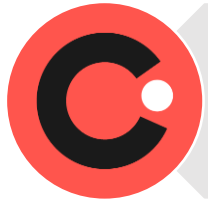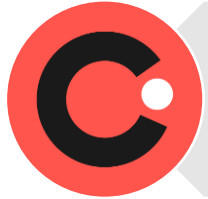# cognia®

# Accreditation & Accountability in support of K-12 Improvement

Jake Goldsmith, Vice President, Regional Services

Tony Siddall, Senior Director, Regional Services

# What We'll Cover Today

**Who is Cognia**

**What is Accreditation**

**Accreditation & Accountability**
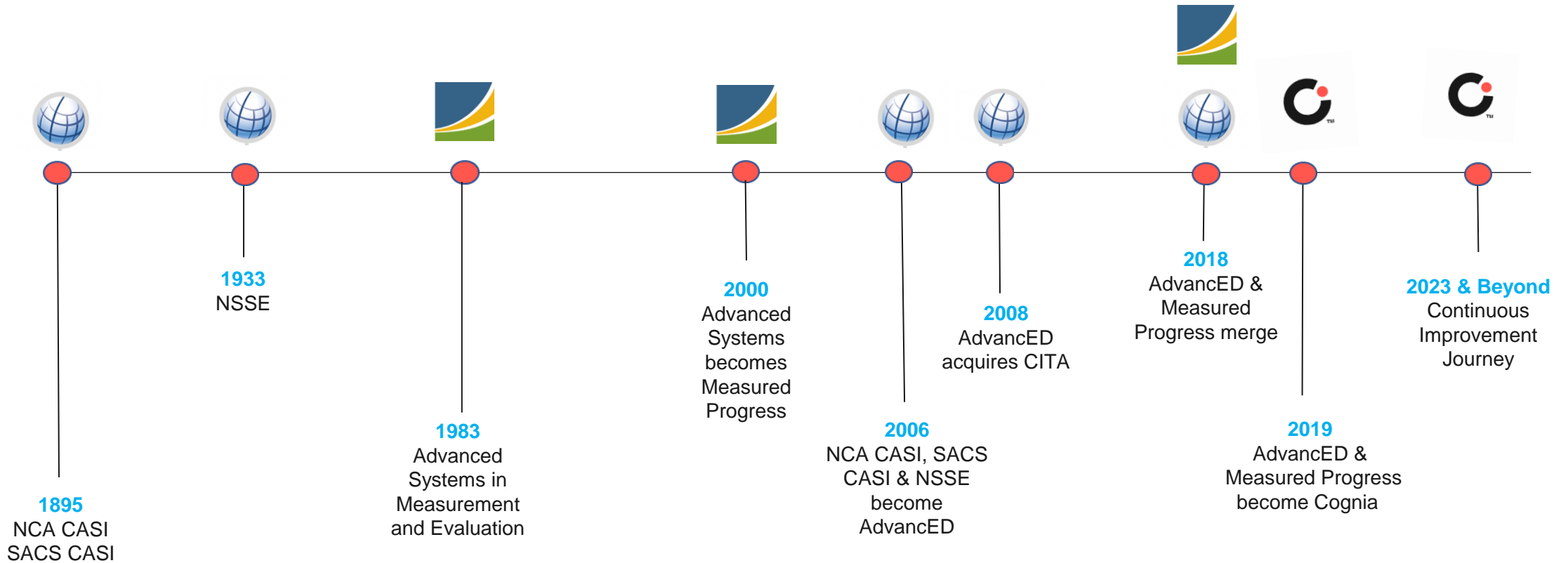
**Building Coherence**

# Our Vision

To impact and inspire education providers to advance and enable pathways for success for all learners

