

Section 1: Overview of the District's Preparation and Organization to Conduct the Guided Self-Study

Spartanburg School District Two benefits from external accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools since our high schools were accredited during the 1960's. Our elementary schools began the process during the 1970's. All of our schools have maintained accreditation since that time. Our District and all schools use a structured strategic planning process to develop and insure system and building-level plans for improved performance. Every effort is made to align Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation and strategic planning during the various planning cycles over the last ten years; however, different cycles of planning often created alignment issues and some duplication of effort. The current District accreditation process as well as our recently instituted process of continuous improvement will eliminate many of these concerns.

In the fall of 2005, Dr. Mercer and members of our District Leadership Team met with Dr. Billy Floyd, State Director for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, to discuss the new District-level SACS Accreditation Model. Pursuant to this initial exploratory session, the District Two Team which included school principals as well as District Level administrators examined the process and made the decision to present a proposal to the District Two School Board requesting permission to pursue SACS CASI accreditation. Following the School Board's approval in the spring of 2006, the request for a SACS CASI Quality Assurance Review Team was forwarded to Dr. Mark Elgart. In late spring of 2006 a representative of SACS CASI conducted a readiness visit in District Two. In July, 2006 approval was received along with a scheduled visit date of November 4-7, 2007.

Prior to the above, during the 2004-2005 school year, the District Two Strategic Planning Team met routinely. This team consisted of over 25 members including administrators, district staff, parents, community organization representatives, government officials, business, private school representation, law enforcement, and students. After refining the vision and mission statement, this Team pursued the work of assessing our needs in the areas of student achievement, teacher quality, and school climate. Information from school/district report cards, test results, surveys, school and community meetings were utilized to identify areas for improvement. Goals for improvement, strategies, and action steps were then developed. At the end of this process the 5-Year District Strategic Plan was written aligned with the South Carolina State Department of Education planning model. Those performance goals were used to construct the five-year Spartanburg School District Two Strategic Plan (2006-2010) which was approved by our Board of Trustees. Each of the District's schools used the District's plan as a template, and, with the help of local school improvement councils and staff members, they customized their own school renewal plan to include the individual school's performance goals and action plans. Also, the standards of the South Association of Colleges and Schools/Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS/CASI) were used to provide additional alignment between the State's planning requirements, the District planning model, and the accreditation standards. This process resulted in a closely-aligned, system-wide strategic plan. As would be expected, the plan's performance goals and strategies identified in the plan were reviewed annually, with adjustments made based on the latest data. In this manner, each school developed a plan with the expectation of performance five years in advance; however, goals and strategies are examined and amended annually, thus ensuring accuracy and accountability.

In the summer of 2006, Mr. Bill Jenkins from York, South Carolina was appointed as our District Facilitator. Periodic meetings between Mr. Jenkins and our District SACS

Coordinator as well as other Team members began in the fall of 2006 and continued into the spring of 2007. During the same time period, our District's and schools' leadership teams began the process of revisiting our District Mission Statement, Visions, and Beliefs. Though such core beliefs were considered largely accurate and timely, all school personnel were involved in this process to include administrators, parents, community representatives, teachers, and students. Finally, they were reviewed and accepted by the District Leadership Team. Following this, the District Strategic Plan, as a part of this annual review process, reflected some necessary revisions which took the form of new strategies identified to support district performance goals.

Next, beginning in late fall of 2006, The District Leadership Team, after careful review of the Accreditation Standards for Quality Systems, examined the District's compliance with each Standard. Areas of improvement were identified, and a draft of Section Two of the Self Study was instituted. In addition, several District Leadership Team members served on District Accreditation Teams to other Districts during 2006-2007 to learn more about the SACS CASI process thus facilitating our District's study.

School-level principals meet monthly with the Superintendent and District Leadership Team. In addition, breakout meetings are also held for elementary and secondary principals. Here they reviewed their school plans to make revisions and effect uniformity with the District Plan. This resulted in the development of our current District Strategic Plan and the School Annual Plans to assure alignment of goals and objectives. As the self-study was created, principals, in turn, shared the process and information with their stakeholders. These stakeholders also offered input that shaped the final Self Study.

Dr. Scott Mercer was appointed Superintendent for Spartanburg School District Two in June of 2005. Dr. Mercer saw a need to refine the process of continuous improvement in District Two. He began by institutionalizing the involvement of all school and community stakeholders. As part of this effort, Dr. Mercer established several Superintendent's Advisory Cabinets to include a Student Cabinet, a Business Leader Group, a District Support Staff Team, a Parent Cabinet, and a Teacher Forum. These stakeholders meet three times each year. Beginning with the 2006-07 school year, each Cabinet contributed to the SACS CASI Self Study offering input, suggestions, and voicing concerns.

Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year and now in place during the 2007-08 school year, Dr. Mercer and the District Instructional Office further refined the process for continuous improvement in our district. Through the use of Data Notebooks and school-level leadership teams, a process is in place that ensures that indicators of school effectiveness will be systematically analyzed each year. Further, the school-level leadership team, along with District team members, will identify areas for improvement and strategies to bring about improvement. This work closely parallels and facilitated the SACS CASI Study. In point of fact, this continuous improvement process, now firmly in place, embodies the intent and systematic study required to complete the SACS CASI Self Study in Spartanburg District Two. A clearly defined process of continuous improvement insures that District Two will continue using this process on an ongoing basis.

During the process of reviewing our compliance with the Accreditation Standards for Quality Systems, the following district office personnel were responsible for each Standard:

1. Beliefs and Mission	Dr. Scott Mercer Mr. Joe Bullington
2. Governance & Leadership	Dr. Scott Mercer Dr. Kristi Woodall
3. Curriculum	Dr. Quincie Moore Dr. Barbara Mills
4. Instructional Design	Dr. Quincie Moore Dr. Barbara Mills
5. Assessment, Measurement, & Effective Results	Dr. Scott Mercer Dr. Quincie Moore Mrs. Trisha Meadows
6. Resources (Human) (Financial)	Dr. Kristi Woodall Mr. Wayne Chamblee Ms. Heidi Kerns
7. Student Services	Mr. Brantley Enloe Mr. John King Mr. Joe Bullington Mrs. Rhonda Henderson
8. Staff/Stakeholder Communications & Relationships	Mrs. Rhonda Henderson
9. Physical Facilities	Mr. John King
10. Continuous Process of Educational Improvement	Dr. Scott Mercer Dr. Quincie Moore

Section Two: Accreditation Standards for Quality Systems

Standard 1 Beliefs and Mission

A quality system develops and communicates a vision, beliefs and mission that provide a focus for the quality of the work of the students and the quality of the work of the system and schools.

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 1.1 Establishes a vision for education in the community through the leadership of the governing board of the system and in cooperation with its stakeholders;
- 1.2 Identifies system-wide goals to advance the vision;
- 1.3 Establishes an accountability system to document and monitor achievement of its goals;
- 1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile that describes the system, students, and community;
- 1.5 Ensure that the system's vision, mission, and beliefs guide the instruction and curriculum throughout the system and reflect research and best practices concerning teaching and learning; and
- 1.6 Reviews its vision, mission, and beliefs annually and revises them when appropriate.

During the 2006-2007 school year, groups consisting of district-level administrators, school faculties, parents, support staff, business and community members and students met to review the district's previous mission statement, motto, vision, beliefs and learner expectations. These were modified and affirmed by the various groups. We believe one will find that our district epitomizes and emphasizes *teaching and learning*.

Our mission is to prepare our students for tomorrow's world by providing effective and innovative educational practices in a safe and supportive environment. Our motto is "Students First."

Vision

We will provide schools that are:

- *Safe*
- *Student-centered*
- *Challenging for staff and students*
- *Fair*
- *Inviting*
- *Constantly improving*

Beliefs

We believe:

- *All students can learn.*
- *Education is everyone's responsibility.*
- *A safe and supportive environment nurtures growth.*
- *Everyone is unique and has value.*
- *Individuals must be prepared for a global society.*
- *Learning is a life-long process.*
- *Decisions must be based on what is best for all students.*

Learner Expectations

We expect student to become:

- *Competent in foundational skills*
- *Innovative problem solvers*
- *Able to use technology effectively*
- *Quality producers and performers*
- *Self-directed learners able to succeed in a changing society*
- *Effective communicators*
- *Able to interact cooperatively with others*
- *Contributing citizens*

We believe these statements provide a solid foundation and focus for the work of our system. All school improvement plans align with these values. Progress toward accomplishment of the system's goals is constantly monitored and adjustments made as necessary. A report outlining our achievement levels for the community and Board of Trustees is produced and published annually.

Our mission, motto, vision, beliefs and learner expectations guide the basic philosophy and operation of the district and information concerning such are communicated through such avenues as the district web site, publications, reports to the Board of Trustees, data displayed in the schools and district office board room, leadership meetings, superintendent's advisory cabinet meetings (teachers, support staff, parents, students, business/community), communications with media, and faculty meetings.

Standard 2 Governance and Leadership

A quality system provides for and promotes stability in the leadership, governance and organizational structure which include a focus in developing and maintaining a vision; an emphasis on improving student learning; and support for innovative efforts that produce desired results.

Governance

In fulfillment of the standard, the system operates under a governing board that:

- 2.1 Adopts written policies and procedures that promote the effective operation of the system that include clearly defined lines of authority, relationships, and accountability which support the mission, beliefs and goals of the system;
- 2.2 Permits the administrative team of the system to implement policies and procedures without interference;
- 2.3 Establishes policies and procedures that recognize and preserve the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the head of the system and the schools; and
- 2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board.

Governance

Spartanburg School District Two is governed by a Board of Trustees that adopts and revises written policies and procedures that facilitate the system's operation and establish the

governance and leadership roles of the district. Board policies address the Board's legal status, powers and duties, authority of members, the number of members and their qualifications, terms of office, election parameters, and unexpired term fulfillment.

Also included are policies addressing the superintendent's legal status, chain of command, board expenses, school improvement councils' composition, duties and responsibilities, and board meeting procedures. Policies address general school administration, fiscal and business management, facilities, personnel, the instructional program, students, and public/organizational/educational agency relations.

Leadership

In fulfillment of this standard, the leadership of the system:

- 2.5 Maintains access to legal counsel who can advise or obtain necessary information about the legal requirements and obligations that exist in the state, federal, or other jurisdictions in which it operates;
- 2.6 Maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations from protracted proceedings and claims for damage;
- 2.7 Creates and strengthens collaborative networks of community stakeholders to support student learning; and
- 2.8 Allocates and aligns the human, instructional, financial, and physical resources in support of the vision, mission, beliefs, and expectations for student learning.

Leadership

The Board of Trustees receives orientation in boardmanship, including what responsibilities belong to them and what belong to the administration, in January after being first elected to the Board. They are encouraged to attend all local and state South Carolina School Board Association training sessions and conferences. Five members of the Board were recently recognized for earning increasing levels of boardmanship.

Our district maintains legal counsel to advise when the need arises. The Board has retained the services of two law firms: Childs & Halligan, PA for educational counsel and Lyles, Darr, and Clark, LLP for general counsel. Our district's Office of Finance and Operations and Office of Personnel oversee the various insurance programs for such issues as liability, workers' compensation, property damage risks, and tort liability to assure adequate coverage.

Our district is dedicated to enacting the district's mission through strong and collaborative partnerships with local colleges, businesses, and the community. We currently have in place with the other six school districts in Spartanburg County a Scholars Academy which houses some of our best students beginning in the ninth grade at the University of South Carolina Upstate and are working on a partnership with Spartanburg Community College to address the needs of some of our most at risk high school students. A District Two Family Resource Center was established in January, 2007 at a middle school site that was vacated with the completion of a new facility. The Center works with families in areas of adult education and ESOL instruction, parenting, provides an after school day care in conjunction with the YMCA, a partnership with the area's faith community, and is striving to expand its programs.

We also participate in a program developing potential administrators (a Master's degree in Education Administration can be earned at no cost to the participants) and one addressing the needs of first year principals through Converse College with the seven Spartanburg districts.

