learning communities that meet both informally and formally. Collaboration occasionally occurs across grade levels, content areas, and other system divisions. Staff members promote discussion about student learning and the conditions that support student learning. Learning, using, and discussing the results of inquiry practices such as action research, the examination of student work, reflection, study teams, and peer coaching sometimes occur among system personnel. System personnel express belief in the value of collaborative learning communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Agendas and minutes of collaborative learning committees</li> <li>•Calendar/schedule of learning community meetings</li> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Professional development funding to promote professional learning communities</li> <li>•Examples of improvements to content and instructional practice resulting from collaboration</li> </ul>	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.6	Teachers implement the system's instructional process in support of student learning.	All teachers throughout the system use an instructional process that informs students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Exemplars are often provided to guide and inform students. The process includes multiple measures, including formative assessments, to inform the ongoing modification of instruction and provide data for possible curriculum revision. The process provides students with specific and timely feedback about their learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Examples of learning expectations and standards of performance</li> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Examples of assessments that prompted modification in instruction</li> <li>•Samples of exemplars used to guide and inform student learning</li> </ul>	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	Some system personnel are engaged in mentoring, coaching, and induction programs that are consistent with the system's values and beliefs about teaching, learning, and the conditions that support learning. These programs set expectations for system personnel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Professional learning calendar with activities for instructional support of new staff</li> <li>•Personnel manuals with information related to new hires including mentoring, coaching, and induction practices</li> </ul>	Level 2

# Accreditation Report

Worth County Schools

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.8	The system and all of its schools engage families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keep them informed of their children's learning progress.	Programs that engage families in meaningful ways in their children's education are designed and implemented. System and school personnel regularly inform families of their children's learning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Performance-based report cards</li> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•List of varied activities and communications modes with families, e.g., info portal, online, newsletters, parent centers, academic nights, open house, early release days</li> <li>•Parental/family/caregiver involvement plan including activities, timeframes, and evaluation process</li> </ul>	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.9	The system designs and evaluates structures in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the student's school who supports that student's educational experience.	Most school personnel participate in a structure designed by the system that gives them interaction with individual students, allowing them to build relationships over time with the student. Most students participate in the structure. The structure allows the school employee to gain insight into the student's needs regarding learning skills, thinking skills, and life skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Curriculum and activities of structures for adults advocating on behalf of students</li> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Master schedule with time for formalized structure</li> </ul>	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	Most teachers across the system use common grading and reporting policies, processes, and procedures based on criteria that represent each student's attainment of content knowledge and skills. These policies, processes, and procedures are implemented in most or all schools across grade levels and courses. Most stakeholders are aware of the policies, processes, and procedures. The policies, processes, and procedures may or may not be evaluated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Sample report cards for each program or grade level and for all courses and programs</li> </ul>	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning that is aligned with the system's purpose and direction. Professional development is based on assessment of needs of the system. The program builds capacity among all professional and support staff. The program is systematically evaluated for effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning, and the conditions that support learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•District quality control procedures showing implementation plan for professional development for district and school staff</li> <li>•District professional development plan involving the district and all schools</li> <li>•Brief explanation of alignment between professional learning and identified needs</li> </ul>	Level 3

# Accreditation Report

Worth County Schools

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.12	The system and its schools provide and coordinate learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	System and school personnel use data to identify unique learning needs of special populations of students based on proficiency and/or other learning needs (such as second languages). System and school personnel are familiar with research related to unique characteristics of learning (such as learning styles, multiple intelligences, personality type indicators) and provide or coordinate related learning support services to students within these special populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Schedules, lesson plans, or example student learning plans showing the implementation of learning support services</li><li>•Survey results</li><li>•List of learning support services and student population served by such services</li><li>•Data used to identify unique learning needs of students</li></ul>	Level 2

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

All schools in the Worth County School District utilize the Georgia Department of Education's curriculum maps that are reflective of the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) and the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS). Unit and lesson plans are reviewed and revised throughout the year to ensure challenging and equitable experiences for all students. Response to Intervention (RTI) provides a framework to support individualized learning and achievement expectations. A district level RTI Coordinator provides support to principals and school level RTI Coordinators as they work to provide support for all students. The district provides a well-rounded and relevant curriculum that challenges all students. Stakeholder feedback supports the above findings from the district self assessment. The overall highest indicator from parents and staff was 3.1: The system's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and like skills that lead to success at the next level.

Through the use of common unit assessment, benchmark assessment results, and summative assessment results, teachers adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment in order to meet the needs of all students in the classroom. School Improvement Coordinators at each school guide teachers through the use of both formative and summative assessment data to inform classroom practice. School Improvement Coordinators also facilitate vertical and horizontal alignment within the school to ensure curriculum, instruction, and assessment are aligned to the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS), and the district's overall purpose.

Teachers within the Worth County School District use the Georgia Department of Education's Instructional Frameworks to frame units and lessons of instruction. This framework, along with exemplars, provides students with expectations and standards of performance. Teachers use a variety of measures to gauge student mastery of standards including universal screening, informal assessments, common unit assessments, unit tasks, progress monitoring, and benchmark assessments. Benchmark assessments are administered twice per year at each school.

All teachers within the district participate in meaningful, job-embedded professional learning to support curriculum and instructional practices in the classroom. Each year, teachers complete a needs assessment to determine areas of need for professional learning. A system professional learning plan is written from the identified areas as a framework for each school to follow. School Improvement Coordinators write school level Professional Learning Plans to target specific professional learning needs at the school level. School

Improvement Coordinators meet weekly or bi-weekly for professional learning with teachers. Each teacher within the system earns at least two professional learning units each year from job-embedded professional learning.

Each school within the district keeps families informed of their child's learning progress through multiple means. Teachers and administrators use agendas, newsletters, school websites, teacher websites, e-mail, mass telephone call outs, texting, social media, and parent conferences to keep parents up to date on their child's educational progress. Parent Involvement Coordinators at each school support administration and teachers in parent involvement and communication by conducting meaningful programs and workshops. For example, along with the district Instructional Technology Coordinator, the Parent Coordinators provide computer classes for parents to show them how to access the Parent Portal, district, school, and teacher websites. In addition to regular teacher/parent communication, these activities provide a vital link between the school and home.

In order to sustain strengths in teaching and learning, the district should continue to utilize School Improvement Coordinators and Parent Involvement Coordinators at each school. In addition, the district should continue to conduct monthly school improvement meetings to maintain effective communication about district and school improvement efforts.