# Our Mission

To serve as a trusted partner in advancing learning

# History At-a-Glance

**1895**
NCA CASI
SACS CASI

**1933**
NSSE

**1983**
Advanced
Systems in
Measurement
and Evaluation

**2000**
Advanced
Systems
becomes
Measured
Progress

**2006**
NCA CASI, SACS
CASI & NSSE
become
AdvancED

**2008**
AdvancED
acquires CITA

**2018**
AdvancED &
Measured
Progress merge

**2019**
AdvancED &
Measured Progress
become Cognia

**2023 & Beyond**
Continuous
Improvement
Journey

# The network

**125** years of knowledge and expertise in continuous improvement

**36,000** schools and districts

**92** countries

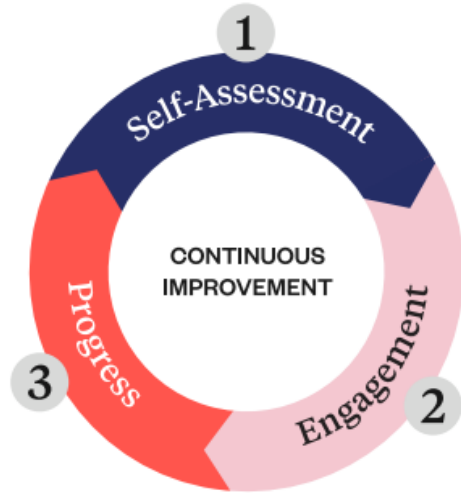The world's largest accreditation and improvement network

# Continuous Improvement

" An embedded set of behaviors rooted in an institution's culture that constantly focuses on conditions, processes and practices to improve teaching and learning.

*-Cognia Self Assessment Workbook*

# A Multi-Year Cycle of Continuous Improvement



## 1 Self-Assessment

- Participate in orientation and training from Cognia
- Reflect and collaborate on your school's current status
- Administer Cognia Culture and Climate Survey
- Identify, collect, and analyze meaningful evidence and data
- Complete Cognia Self-Assessment Workbook
- Complete Cognia Diagnostics and Assurances

## 2 Engagement

- Cognia evaluators schedule the Leadership Overview Presentation, review submitted evidence, and rate Performance Standards
- Following evaluation, you'll receive an Engagement Review Report that details Cognia's findings, highlights your noteworthy practices, and identifies areas for improvement
- Cognia Global Commission confirms that the findings in the report demonstrate your institution's commitment and quality and confers your accreditation

## 3 Progress

- Cognia evaluators schedule follow-up for your institution to assess the status of your continuous improvement efforts
- Receive continued collaboration and guidance from your Cognia team
- Toward the middle of your accreditation term, complete the institution's part of the Progress Report, describing your improvements in the areas outlined in your Engagement Review Report

"

Regional K–12 accreditation is a private, not-for-profit system of voluntary self-regulation carried out by the education profession to help improve practices and results.

Accreditation is a rigorous, multi-year process in which school and district leaders work with teams of peer reviewers to demonstrate that their schools meet or exceed standards set by the profession, which are based on research about what helps improve school and student performance.

- *The Role of Regional Accreditation and Accountability Systems in Improving K-12 Education, Cognia 2022*