Partnerships with Spartanburg Regional Health Center and Mary Black Hospital Systems provide athletic trainers to our high and junior high schools at little or no cost to the district. A memorandum of agreement exists with Spartanburg Area Mental Health that provides five counselors to our schools at a greatly reduced rate. The superintendent meets monthly with the other six superintendents in Spartanburg to discuss issues common to all as do the Curriculum and Instruction representatives and high school principals. A monthly principals meeting is held here in the district office with the administrative staff. The superintendent meets quarterly with advisory councils composed of Teachers of the Year, middle and high school student representatives, support staff representatives, parent leaders from each school, and members of the business and community. He is an active member of the Boiling Springs Business Association/Area Council, the Lions Club, and the Spartanburg Chamber of Commerce. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Spartanburg Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

At the school level, administrators and teachers work with student leadership groups, School Improvement Councils, Parent-Teacher Organizations, booster clubs, and community groups to support student learning.

Standard 3 Curriculum

A quality system offers a research-based curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning that is subject to review and revision at regular intervals.

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 3.1 Develops curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning;
- 3.2 Provides a curriculum that includes a set of essential knowledge and skills in each content area;
- 3.3 Aligns curriculum with clearly defined expectations for student learning across subject areas and grade levels;
- 3.4 Ensures that the curriculum reflects a commitment to equity, an appreciation of diversity, recognition of different ways of learning, and challenges each student to excel;
- 3.5 Develops written curriculum guides and support materials that serve as a basis for implementing the curriculum;
- 3.6 Promotes in the curriculum the active involvement of students in the learning process, including opportunities to explore application of higher order thinking skills and to investigate new approaches in applying their learning;
- 3.7 Gathers, analyzes, and uses data and research in making curriculum choices; and
- 3.8 Provides a balance of educational experiences through the curriculum that is based on knowledge of human growth and development, and relies on sound learning principles.

The District Two curriculum model is an inquiry-based curriculum that highlights student involvement and investigation, hands-on activities, and differentiated instruction. The hallmark of the curriculum approach is embedded in the “Total Quality Effective School” (Lezotte) model of relevance and rigor, coherence, and efficiency in a positive, and inviting educational setting.

The use of science kits and “Math Out of the Box” / Investigations at elementary levels provide examples of the implementation of the afore-mentioned approaches. Both instructional initiatives in math and science are based on inquiry approaches to learning and engage students in cooperative learning and personal investigation. Similar approaches are used in English language arts instruction where students are encouraged to pursue independent reading and draw connections to literary themes and their personal lives. The 100 Book Challenge program in grades K-6 along with Read 180 in secondary schools are examples. Differentiated instruction is a foundational element of effective instruction and represents the essence of relevance for students. Instruction and content based on where students are academically and intellectually ensure a high degree of student involvement and willingness to learn. Therefore, differentiated instruction provides the basis for instructional relevance.

District teachers have collaborated to produce curriculum guides in each of the core content areas in order to reflect the approaches to instructional delivery aligned with district expectations. These guides contain resource materials, informational sources, ideas, and narratives that aid teachers in developing lesson plans that are relevant to students’ needs. All activities within the guides have been developed based on the New Bloom’s Taxonomy (Anderson et al), which categorizes the cognitive levels of curriculum standards. Narratives and activities within the guides have been designed to attain or surpass the levels as cited in the Matrix for Teaching, Learning, and Assessing. All guides are based on the South Carolina Curriculum Standards and provide a framework for pacing and efficient delivery of the curriculum. The curriculum guides clearly indicate expectations for student learning. Course guides used by teachers provide evidence of the attempt to bring relevance to the curriculum standards as promulgated by the state, coherence to the process of instruction by ensuring a vertical integration of skills and activities, and efficiency in instructional delivery by delineating a clear timeline of achievement of expected mastery of content. The guides are revised at cyclical reviews of standards in conformity with State Department of Education schedules. In addition, district teachers meet regularly to collaborate on lesson plans and suggest revisions to the guides in accordance with agreed upon changes. The district has placed all curriculum guides online for easy access and expedited revision. Core content areas are on an annual schedule for revision and update of the district guides.

Curriculum content is relevant to students’ lives in the context of the technological and international world in which they live. Therefore, the technology initiative to promote the use the Promethean Boards, laptop labs, Odyssey software, Plato software, Read 180 software, video streaming, and other media access has been widespread. Teachers are encouraged to deliver instruction through varying modalities with technology delivery as an important focus. To acknowledge international connections and the importance of responding to the challenge of greater international competition, an International Baccalaureate (IB) program is being undertaken at Hendrix Elementary School. The program includes a re-design of the curriculum around six center themes that help students function in an internationally diverse environment. The curriculum has been enriched with the additions of German language, Suzuki strings, and dance. Elements of the IB program will follow students as they progress through the educational sequence.

The educational setting is important to the effectiveness of instructional content and delivery. Utilizing data and conclusions drawn from brain research according to Kovaliv et al, district

teachers have been trained in the use of colors, music, lighting, classroom layout, feeling tone, and instructional strategies to provide maximum benefit for students in the educational setting. The cognitive compatible classroom (CCC) is a district-wide initiative to ensure that the relevance, coherence, and efficiency of the curriculum model are not compromised by incompatible classroom and school settings. Teachers use a district-created rubric to gauge their levels of implementation of the CCC initiative.

Standard 4 Instructional Design

A quality system develops and employs instructional strategies and activities in support of student achievement of the expectations for learning defined by the curriculum.

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 4.1 Analyzes and uses the results of assessments of student learning to improve instructional design and effectiveness;
- 4.2 Designs and employs instructional strategies and activities that are research-based and reflective of best practice;
- 4.3 Aligns the Instructional design, including strategies and action plans, with the system's mission and expectations for student learning;
- 4.4 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning;
- 4.5 Implements an instructional design that provides all students with instruction that stimulates and enhances intellectual and creative development of higher order thinking skills and requires students to apply their learning; and
- 4.6 Provides a comprehensive program of information and media services that are aligned with its beliefs, mission and goals.

District Two schools participate in extensive analysis and disaggregation of assessment results at the classroom, school, and district level to improve instructional design and effectiveness. Teachers administer a variety of assessments beginning in pre-kindergarten through secondary levels. These assessments include state and federally-mandated instruments, professionally produced instruments, and teacher-made assessments. The data derived from these assessments is used to address individual, class, and school strengths and weaknesses. Collaborative meetings among subject area and grade-level teams, administrators, instructional coaches, and district coordinators analyze curriculum, instruction, and student learning to make adjustments as identified from assessments. Adjustments are made in lesson planning, teaching strategies, interventions, programs offered, and materials used. Administrators use the results of assessments when designing school and teaching schedules and to determine courses that teachers may take to improve their teaching competencies.

At the pre-kindergarten and primary level, the assessments employed are DIAL-3, which is used as a screening instrument to determine student placement in developmental programs, and family interviews. The Dominic Reading and Writing Assessment Portfolio is a reading and processing system designed to help teachers observe and document a child's growth in reading and writing in order to improve instructional decisions (K-8).

At the elementary, middle school, and high school levels, students are administered MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) three times each year. Results of this assessment help teachers determine differentiated groups and set target goals by individual student, class, grade level or department. MAP results have a high correlation to PACT scores and give teachers more diagnostic information by subject area. Teachers use MAP to help students set learning goals and to explain student progress to parents.

At the high school level, the High School Assessment Program (HSAP), End-of-Course Tests (EOC), ACT, SAT, Advanced Placement examinations, and teacher assessments provide teachers with assessment data to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum and make decisions about instructional design. English Language Developmental Assessment (ELDA) helps determine instructional needs for non-English speaking students.

Instructional coaches in math, science, and literacy work with teachers to help them utilize best practices, developmentally appropriate activities, and research-based practices. Math and science instructional coaches are trained and supervised by the Math and Science Unit (MSU) which is funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation. Literacy coaches participate in all training provided by the South Carolina Department of Education.

Instructional practices employed by teachers include science and math note booking, inquiry-based learning in math and science, reading and writing across the curriculum, use of science kits, and science lab experiences.

The district strategic plan and school strategic plans are aligned with the district's vision, beliefs, and mission. Strategies and actions in the plans ensure that high expectations for learning exist. Provisions for the different learning styles and abilities of learners are included in plans in core academic areas as well as English as a Second Language, Gifted and Talented, Education and Economic Development Act, alternative programs, Title I, honors classes, career and technology courses, exploratory and fine arts classes, and special education. Action plans include such instructional practices as professional study groups, peer coaching and observation, and courses in a variety of subjects designed to make teachers better.

The instructional design aligns with the District's mission and expectations and motto of "Students First." The organization of schools varies, which reflects the needs of the learners in schools and the needs of the community they serve. The focus in all schools is on developing students who are responsible and productive citizens through academic, exploratory, extracurricular, and athletic programs.

District Two Schools adhere to state law and SACS-CASI requirements regarding protection of instructional time. The number of assemblies held at schools is held to a minimum. Teacher daily schedules allow for optimum classroom time and required planning periods. The length of the school day exceeds state law. Students are given opportunities to have learning experiences by providing before and after school tutoring and study rooms. Media centers are open 30 minutes before and after school and often more. All overnight field trips must be Board approved and educationally sound. Class field trips must be standard-based and educationally appropriate. Interruptions of the school day through announcements and bells are kept to a minimum. Administrators conduct frequent classroom observation through instructional walk-throughs ensuring that students are on task. Teacher attendance at conferences and workshops is regulated by Board policy and must be designed to support improvement initiatives of the district and school. School master schedules allow for maximum academic class time through teaming and block scheduling.

Heterogeneous grouping practices at the elementary level ensure that all students are challenged at high levels. Literacy programs at all levels encourage students to read for pleasure and information. Extensive classroom libraries and media collections give students many choices for personal and school reading. Honors, Advanced Placement, exploratory, elective, and career/technical courses allow students to enhance intellectual and creative development and apply what they have learned. Dual credit courses at the high school and an array of fine arts courses allow students to excel. Students enrolled in special education are instructed in the South Carolina Curriculum Standards and are challenged to learn at the highest levels they can achieve. Gifted and Talented academic and artistic programs foster creative and intellectual development. An extensive program of clubs, activities, organizations, and special events gives students opportunities to apply their learning and challenge them intellectually.

Media collections meet South Carolina State Department of Education guidelines for being “Proficient” in the areas of programs, services, and media collections. Full time media specialists serve each school. Media centers have flexible scheduling and extended hours to serve students and teachers. All media centers have internet access, including United Streaming, South Carolina ETV video and video taping resources are utilized extensively. Media centers are equipped with student computers, offering a variety of programs including Accelerated Reader, DISCUS, SCOIS, interactive educational games, and teacher-generated projects.

Information services include district and school websites with dedicated pages for students, parents, teachers, and the community. Instructional technology tools include interactive whiteboards, slates, active votes, digital cameras, wireless remote labs, presentation rooms, classroom computers, and computer labs. Electronic resources available to teachers include school email accessible from home, Odyssey learning, EdGate, and School Notes. The district provides web-based programs to help teachers plan, manage, and assess instruction such as TestView, MAP, Integrate Pro, SASI, and Kid Pace.

Guided self-study indicates that this standard is met. Results from a comprehensive assessment program are used to design and improve instruction and curriculum. Instructional time and resources are allocated to ensure learning is the primary focus of the system. Research-based best practices, aligned with the system’s vision, mission, and goals are selected for instruction. Information and media services are focused on learning and providing resources to facilitate instruction.

Standard 5 Assessment, Measurement, and Effectiveness Results

A quality system uses effective and continuous performance management systems for assessing, aligning, and improving student learning and operation performance, including organizational and instructional effectiveness, at all levels and areas of the system.

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 5.1 Establishes key indicators and performance expectations for student learning;
- 5.2 Develops and implements a comprehensive system for assessing student progress based on clearly defined student results for learning;
- 5.3 Establishes and provides a comprehensive assessment system that includes current data that includes a profile of student performance, community characteristics, system characteristics, and stakeholder perceptions of the system (staff and stakeholder);

- 5.4 Employs an assessment system that provides data for making informed decisions for continuous improvement;
- 5.5 Conducts a periodic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness as a basis for improving the system and schools; and
- 5.6 Communicates assessment results to all stakeholders.

