

BPS Mission: *All students will have the academic, social, and personal skills to be college, career, and community ready.*

BPS Vision: *Together, we inspire a passion for learning, discovery, and excellence.*

AdvancED

AdvancED is a global leader providing continuous improvement and accreditation services to more than 32,000 institutions serving 20 million students worldwide. Bismarck Public Schools (BPS) has 13,000 students.

Performance Review

Using a set of rigorous, research-based standards, the accreditation process examines the whole school district to determine how everyone (staff, students and community members) works together to meet the needs of students. An accreditation team of highly skilled and trained educators from in and out of state gather first-hand evidence to evaluate the institution's performance and assess the quality of the learning environment. Nearly 300 people were interviewed (including leaders, teachers, other staff, parents, students and community partners) and one-third (8) of the public schools in Bismarck were visited.

Outcome

Bismarck Public Schools had a high Index of Educational Quality™ of **358 out of 400**.

In the 31 categories listed below, BPS exceeded or met expectations in 87% of them:

Exceeds Expectations 18=	58%	Emerging	4=	13%
Meets Expectations 9=	29%	Needs Improvement	0=	0%

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

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

Resource Capacity Standards		Rating
3.1	The system plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the system's effectiveness.	Exceeds Expectations
3.2	The system's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.	Exceeds Expectations
3.3	The system provides induction, mentoring, and coaching programs that ensure all staff members have the knowledge and skills to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.	Exceeds Expectations
3.4	The system attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the system's purpose and direction.	Exceeds Expectations
3.5	The system integrates digital resources into teaching, learning, and operations to improve professional practice, student performance, and organizational effectiveness.	Exceeds Expectations
3.6	The system provides access to information resources and materials to support the curriculum, programs, and needs of students, staff, and the system.	Exceeds Expectations
3.7	The system demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning and use of resources in support of the system's purpose and direction.	Meets Expectations
3.8	The system allocates human, material, and fiscal resources in alignment with the system's identified needs and priorities to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.	Exceeds Expectations

Classroom Observation Scores

The average score for the 7 sections was **316 of 400**. The highest scores were 358 in Well-Managed Learning Environment and 352 in Supportive Learning Environment. The lowest was 192 in Digital Learning Environment, though all high schools and middle schools will have 1:1 computers in 2018-19, and elementary schools currently have a 2:1 student to computer ratio.

“...the team noted that classrooms exhibited supportive learning environments where students collaborated with their peers and learning interactions with teachers were seen as congenial and supportive.”

“Student interviews revealed that students felt supported by members of the school staff, some of whom noted that support staff, administrators and (instructional) coaches were also accessible when needed.”

“The team also observed well-managed classrooms in which teachers and students interacted respectfully with one another. Classroom expectations were recognized and followed by students. Positive peer-to-peer, adult to student, and adult to adult interactions were observed in all settings. Students transitions from one learning activity to another with ease.”

“Student interviews revealed students enjoy participating in hands-on, student led activities that demonstrate their understanding of the skills outlined in the standards.”

“Rigorous learning activities that required higher-order thinking were embedded in instruction.”

“...the team observed students monitoring their own learning while also responding positively to teacher feedback. An emphasis on soft skills was observed in classrooms... (and) teachers were committed to meeting the academic and behavioral goals for all students.”

Continuous Improvement Categories

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

Bismarck Public Schools focuses on Five Rocks:

1. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): teachers regularly collaborate to improve student achievement.
2. Multi-Tiered System of Support for Academics & Behavior (MTSS A-B): processes are in place to support academic achievement and student behavior.
3. Standards Based Education (SBE): elementary and middle schools use standards-based assessment and reporting; high schools align to the standards but use letter grades.
4. Project Based Learning (PBL): occurring at every grade level in some classrooms.
5. Data Driven Decision Making (DDDM): data is used to improve instruction, student interventions, and professional development for staff.

“A culture of learning across the district was evident in all observations, interviews and interactions during the engagement review. Technology was determined to be utilized to support a rigorous teaching and learning environment.”

“The use of instructional coaches and their close work with teachers and building principals provided an effective practice that ensured processes to measure organizational effectiveness are in place.”

“At the elementary level, parents and students all indicated they felt safe at school and enjoyed being there. Students shared they like their teachers and have fun at school; (middle school) students indicated they felt

supported at school and enjoyed being there. Students indicated there are many opportunities for leadership roles and a variety of groups/clubs to join.”

Powerful Practices in Bismarck Public Schools

1. The continuous efforts to implement and improve student learning by focusing diligently on each of the “Five Rocks” has developed into an integrated, cohesive, systemic, systematic, and articulated service to support growth and development for all students.

“Parents interviewed were pleased with the academic rigor in all areas of their student’s education and were appreciative of the communication sent home to keep them apprised of their progress.” “Students interviewed emphasized a love of learning in their respective schools...”

2. Instructional coaches are instrumental in building capacity by enhancing the skill-set of teachers in innovative best practices.

“The (instructional) coaches support teachers and build capacity within the district by providing feedback on lessons taught, presenting individual professional learning opportunities and sharing classroom management strategies. Coaches work with teachers to analyze student data, which drives instruction and continually improves student achievement at all levels.”

Opportunity for Improvement in BPS

1. Establish practices and procedures that support the governing body’s ongoing implementation of the coherent governance model.

Improvement Priorities for BPS

1. Develop a formalized plan to regularly review and revise the system’s mission and vision that involved all stakeholder groups.

Conclusion Narrative

“Students said in interviews, ‘I know I am learning when I am challenged with more difficult problems and tasks.’ In classroom observations and interviews, students saw mistakes as opportunities to grow and learn.”

“The community partner interviews and parent interviews indicated a trust in the district leadership at all levels and a commitment to the success for all students.”

The **full report** is online at www.bismarckschools.org, About Us, Strategic Improvement or call 701-323-4091.