Texas Tech University K-12

Lubbock, Texas

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Cognia Continuous Improvement System

Cognia defines continuous improvement as "an embedded behavior rooted in an institution's culture that constantly focuses on conditions, processes, and practices to improve teaching and learning." The Cognia Continuous Improvement System (CIS) provides a systemic, fully integrated solution to help institutions map out and navigate a successful improvement journey. In the same manner that educators are expected to understand the unique needs of every learner and tailor the education experience to drive student success, every institution must be empowered to map out and embrace their unique improvement journey. Cognia expects institutions to use the results and the analysis of data from various interwoven components for the implementation of improvement actions to drive education quality and improved student outcomes. While each improvement journey is unique, the journey is driven by key actions.

The findings of the Engagement Review Team are organized by the ratings from the Cognia Performance Standards Diagnostic and the Levels of Impact within the i3 Rubric: Initiate, Improve, and Impact.

Initiate

The first phase of the improvement journey is to **Initiate** actions to cause and achieve better results. The elements of the Initiate phase are defined within the Levels of Impact of Engagement and Implementation. Engagement is the level of involvement and frequency of stakeholders in the desired practices, processes, or programs within the institution. Implementation is the process of monitoring and adjusting the administration of the desired practices, processes, or programs for quality and fidelity. Standards identified within Initiate should become the focus of the institution's continuous improvement journey toward the collection, analysis, and use of data to measure the results of engagement and implementation. Enhancing the capacity of the institution in meeting these Standards has the greatest potential impact on improving student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Improve

The second phase of the improvement journey is to gather and evaluate the results of actions in order to **Improve**. The elements of the **Improve** phase are defined within the Levels of Impact of Results and Sustainability. Results come from the collection, analysis, and use of data and evidence to demonstrate attaining the desired result(s). Sustainability is results achieved consistently to demonstrate growth and improvement over time (a minimum of three years). Standards identified within Improve are those in which the institution is using results to inform their continuous improvement processes and to demonstrate over time the achievement of goals. The institution should continue to analyze and use results to guide improvements in student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

Impact

The third phase of achieving improvement is **Impact,** where desired practices are deeply entrenched. The elements of the **Impact** phase are defined within the Level of Impact of Embeddedness. Embeddedness is the degree to which the desired practices, processes, or programs are deeply ingrained in the culture and operation of the institution. Standards identified within Impact are those in which the institution has demonstrated ongoing growth and improvement over time and has embedded the practices within its culture. Institutions should continue to support and sustain these practices that yield results in improving student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

Cognia Performance Accreditation and the Engagement Review

Accreditation is pivotal in leveraging education quality and continuous improvement. Using a set of rigorous research-based standards, the Cognia Accreditation Process examines the whole institution—the program, the cultural context, and the community of stakeholders—to determine how well the parts work together to meet the needs of learners. Through the accreditation process, highly skilled and trained Engagement Review Teams gather first-hand evidence and information pertinent to evaluating an institution's performance against the research-based Cognia Performance Standards. Review teams use these Standards to assess the quality of learning environments in order to gain valuable insights and target improvements in teaching and learning. Cognia provides Standards that are tailored for all education providers so that the benefits of accreditation are universal across the education community.

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

Cognia Standards Diagnostic Results

The Cognia Performance Standards Diagnostic is used by the Engagement Review Team to evaluate the institution's effectiveness based on the Cognia Performance Standards. The diagnostic consists of three components built around each of three Domains: **Leadership Capacity**, **Learning Capacity,** and **Resource Capacity**. Results are reported within four ranges identified by color. The results for the three Domains are presented in the tables that follow.

Color	Rating	Description
Red	Insufficient	Identifies areas with insufficient evidence or evidence that indicated little or no activity leading toward improvement
Yellow	Initiating	Represents areas to enhance and extend current improvement efforts
Green	Improving	Pinpoints quality practices that are improving and meet the Standards
Blue	Impacting	Demonstrates noteworthy practices producing clear results that positively impact the institution

Under each Standard statement is a row indicating the scores related to the elements of Cognia's i3 Rubric. The rubric is scored from one (1) to four (4). A score of four on any element indicates high performance, while a score of one or two indicates an element in need of improvement. The following table provides the key to the abbreviations of the elements of the i3 Rubric.