The Standard 3 committee identified several areas in need of improvement related to the district's curriculum, instructional design and assessment practices. First, there is a need for school leaders to better monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices to ensure student success. Through the implementation of the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System, the district will have a more systematic process for monitoring and evaluation of instructional practices this year and in the future.

Although staff regularly participate in professional learning communities at the district and school level, there is no formal process in place that promotes discussion about student learning. Furthermore, there is limited professional learning focused on examination of student work and action research.

New teachers within the Worth County School District receive support from veteran teachers, administrators, and the School Improvement Coordinator. School Improvement Coordinators provide coaching for teachers at the school level; however, no formal induction program exists for the district. The committee recognizes the need for the creation of an induction program for teachers beyond the new teacher orientation program that the district currently offers.

## Resources and Support Systems

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

Overall Rating: 2.88

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.1	The system engages in a systematic process to recruit, employ, and retain a sufficient number of qualified professional and support staff to fulfill their roles and responsibilities and support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, and educational programs.	Policies, processes, and procedures ensure that system and school leaders have access to, hire, place, and retain qualified professional support staff. System and school leaders systematically determine the number of personnel necessary to fill all the roles and responsibilities necessary to support purposes, educational programs, and continuous improvement throughout the district. Sustained fiscal resources are available to fund positions critical to achieve the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, and educational programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•District budgets or financial plans for the last three years</li> <li>•School budgets or financial plans for last three years</li> <li>•Documentation of highly qualified staff</li> <li>•Job postings: TeachGeorgia, System Website, Newspaper, Department of Labor; Salary Schedules; Professional Development Plans; Annual Evaluations including Teacher Keys Effectiveness System/Leader Keys Effectiveness System for teachers and some administrators; Interview process records; E-Verify Compliance</li> </ul>	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.2	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools, educational programs, and system operations.	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are focused on supporting the purpose and direction of the system, its schools, educational programs, and system operations. Instructional time is protected in policy and practice. System and school leaders work to secure material and fiscal resources to meet the needs of all students and improve the effectiveness of the system. System and school leaders demonstrate that instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are allocated so that all students have equitable opportunities to attain challenging learning expectations. Efforts toward the continuous improvement of instruction and operations include achieving the purpose and direction of the system and its schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Examples of school schedules</li> <li>•Examples of school calendars</li> <li>•Alignment of district budget with district purpose and direction</li> <li>•District strategic plan showing resources support for district</li> <li>•Facilities Plan; Consolidated Application; Agendas for vertical alignment, collaborative planning, and leadership meetings; Learning Resources Purchases; School Improvement Specialists at each school</li> </ul>	Level 3

# Accreditation Report

Worth County Schools

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.3	The system maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	System and school leaders have adopted or created clear expectations for maintaining safety, cleanliness, and a healthy environment, and have shared these definitions and expectations with stakeholders. System and school personnel as well as students are accountable for maintaining these expectations. Measures are in place that allow for continuous tracking of these conditions. Improvement plans are developed and implemented by appropriate personnel as necessary to improve these conditions. Results of improvement efforts are evaluated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Policies, handbooks on district and school facilities and learning environments</li> <li>•School safety committee responsibilities, meeting schedules, and minutes</li> <li>•Work Orders; Capital Assets Inventory Proposed Schedules; Boiler Inspection Logs; Maintenance Meetings; Pest Control Inspections; Accountability through the Code of Conduct and the Personnel Handbook</li> </ul>	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.4	The system demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning in support of the purpose and direction of the system.	The system has some policies related to strategic resource management. The system has a long-range strategic planning process. The strategic planning process is reviewed for effectiveness when necessary. Strategic plans are implemented effectively by the governing body and system leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•District strategic plan showing the areas of budget, facilities, quality control, and other strategic systems</li> <li>•Technology Plan; Facilities Plan; Consolidated Local Education Agency Improvement Plan; SPLOST Expenditure Records</li> </ul>	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.5	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of information resources and related personnel to support educational programs throughout the system.	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of information resources and related personnel to ensure that all students, school, and system personnel have access to the media and information resources necessary to achieve the educational programs of the system and its schools. The system implements and evaluates processes to ensure qualified personnel are recruited, hired, and retained in sufficient numbers to assist students, school and system personnel in learning about the tools and locations for finding and retrieving information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Schedule of staff availability to assist students and school personnel related to finding and retrieving information</li> <li>•Destiny Catalogs; Media Center Class Schedules; Budget: purchased applications; Inventory of Computer Labs and Mobile Labs</li> </ul>	Level 3

# Accreditation Report

Worth County Schools

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.6	The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	The system provides a modern, fully functional technology infrastructure, modern, updated equipment, and a qualified technical support staff to meet the teaching, learning, and operational needs of all stakeholders throughout the system. System and school personnel collect data concerning needs and use the resulting data to develop and implement a technology plan to continuously improve technology services, infrastructure, and equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•District technology plan and budget to improve technology services and infrastructure for the district-level and school-level</li> <li>•Technology Inventories; Data Management Systems; School-wide School Improvement Plans; Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT) Classrooms; Technology Literacy Results; Technology Tickets</li> </ul>	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.7	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of support systems to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.	The system has designed and implemented a process to determine the physical, social, and emotional needs of all students and then selects or designs and implements programs to meet the needs of these students. Measures of program effectiveness are in place, and system and school personnel use the data from these measures to regularly evaluate all programs. Improvement plans related to these programs are designed and implemented to more effectively meet the needs of all students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•List of support services available to students</li> <li>•Annual Guidance Plans; Social Worker Documentation; Athletic Program; Partners in Education; Parent Involvement Coordinators</li> </ul>	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.8	The system provides, coordinates, and evaluates the effectiveness of services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students.	The system has designed and implemented a process to determine the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students and then selects or designs and implements programs to meet the needs of these students. Measures of program effectiveness are in place, and system and school personnel use the data from these measures to regularly evaluate all programs. Improvement plans related to these programs are designed and implemented to more effectively meet the needs of all students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Description of IEP process</li> <li>•Description of referral process</li> </ul>	Level 3

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

## Standard 4 Narrative

The Standard 4 AdvancED committee has identified several areas of strength related to resources and support systems in the Worth County School District.

