Cognia Diagnostic Review Report

Results for: Kennedy Montessori Elementary

January 13-16, 2020

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Introduction

The Cognia Diagnostic Review is conducted by a team of highly qualified evaluators who examine the institution's adherence and commitment to the research aligned to Cognia Performance Standards. The Diagnostic Review process is designed to energize and equip the leadership and stakeholders of an institution to achieve higher levels of performance and address areas that may be hindering efforts to reach those desired performance levels. The Diagnostic Review is a rigorous process that includes an in-depth examination of evidence and relevant performance data, interviews with stakeholders, and observations of instruction, learning, and operations.

Standards help delineate what matters. They provide a common language through which an education community can engage in conversations about educational improvement, institution effectiveness, and achievement. They serve as a foundation for planning and implementing improvement strategies and activities and for measuring success. Cognia Performance Standards were developed by a committee composed of educators from the fields of practice, research, and policy. These talented leaders applied professional wisdom, deep knowledge of effective practice, and the best available research to craft a set of robust standards that define institutional quality and guide continuous improvement.

When this institution was evaluated, the Diagnostic Review Team used an identified subset of the Cognia Performance Standards and related criteria to guide its evaluation, looking not only for adherence to standards, but also for how the institution functioned as a whole and embodied the practices and characteristics of quality. Using the evidence, they gathered, the Diagnostic Review Team arrived at a set of findings contained in this report.

As a part of the Diagnostic Review, stakeholders were interviewed by members of the Diagnostic Review Team about their perspectives on topics relevant to the institution's learning environment and organizational effectiveness. The feedback gained through the stakeholder interviews was considered with other evidence and data to support the findings of the Diagnostic Review. The following table lists the numbers of interviewed representatives of various stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder Groups	Number
District-Level Administrators	2
Building-Level Administrators	2
Professional Support Staff (e.g., Counselor, Media Specialist, Technology Coordinator)	3
Certified Staff	21
Noncertified Staff	3
Students	128
Parents	8
Total	167

Cognia Standards Diagnostic Results

The Cognia Standards Diagnostic was used by the Diagnostic Review Team to evaluate the institution's effectiveness based on the Cognia's Performance Standards identified as essential for realizing growth and sustainable improvement in underperforming schools. The diagnostic consists of three components built around each of the three Domains: **Leadership Capacity**, **Learning Capacity**, and **Resource Capacity**. Point values are established within the diagnostic, and a percentage of the points earned by the institution for each Essential Standard is calculated. Results are reported within four categories: Impacting, Improving, Initiating, and Insufficient. The results for the three Domains are presented in the tables that follow.

Leadership Capacity Domain

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

Leadership Capacity Essential Standards		**Rating**
1.1	The institution commits to a purpose statement that defines beliefs about teaching and learning, including the expectations for learners.	Initiating
1.3	The institution engages in a continuous improvement process that produces evidence, including measurable results of improving student learning and professional practice.	Initiating
1.6	Leaders implement staff supervision and evaluation processes to improve professional practice and organizational effectiveness.	Initiating
1.7	Leaders implement operational process and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness in support of teaching and learning.	Initiating
1.8	Leaders engage stakeholders to support the achievement of the institution's purpose and direction.	Initiating
1.9	The institution provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness.	Initiating
1.10	Leaders collect and analyze a range of feedback data from multiple stakeholder groups to inform decision-making that results in improvement.	Initiating

Learning Capacity Domain

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

Learning Capacity Essential Standards		Rating
2.1	Learners have equitable opportunities to develop skills and achieve the content and learning priorities established by the institution.	Initiating
2.2	The learning culture promotes creativity, innovation and collaborative problem-solving.	Insufficient
2.5	Educators implement a curriculum that is based on high expectations and prepares learners for their next levels.	Insufficient
2.7	Instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learners' needs and the institution's learning expectations.	Insufficient
2.9	The institution implements, evaluates, and monitors processes to identify and address the specialized social, emotional, developmental, and academic needs of students.	Initiating
2.10	Learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated.	Insufficient
2.11	Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to demonstrable improvement of student learning.	Insufficient
2.12	The institution implements a process to continuously assess its programs and organizational conditions to improve student learning.	Insufficient