Spartanburg School District Two utilizes established indicators and performance expectations for student learning. The District's assessment policies are aligned with the South Carolina Education Accountably Act (EAA) and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). These policies are the framework for administrative guidelines and procedures used in assessment, measurement, and effective results.

At the district, school, class, teacher, and student levels, information about student learning is emphasized. The district participates in the state mandated testing program, the Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT) which provides Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies data for grades 3-8 and in the South Carolina Readiness Assessment (SCRA), which documents performance-based information for kindergarten and first grade. High school students participate in the South Carolina End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) for Algebra, English I, Physical Science, and US History as well as the South Carolina High School Assessment Program (HSAP), which serves as an exit examination required for graduation.

In addition to the state-required examinations, Spartanburg District Two administers Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), a computerized adaptive test that provides norms for absolute performance as well as growth and gives teachers specific information about student skills acquisition through a learning continuum aligned with state standards. MAP is given three times annually to guide and assess learning. A suite of reports provides disaggregated scores by student demographic category and quartile. MAP also allows students and teachers to establish learning goals for achievement and growth. Support for teacher and administrator use of MAP to guide instructional decisions is provided through on-going professional development.

The Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT) is a standards-based accountability measurement of student achievement in four core academic areas: English/language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies. The PACT items are aligned to the South Carolina curriculum standards developed for each discipline. PACT is mandated by the South Carolina Education Accountability Act and the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and is administered to students in grades 3-8. The PACT is one part of a comprehensive approach to improve the curriculum and instruction in Spartanburg School District Two. Academic progress is measured by a comparison of the PACT scores for schools, districts, and the state from year to year. The EAA requires that schools develop individual Academic Plans for Students (APS) for those students in grades 3-8 who score Below Basic on PACT. Testview is used to maintain the academic plans.

The High School Assessment Program (HSAP) meets both federal and state requirements. It meets the requirements of the EAA that each public school student pass an exit examination to receive a South Carolina high school diploma. It is also used to measure students' academic achievement on high school standards in accordance with the federal NCLB.

The HSAP assesses selected South Carolina academic standards in English/language arts and mathematics that students have had the opportunity to learn by the end of the tenth grade.

Students who meet the state HSAP participation guidelines take HSAP, unless they meet the state qualifications for alternate assessment. Advanced Placement examinations are administered to qualifying high school students.

The Education Accountability Act requires the development of end-of-course examination in gateway or benchmark courses. The program is called End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP). The examinations, which count 20 percent of the students' final grade in each gateway or benchmark course, currently include Algebra I / Math for the Technologies 2, English I, Physical Science, and United States History. Each examination is administered to students at the end of the semester in which they are scheduled to complete the course.

Students in grades K-12 who receive English as a Second Language instruction are administered the federally-required English Language Developmental Assessment (ELDA). An oral observation instruction issued for students in grades K-2. Results from this assessment help educators assess progress in acquiring English language literacy skills of non-native speakers and to make instructional decisions.

Students in second grade are administered the Cognitive Ability Test (CogAT) and Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) as part of the screening process for identification in Gifted and Talented programs. A further assessment for Gifted and Talented is the STAR assessment, which focuses on students' non-verbal skills. Educators use the results of these assessments to offer challenging experiences to students who qualify for service.

Middle school students are administered Explore, a precursor to the ACT. Some students are administered the PSAT in eighth grade. Results of Explore and PSAT are used to advise students on placement in honors classes and electives beginning in ninth grade. The comprehensive assessment system in Spartanburg School District Two includes current data, profiles of student performance, community characteristics, system characteristics and stakeholder perceptions. The district uses all assessment instruction results to make informed decisions for continuous improvement. District and school administrators meet on a monthly basis to discuss assessment results and make informed decisions on instruction based on these results. The superintendent meets twice annually with principals and district office administrators to discuss instructional goals, growth, support mechanisms.

Spartanburg School District Two values the power of communication with all stakeholders. A variety of outlets to communicate assessment results include school and district newsletters and websites, parent conferences, Board meetings, report cards, progress reports, letters, and phone calls.

A guided self-study suggests that this standard is being met. A comprehensive assessment program monitors student learning through numerous methods, including formal and informal assessments. Both quantitative and qualitative data on attendance, discipline, and instructional and organizational effectiveness are collected, analyzed, and published to improve student learning and communicate with stakeholders.

Standard 6 Resources

A quality system has qualified staff that is supported by the financial and physical resources necessary to fulfill the vision, mission and goals of the system.

Financial Resources

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 6.1 Maintains financial accounts in accordance with accepted accounting procedures and are audited annually; (Note: The report of the annual audit is on-site and available to evaluators.)
- 6.2 Secures income from all regular sources that is sufficient to support all regular expenditures and to assure the continuity and stability of services;
- 6.3 Manages debt service or lines of credit in such ways as to assure that fiscal responsibility remains under the control of system authority;
- 6.4 Maintains and monitors a balance sheet that describes the overall financial operations and financial condition of the system; and
- 6.5 Develops and implements an annual budget that provides the resources to support the beliefs, mission, and educational programs of each school.

Spartanburg County School District Two's Office of Financial Services accounts in accordance with accepted accounting procedures, and all accounts are externally audited on an annual basis. Financial accounts are maintained in accordance with the account structure specified in the South Carolina Department of Education Financial Accounting Handbook. Revenues and expenditures are recorded in accordance with the South Carolina Department of Education Funding Manual. An independent CPA firm is retained to conduct an annual financial audit in accordance with state regulation. Financial Statements are prepared annually and receive an unqualified opinion from the auditors.

The District secures income from all regular sources that is sufficient to support all regular expenditures and to assure the continuity and stability of services. Regular sources of income are delineated in the annual budget. All revenues and the associated expenditures are delineated in the annual audited financial statements. Additionally, staff members actively pursue grants and manage grant budgets.

To assure that fiscal responsibility remains under the control of system authority, Spartanburg County School District Two manages debt service or lines of credit in various ways. Capital assets and debt administration are specifically addressed in Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) included in the audited financial statements. A debt service schedule is also included in the notes to the financial statements. Moody's Investor Services has assigned Spartanburg School District Two an Aa1 enhanced rating with a stable outlook and an A1 underlying rating.

Spartanburg Two maintains and monitors a balance sheet that describes the overall financial health of the system. The audited financial statement contains a Statement of Net Assets and a Balance Sheet of Governmental Funds as well as supplementary schedules. The Office of Financial Services develops and implements an annual budget that provides the resources to support the beliefs, mission, and educational programs of each school and the district. Annually, the Board of Trustees approves an operating and a debt service budget. Capital projects are on an individual basis from a master long range building plan. Monthly financial statements are presented to the Board of Trustees.

Human Resources

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 6.6 Employs an administrative head of the system that has earned a graduate degree from a regionally accredited or federal or state sanctioned institution with 18 hours in administration and/or supervision as a part of, or in addition to, the degree, or meets the legal qualifications of the state in which employed;
- 6.7 Employs system level administrative and supervisory staff members having responsibilities for instructional services that have earned a graduate degree from a regionally accredited or federal or state sanctioned institution with 18 hours in administration and/or supervision as a part of, or in addition to, the degree, or meets the legal qualifications of the state in which employed;
- 6.8 Develops and maintains a remuneration plan for all employees;
- 6.9 Maintains staffing that is sufficient to meet the vision, mission and goals of the system; and
- 6.10 Implements a system of employee evaluation and assessment that includes confidentiality for each staff evaluation or assessment.

Spartanburg School District Two employs an administrative leader who has earned a doctorate of philosophy in education administration from a regionally accredited institution. He meets all certification requirements for Superintendent in the state of South Carolina.

In addition, all Spartanburg School District Two district-level administrative and supervisory staff members responsible for instructional services hold at a minimum a master's degree in education administration from a regionally accredited institution. These staff members meet all requirements for certification at the administrative level in the State of South Carolina. School-level administrators in the system are required to hold a master's degree in Education Administration from a regionally accredited institution and must meet all State of South Carolina requirements for certification at their administrative level.

Spartanburg School District Two maintains an appropriate Remuneration Plan for all employees. All salary schedules are updated on an annual basis to reflect salary increases made available by the state and district. The schedules include salaried and hourly positions.

One of the goals of the Office of Personnel is to recruit, employ, and retain the best possible candidates for available positions. Strategies include the following:

- Human resource representatives attend annual college and state-level career fairs for educators.
- The office of personnel interacts with the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) in the posting of vacancies, in locating available candidates, and in printing application information.
- The office of personnel posts vacancies on the district's website. In addition, applicants can complete the district's applications on-line.
- Some district vacancies are advertised in local newspapers and in college placement offices.
- Efforts are made to conduct preliminary interviews with all interested teacher candidates. The interviews are conducted by the director of personnel.

- The office of personnel works closely with local colleges in the placement of practicum students and student teachers.

Standard 7 Student Services

A quality system identifies and has a network of services that support the development and well-being, including the health and safety, of each student.

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 7.1 Designs and provides student support services that meets the needs of students, are continually reviewed, and are aligned with the vision, beliefs, mission, and expectations for student learning;
- 7.2 Provides student services coordinated with the school, home, and community;
- 7.3 Develops and requires written emergency and security plan(s) that ensure the safety and care of students and stakeholders in the system;
- 7.4 Maintains secure, accurate and complete student records system in accordance with state and federal law and regulations;
- 7.5 Provides student services, as appropriate, in the areas of health, counseling, nutrition, safety, co-curricular, and transportation;
- 7.6 Promotes the development of student decision-making skill, ethical and lawful conduct, and responsible citizenship; and
- 7.7 Employs a process for developing and implementing written guidelines for student conduct and attendance that is communicated to students, parents, and staff.

Spartanburg School District Two provides a wide variety of support services in order to meet the needs of our students. The services are aligned with our mission statement, vision, beliefs, and learner expectations.

Each of our 13 schools is appropriately staffed by one or more certified guidance counselors based on SACS and SC Department of Education standards. Our counselors are actively involved with students and the focus of their activities is aimed at delivery of direct services to students. They provide individual, group, and classroom counseling and guidance activities.

The Special Services Department of District Two provides screening, evaluation, counseling and support services to our students with special needs and the parents and teachers of those students. School Psychologists and Educational Screeners collaborate with school child study teams to promote appropriate pre-referral interventions and to conduct psycho-educational evaluations. We have a Gifted and Talented program that begins in grade three and evolves into our AP/Honors, dual college enrollment, and Scholars Academy programs in our high schools. Our students come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Many of our students have emigrated here from other countries. As a result, there are almost 30 different languages that are the original language of the students' families. As a result, we provide an extensive English Speakers of Other Languages program.

Our schools work very closely with local government and private agencies to help meet the needs of our students and their families. Spartanburg Area Mental Health (SAMH) counselors are available to deliver therapeutic counseling services within the school setting. Counselors work closely with teachers and school staff to promote positive behavior change. SAMH counselors are also available during crisis situations. Our counselors and administrators are in contact with agencies and groups such as social services, family court, Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, and the Lions Club. We work closely with the faith based organizations in our

community. The district office helps to facilitate these activities by often including representatives from these services on our agenda for monthly principals' meetings.

All of our schools have PTA/PTO's and School Improvement Councils. These organizations provide parents with the opportunity to participate in their child's school. Through these organizations parents are provided opportunities to learn more about the development of their child and how working together we can support and enhance that development.

At the district level, we have expanded our efforts to provide services to our parents. A district office staff member provides training at school sites to parents on how to access the Odyssey Program online. Our elementary teachers of gifted students have provided informative training in the evening for the parents of their students.

Safely is priority in our district. There is district safety committee that includes administrators, teachers, students, parents, law enforcement, and business partners. Each school and the district have an extensive emergency plan that is reviewed annually. The district office annually offers training to district and school personnel on emergency procedures. This training includes drills and simulation exercises. Secondary students are included on the district safety committee. All schools have radio communications for each administrator and other key staff members. All principals have a Cell phone/radio. Each middle school and high school has a school resource officer. Our School Resource Officers conduct annual safety audits at every school to assure that our schools are safe for students and staff.

Student records are maintained at each school site in a secured location. We also use the SASI software to maintain student records so that data can be exchanged with the SC Department of Education. Once a student graduates the student records are housed at the high school. Periodically those records are archived at the district office for students who graduated more than forty years ago.