Worth County School District continues to hire, place, and retain highly qualified faculty and staff. Job descriptions are fully developed, clearly

communicated, and reviewed annually. All faculty and staff are evaluated by trained evaluators using a system-approved evaluation instrument. All efforts are made to observe written federal, state, and local policies in regards to the qualification, selection, and assignment of teachers. Annual needs assessments are completed to verify the number of positions available. Professional development opportunities are provided in order to ensure continuous improvement from faculty and staff.

Established policies are in place to protect instructional time. Announcements are broadcast at a designated time each day and Google Apps are utilized to share other information with teachers. In grades Pre-K - 5 breakfast is served in the classrooms and remediation and acceleration opportunities are available before and after school at all locations. Teachers are evaluated on their ability to teach from bell to bell and to use their time efficiently and effectively. Budgets allocate spending for necessary instructional resources. Expenditures require approval from the building-level principal and from relevant district directors when applicable.

Worth County School District facilities and grounds are well-maintained by the maintenance staff. The maintenance staff also inspects and performs routine maintenance on the heating and air conditioning systems throughout the school system. Maintenance staff is based in each school location as well as at the district office. Fire Drills and Severe Weather Drills are conducted monthly and are reported as required by Georgia law. Other emergency drills are conducted periodically throughout the school year and policies and procedures for all drills are communicated with staff during faculty meetings and work sessions. Custodial work is performed by Southern Management under the auspices of the maintenance department.

Worth County School District's technology infrastructure supports its teaching, learning, and operational needs. The district keeps desktop computers under warranty for five years and strives to replace desktops on that cycle. A wide range of media and information resources are utilized in support of educational programs in the district. Available technology includes computers, laptops, interactive whiteboards, wireless slates, LCD projectors, student response systems, document cameras, and iPad carts. Each school has a media center staffed by a certified media specialist and a media clerk. An instructional technology specialist is employed at the district level to aid teachers in incorporating technology into the classrooms.

Worth County School District strives to provide a technology-rich learning environment. A recent erate project has allowed for new switches to be installed at Worth County Primary School, Worth County Elementary School, and Worth County Middle School, but Worth County High School is still in need of faster internal connections. Another erate project funded new wireless technology at the same schools, and the district funded matching wireless in a portion of the high school. However, there is still room for improvement with the wireless infrastructure at Worth County High School and at Worth County's district office. Worth County's student to computer ratio is 1.95:1, slightly better than the state average of 2.03:1.

Guidance counselors, parent involvement coordinators, resource officers, and nurses are available at each school to meet the needs of students. A social worker is employed at the district level to work with students and their families from each school. In addition, teachers serve as academic advisors for students and teach character education lessons. Initiatives such as after-school programs, Credit Recovery, Eighth Period, Lunch and Learn, Saturday School, Remediation classes for math, reading, and writing, and Ramp Up sessions before school provide students with additional learning opportunities as needed.

Measures of program effectiveness are in place in all Worth County School District locations, including student surveys, parent surveys, teacher surveys, and evaluation of formative and summative assessment scores. Changes are made to programs based on the needs of the student population. Faculty and staff have been trained to implement the pyramid of intervention for behavioral and academic RTI. The IEP process for special needs students is well-documented and includes a career planning component.

The Standard 4 AdvancED committee also identified an area in need of improvement related to resources and support systems in the Worth County School District.

Worth County School District strives to anticipate the long-term needs of all stakeholders. The system follows a 3-year Technology Plan and a 5-year Facilities Plan. Budgets are done annually, as is the Consolidated Local Education Agency Improvement Plan. However, there is

room for improvement in communication between the various people involved in each of these. Also, a greater awareness among stakeholders of the goals in each of these plans would lead to a higher success rate.

## Using Results for Continuous Improvement

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

Overall Rating: 2.0

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.1	The system establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	System and school personnel use an assessment system that produces data from multiple assessment measures. These measures include locally developed and standardized assessments about student learning as well as school and system performance. The assessment system provides consistent measurement across classrooms, courses, educational programs and system divisions. Some assessments are proven reliable and bias free. The assessment system is evaluated for effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning, and the conditions that support learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Brief description of technology or web-based platforms that support the education delivery model</li> <li>•Documentation or description of evaluation tools/protocols</li> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Brief description of student assessment system including range of data produced from standardized and local or school assessments on student learning and school performance</li> <li>•Brief description of learning management systems or data management systems that support the effective use of student assessment results, school effectiveness, and district effectiveness</li> </ul>	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.2	Professional and support staff continuously collect, analyze and apply learning from a range of data sources, including comparison and trend data about student learning, instruction, program evaluation, and organizational conditions that support learning.	Processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing, and applying learning from data sources are documented and used by professional and support staff throughout the district. Data sources provide a picture of student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and the conditions that support learning. System and school personnel use data to design and implement improvement plans to improve student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and the conditions that support learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Examples of data used to measure the effectiveness of the district systems that support schools and learning</li> <li>•List of data sources related to district effectiveness</li> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Examples of changes to the district strategic plan based on data results</li> <li>•List of data sources related to student learning, instruction, program effectiveness, and conditions that support learning</li> </ul>	Level 2

# Accreditation Report

Worth County Schools

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.3	Throughout the system professional and support staff are trained in the interpretation and use of data.	Most professional and support staff members are assessed and trained in a professional development program related to the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Professional learning schedule specific to the use of data</li> <li>•Documentation of attendance and training related to data use</li> <li>•Survey results</li> </ul>	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.4	The school system engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	A process exists for analyzing data that determine verifiable improvement in student learning including readiness for and success at the next level. Results indicate mixed levels of improvement, and system and school personnel sometimes use these results to design, implement, and evaluate the results of continuous improvement action plans related to student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Student surveys</li> <li>•Agendas, minutes of meetings related to analysis of data</li> <li>•Examples of use of results to evaluate continuous improvement action plans</li> <li>•Evidence of student readiness for the next level</li> <li>•Evidence of student growth</li> <li>•Evidence of student success at the next level</li> </ul>	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.5	System and school leaders monitor and communicate comprehensive information about student learning, school performance, and the achievement of system and school improvement goals to stakeholders.	System and school leaders monitor information about student learning, system and school effectiveness, and the achievement of system and school improvement goals. Leaders communicate results to all stakeholder groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•District quality control procedures for monitoring district effectiveness</li> <li>•Minutes of meetings regarding achievement of student learning goals</li> <li>•Survey results</li> <li>•Sample communications to stakeholders regarding student learning, conditions that support learning, and achievement of school improvement goals</li> <li>•Executive summaries of student learning reports to stakeholder groups</li> </ul>	Level 2

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

As a whole, the committee agreed that the (WCSD) has implemented a comprehensive assessment system that produces a variety of data from multiple sources. However, the committee concurred that the school district does have room for growth. The committee believed that

we did not have solid, consistent procedures in place that would warrant a rating higher than "2" on any indicator. There was evidence within schools and departments that some indicators are fully functional. However, that was not the case on a consistent basis. Moreover, the committee deemed more professional learning was appropriate to ensure consistency on the use of the program(s) and the data produced to better serve students at all levels.