Element	Abbreviation
Engagement	EN
Implementation	IM
Results	RE
Sustainability	SU
Embeddedness	EM

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Leadership Capacity Domain

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

Leadership Capacity Standards											Rating
1.1	The institution commits to a purpose statement that defines beliefs about teaching and learning, including the expectations for learners.										Impacting
	EN:	3	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	4	**EM:**	4	
1.2	Stakeholders collectively demonstrate actions to ensure the achievement of the institution's purpose and desired outcomes for learning.										Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	4	**EM:**	4	
1.3	The institution engages in a continuous improvement process that produces evidence, including measurable results of improving student learning and professional practice.										Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	3	
1.4	The governing authority establishes and ensures adherence to policies that are designed to support institutional effectiveness.										Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	4	**EM:**	4	
1.5	The governing authority adheres to a code of ethics and functions within defined roles and responsibilities.										Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	4	**EM:**	4	
1.6	Leaders implement staff supervision and evaluation processes to improve professional practice and organizational effectiveness.										Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	4	
1.7	Leaders implement operational processes and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness in support of teaching and learning.										Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	4	**EM:**	4	
1.8	Leaders engage stakeholders to support the achievement of the institution's purpose and direction.										Initiating
	EN:	3	**IM:**	2	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	2	
1.9	The institution provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness.										Initiating
	EN:	3	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	1	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	2	
1.10	Leaders collect and analyze a range of feedback data from multiple stakeholder groups to inform decision-making that results in improvement.										Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	2	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	2	

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Leadership Capacity Standards										Rating
1.11	Leaders utilize ethical marketing and communication practices.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	2	**EM:** 4	

Learning Capacity Domain

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

Learning Capacity Standards										Rating
2.1	Learners have equitable opportunities to develop skills and achieve the content and learning priorities established by the institution.									Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	2	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	3	**EM:** 3	
2.2	The learning culture promotes creativity, innovation, and collaborative problem-solving.									Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	1	**EM:** 2	
2.3	The learning culture develops learners' attitudes, beliefs, and skills needed for success.									Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	1	**EM:** 4	
2.4	The institution has a formal structure to ensure learners develop positive relationships with and have adults/peers who support their educational experiences.									Improving
	EN:	3	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	1	**SU:**	1	**EM:** 3	
2.5	Educators implement a curriculum that is based on high expectations and prepares learners for their next levels.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	4	**EM:** 4	
2.6	The institution implements a process to ensure the curriculum is clearly aligned to standards and best practices.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	4	**EM:** 4	
2.7	Instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learners' needs and the institution's learning expectations.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	3	**EM:** 3	
2.8	The institution provides programs and services for learners' educational futures and career planning.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	2	**EM:** 4	

Learning Capacity Standards									Rating
2.9	The institution implements processes to identify and address the specialized needs of learners.								Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	2	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	1	**EM:** 2
2.10	Learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated.								Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	2	**EM:** 4
2.11	Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to the demonstrable improvement of student learning.								Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	3	**EM:** 4
2.12	The institution implements a process to continuously assess its programs and organizational conditions to improve student learning.								Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	3	**EM:** 4
2.13	The institution ensures authenticity in student learning in a digital learning environment.								Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	4	**EM:** 4

Resource Capacity Domain

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

Resource Capacity Standards									Rating
3.1	The institution plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the institution's effectiveness.								Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	1	**EM:** 4
3.2	The institution's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.								Initiating
	EN:	2	**IM:**	2	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	1	**EM:** 3
3.3	The institution provides induction, mentoring, and coaching programs that ensure all staff members have the knowledge and skills to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.								Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	1	**EM:** 3
3.4	The institution attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the institution's purpose and direction.								Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	2	**EM:** 4

Resource Capacity Standards												Rating
3.5	The institution integrates digital resources into teaching, learning, and operations to improve professional practice, student performance, and organizational effectiveness.											Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	3	**EM:**	4		
3.6	The institution provides access to information resources and materials to support the curriculum, programs, and needs of students, staff, and the institution.											Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	3		
3.7	The institution demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning and use of resources in support of the institution's purpose and direction.											Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	3	**EM:**	4		
3.8	The institution allocates human, material, and fiscal resources in alignment with the institution's identified needs and priorities to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.											Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	4		
3.9	The institution provides an effective Learning Management System (LMS).											Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	4	**EM:**	4		
3.10	The institution's technology infrastructure supports teaching, learning, and operational effectiveness.											Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	4	**EM:**	4		

Assurances

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

Assurances Met		
YES	**NO**	**If No, List Unmet Assurances by Number Below**
X		

Cognia Observation Tool for Digital Learning

The instrument that is used by the Engagement Review Team is the Cognia Observation Tool for Digital Learning. This tool provides a format for reviewing five major key areas of the digital environment including Instructional Design, Learning Engagement, Platforms and Technologies, Assessment for Learning, and the Digital Learning Community. The tool provided the contextual framework for the team in conducting classroom observations, whether synchronously or asynchronously, and established a common language for team discussion. Additionally, these five areas (with their accompanying indicators) provided support for the team as they interviewed leaders, teachers, and students about the digital learning environment of your school.