# A Standards-Based Process

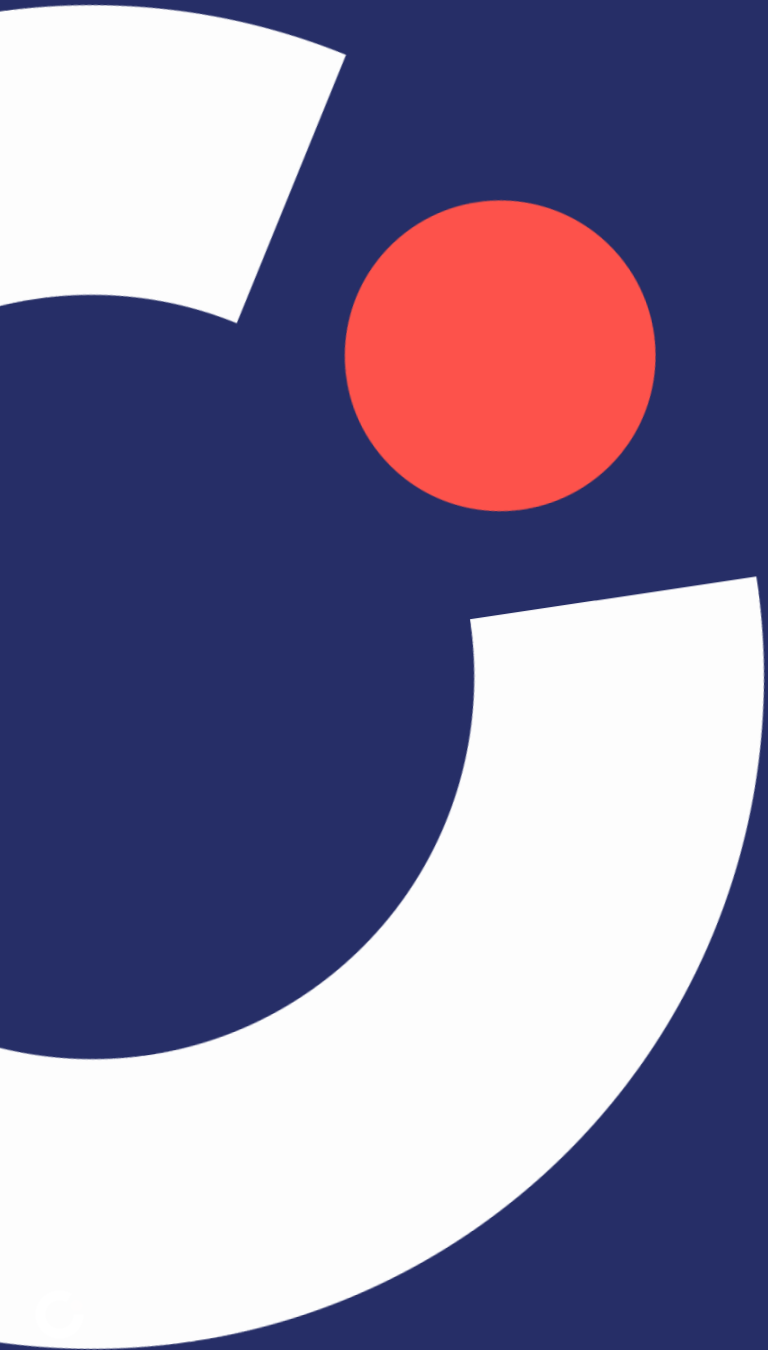## 30 **Standards** Organized in Four **Key Characteristics**

**CULTURE OF LEARNING**: the institution's focus on the challenges, joys, and opportunities for learning, and the coherence with its mission and vision

**LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING**: the responsibility of an institution's leaders to influence and impact all aspects of the institution in positive ways

**ENGAGEMENT OF LEARNING**: the inclusion of all learners in the learning process, and their development of confidence and love of learning

**GROWTH IN LEARNING**: the growth of learners in the programs and curricula provided by the institution and their readiness to successfully transition to next levels of learning



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Effective July 1, 2022

**Performance Standards**

K-12 and Postsecondary Institutions

# Accreditation and Accountability

# Self Assessment & Peer Review
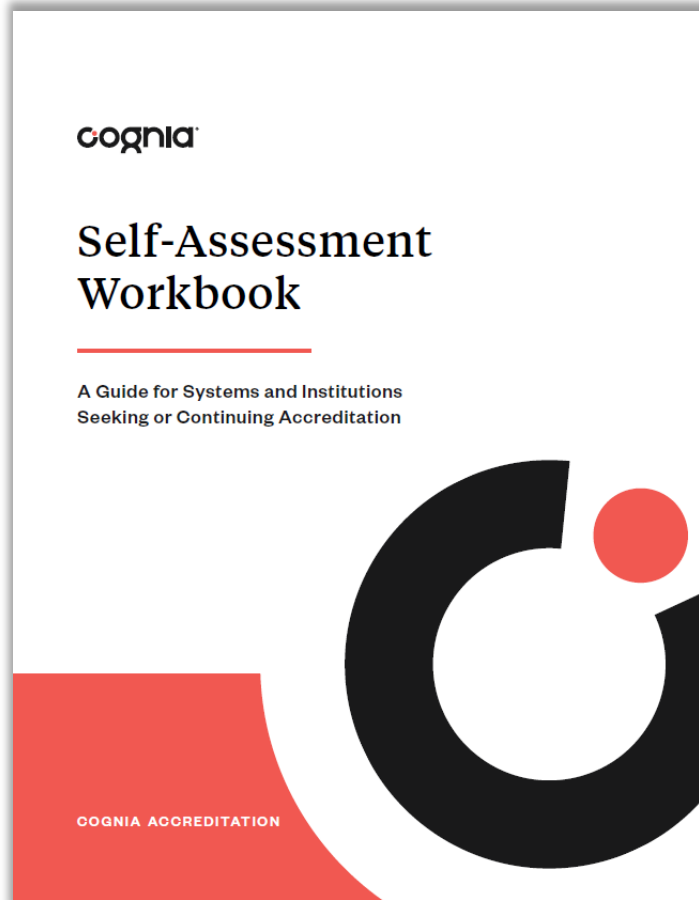
Building capacity to **gather**, **analyze** and **use** evidence:

- Gather Evidence & Analyze Data
- Rate Performance Standards
- Write Reflective Narratives
- Develop Theories of Action

# Accreditation can help answer...

- What kinds of activities are students asked to do in the classroom, and how well do those activities align with the intended curriculum?