The committee agreed that the district has a systematic assessment process in place and a system-wide process to collect, analyze, and utilize data. However, we believe that improvement is necessary in analyzing data and using the data to drive the teaching-learning process to maximize student achievement. Although there is a system data analysis procedure in place, the committee agreed more professional learning is needed to address the interpretation and utilization of data for system effectiveness and district improvement.

Although there is a written "system level data analysis procedure," the committee agreed that there is a need for more training on collecting, analyzing and applying learning from data sources for all staff. Although professional learning has been provided through GLRS, RESA, and the LEA, the committee determined that more training would provide well prepared staff who are fluent in the application, evaluation, interpretation, and use of data. There was a consensus of the committee that all staff does not feel confident in evaluating the effectiveness of the common core content units. More professional learning is needed to provide staff with evaluating and revising the content units to align instruction to support learning and the use of improvement plans as a dynamic tool to improve instruction. The committee concurred that there is a process in place to analyze data for readiness and improvement. However, we determined a need for consistent, clearly defined procedures that ensure fidelity across the school district for analyzing data to determine student learning and readiness for success at the next level.

Although the committee was in agreement that the system and school leaders monitor comprehensive information, the committee believes that there is need for improvement in several areas. Leaders, district and school level, need to communicate results more frequently with the use of a variety of delivery methods. Additionally, the communication should be understandable and user friendly to all stakeholders.

The WCSD will provide the following for improvement:

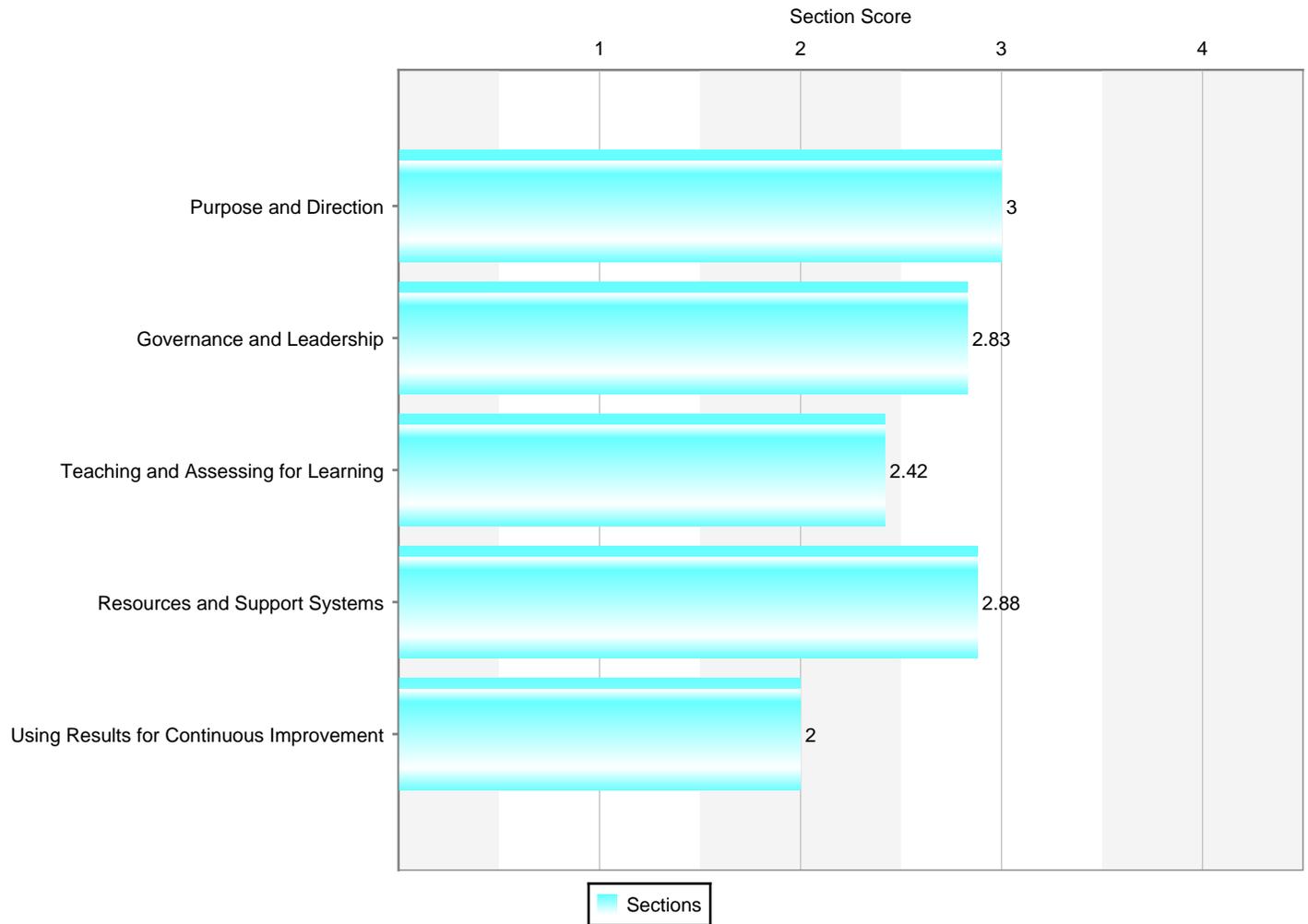
1. Additional professional learning for all staff on systematic approach to the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data to ensure consistency across the district.
2. Fiscal alignment of system and school level resources for learning and technical challenges.
3. System and school level checkpoints to ensure all staff are consistently utilizing data to inform instruction.
4. Frequent analysis of data at the school and district level to ensure instructional changes are addressed as data indicates.