The 2-D Learning Rubric looks at the instructional delivery with the key areas from a two-dimensional (2D) perspective that measures the Learning Environments and Learning Experiences. The 2-D Learning Rubric identifies the percentage of scores that fall into nine possible cells and will serve as a baseline for the educational provider's continuous improvement journey. The ratings and averages are in support of the findings of the Engagement Review Team. The results of the observation tool will also be posted in the workspace for additional access. The Learning Experiences are categorized as Digitize, Enhance and Innovation. Learning Environments are categorized as Silos, Connects, and Interconnectivity. The relationship between the experience and the environment is then rated.

These data support the team's findings and your own review of your program. Scores derived from these observations have no mathematical impact on the Index of Education Quality (IEQ) or final ratings of any of the Standards. They, in fact, support the areas of strength and needs for improvement identified in this report.

Cognia Observation Tool for Digital Learning						Institution	Cognia Average
Instructional Design: Instruction is designed to promote interactive engagement with personalized academic content.	**HE**	**EV**	**SE**	**NE**	**NA**	**3.01**	*2.53*
Learners have access to appropriately challenging curriculum (providing rigor, relevance, and fostering positive relationships).	12	3	0	0	0	3.80	*2.92*
Learners engage in a competency-based curriculum.	13	1	1	0	0	3.80	*2.80*
Instructional design incorporates evidence-based strategies appropriate for digital learning environments.	4	3	8	0	0	2.73	*2.56*
Instruction is designed to encourage collaboration with peers and mentors in meeting high learning expectations.	0	1	6	8	0	1.53	*1.97*
Learners demonstrate work that reflects the high expectations of the instructional design.	3	12	0	0	0	3.20	*2.41*
Learning Engagement: Dynamic learning environments support interactive engagement to create personalized learning experiences.	**HE**	**EV**	**SE**	**NE**	**NA**	**3.03**	*2.24*
The mentors and learners collaborate on personalized learning experiences that provide equity in learner voice and choice (e.g. competencies, rigor, time, place, and pace).	4	5	6	0	0	2.87	*2.31*
Learners engage in rigorous learning experiences, including interaction between peers and mentors and the use of higher order thinking skills.	4	7	3	1	0	2.93	*2.12*
Learner interactions with peers, mentors, and the academic content permeate the digital environment.	7	5	3	0	0	3.27	*2.09*
Learners make connections from the digital learning environment to real-life experiences.	7	4	2	2	0	3.07	*2.43*
Platforms and Technologies: Technology platforms are dynamic and enable innovative interactions between mentors and learners in support of personalized learning pathways.	**HE**	**EV**	**SE**	**NE**	**NA**	**3.36**	*2.35*
Learners have equal access to resources in a Learning Management System (LMS) or Content Management System (CMS) to enable classroom discussions, activities, digital tools, and support.	12	3	0	0	0	3.80	*3.04*
Learners use digital resources to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning.	12	3	0	0	0	3.80	*2.50*
Learners use digital resources to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning.	4	9	2	0	0	3.13	*2.24*
Learners use digital platforms to communicate and/or work collaboratively for learning.	2	8	5	0	0	2.80	*2.17*
Learners and mentors engage in interactive digital platforms that have capacity to support new technologies (e.g. adaptive technology, technology-enhanced items, virtual reality, or augmented reality).	5	9	1	0	0	3.27	*1.82*