District Two currently employs 13 school nurses. Each school has a full-time nurse. We contract with Health Promotions to provide dental screening, cleaning, and sealants to elementary students. School nurses are responsible for the creation and delivery of Individual Health Plans at each school. Through our efforts under the Healthy Schools Act and with the assistance of Chartwell, our school food services vendor, students are provided healthy and tasteful breakfasts and lunches. In addition, students are provided educational opportunities to learn more about healthy living. Students in District Two have a wide range of co-curricular activities to choose from. We operate our transportation services under the direction of the SC Department of Education.

As appropriate, students are included on district and school level committees. There is a Student Advisory Committee composed of students from throughout the district. This committee works closely with the Superintendent to provide a student's perspective on issues facing the district and as a voice for student concerns. Student Councils are active at each of our schools. Students are encouraged and assisted by the schools in participating in community and charitable events.

The District Two Board Policy Manual contains policies on both student attendance and behavior. Our Board of Trustees and administrators periodically review our policies related to student attendance and behavior and modify those policies as necessary. We believe that students must attend school regularly to benefit from the educational opportunities. We also believe that good student conduct is a requirement for an orderly educational process. Student

handbooks outlining the expectations for student attendance and conduct are provided by each school to parents and students.

Standard 8 Staff and Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

A quality system develops and supports organizational patterns or structures that promote effective communications and relationships between and among the schools, stakeholders and system.

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 8.1 Provides members of the staff with the information they need concerning students, parents, school operations, and employment status;
- 8.2 Demonstrates staff morale where staff reflects a positive attitude toward the system, schools, and stakeholders;
- 8.3 Ensures that communications among and between system staff, stakeholders and schools are clear and effective;
- 8.4 Maintains constructive and mutually supportive relationships among and between all levels of the system;
- 8.5 Provides evidence of communications with other appropriate agencies such as public or mental health, physicians, and other related professionals;
- 8.6 Ensures that records and other correspondence defining students' accomplishments are accurate and consistent with professional standards;
- 8.7 Involves staff in the process of designing of professional development programs;
- 8.8 Provides professional development for staff that support the overall goals and action plans for the system, including building knowledge, skills, and potential for a high level of performance; and
- 8.9 Ensures that no form of bias or prejudice is practiced or sanctioned.

Spartanburg School District Two aligns its communications plan with the district's strategic plan, goals, policy, and mission and utilizes various means to keep staff and community clearly, effectively, and positively involved in and informed of school and district operations and news.

Customer service, which includes providing information for and demonstrating courtesy toward all our publics, is a system-wide effort. Most of the district's schools have won the Department of Education's Red Carpet Award for family-friendly schools and attractive environments. Some school staffs have completed the district's customer service training, and the district and school offices have been directed to use a uniform greeting when answering the telephone. Staff development training for assisting internal and external publics has been made available to front-line office personnel. School lobbies are welcoming and inviting, and secure at the same time. After they are greeted, visitors sign in and are provided visitor badges. Personnel who are in various schools are issued employee picture identification badges that must be worn while they are on school property.

The district ensures that Board and staff members are equipped with the information needed to perform their jobs well. New Board members are provided orientation by district staff and by the South Carolina School Boards Association, and all Board members are kept informed of current events via the weekly Boardgram, meeting packets, and interim communications as needed. New teachers attend a day-long orientation prior to the start of the school year, and they are assigned a mentor to guide them. First-year teachers complete an induction program consisting of classroom training and pedagogical support. All third year teachers are trained in Madeline Hunter's Program for Effective Teaching. Teachers have ready access to student and parent information, which is available in student records maintained at the schools and in the state's computerized student information system (SASI). The Personnel Office publishes a newsletter to keep staff informed of personnel/employment matters. Principals hold staff meetings to provide

information on instructional matters and school operations. Employees receive training and instructions on safety procedures specific to their positions. Some safety training is accomplished using a web-based program; employees complete the modules assigned to them at their own pace.

Publications and electronic media for the district's stakeholders include school newsletters and websites, student handbooks, employee handbooks, Board Policy Manual, media releases, *Two Cents' Worth* electronic employee newsletter and *School Family News*, academic calendar, district and school brochures, district web site, and special publications as needed.

The district web site is a source of current information for staff, parents, students, and the general public. Board agendas and minutes are posted on the web site. The headlines feature staff and student news. A "Contact Us" link provides contact information for district administration. School links provide information about schools. Employment information and forms are available for employees and for job applicants. The Parent Information section provides links to resources, explains inclement weather procedures, and includes a safety message for parents. The district calendar, newsletters, and annual report are also available via the web site.

Media are invited to Board meetings and into schools for special events. Because they regularly publicize our news, the media are an effective conduit from the schools and district to their constituents.

Special events at schools are also occasions for inviting in parents, grandparents, and community members. Grandparents Day, Veterans Day, alumni gatherings, multicultural assemblies, plays, musical presentations, sports events, etc. are enjoyed by the entire community.

Spartanburg School District Two's administrative team meets weekly, principals and district administrators meet monthly, and the Board of Trustees meets at least monthly, to discuss plans, goals, policies, and strategies. An opportunity for public input is offered at every Board meeting.

Superintendent's advisory cabinets (teacher [Teacher Forum], parent, student, support staff, and business/community) have been established and meet three times during the school year to discuss current instructional and other timely issues pertaining to schools. The council meetings provide a forum for concerns and input from individuals representing all stakeholders. Among topics addressed recently were school calendars, property tax reform, Internet safety, district goals, and traffic issues.

The superintendent and other district staff meet regularly with community groups such as the Chamber of Commerce and Lions Club. The superintendent is a graduate of Leadership Spartanburg, which equipped him with community insight and contacts. He also serves on the board of Spartanburg Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

At the Welcome Back Convocation for all employees held at the beginning of the school year, school and individual accomplishments such as Red Carpet Award, School Climate Award (for the winning school and its custodians), Teachers of the Year, new employees, individuals with perfect attendance, etc. are announced and celebrated. Our business partners participate by providing door prizes for the Welcome Back Convocation. The superintendent takes this opportunity to inspire staff and share his vision for the new school year.

Staff, volunteers, and Board members are recognized for their contributions on special occasions during the school year—School Bus Safety Week, American Education Week, Board Appreciation Month, Teacher Appreciation Week, School Volunteer Week, Secretary's Day, etc. Special awards and accomplishments are celebrated and recognized publicly at Board meetings as well as through media releases and postings on the web site. The Golden Rule program recognizes staff members who give of themselves above and beyond the call of duty.

Board members are invited into schools regularly for walk-through visits with the superintendent, and each Board member is adopted by a school for a special visit and appreciation during Board Recognition Month. These visits enable Board members to see schools in action and schools to thank Board members for their support.

Our VIP program involves senior citizens (district residents age 60 and above) and system retirees in schools by providing them passes that entitle them to free admittance to school sports and other activities. A reciprocal agreement with surrounding districts allows District Two VIP pass holders to attend activities, such as away games, in cooperating districts at no charge. The laminated picture identification passes are requested year-round, and approximately a thousand cards have been issued since the program's inception in 1995.

In response to a recommendation from the Teacher Forum, all staff members receive an employee identification card. The employee card admits them to school sports events free of charge.

The Sheriff's Office and county Emergency Management Office have provided personnel to make presentations on topics such as gang prevention and crisis response. The Emergency Management Office has entered the school and mobile phone numbers of our principals and several district office administrators into their Emergency Notification System (ENS), an automated phone calling system, to alert us during severe weather/other emergency events. The telephone notification serves as a means of warning in addition to our alert monitors.

A Comprehensive Health Committee made up of members of the medical community, faith community, parents, educators, students, and other citizens meet to review health education materials, curriculum, and other issues impacting health and wellness.

In collaboration with local churches, the district permits Released Time Christian Education for middle school students who want to participate.

Health agencies/physicians work in partnership with the district to provide services such as the following:

- A local hospital provides athletic trainers.
- Infectious disease specialists from the Health Department work with school nurses and administrators to communicate with parents about outbreaks of head lice and communicable diseases.
- The Department of Social Services works with the district to investigate possible incidents of child abuse or neglect.
- The Department of Mental Health supports our guidance counselors and psychologists when needed.

To ensure accuracy and consistency in the maintenance of student records on file at the schools, a committee of administrators and teachers was formed to develop a checklist of items to be included. The checklist serves both to eliminate clutter and to verify that all required documentation is in each student's permanent record. Student records are also maintained via computer in SASI. The district complies with state and federal requirements and participates in the state data collection process.

Spartanburg School District Two utilizes CompassLearning Odyssey®, a web-based curriculum, that families can access from their home computers. Assignments are correlated to MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) testing that is administered three times a year. The Odyssey assignments are for enrichment and are based on what students know and what they are ready to

learn. Parents of K–8 students can become more involved in their children’s school work and progress by having them work in the assignments from home.

Teams of district teachers collaborated to produce curriculum guides based on the state’s curriculum standards. The curriculum guides are available online.

Policy, publications, practice, and relationships reflect that no form of bias or prejudice is practiced or sanctioned in the district. Printed publications include the following statement:

Spartanburg County School District Two does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or handicap in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its program and activities.

Standard 9 Physical Facilities

A quality system has the necessary resources to provide the facilities, sites and equipment for the educational programs and services to be fully implemented throughout the system and individual schools.

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 9.1 Maintains compliance with applicable local, state, and federal law, standards, and regulations;
- 9.2 Ensures that the system sites, facilities, and equipment are maintained to provide an environment that is healthy and safe for all occupants; and
- 9.3 Has a process in place that includes plans and implementation for maintaining and improving the system sites, facilities, and equipment.

Spartanburg School District Two has experienced significant growth in recent years necessitating an aggressive building program to accommodate the facility needs of the district. We maintain a five-year long-range building plan that is updated annually. Each year the district looks at attendance numbers, programmatic needs, and projects for building enhancement for each school.

Student enrollment projections are updated every year to assure that adequate facilities and staff are available. Our district recently conducted a comprehensive growth and facilities study with the help of Dr. Ken Stevenson from the University of South Carolina. Our student population is expected to continue to increase during the next ten years.

Spartanburg School District Two prides itself on providing safe and inviting facilities to fully and equitably implement educational programming and services. We inspect and monitor all of our facilities to comply with all applicable codes and regulations. When deficiencies are detected, they are corrected in a timely manner.

Our maintenance department has a comprehensive preventive maintenance plan for every facility. Trained technicians for electrical, plumbing, and heating and air conditioning are on staff to make repairs and facility improvements. We use a work order system to track the progress of repairs and assure that repairs are made as quickly as possible.

Providing adequate facilities for a rapidly growing student population has been a challenge for this district. Several new facilities have recently been completed to relieve overcrowded situations in a number of our schools. If student enrollment forecasts remain as expected, this district will continue to experience challenges to provide new facilities for our community.

Standard 10 Continuous Process of Educational Improvement

A quality system establishes, implements and monitors a continuous process of educational improvement clearly focused on student performance.

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 10.1 Develops and implements a strategic plan, aligned with the vision, mission and beliefs of the system, to guide improvement efforts throughout the system;
- 10.2 Engages stakeholders in the development and implementation of plans and processes for continuous improvement;
- 10.3 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that:
 - articulates the direction and purpose the system and its schools are pursuing for the future (vision);
 - provides a rich description of the current conditions with a focus on student learning (profile);
 - identifies what actions system personnel will take to improve student learning (plan); and
 - documents what has been accomplished and uses the results to inform what happens next (results).
- 10.4 Ensures that each school is engaged in a planning process with improvement goals that complement the system vision and goals;
- 10.5 Monitors compliance with accreditation standards by each school in the system;
- 10.6 Maintains continuity and collaborative planning among the elementary, middle and secondary levels in improvement efforts;
- 10.7 Provides professional development for system and school personnel to help them implement improvement goals and strategies;
- 10.8 Monitors and makes progress in meeting goals and standards for student performance that take into account those required by state and federal agencies; and
- 10.9 Communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders.