### Stakeholders Feedback

When looking at survey feedback from stakeholders, the survey data suggests that stakeholders have a more positive opinion regarding our performance on this standard than does our committee. Some indicators were rated more than a point higher than rated by the committee. It is plausible to attribute the difference in scoring to the language of the survey or possibly the possible evidence referenced available to the committee while rating ourselves. For example, the difference between a score of 2 versus a score of 3 may be only one key word (e.g. "The system generally provides consistent measurement across classrooms and courses" and "The system ensures consistent measurement across classrooms and courses"). Either way, for all indicators, stakeholders viewed the WCSD as proficient.

## Report Summary

### Scores By Section



# Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic

## **Introduction**

The Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic is designed to analyze the institution's survey results in terms of areas of achievement and areas that need improvement. Further, the diagnostic is essential to the accreditation and continuous improvement processes in that it provides the institution with a comprehensive view of the aggregate scores of the surveys administered, and the actual total of respondents for each survey type to derive a single score for this diagnostic. The performance level score computed at the completion of the diagnostic is used to broaden and enhance the external review team's understanding of the stakeholder's perceptions of the institution; the diagnostic should be used in the same manner by the institution as it engages in improvement planning.

**Stakeholder Feedback Data**

<b>Label</b>	<b>Assurance</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Attachment</b>
1.	Did you complete the Stakeholder Feedback Data document offline and upload below?	Yes		WCSD Stakeholder Data Document

## Evaluative Criteria and Rubrics

Overall Rating: 3.5

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
1.	Questionnaire Administration	All required AdvancED questionnaires were used by the institution to receive stakeholder feedback. The minimum response rate for each population was met (parent questionnaire: equal to or greater than 20%, student questionnaire(s): equal to or greater than 40%, staff questionnaire: equal to or greater than 60%). Questionnaires were administered with complete fidelity to the appropriate administrative procedures. In every instance, the stakeholders to whom these questionnaires were administered fully represented the populations served by the institution. Appropriate accommodations were provided as necessary for all participants.	Level 4

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
2.	Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	All questionnaires had an average item value of 3.20 or above (on a 5.0 scale). Results of stakeholder feedback collected by the institution were acceptably analyzed and presented with reasonable clarity.	Level 3

## **Areas of Notable Achievement**

### **Which area(s) indicate the overall highest level of satisfaction or approval?**

Indicator 4.3 had the overall highest level of satisfaction for two stakeholder groups. Both parents and staff are most satisfied with the district and schools' abilities to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff. This Indicator appears in the top three areas of notable achievement for these stakeholder groups' at all four schools in the Worth County School District (WCSD).

Students indicated that they are most satisfied with Indicator 5.4. They believe that their schools are preparing them for success in the next school year.

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

Data from the AdvancED surveys administered to students and staff in the Spring of the 2012-2013 school year were compared to the Fall 2013 data. Based on the student survey results, more students feel they are being treated fairly (Indicator 2.1) and that their school is safe and clean (Indicator 4.3).

The majority of scores from the staff survey results increased from Spring 2013 to Fall 2013. Each score for Indicators under Standard 1: Purpose and Direction increased by approximately 0.5 points. Staff members continue to show high approval for the manner in which the system maintains and communicates a purpose and direction that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

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

The survey results indicated that parents and staff are most satisfied with Indicator 4.3: The system maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff. With the recent school tragedies occurring around the country, safety is a priority for the WCSD. School safety has been discussed at various meetings including school board meetings and school council meetings. In 2013, principals and the Facilities Director conducted safety inspections of each school and created a plan for improved security. During the Five Year Facilities Review in December 2013, the Facilities Review Team validated our Facilities Plan and commended the WCSD for being aware and taking proper action for improved security at each school. This feedback supports our survey results.

In addition, numerous parents made comments about the safe, secure, and clean environment at all four schools on the AdvancED survey open questions. Worth County High School parents feel their children are provided with a "safe school environment" for learning. One parent expressed that the thing liked best about Worth County Primary School is "knowing that my child is in a safe environment." A Worth County Elementary parent likes "how the doors lock after a certain time to ensure student safety." Parents made positive comments about the "safe environment" and "the security" at Worth County Middle School.

## **Areas in Need of Improvement**

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

In contrast to parents and staff, student survey results indicate that they have the overall lowest level of satisfaction with being provided a safe, clean and healthy environment. Indicator 4.3 was the lowest rated Indicator by Worth County Middle School and Worth County High students.

Parents feel that the governing body needs to improve on ensuring that the leadership at all levels has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively. Indicator 2.3 appeared in the bottom three areas in need of improvement at all schools.

There are three Indicators under Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning that received the lowest rating overall based on staff survey results. Indicators 3.2, 3.3, and 3.9 received a score of 3.08.

Indicator 3.2: Curriculum, instruction, and assessment throughout the system are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.

Indicator 3.3: Teachers throughout the district engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.

Indicator 3.9: The system designs and evaluates students in all schools whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the student's school who supports that student's educational experience.

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

While there are no significant signs of decreasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval, there are minor areas that have been identified.

Indicator 5.4 was rated highly by students during the Spring 2013 and Fall 2013 survey administrations. However, there was a difference of 0.12 points between the scores indicating a slight decrease in satisfaction regarding being prepared for success in the next school year.

There were several Indicators with very slight decreases in satisfaction for WCSD staff. Indicator 2.3, our school's governing body or school board maintains a distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of school leadership, had the largest decrease of 0.19 points.

### **What are the implications for these stakeholder perceptions?**

It is evident that WCSD students have concerns about their safety and security. During the 2012-2013 school year, WCSD had an issue with terroristic threats being called in to several schools. No evidence of genuine danger was ever found and based on the results of the AdvancED surveys, parents and staff were satisfied with the manner in which the threats were handled. However, this situation caused discomfort and concern for many. Based on student survey results, the WCSD recognizes the need to educate students about the District's Emergency Preparedness Plan and the fact that their safety and security are our top priority.