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Cognia Observation Tool for Digital Learning						Institution	Cognia Average
Assessment for Learning: Assessment for learning promotes the development of learning goals, support and progress monitoring, and student ownership of the learning process.	**HE**	**EV**	**SE**	**NE**	**NA**	**2.80**	*2.26*
Learners engage in a process that includes goal setting, self-assessment, and reflection on learning with support from mentors.	4	9	2	0	0	3.13	*2.18*
Learners engage consistently in active communication (static and dynamic) with mentors about their learning goals.	2	4	9	0	0	2.53	*2.30*
Learners engage in the coaching process with their mentors in their progress towards learning goals.	4	6	4	1	0	2.87	*2.20*
Learners take responsibility in the creation and attainment of their learning goals.	0	5	6	4	0	2.07	*2.17*
Learners engage consistently in active feedback (static and dynamic) with mentors.	9	3	3	0	0	3.40	*2.44*
Digital Learning Community: The community promotes positive interactions and relationships between and among learners and mentors.	**HE**	**EV**	**SE**	**NE**	**NA**	**2.83**	*2.18*
Learners are engaged in promoting digital citizenship and a culture of connectedness.	8	1	4	0	2	3.31	*2.18*
Learners communicate and interact respectfully with mentor(s) and each other.	1	7	7	0	0	2.60	*2.65*
Learners and mentors have opportunities to develop empathy and respect for personal and socio-cultural differences among members within the community.	2	3	3	1	6	2.67	*1.75*
Learners and mentors have opportunities to build a sense of community by fostering positive relationships (peer to peer, peer to adult, adult to adult).	1	9	5	0	0	2.73	*2.14*

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2-D Learning Rubric			
Interconnectivity	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Connects	6.7%	2.7%	0.0%
Silos	81.3%	9.3%	0.0%
	Digitize	Enhance	Innovation

Learning Environments (vertical axis label)

Learning Experiences

Accreditation Status and Index of Education Quality®

Cognia will review the results of the Accreditation Engagement Review to make a final determination concerning accreditation status, including the appropriate next steps for your institution in response to these findings. Cognia provides the Index of Education Quality (IEQ) as a holistic measure of overall performance based on a comprehensive set of standards and review criteria. This formative tool for improvement identifies areas of success and areas in need of focus. The IEQ comprises the Standards Diagnostic ratings from the three Domains: Leadership Capacity, Learning Capacity, and Resource Capacity. The IEQ results are reported on a scale of 100 to 400 and provide information about how the institution is performing compared to expected criteria. Institutions should review the IEQ in relation to the findings from the review in the areas of Initiate, Improve, and Impact. An IEQ score below 250 indicates that the institution has several areas within the Initiate level and should focus their improvement efforts on those Standards within that level. An IEQ in the range of 225–300 indicates that the institution has several Standards within the Improve level and is using results to inform continuous improvement and demonstrate sustainability. An IEQ of 275 and above indicates the institution is beginning to reach the Impact level and is engaged in practices that are sustained over time and are becoming ingrained in the culture of the institution.

Below is the average (range) of all Cognia Improvement Network (CIN) institutions evaluated for accreditation in the last five years. The range of the annual CIN IEQ average is presented to enable you to benchmark your results with other institutions in the network.

Institution IEQ	343.97	CIN 5 Year IEQ Range	278.34 – 283.33

Insights from the Review

The Engagement Review Team engaged in professional discussions and deliberations about the processes, programs, and practices within the institution to arrive at the findings of the team. These findings are organized around themes guided by the evidence, with examples of programs and practices, and suggestions for the institution's continuous improvement efforts. The Insights from the Review narrative should provide contextualized information from the team's deliberations and analysis of the practices, processes, and programs of the institution organized by the levels of Initiate, Improve, and Impact. The narrative also provides the next steps to guide the institution's improvement journey in its efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities for all learners. The findings are aligned to research-based criteria designed to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness. The feedback provided in the Accreditation Engagement Review Report will assist the institution in reflecting on its current improvement efforts and to adapt and adjust their plans to continuously strive for improvement.

The Engagement Review Team reviewed multiple artifacts, engaged in interviews, and conducted digital learning observations with Texas Tech University (TTU) K-12. Five themes surfaced during the review, including leadership, the learning culture, assessment, communication, and impact of change.