- What does the school do to support its lowest performing students?

- What is happening in the culture and learning environment of the school?

- How active are families in the school community?

- How are teachers hired and supported to grow professionally?

- What are school leaders doing to build the morale of teachers and staff?

- How actively are students engaged in their learning?

# Accreditation vs. Accountability
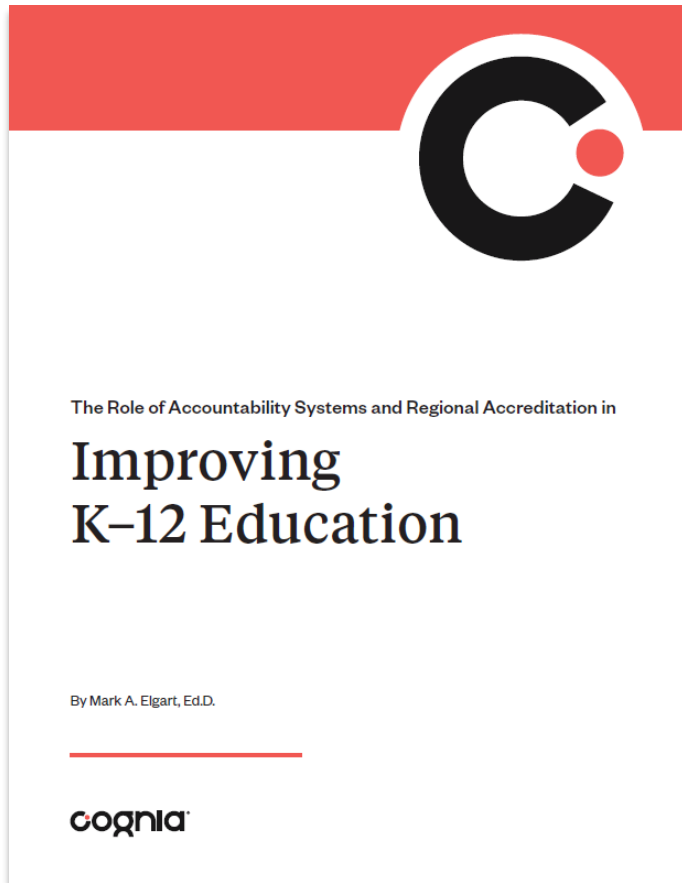
| | Regional Accreditation | Accountability Systems |
|---|---|---|
| **Purpose** | Continuous Improvement | Determine Status |
| **Focus** | Root Causes | Outcomes |
| **Evidence** | Holistic | Quantitative |
| **Participation** | Voluntary (ideally) | Compulsory |
| **Authority** | Peer-driven | Policy-driven |

The Role of Accountability Systems and Regional Accreditation in

## Improving K–12 Education

By Mark A. Elgart, Ed.D.

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"For accreditation to be effective, schools need to be ready and willing to invest the time in self-reflection and peer review. It will not be effective in schools or districts unwilling to abide by the rigorous process and make meaningful changes.

- *The Role of Regional Accreditation and Accountability Systems in Improving K-12 Education, Cognia 2022*

# Building Coherence

- Maintain a clear distinction between regional accreditation and state accountability

- Set a state strategy to intentionally pair continuous improvement supports with accountability

- Improve the formative usefulness of state assessments

- Broaden the data collected (but do not attach stakes)