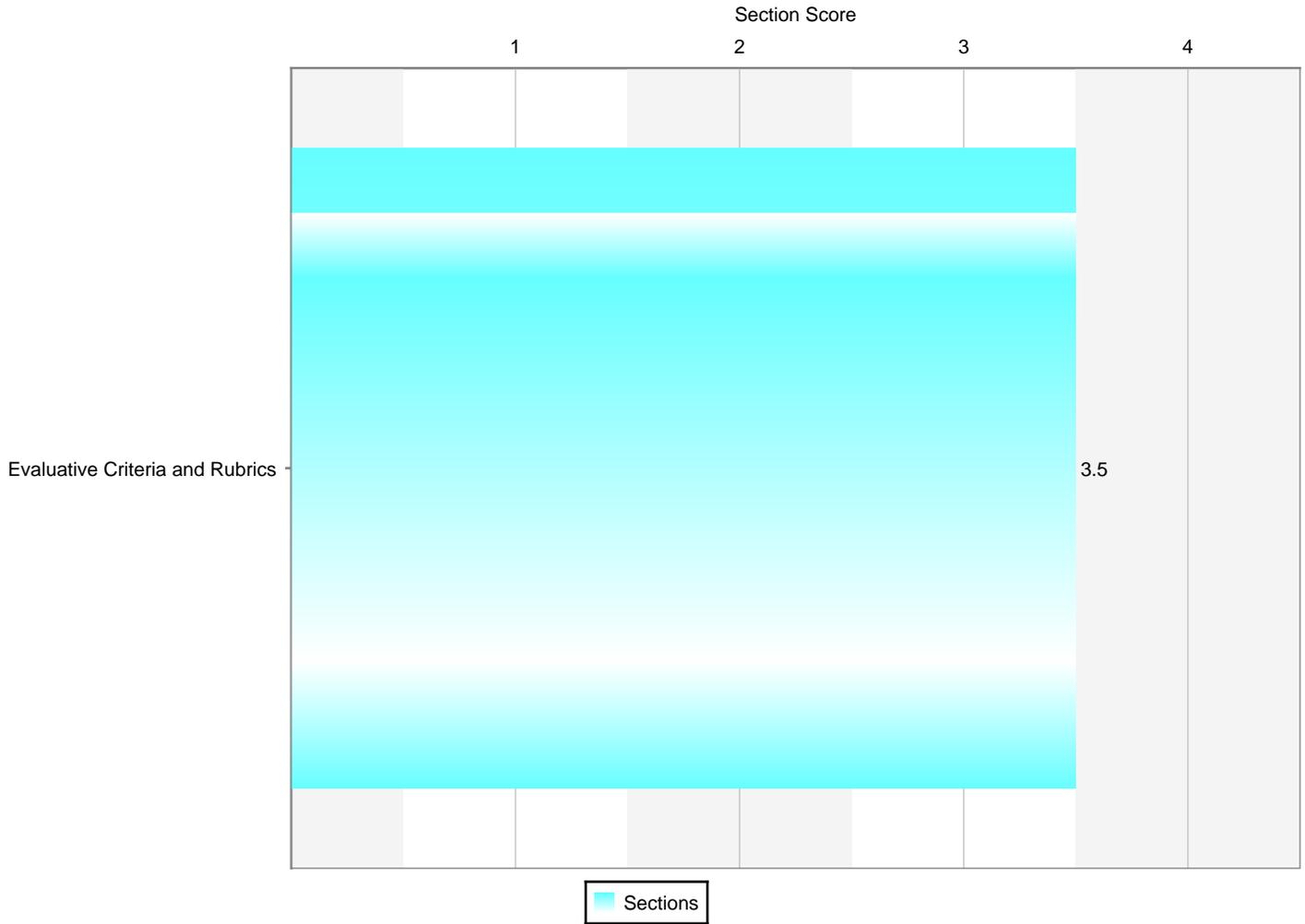
**Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other stakeholder feedback sources?**

Several open ended responses from parents and staff on the AdvancED surveys support decreased satisfaction with Indicator 2.3 concerning the governing body ensuring that leadership have the autonomy to meet goals and manage day-to-day operations. Indicators 3.2, 3.3, and 3.9 from the Teaching and Assessing for Learning Standard have not been areas of concern in any other stakeholder feedback sources.

Although Indicator 4.3 is an area of concern for students, there was no written indication on the open-ended responses concerning facilities, services, and equipment in providing a safe, clean, and healthy environment.

## Report Summary

### Scores By Section



# **Student Performance Diagnostic**

## **Introduction**

The Student Performance Diagnostic provides an institution with a process to report summative student assessments. This diagnostic is significant to the accreditation and continuous improvement process as it serves as a resource for schools to view content area assessment results required by the state, district, or other entities, determine the quality and reliability of the given assessments, and show the alignment of the assessments to the school's curriculum. The performance level computed at the completion of the diagnostic is used by the external review team as a comprehensive report to understand fully the institution's assessment program; the diagnostic should be used in the same manner by the institution as it engages in improvement planning.

**Student Performance Data**

<b>Label</b>	<b>Assurance</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Attachment</b>
1.	Did you complete the Student Performance Data document offline and upload below?	Yes		WCSD Student Performance Data

## Evaluative Criteria and Rubrics

Overall Rating: 3.25

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
1.	Assessment Quality	The array of assessment devices used by the institution to determine students' performances is sufficiently aligned so that valid inferences can be reached regarding students' status with respect to the entire set of curricular aims regarded as high-priority, "must accomplish," instructional targets. The documentation provided in support of this alignment is persuasive. All of the assessments used are accompanied by evidence demonstrating that they satisfy accepted technical requirements such as validity, reliability, absence of bias, and instructional sensitivity.	Level 4

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
2.	Test Administration	All the assessments used by the institution to determine students' performances, whether externally acquired or internally developed, have been administered with complete fidelity to the administrative procedures appropriate for each assessment. In every instance, the students to whom these assessments were administered are accurately representative of the students served by the institution. Appropriate accommodations have been provided for all assessments so that valid inferences can be made about all students' status with respect to all of the institution's targeted curricular outcomes.	Level 4

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
3.	Quality of Learning	Evidence of student learning promoted by the institution is acceptably analyzed and presented with reasonable clarity. In comparison to institutions functioning in a similar educational context, students' status, improvement, and/or growth evidence indicates that the level of student learning is at or above what would otherwise be expected.	Level 3

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
4.	Equity of Learning	Evidence of student learning indicates achievement gaps exist among subpopulations of students, and these achievement gaps demonstrate a modest decline.	Level 2

## Areas of Notable Achievement

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

Worth County School District (WCSD) is using the new state performance targets that were introduced in 2011 for College and Career Performance Index (CCRPI) accountability purposes as expected levels of performance. After reviewing unofficial scores for 2013, WCSD students scored above the state target for all students on the Biology and Math II End of Course Tests (EOCTs). During the last administration of the Math I EOCT in 2012, our students also performed above the state target for all students.