The leadership structures and practices show strength in delivering a quality online education to a diverse body of students. The school's mission is "to provide an excellent academic program that engages, challenges, and prepares students for their futures." The governing authority, the Board of Regents of the Texas Tech University System, maintains a commitment to this mission by providing a high-quality staff to lead the school with a network of support systems in place and allocating the resources needed to enable the school to thrive and become financially self-supporting. The Regents approve all policy for the school, including ethics and conflict of interest policies, and monitor the Texas State Board of Education (SBOE) rules and regulations. Recently the SBOE passed legislation that allowed the school to access Foundation School Program (FSP) funding, enabling them to offer a tuition-free program. This has led to the development of a school-specific advisory board, which has just had its first training on what the school is all about, the roles and ethics of being a board member, and the responsibilities it will have in advising the school leaders. Participating in FSP funds provides increased access for Texas students and comes with increased responsibility for reporting and accounting procedures. The Regents are providing increased personnel to manage these additional, highly detailed duties. Special attention to separated accounting and attendance systems for FSP funding will support the school to perform well on the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas.

A curriculum development team works with teacher input and research on best practices to provide a rigorous online curriculum in every course aligned to the state standards and with high expectations for students. Many of the course exams are audited by the Texas Education Agency to ensure they align to and assess the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) state curriculum in their Credit by Exam (CBE) system. Students have access to the Texas Tech University library system, which houses a wealth of resource materials. New resources are vetted by the curriculum development team, with a "sandbox" set up by the technology team to ensure compatibility and effectiveness. Tracking data on student achievement within courses following changes or the addition of resources would provide "return on investment" data to further guide these decisions.

A network of technology staff from the university department, the Blackboard staff, and the K-12 team support the Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS) infrastructure and user support through their Footprints ticket system and helplines. The team analyzes user data through apps in its systems and Footprint trouble-shooting tickets to guide improvements and monitor changes as they are

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implemented. The school provides an intensive system of security to safeguard student information and has recently implemented Proctorio services to digitally proctor student assessments based on data from Footprint tickets and teacher feedback. This, along with SafeAssign, supports teachers to ensure authenticity of work among the students. Currently, the technology team is working on tools in the LMS that will support the reporting requirements for FSP and dashboards that will enable more efficient access to student data from the LMS for teachers and school leaders. As the tuition-free school data will become a part of the Texas School Report Card system, special attention to those reporting markers will be important to ensure school leaders can monitor progress well.

Handbooks, weekly and bi-weekly meetings with teams, and update emails from school leaders provide consistency in operational procedures throughout the school. A marketing team works closely with school leaders to ensure the accuracy of information and branding in all communications from the school. Counselors meet with every student and/or parent at enrollment to clarify what it means to be an online student and gather information, such as transcripts, learning needs and styles, and student interests. They develop and track a personal graduation plan (PGP) with high school students to guide course choices and career path development. Almost all courses come through the Blackboard LMS, providing students with a familiar environment in nearly every course. Students reported it took them some time to learn how to navigate comfortably, but they appreciated that it was the same in their varying courses. Every teacher provided a syllabus that gave students a guide for content and pacing to support students' completion.

The leadership team clearly understands the value of its quality teachers and how their work with each student is critical to their success. The evaluation system includes frequent "walk-throughs" (review of online data in each course) that provide feedback to each teacher personally on turnaround times and student achievement, with added support and induction processes for new teachers. Grades and Retention Center reports in the LMS provide data for teachers to intervene, monitor, and adjust as needed to promote students' individual success. Changes to caseloads were implemented this year to support needed accommodations for increased students with special needs. School leaders are encouraged to find strategies – in addition to the current practice of email threads – for teachers to have regular opportunities for professional time together (perhaps by time zone rather than subject) in a shared community of practice, enabling them to develop their leadership capacity through collaborative learning discussions, sharing what they have learned in their individual professional development activities, and mentoring each other.

The learning culture of the school provides challenging rigor and authentic learning experiences. A well-developed curriculum with high expectations, guided by TEKS trackers to ensure alignment, includes activities with appropriate depth of knowledge for the age groups served. Science courses include frequent labs students do at home, sending photos with their lab write-ups to their teachers. Math courses focus heavily on problem-solving activities and include access to interactive online resources that enhance the learning experiences. Career-tech (CTE) and social studies courses use some project-based learning activities to encourage critical thinking skills. An analysis of the level of interactive tools and collaborative opportunities available to students would provide excellent data for the curriculum development team to continuously improve the design of the courses to align with the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL). Collaboration especially will become more accessible as the new tuition-free program works within closer time boundaries and cohorts of students this year.