Spartanburg Two's Five-Year Strategic Plan was reviewed during the 2004-2005 school year, and the Strategic Planning Team met periodically to assess our needs in the areas of student achievement, teacher quality, and school climate. Goals for improvement, strategies, and action steps were then developed.

In June of 2005, a new superintendent came on board and processes have been implemented building on that Strategic Plan. Each year, two individual conferences are held between the District's instructional leadership team and each school's principal or director. Guiding questions probe each school's levels of student achievement, plans for addressing areas of weakness, and discussions occur on how the District can assist. As a result of those conferences, support has been provided in the addition of a Director of Instructional Technology and another computer technician, the purchase and implementation of the Odyssey software for home and school use, the expansion of the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing program, staff development in providing brain compatible classrooms, purchase and implementation of the SafeSchools training software for all staff, school level instructional coaches, and many other items through this collaboration of leaders.

Additionally, six District goals were established and accepted through the School Board's leadership in January, 2007, that are focusing efforts on critical areas of instruction and achievement. These goals, holding the superintendent accountable, have been communicated to the various stakeholders in the system, and will be reviewed by the Board annually.

Through these processes and others, student performance is measured in multiple ways on a regular basis providing longitudinal data as we strive to become the highest performing district in the state.

Section Three: Continuous Process of Improvement

Spartanburg County School District Two, one of the premier schools districts in South Carolina, is located in a picturesque area of the Piedmont nestled in the shadow of the Blue Ridge foothills. Encompassing the city of Chesnee, the community of Boiling Springs, and the intervening rural regions (approximately 134 square miles in the northern portion of Spartanburg County from I-85 to the North Carolina state line), the district has an estimated population of 56,000 and a school population of 9,472. The area offers abundant opportunities for educational, recreational, spiritual, and cultural growth. Its schools boast impressive academics, dedicated faculty and staff, a supportive community, a committed administration, and motivated students. District Two has, in two attendance areas, seven elementary schools, one intermediate school, one middle school, one junior high, a ninth grade campus, and two high schools. Swofford Career Center is shared with adjoining Spartanburg School District One.

The District has grown by 200-250 students per year for the past decade. In response, five new schools have been opened since 1995 with plans for significant additions to several schools and opening an additional new school in the next five years. This significant growth is an ongoing challenge, but one we address persistently in all schools and programs.

Our district worked carefully several years ago with our varied stakeholders to craft our vision and values in such a way that matched our resolve to provide a fine education for our children and to challenge us to grow. The statements that follow are reviewed and revised periodically by our advisory groups to ensure we are still matching our words with our actions.

Mission: Our mission is to prepare our students for tomorrow's world by providing effective and innovative educational practices in a safe and supportive environment.

Our motto: Students First.

Our vision: We will provide schools that are safe, student-centered, challenging for staff and students, fair, inviting, and constantly improving.

Beliefs: We believe all students can learn, education is everyone's responsibility, a safe and supportive environment nurtures growth, everyone is unique and has value, individuals must be prepared for a global society, learning is a life-long process and decisions must be based on what is best for all students.

Learner Expectations: We expect students to become competent in foundational skills, innovative problem solvers, able to use technology effectively, quality producers and performers, self-directed learners able to succeed in a changing society, effective communicators, able to interact cooperatively with others, and contributing citizens.

Spartanburg County School District Two establishes and maintains high expectations for performance in all areas of student endeavor and achievement. The District performs in the top 10% of South Carolina school districts based on the Strom Thurmond Institute of Clemson University Test Performance (Only six South Carolina districts rank higher.). In the area of fine arts, the District boasts state award winning marching bands as well as first-rate choral, strings, visual arts, and drama programs. In the area of school and community input, District Two works with advisory committees such as Parent Cabinet, Student Cabinet, Teacher Forum, District

Leadership Team, Support Staff Cabinet, and the Business Cabinet. These cabinets and teams react to and support new initiatives and offer suggestions and resources to improve the quality of services our district offers parents and students.

Seventy percent of our graduating seniors attend post-secondary colleges and universities. Last year they earned more than seven million dollars in scholarships, grants, and awards. PACT and HSAP Test scores are consistently above state averages. Recent PACT scores tied for eighth highest in South Carolina.

Spartanburg School District Two maintains a well-defined process for insuring and monitoring continuous improvement. Using the input of our district stakeholders, a strategic planning process culminates in the development of the yearly budget. Using the same process, a Strategic Plan was reviewed and updated in 2004-2005 resulting in a 5-Year district Strategic Plan for 2006-2010 (see SACS-CASI Quality Review Team's work area).

A comprehensive needs assessment process reviewed the following areas: (1) student achievement, (2) school climate, and (3) teacher quality. An action plan then focused on each area's improvement. School/district report cards, test results, questionnaires, surveys, community meetings, and school personnel meetings were used as data sources. In this manner, strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement were determined. Next, performance goals, strategies, and action steps were formulated.

First, in our process of continuous improvement, student achievement data from PACT has been analyzed for current and longitudinal trends. District Two manifests steady progress toward the achievement of goals established in the previous Strategic Plan. Although we have designed new curriculum guides based on new State Curriculum Standards in math and ELA in grades K-5 and social studies and science in grades 1-8, additional guides are needed in math and ELA grades 6-12 and social studies and science in grades 9-12. ELA and math grades 6-12 will be developed 2007-2008; social studies and science in grades 9-12 will be created in 2008-2009. In addition, our elementary schools with the highest poverty indexes must continue to receive all possible support to aid them in maintaining and raising achievement for our most vulnerable students.

Secondary achievement data reflects 2006-07 results from the HSAP Test. Results for the spring 2007 administration of HSAP show an increase in the percentage of students who met the graduation standard on the first attempt from 81.8 (2006) to 83.5 (2007). District Two's graduation rate is 76.1 as reported on the 2006 Report Card with a three year average of 78.5%. However, as we continue to develop and institute programs and strategies for increasing enrollment in advanced placement courses, alternatives to traditional secondary school programs, and recovery methods, District Two will raise the graduation rate and retain more students who successfully transition to post secondary institutions and opportunities.

Second, school climate is addressed with a variety of strategies and programs to affect attendance as well as provide non-traditional, extended day, summer clubs, literacy programs, and parent events and involvement opportunities. In addition, locked entrances and classroom doors, resource officers, and heightened safety awareness strategies and programs have been implemented and continue to be studied for additional improvements. A safety council consisting of school resource officers, school and district administrators, local emergency personnel, and business leaders convenes annually to review and address issues of safety.

Third, teacher quality is studied. Currently, several programs are in place to impact this area. A Leadership Program, under the guidance of former superintendent, Dr. James Jennings, is addressing the need for competent and trained school administrators. Professional offerings in technology, gifted certification, and other renewal opportunities are offered each semester as part of our Staff Development Program. An Instructional Fair, now in the planning process for fall of 2008, will offer sessions for all professional staff as part of our first day back for teachers.

Due to a regularly scheduled National Board Certification graduate course, our NBC rate is 10%, the highest in our county. Feedback in the form of teacher and principal surveys continues to offer target areas for training and staff development initiatives.

Fourth, the district's Department of Instruction produces an annual data notebook. A district copy is assembled, and each of the thirteen schools receives an individual copy of their respective school profiles. This notebook provides the data foundation for district and school leadership team collaborative conferences designed to highlight school-level strengths and address areas for improvement. The format and contents of this notebook reflect the changes in the state's accountability system. Since the first school and district report cards in 2000-2001, our stakeholders and community members easily access information about schools and districts, heretofore inaccessible. The South Carolina Department of Education posts results of statewide testing programs and results for SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement programs, as well as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) on its web site at www.ed.sc.gov.

The South Carolina Department of Education web site includes an index page for assessment results (<http://www.ed.sc.gov/topics/assessment/scores>) from which readers can access additional detailed statistics for performance. The State Department's web site also has a tool called PlanITEd (<http://ed.sc.gov/tools/planited/default.cfm>) which is a web-based tool that helps educators make informed decisions by creating easily readable graphs and charts from selected data. Data can be viewed by year, subgroups, or compared to similar schools or districts, the state, and the nation. In addition, analysis is possible by school type (primary, elementary, middle, and high) or by district.

Fifth, instructional leadership conferences have metamorphosed over the past three years from semi-annual meetings between principals and the superintendent and assistant superintendent of instruction, working through a set of guiding questions on where our schools are in terms of student achievement, what worked or did not work, what plans did we have to address weaknesses, and how the district can assist the schools, to the current summit of as many as 12 leaders of learning from the school and district levels addressing these issues. We have found these meetings to be powerful in our process of continuous improvement in looking at where we are and making plans to get to the next level of student achievement.

Finally, the Spartanburg School District Two Board of Trustees holds the superintendent accountable for student achievement. The Board evaluates the superintendent each year in six categories of leadership including: (1) Policy and Government, (2) Communications and Community, (3) Planning and Assessment/Staff and Personnel Relationships, (4) Educational and Instructional Leadership, (5) Business and Finance/Organizational Management, and (6) Professionalism and Relationships with the Board. Additionally, the superintendent and the Board agree on a set of goals as additional indicators of progress the District will strive to

accomplish. For the 2007 calendar year, the goals include: (1) increasing the percentages of students reading on grade level, (2) improving our performance on SAT and ACT tests, (3) using MAP data to gauge effectiveness of and to improve instructional practices, (4) gaining district accreditation through the new SACS/CASI process by November of 2007, (5) development of a five-year facilities plan, and (6) implementing a plan to gain feedback from recent graduates on their preparation for higher education.

District and School Report Cards

School and district report cards highlight achievement data. Spartanburg School District Two received an Absolute Performance rate of 3.2 Average for 2007. Preliminary rating results for schools in Spartanburg School District Two are summarized below.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSE Average • CFG Good • CES Average • HES Average • OES Good • MES Average 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSF Average • BSJ Average • BSI Average • CMS Average • CHS Average • BSH Good
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100% are Average or higher.

The Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT) was administered in mathematics, English language arts, science and social studies to students in Grades 3 through 8. These tests are based on the South Carolina Curriculum Standards. Four performance levels have been established for PACT – Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. These levels indicate how an individual student is performing based on the curriculum standards assessed by the PACT.

BELOW BASIC

A student who performs at the BELOW BASIC level on the Pact has not met minimum expectations for student performance based on the curriculum standards approved by the State Board of Education. According to the South Carolina State Department of Education, a BELOW BASIC student is not prepared for work at the next grade.

BASIC

Performance at the BASIC level means a student has passed the test. A student who performs at the BASIC level on the PACT has met minimum expectations for student performance based on the curriculum standards approved by the South Carolina State Board of Education. The student is minimally prepared for work at the next grade.