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

There are several EOCTs that show a positive trend in performance. There is an overall positive trend in performance on the 9th Grade Literature and Composition, American Literature and Composition, Biology, and Economics EOCTs. Scores on the Grade 8 Writing Assessment have continued to improve over the last four years.

English/language arts (ELA) and reading have always been a major focus in WCSD, and our students have always performed well in these areas. Over the last several years we have made an effort to encourage more open-ended responses across all subject areas to provide our students with more opportunities to write. Rising test scores on the Grade 8 Writing is also attributed to the Writing Success class at Worth County Middle School (WCMS). This connection class provides additional support and practice for writing skills to at-risk students.

Worth County High School (WCHS) has made efforts to schedule students for science courses more strategically. WCHS is now offering Environmental Science and Biology to 9th grade students. Students are placed in one of the two courses based on their 8th grade science CRCT scores. Environmental Science is not an EOCT course; therefore, students have a year to adjust to the rigor of high school courses before taking an EOCT.

### Which area(s) indicate the overall highest performance?

Scores on all of our ELA assessments indicate the overall highest performance. Students performed the highest on the ELA Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT). WCHS students performed the overall highest on the American Literature and Composition EOCT.

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

The Black and White subgroups show a trend toward increasing performance on the Physical Science EOCT. The Black subgroup is also increasing performance on the 9th Grade and American Literature and Composition EOCTs. The White subgroup demonstrates increasing performance on Biology, Economics, and U. S. History EOCTs.

There is a positive trend line over a four year period on the CRCT for the Black, Economically Disadvantaged (ED), and White subgroups in the areas of science and social studies.

**Between which subgroups is the achievement gap closing?**

The achievement gap is closing between the White and ED subgroups on several EOCTs. The gap closed 12 percentage points since 2011 on the 9th Grade Literature EOCT. There is a closing of 2 percentage points on the American Literature EOCT. On the Math II EOCT, the achievement gap has closed 5 percentage points. The Biology EOCT gap closed 9 percentage points since 2011.

There were a couple of notable closings based on unofficial scores for 2013. The ED subgroup performed at or above the same level as the White subgroup on the Physical Science EOCT during the spring administration. The Black subgroup closed the gap between the White subgroup by 20 percentage points on the 9th Grade Literature EOCT. These 9th grade students are the same group that gave us our highest scores on the Grade 8 Writing Assessment in 2012 which met the state average. ELA continues to be an area of strength for these students.

Although subgroup scores increased on the CRCT, there is no significant closure of the achievement gap.

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

Scores on the ACT are consistent with the findings concerning ELA. WCSD has strong ACT scores in ELA. Our students performed above the state average. We administer the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) to grade 4 students. We've seen an increase in all areas on this assessment over the last several years.

Compared to other Southwest Georgia RESA (SWGA RESA) districts, WCSD outperformed all districts on the 2013 Biology EOCT. WCSD scored in the top five of 15 districts on the 2013 Math II EOCT and performed well-above the state average. Southwest Georgia RESA 2013 comparison data also show that WCSD scored in the top four of the highest performing districts on the 9th Grade Literature and Composition EOCT. We were above the SWGA RESA average on the 2013 American Literature and Composition EOCT.

Through this self-assessment process, we realize that we need to make a connection between data findings and other relevant data sources such as school level benchmarks and common assessments.

## Areas in Need of Improvement

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

Worth County School District (WCSD) is using the new state performance targets that were introduced in 2011 for College and Career Performance Index (CCRPI) accountability purposes as expected levels of performance. All content areas for CRCT in grades 3-8 were below the state expected levels of performance. As a result, schools in the WCSD will set district created targets as we work to meet or exceed the more rigorous state targets year to year.

All content areas for End of Course Tests (EOCT) but Physical Science and Math II were also below the state performance targets. However, all 8 EOCT content areas have experienced gains in student performance over a 3 year period.

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

Due to continuous school improvement efforts, there are no negative trends for any CRCT content area for grades 3-8. While below state expected targets, we continue to experience gains in student achievement. In addition, there are no negative trends in performance on any EOCT. Due to curriculum changes, Coordinate Algebra EOCT was administered for the first time in spring of 2013 and proved to be a very rigorous assessment for Georgia's students. Worth County High School scores along with state scores were significantly lower than the Math I EOCT scores from previous years. This decrease in scores can be attributed to a change in curriculum and assessment.

### Which area(s) indicate the overall lowest performance?

For CRCT, social studies for grades 3-8 has had the overall lowest performance for several years. Several factors contribute to these scores. First, since the inception of No Child Left Behind and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), both science and social studies were not viewed as equally important as reading/ELA and mathematics; therefore, many schools concentrated more heavily on reading/ELA and mathematics for accountability purposes. Science and social studies did not receive equal time and attention; consequently these standardized test scores began to drop. In addition, when the WCSD was a Reading First district, very little time was given to science and social studies in the regular classroom. Students received science and social studies instruction every 8 days in their specials rotation. As a result of new accountability measures in Georgia, our awareness of the importance of teaching social studies and our students' continued low scores, we have and continue to make changes for the better. We now offer equal time to both science and social studies for grades 6-8. Teachers in grades k-5 teach all social studies standards instead of depending on specials' teachers. The social studies specials class at WCPS is used to reinforce standards taught in the regular classroom.

Even though social studies CRCT scores for grades 3-8 have the overall lowest performance, SWGA RESA 2013 comparison data show Worth County in the top four of 15 districts with the highest average scores.

Economics EOCT at the high school level had the lowest overall performance. As a result of low Economics scores, high school staff have created a plan to realign social studies classes to better prepare students for increased Economics performance in their 12th grade year.

Economics has been taught previously in students' 10th grade year.

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

While there are no trends toward decreased performance on the CRCT in any content areas, we are concerned about 2012 scores for Students with Disabilities (SWD). Prior to 2012, the SWD subgroup demonstrated a trend of increasing performance in all content areas in grades 3-8. There was a significant drop in scores during the 2012 administration of the CRCT. After analyzing unofficial data for 2013, the scores appear to have increased.

**Between which subgroups is the achievement gap becoming greater?**

There is an achievement gap between the Black and White subgroups in the area of social studies on the CRCT and EOCT. As discussed previously, we are making an effort to address this issue.