Students have formative and summative assessments throughout their courses to show their level of mastery. Short answer questions are frequently used in assessments along with multiple choice so that students have more opportunities to demonstrate their thinking. Parents have access to their child's grades and rubrics to monitor progress between reporting periods. The Blackboard LMS mostly

summarizes sections of content as teachers refer students to textbooks, links to websites and articles, and online tools. Student agency is developed through guidance on pacing in all courses along with voice and choice on writing topics and presentation formats in some courses. Further development of student agency could be developed with high school students using a course tracking sheet or chart in annual meetings with the counselors that the students can access as desired to see their progress towards graduation.

Teachers are provided with documents for accommodations for students with special needs, which were described to be mostly having text read to them (through compatible tools or a person they provide) and extra time. School leaders expect this need to increase this year and plan for a new administrative position to monitor compliance and complete state reporting requirements. Struggling students without accommodations assigned to them are offered extra time with the teacher when needed and opportunities to redo work after reteaching. The platform is consistent across all courses except language courses and Advanced Placement (AP) courses, with stable software and many safeguards in place to protect students and their information. Blackboard includes a messaging center that students use to turn in assignments in portable document format (pdf), ask questions as needed of the teacher, and report any problems they are having. Students interviewed reported that teachers have become much more responsive to them this past year, answering their messages within a day and providing specific feedback on their work either through rubrics or notes back to them on their assignments.

Middle school students are required to take a career exploration class, and high school students have access to an online career inventory tool. Students are given a broad array of choices of classes to meet their interests and career pathways. Leadership explained that courses are added periodically based on data from student choices in their PGP documents. Leadership skills are built into the career exploration course at the middle school level and through an optional interpersonal course at the high school level. At enrollment, students are offered a brief orientation course that develops their skill with self-direction, but this course is optional. Opportunities for a National Honor Society, National Junior Society, and Student Council have just begun; however, less than 100 students are involved in those. Developing leadership skills in students is a critical piece of 21st-century learning that supports their success later in life. The school could consider making some of these developmental courses required or pull the best activities from them and embed those in other required classes to ensure all students have some exposure to leadership development.

The LMS is rich with student assessment data, but currently, the data points that teachers and school leaders analyze are limited by the reporting capability of the LMS and usage apps the technology team has inserted. The technology team uses the Nagios monitoring system to receive comprehensive monitoring data and alerting systems to support their maintenance of the infrastructure and supply return on investment usage data as new tools are added and implemented. The Ally Accessibility score informs the curriculum development team with information related to student accessibility issues such as contrast levels and compatibility with online reader tools. The Blackboard's Retention Center report flags students at risk of failure based on low grades and lag times in accessing the course. Teachers use this to monitor issues with course completion and check in with flagged students. The LMS identifies student work by date of submission and date graded, which school leaders monitor by teacher as one of their evaluation criteria, turnaround time. Since these courses are competency-based and mastery is necessary to progress through sections, completion times reports provide feedback on student needs as well. Built-in course checkpoints allow students to have a one-on-one conversation with their teacher several times throughout the course. Teachers reported these also help them get to know their students and give them some personalized attention. Rubrics provide formative feedback to students: however, the rubric score translates to a comprehensive percentage in the grading system, so there is no formal analysis of the individual criteria on the rubrics to inform the teacher or curriculum developers of

strengths and weaknesses in the lessons. The school shared an item analysis of a final exam for one course that showed items considered as "poor" questions based on 163 submitted tests, providing the curriculum developers with clear data to guide their adjustment decisions. A next step for this team will be to analyze the alignment of course summative tests to the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) tests in grades 3-8, such that course assessment data can accurately predict success or needed interventions for those students in the tuition-free program, especially those who will be required to pass the STAAR for promotion in specific grades. The technology team is working on creating teacher and leadership dashboards to make the plethora of data more accessible to the academic staff. Communication on what student achievement data to pull for reports will be critical to this process. Building in the ability to analyze academic data points longitudinally will also support continued improvements for the school.

Strong relationships were described between and among the leadership teams and between the teacher leader group and the academic leadership, but not as strong for all stakeholder groups. Leadership collaboration was highlighted through multiple layers of consistent meetings that have been weaving the continued improvements of the school over the years since they first began as a correspondence school over 25 years ago. This team clearly has learned how to network and manage tasks, as seen in their strategic plan developed in spreadsheet format with metrics and monitoring notes, so the leaders are all on the same page with the next steps and projects. The teacher leaders (department chairs, effectively) and the three administrators communicate with the other teachers generally by email to inform them of upcoming changes or updates. Collaboration among the teachers was described as threads of emails. Students described their communication with teachers as varying, depending on the teacher, although much improved this past year. One teacher estimated they communicate with about half of their students outside of feedback on assignments. The students also described very little opportunity to communicate or collaborate with other students, something for which the international students expressed a strong desire. Considering the rich diversity of the student body and how much diversity enhances learning is something the Engagement Review Team strongly encourages, and the school has identified this in its current priorities and goals.