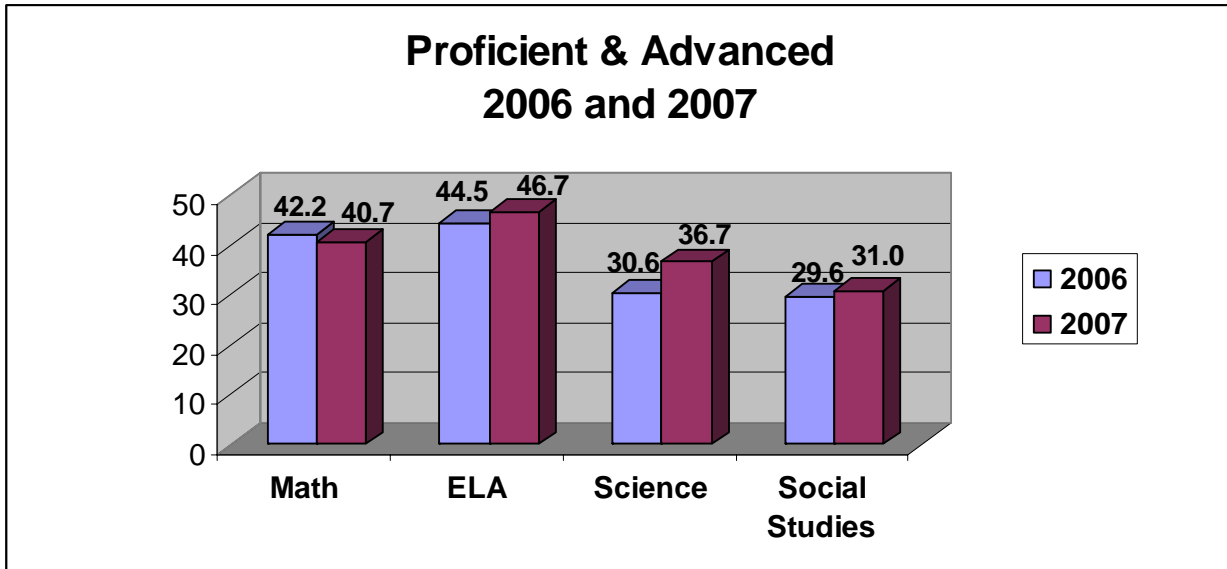
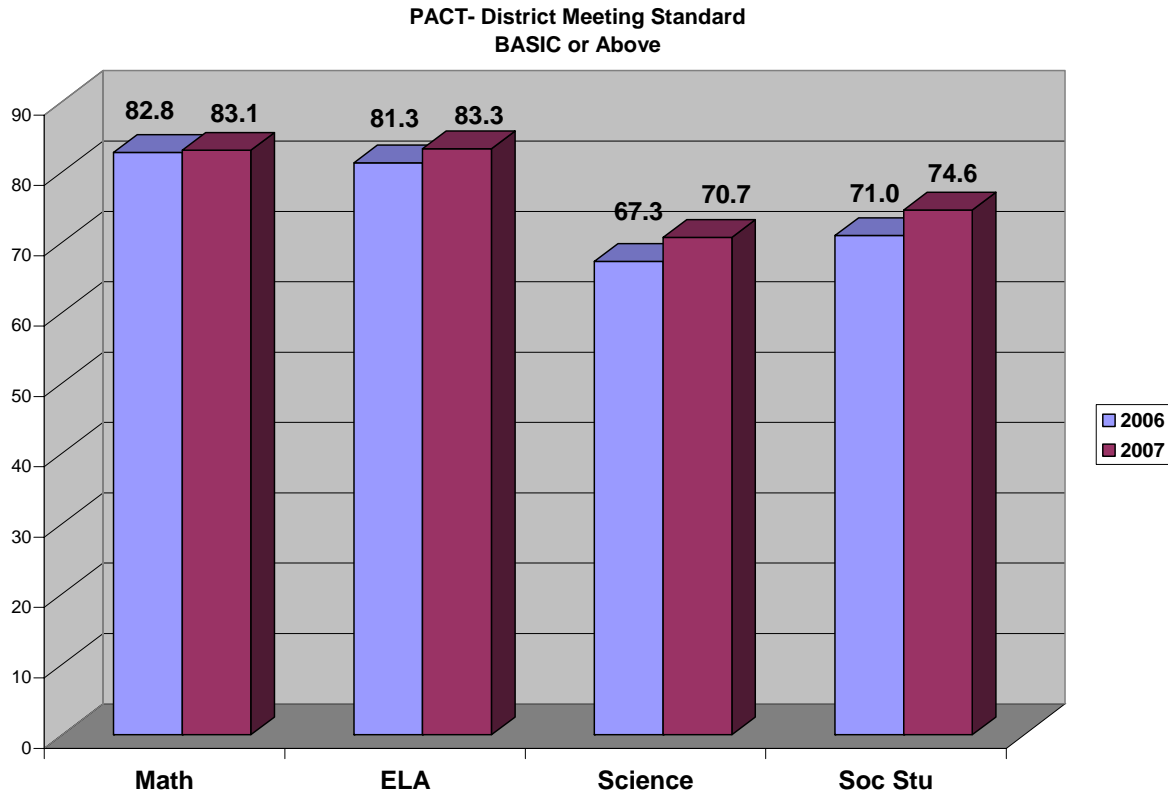
PROFICIENT

A student who performs at the PROFICIENT level on the PACT has met expectations for student performance based on the curriculum standards approved by the South Carolina Board of Education. The student is well prepared for work at the next grade. The PROFICIENT level represents the long-term goal for student performance in South Carolina.

ADVANCED

A student who performs at the ADVANCED level on the PACT has exceeded expectations for student performance based on the curriculum standards approved by the South Carolina State Board of Education. The student is very well prepared for work at the next grade.

The Charts below graphically demonstrate PACT testing results for Spartanburg School District Two. Test results for spring 2006 and 2007 are used to compare results and determine that progress is being made.

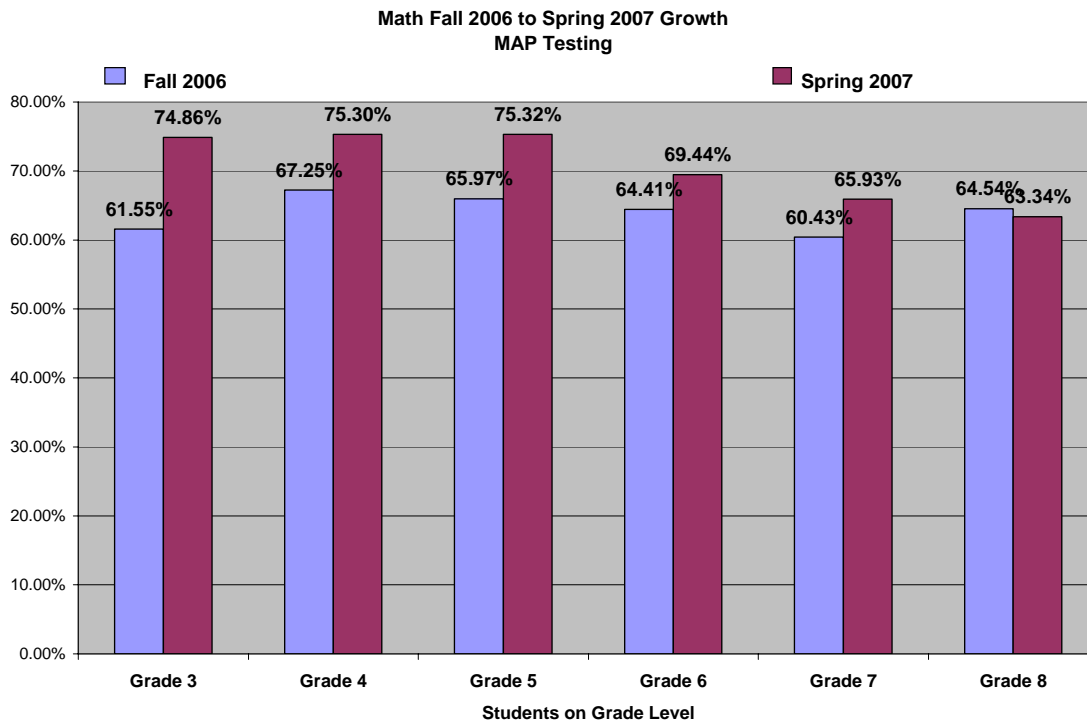


PACT 2007 Proficient & Advanced

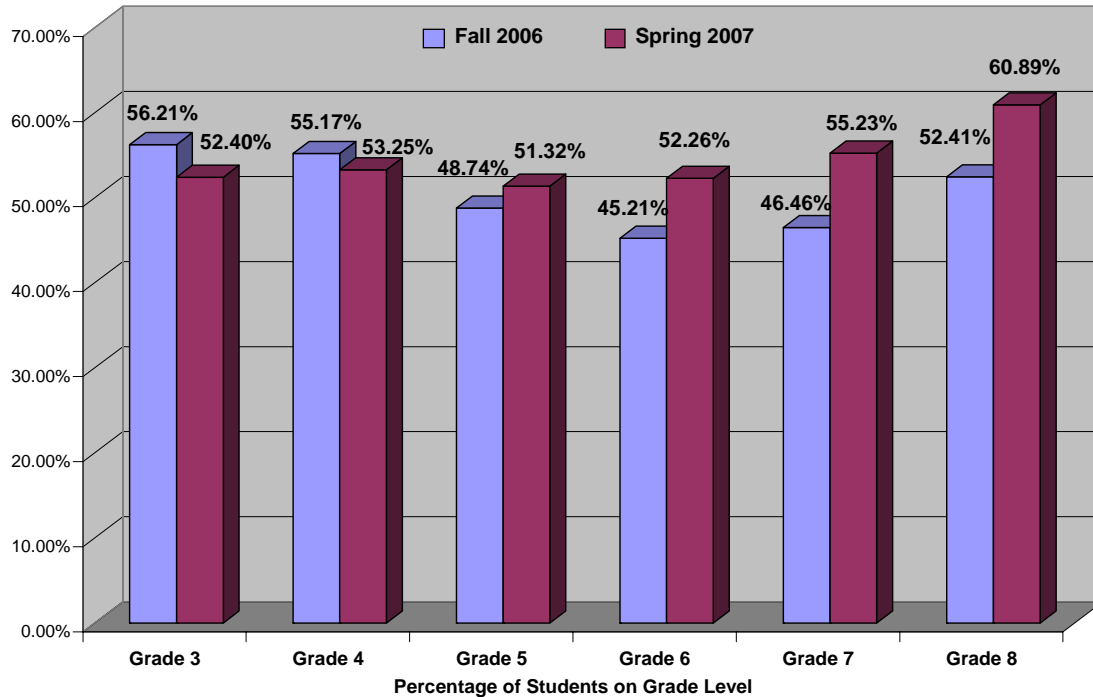
Spt 2	Gr 3	State	Gr 4	State	Gr 5	State
ELA	59.2	54.4	51.1	42.3	40.8	31.9
Math	36.4	30.8	50.8	50.4	42.2	33.5
Spt 2	Gr 6	State	Gr 7	State	Gr 8	State
ELA	39.0	31.0	50.4	28.4	39.5	24.7
Math	38.3	37.9	45.4	32.7	30.2	19.7

Recent comparisons in studies by the Northwest Evaluation Association, using their Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores as a common scale, show that South Carolina's standards are some of the highest in the nation. A complete report of this national research is available at <http://www.nwea.org/research/national.asp>.

The chart below is a comparison from fall 2006 to spring 2007 MAP testing Spartanburg School District Two students. MAP results are used to determine if progress is being made and used to help guide differentiated instruction.



ELA Fall to Spring 2007 MAP

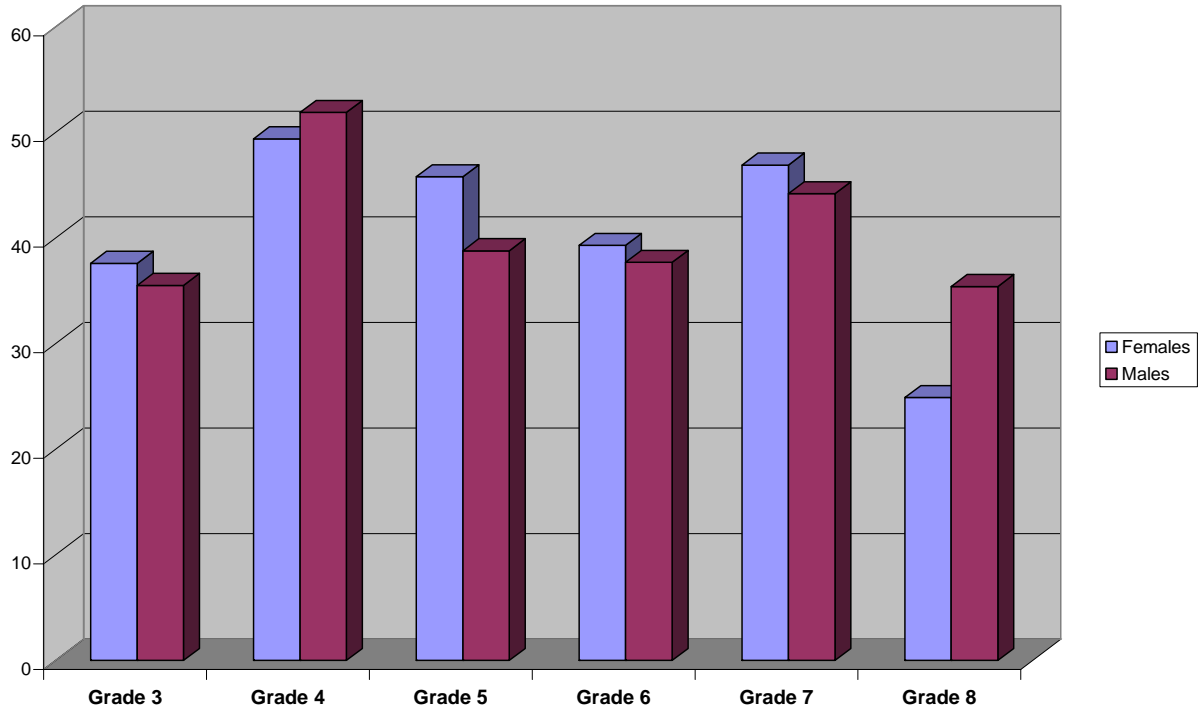


Spartanburg School District Two has a strong literacy focus. The superintendent has set a goal to have all students reading on grade level by grade six. Below is a chart demonstrating our progress in the first year. This is based on the NWEA Measure of Academic Progress testing.