- Consider tiered models of support grounded in diagnostic reviews

# Tiered Models of Support
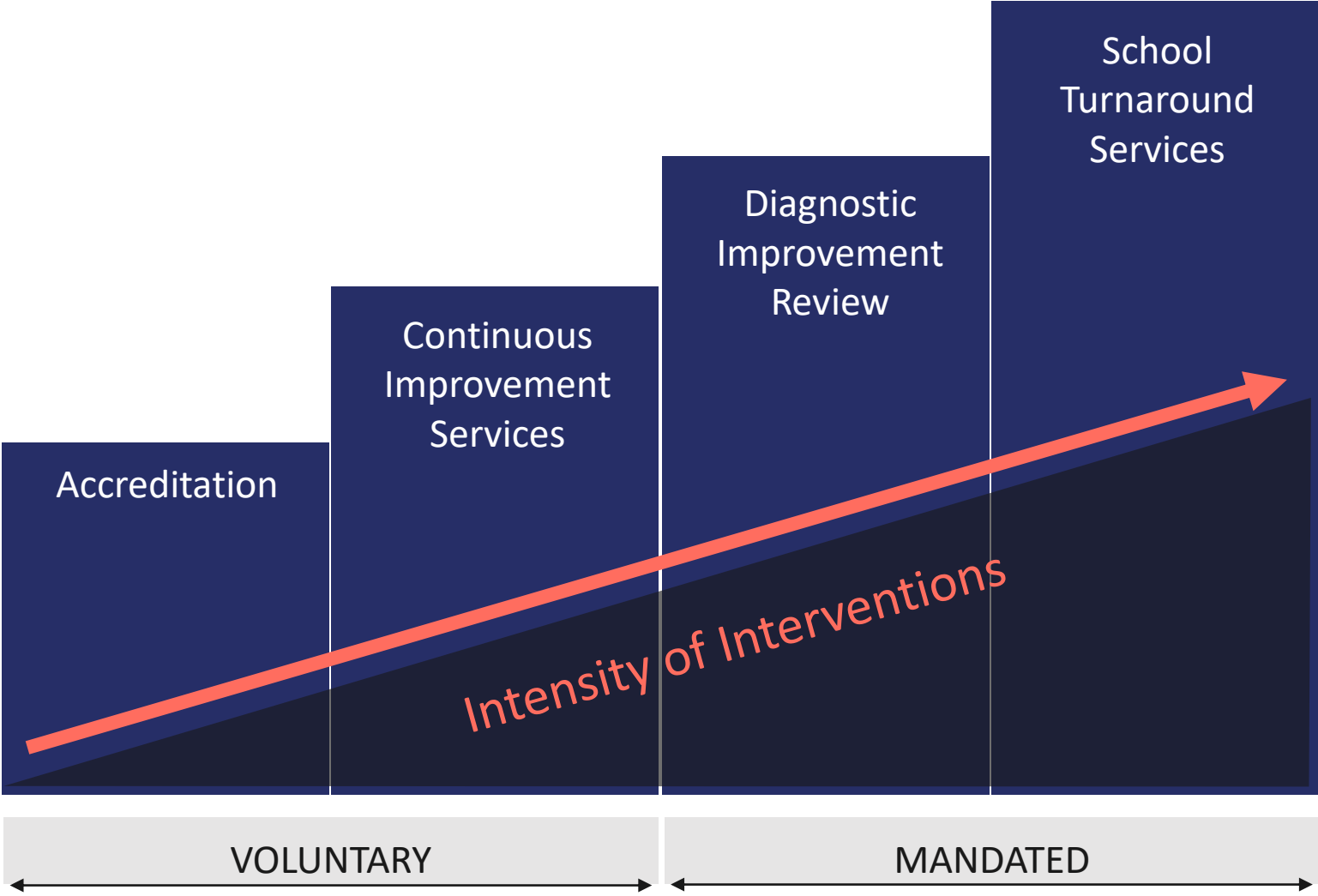
# Accreditation for State Education Agencies



**STANDARD 5**

Agency personnel embrace collegiality and collaboration in support of clients and their learners.

**STANDARD 8**

Leaders use data and input from a variety of sources to make decisions and model personal accountability.

**STANDARD 12**

The agency ensures accountability of schools, districts, and the agency regarding the implementation of state and federal policy.

**STANDARD 16**

The agency collects, evaluates, and responds appropriately to feedback and data for continuous improvement.

**STANDARD 17**

The agency partners with organizations that build the agency's capacity to impact educational improvement.

**STANDARD 22**

Personnel regularly reflect on prior results, create action steps related to improvement goals, and hold themselves and others accountable for those actions.