Parent communication is an area of some frustration, as was expressed in parent interviews (although the team recognizes this was a small representative group). However, the enrollment process was described as involving parents and/or students in the initial conversations. Obviously, the majority of students are minors, and the parents eventually sign enrollment paperwork. The potential for planting seeds of parent involvement or parent networking could be left unplanted if parental presence is not required in those initial conversations. Parents, staff, and students receive surveys "about every year;" however, the school has not yet found a good survey for online schools to establish a consistent feedback loop with validity and reliability in responses. A specific goal for parent communication and engagement with metrics for measuring their participation or contacts with the school or each other in some way would provide another stakeholder group's energy and perspective in the continuous improvement process.

Longitudinal data on usage and technical issues have been used by the operational staff for several years to inform decisions on the technical side of the management of change, but data use to monitor the impact of change on student achievement is not as prevalent. The use of data for improvement was another goal identified by the leadership team. Due to state audits, external data are used intensively to improve CBE assessments. Longitudinal data on summative assessments within courses would provide rich feedback for course developers on the effectiveness of lessons within courses. Follow-up achievement data after changes are made, apps are added, or new tools online are resourced would provide information on the impact such changes have caused, keeping them ever focused on the mission of the school. Records of meetings where data-based decisions are made would

support continuity as leadership changes happen over time. A program evaluation system can further inform decisions related to counseling services, K-12 college and career readiness activities, CTE pathways and certifications, alumni successes, professional development effectiveness, and teacher evaluation effectiveness. The school can lead this goal by constantly asking those in charge of programs, "What do we want/need to get better at, and how can we measure 'better'?"

As the school improvement plan evolves through this Cognia review process, paying special attention to metrics for measuring progress and defining successful completion of goals will be an important aspect of creating a cohesive plan. Of special importance is to review the mission statement and ensure that the goals align with the mission of academic excellence. Communicating the improvement plan to all stakeholder groups, including parents, would provide unity in accomplishing goals. The school might consider a series of parent focus groups to bring varied perspectives and help develop strategies for areas of improvement.

Texas Tech University K-12 has evolved into an outstanding online school filling the need for a different way of doing school for almost half a million students. Its strength in leadership and coordinated approach to managing change has served it well in its continuous journey. The school is encouraged to review the ratings found in each Standard and the insights identified by the Engagement Review Team as part of the school's continuous improvement process, and to use this feedback with suggestions for the next steps to guide its continued pathway of excellence.

Next Steps

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

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

Team Roster

The Engagement Review Teams are comprised of professionals with varied backgrounds and expertise. To provide knowledge and understanding of the Cognia tools and processes, all Lead Evaluators and Engagement Review Team members are required to complete Cognia training. The following professionals served on the Engagement Review Team:

Team Member Name	Brief Biography/Title
Mary Brinkmann, Lead Evaluator	Mary Brinkman earned a Bachelor of Science in education with a special education endorsement and a Master of Education in education administration from the University of Texas at Austin. She has been an educator for over 30 years, serving first in a birth-to-three program, then moving to elementary, middle, and high school levels in public districts and public charter schools. Initially she was a special education teacher, then an assistant principal, and for the final 11 years a principal. Her principalships included an International Baccalaureate (IB) middle school and an online alternative high school. She opened her last school, a public charter T-STEM and IB school, serving students in grades 6-12. She has also worked in the IB Educator Network, providing training and support to schools for growth and improvement, and served as an IB field representative. She serves on Cognia engagement reviews as Lead Evaluator for early learning schools; K-12 schools domestic and global; special purpose, digital, or STEM schools; school systems; and corporations.
Dr. Reham El Haddad	English Language Arts Teacher and Activities Coordinator
Dr. Laura Galindo	Executive Director at Schelastic Academy
Nevine Khalil	Principal at Dar El Tarbiah American Middle School and AP Coordinator for Cairo-Egypt
Cynthia Tschanz	School Administrative Manager at St Joseph Private Language School and Learning Coach at Acacia University

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