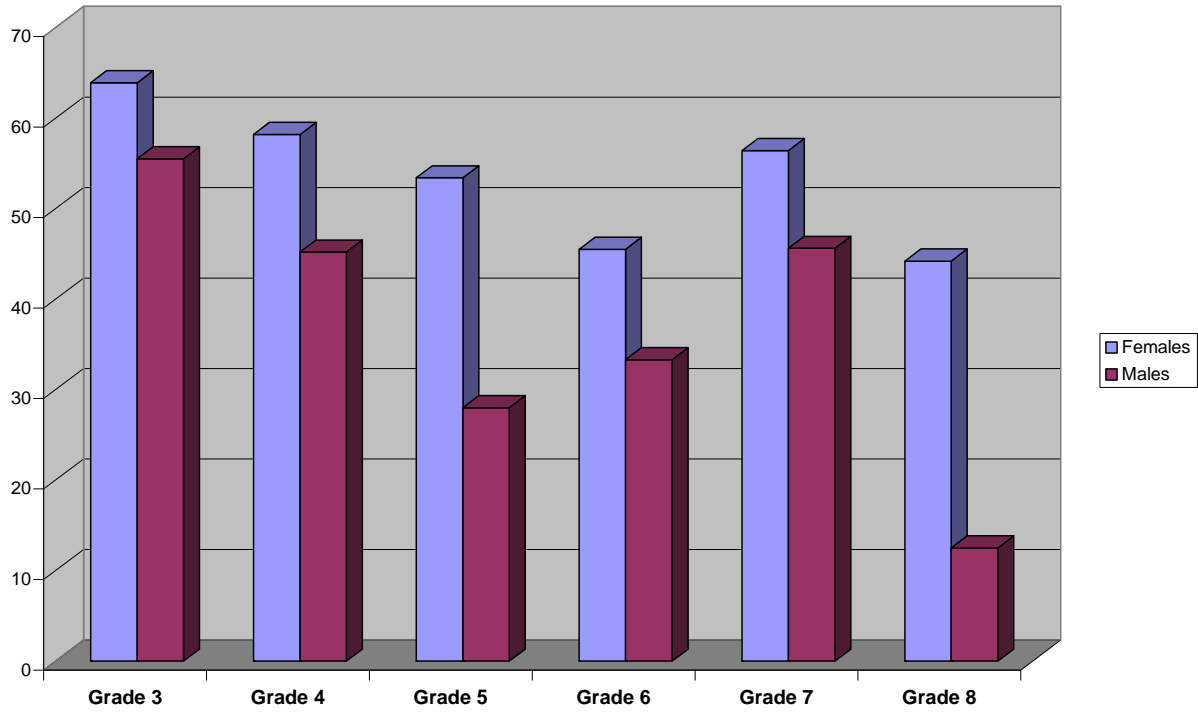
MAP Reading	Spring 2006 % Reading On Grade Level	Fall 2006 % Reading On Grade Level	Winter 2007 % Reading On Grade Level	Spring 2007 % Reading on Grade Level
Grade 6	50.20	50.47	57.26	49.14

Following are additional charts indicating our performance by students in various subgroups. You will note areas of strength as well as areas of concern. Our current student body consists of 77% Caucasian, 12% African-American, 6% Hispanic, and 4% Asian-Pacific.

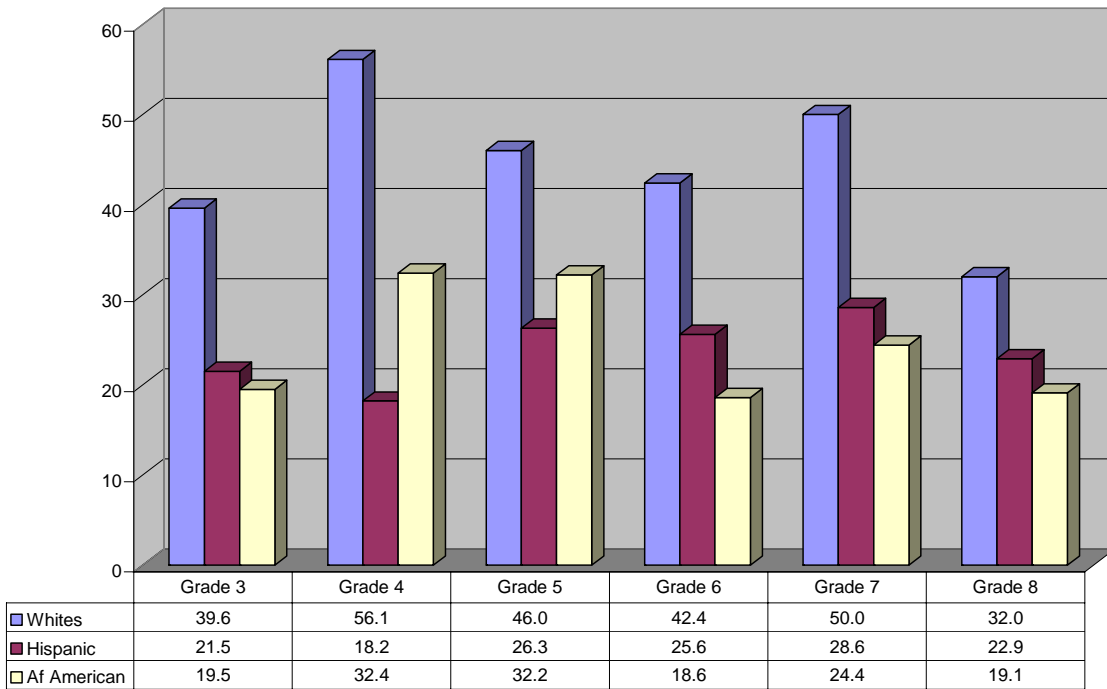
**PACT 2007 Proficient & Advanced
Math**



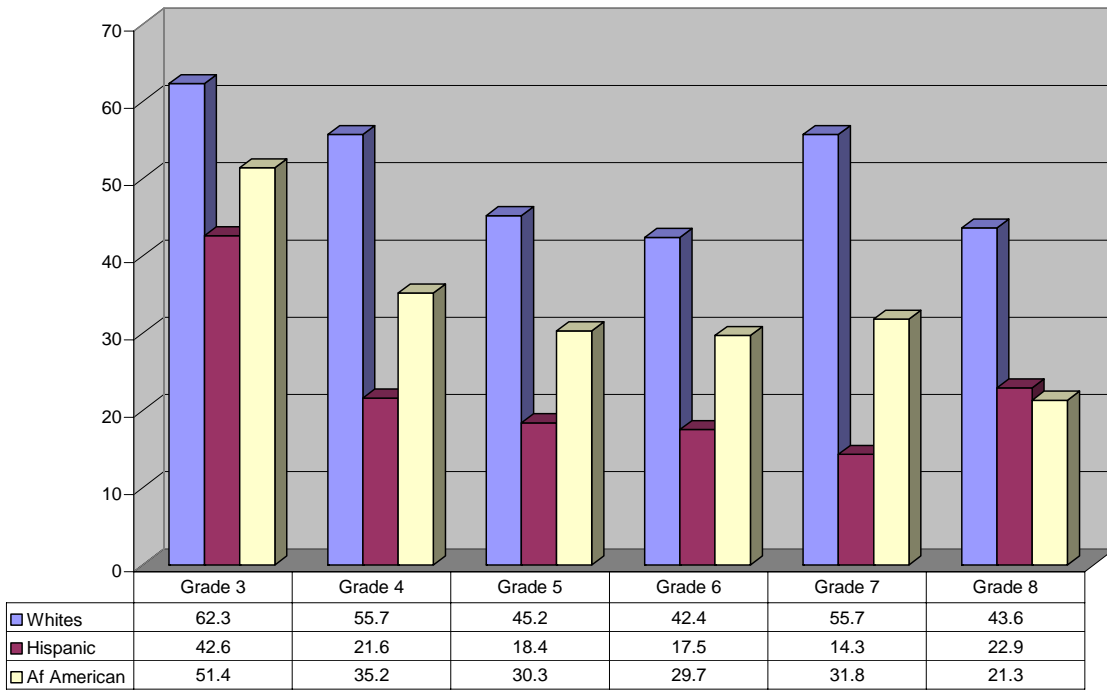
**PACT 2007 Proficient & Advanced
ELA**



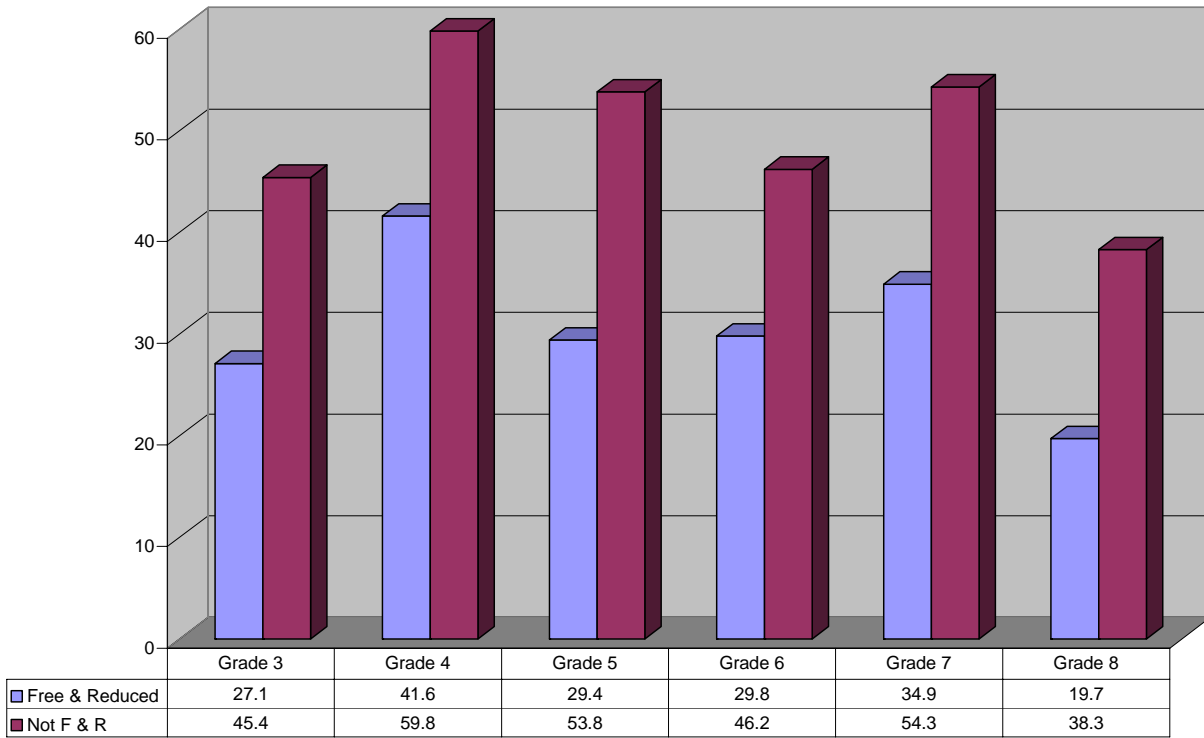
**PACT 2007 Proficient & Advanced Percentages
Math**