Equity & Reciprocity

# Key Standards for Equity

**STANDARD 1**
Leaders cultivate and sustain a culture that demonstrates respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion, and is free from bias.

**STANDARD 15**
Learners' needs drive the equitable allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources.

**STANDARD 16**
Learners experience curriculum and instruction that emphasize the value of diverse cultures, backgrounds, and abilities.

**STANDARD 17**
Learners have equitable opportunities to realize their learning potential.

**STANDARD 18**
Learners are immersed in an environment that fosters lifelong skills including creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.

**STANDARD 30**
Learners' progress is measured through a balanced system that includes assessment both for learning and of learning.

# Improving Access to Evidence Tools

# Actionable Feedback

## Summary of Findings

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

### Noteworthy Practices

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

1  Bina School immerses learners in an environment centered around student needs where curiosity and creativity skills are fostered, and instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet those learning needs for student achievement. Learners are consistently engaged in instructional activities based on their individual needs and interests and faculty use a formal process for analyzing student learning data to deepen each learner's understanding of content.

Standard 18    Standard 21    Standard 22

### Areas for Improvement

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

1  Formalize a systemic process of engaging stakeholders.

Standard 3

RATIONALE    If the school engages stakeholders on a consistent basis, then there will be a systemic process in which stakeholders can support the institution's priorities and guiding principles that promote learners' academic growth and well-being.

2  Develop the governing authority to support the mission of the school.

Standard 8    Standard 9

RATIONALE    If the organization develops the governing authority to include other stakeholder groups, then there will be opportunities to provide leadership opportunities and for the board to continue to provide direction and support as the school becomes established.

3  Formalize a systemic process to gather and analyze data.

Standard 24    Standard 25    Standard 26

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### Vision
Our vision is that every student is achieving at his or her maximum potential in an engaging, inspiring and challenging environment.

### Mission
To ensure all students receive a world-class education that prepares them for success in college, career, and life.

### Beliefs
We believe all students can learn given equitable opportunitites. It is our responsibility to prepare students for the future and provide a safe and secure learning environment.

| Personalized Learning Experiences | Staff Stability | External Stakeholder Engagement | Engaging Learning Environment | Technology |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Objectives** | **Objectives** | **Objectives** | **Objectives** | **Objectives** |
| Provide more active, personalized learning opportunities to support student readiness for middle school. | Provide choice programs for professional development toward advanced certification programs to stabilize teaching staff. | Provide proactive communication and strategic involvement opportunities for parents and other community members. | Develop school environment where all students feel intellectually safe and have opportunities to succeed. | Provide appropriate and sufficient technology resources to students and teachers in all classrooms. |
| **Critical Initiatives** | **Critical Initiatives** | **Critical Initiatives** | **Critical Initiatives** | **Critical Initiatives** |
| • Invest in curriculum, materials aligned to/in support of instructional practices that promote personalized learning<br>• Provide professional development for personalized learning<br>• Implement personalized learning program to increase student engagement | • Conduct leadership study group to establish needs and identify potential programs<br>• Reallocate human and fiscal resources to manage choice program and provide teacher support<br>• Develop and implement strategic partnership plan | • Conduct audit of community engagement<br>• Develop and implement stakeholder engagement plan<br>• Develop and implement strategic partnership plan | • Conduct school wide diagnostic student interest and engagement<br>• Implement advisory block<br>• Redistribute counseling resources | • Revise school technology plan<br>• Conduct school wide needs assessment<br>• Identify and apply for external resource and partnership opportunities |
| **Key Measures** | **Key Measures** | **Key Measures** | **Key Measures** | **Key Measures** |
| • Materials inventories; curriculum distribution lists<br>• Teacher surveys<br>• Classroom observation<br>• Student engagement survey | • Participation rates for choice programs<br>• Completion rate for choice programs<br>• Staff surveys<br>• Teacher retention data | • Communication record data<br>• Stakeholder surveys | • Student surveys<br>• Parent surveys<br>• Support staff inventories<br>• Student portfolios | • Technology needs assessment data<br>• Student observation ratings<br>• Student inventories<br>• Technology integration plans/artifacts |

Accreditation identifies **noteworthy practices** and surfaces **root causes**.

Specific, **forward-looking feedback** supports positive change.

# Q&A

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