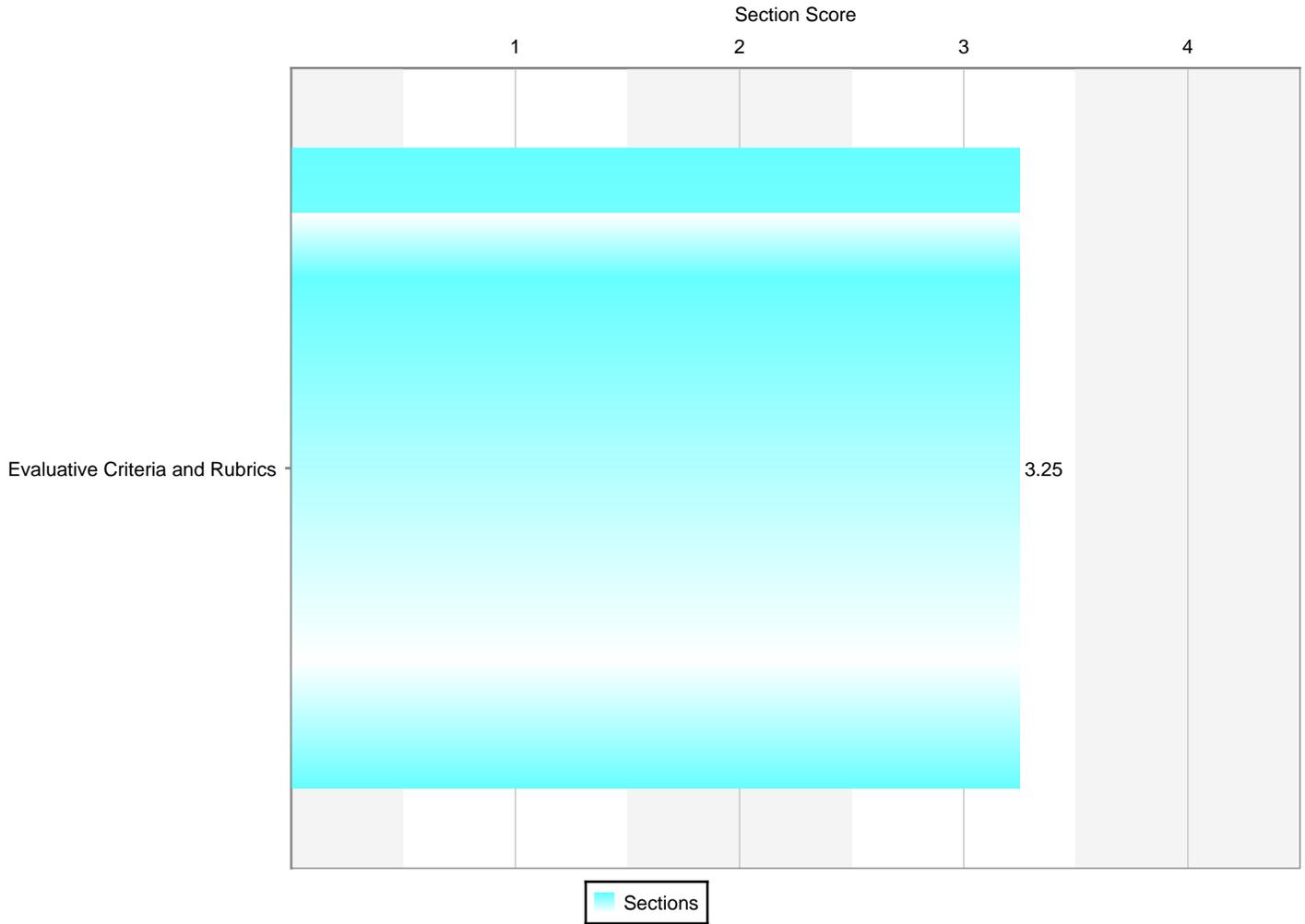
While 2013 SWD subgroup scores appear to have increased from 2012 scores, the achievement gap between our White subgroup and SWD subgroup is a concern as well.

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

Our findings about social studies are consistent with past results from The Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHS GT). The GHS GT was the assessment used for accountability purposes for high schools until 2011. There was a downward trend in overall scores on the social studies portion of this assessment from 2008-2010. School level data sources also reveal gaps between subgroups.

## Report Summary

### Scores By Section



# **AdvancED Assurances**

## **Introduction**

AdvancED Policies and Procedures outline certain requirements that all institutions must meet in order to be in compliance. Institutions are required to verify whether or not they meet these requirements by answering a series of questions and in some cases, attaching evidence for review.

By responding to the questions in ASSIST and attaching evidence when required, the institution has verified whether it meets or does not meet each of the Assurances for Accreditation.

## AdvancED Assurances

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
1.	The institution has read, understands, and complies with the AdvancED Policies and Procedures.	Yes		

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
2.	<p>The institution has reported all substantive changes in the institution that affect the scope and/or have an impact on the institution's ability to meet the AdvancED standards and policies. Such changes include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Restructuring (merging, opening, or closing) of the institution or institution(s) within its jurisdiction</li> <li>- Mission and purpose of the institution</li> <li>- Governance structure of the institution, including changing to a charter school/school system, being the subject of a state takeover, or a change in ownership</li> <li>- Grade levels served by the institution</li> <li>- Staffing, including administrative and other non-teaching professionals personnel</li> <li>- Available facilities, including upkeep and maintenance</li> <li>- Level of funding</li> <li>- School day or school year</li> <li>- Establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus</li> <li>- Student population that causes program or staffing modification(s)</li> <li>- Available programs, including fine arts, practical arts and student activities</li> </ul>	Yes		

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
3.	The institution implements a written security and crisis management plan which includes emergency evacuation procedures and appropriate training for stakeholders. Attach the security and crisis management plan. (optional)	Yes	Please find attached the Worth County School District's Emergency Preparedness Plan for 2013-2014.	WCSD Emergency Plan 2013-2014

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
4.	The institution monitors all financial transactions through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system.	Yes		

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
5.	The institution engages in a continuous improvement process and implements an improvement plan. Attach the improvement plan if the plan is not located in AdvancED's Adaptive System of School Improvement Support Tools (ASSIST).	Yes		WCSD Continuous Improvement Plan

# Accreditation Report

Worth County Schools

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Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
6.	The system verifies that all institutions within its jurisdiction meet the AdvancED Standards for Schools. Attach a description of the quality assurance process used to monitor the institutions.	Yes		WCSD Quality Assurance Process