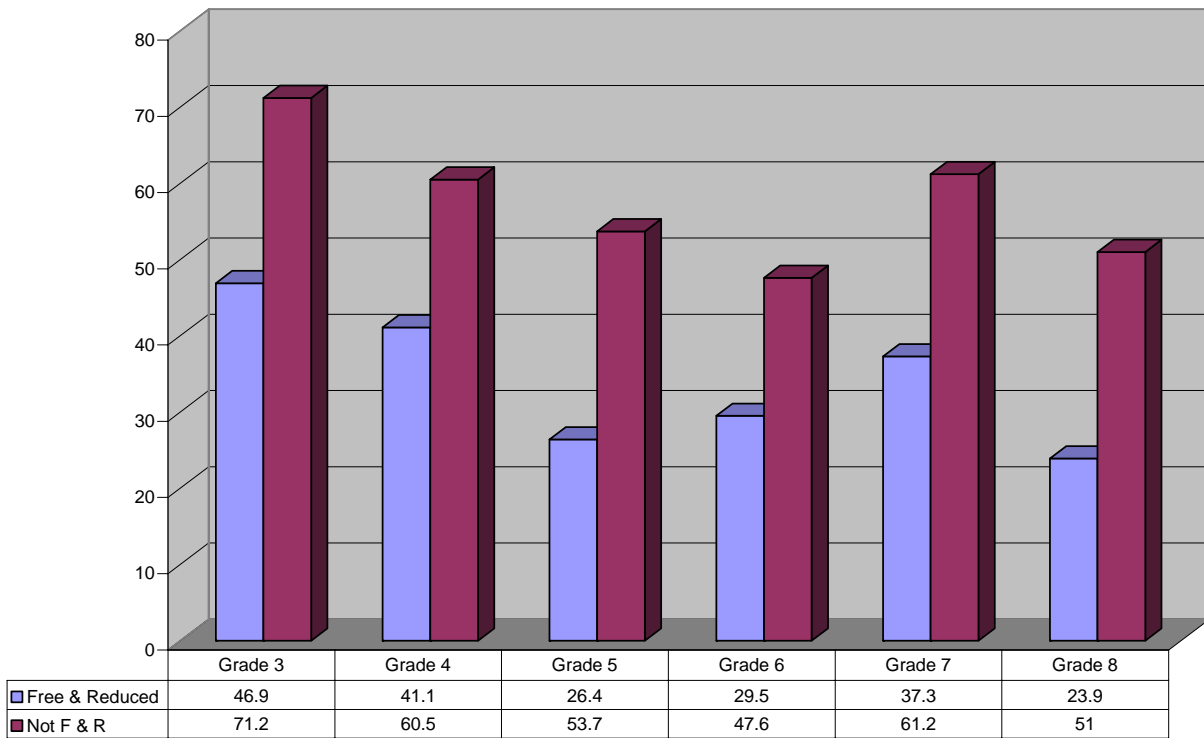
**PACT 2007 Proficient & Advanced Percentages
ELA**



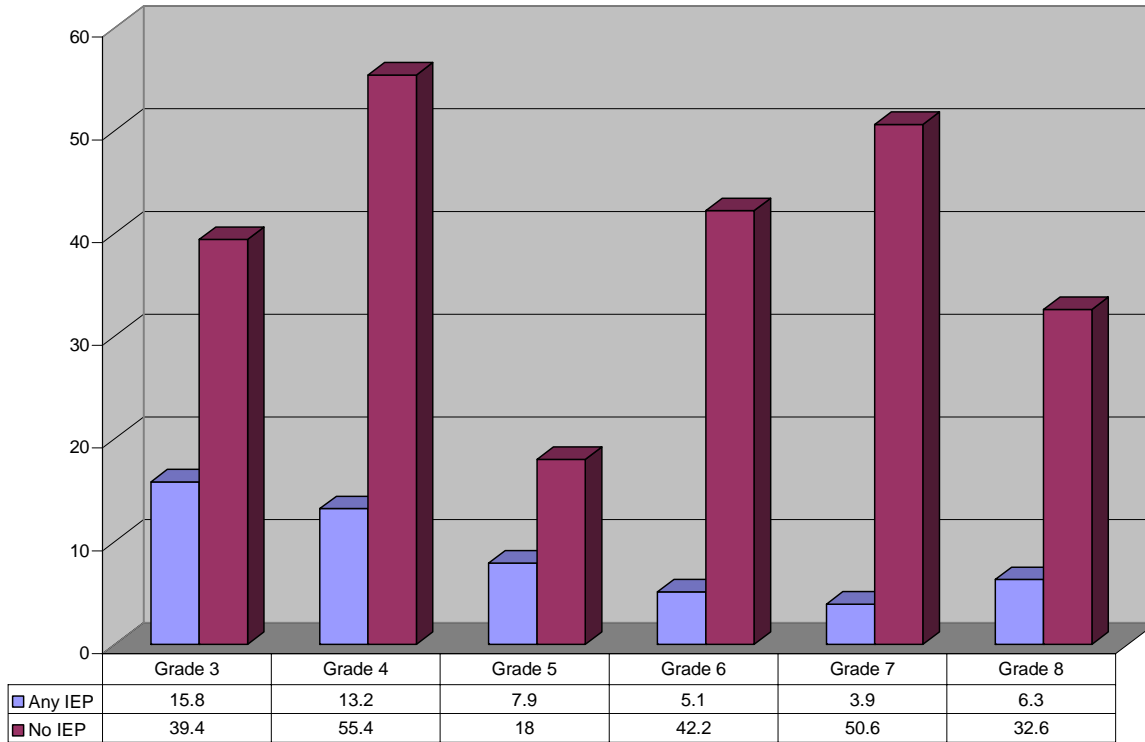
PACT 2007 Proficient & Advanced Math



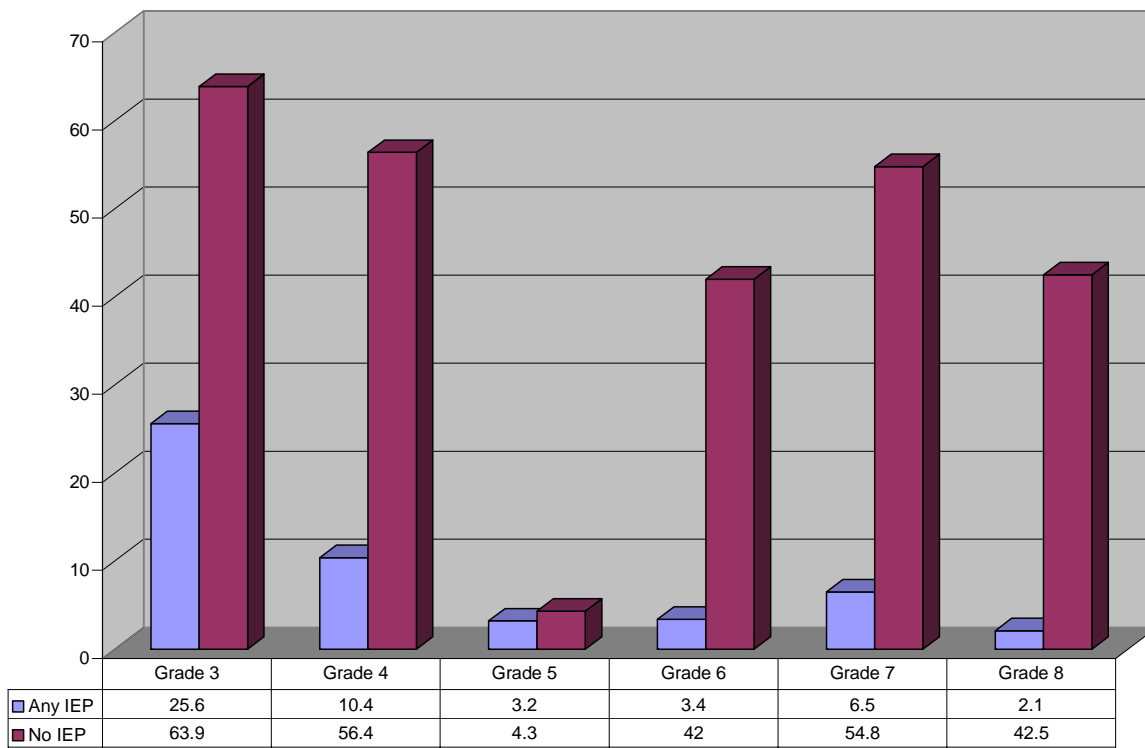
PACT 2007 Proficient & Advanced ELA



PACT 2007 Proficient & Advanced Math



PACT 2007 Proficient & Advanced ELA



Section 4: Methods Employed to Provide Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance Process

Internal Review

Spartanburg Two has established procedures for systematically reviewing our outcomes, and then modifying programs and processes in order to address issues and strengthen results. Student achievement is monitored at the school and district levels. The district provides assistance and resources by producing data notebooks and data feedback sessions for each school in the fall of the year. Principals hold teacher conferences in which results from the past year are discussed and plans made to improve those results. Post conferences are held in the spring to reflect on the past year's implementation of those plans. The Goals-Based Evaluation (GBE) process is also utilized as each continuing contract teacher, in conjunction with the administration, sets a student achievement and professional growth goal every year. Principals also meet each fall and summer with the superintendent, assistant superintendent of instruction, and director of elementary schools in Instructional Leadership Conferences to discuss similar issues. Each conference is concluded with the principal having the opportunity to request needed assistance from the district. These are separate from the annual evaluation process principals and the superintendent follow through the state's ADEPT process for administrators addressing nine areas critical to strong schools.

During the 2004-2005 school year, the district office leadership team along with principals and school leadership teams developed the District Two Strategic Plan for 2005-2010. This plan was disseminated to the schools to use as an aide in developing the 5-year plans for each school. Those School Improvement Plans were submitted to the district office for review. School Improvement Plans were discussed at Instructional and Team meetings. Those discussions were followed by school visits and input from District Advisory Teams. During the annual Instructional Leadership Conferences each school leadership team updates the District Office staff on the progress their school is making toward achieving the goals in the School Improvement Plan and to discuss revisions to those goals. In addition, schools have an opportunity to make suggestions as to how the District Office can support the school in achieving their goals.

Additionally, the Board of Trustees and superintendent agree to a set of goals through a process conducted each November through January in conjunction with the Board's annual evaluation of the superintendent's job performance. These goals guide the district in important issues to be addressed.

External Review

Spartanburg Two schools are all SACS accredited and have used the external review teams' suggestions for improvement. We are also firm believers in being very careful about committing only to programs that we believe will truly make an impact on student achievement and then implementing them fully including follow-up visits over the course of time to ensure proper implementation. We do not embrace new programs without careful consideration and dedication. Therefore, we have had success and do not have a history of failed or abandoned ideas. Several examples include our implementation of the 100 Book Challenge program three years ago. It is a program designed to provide reading materials and instruction on every child's instructional level up through the 6th grade. Consultants from the company have conducted visits into every teacher's classroom twice yearly for the past two years and have trained our own instructional coaches to do the same in their schools. We have also implemented a Cognitive

Compatible Classroom philosophy, closely aligned to Susan Kovalik's brain compatible learning tenets, and have had both the elementary and middle school consultants who delivered the initial training back for additional staff development and to do school visits into every classroom over the past two years. Hendrix Elementary is in the candidate phase of becoming an International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP). Staff from the school have traveled to training sessions and school visits throughout the southeast and have hosted IB staff and trainers on their campus over the past two years. Nine of our schools have also been recognized, some twice, as Red Carpet Schools award winners and one has been a Palmetto's Finest, thus inviting scrutiny from external reviewers. Several of our schools, including five this past year, have been recognized as Palmetto Gold and Silver Award winners and have participated in the state's Showcase program to describe why they have been successful and invite visitors to their campuses.

The district also follows procedures set forth by the South Carolina Department of Education and has been monitored through paper audits and on-site visits in such areas as our Summer Migrant Program, Title I, Title III, Special Services and Early Childhood as well as our annual audit of our district finances.

Finally, we have eagerly anticipated the opportunity to share with the SACS/CASI Quality Assurance Review team our schools and program in Spartanburg Two. We welcome you and are delighted that you have chosen to participate in our quest to receive district accreditation.