Resource Capacity Domain

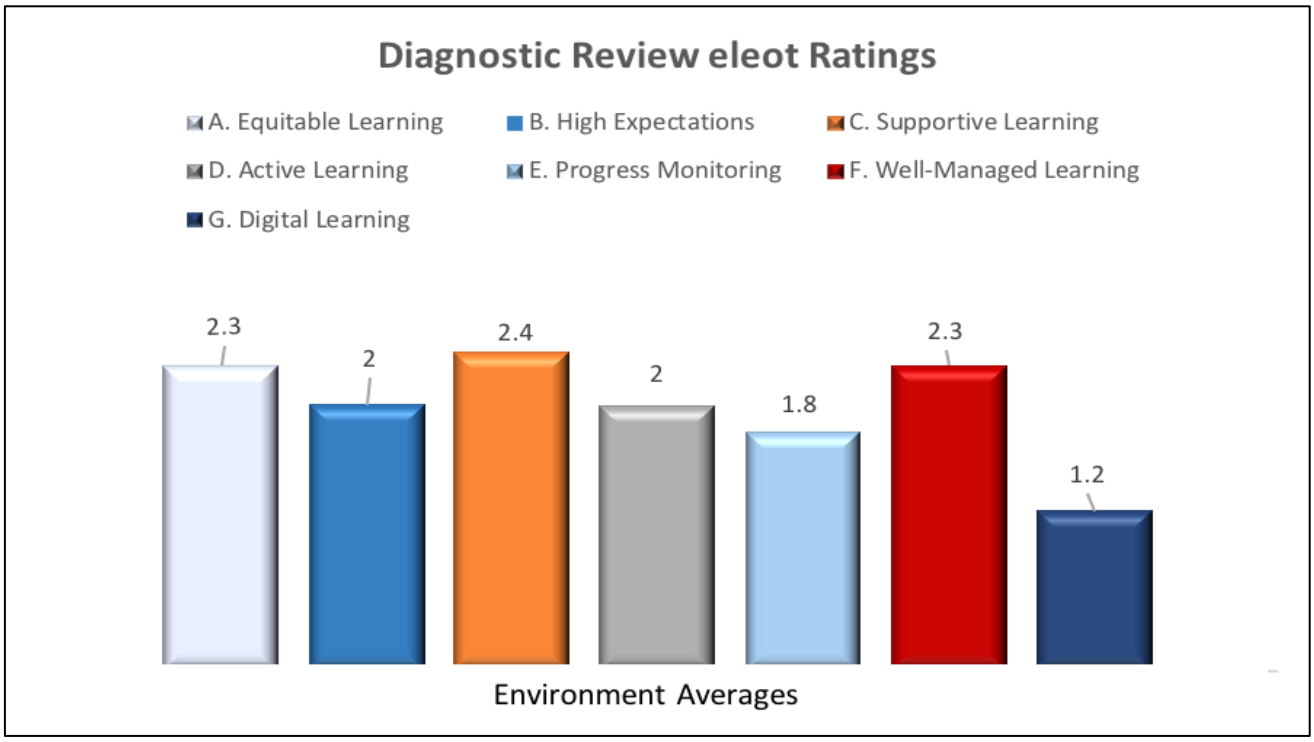
The use and distribution of resources support the stated mission of the institution. Institutions ensure that resources are distributed and utilized equitably so that the needs of all learners are adequately and effectively addressed. The utilization of resources includes support for professional learning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

Resource Capacity Essential Standards		**Rating**
3.1	The institution plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the institution's effectiveness.	Initiating
3.2	The institution's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.	Improving
3.4	The institution attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the institution's purpose and direction.	Initiating
3.7	The institution demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning and use of resources in support of the institution's purpose and direction.	Initiating
3.8	The institution allocates human, material, and fiscal resources in alignment with the institution's identified needs and priorities to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.	Initiating

Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®) Results

The eProve™ Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot) is a learner-centric classroom observation tool that comprises 28 items organized in seven environments aligned with the Cognia Standards. The tool provides useful, relevant, structured, and quantifiable data on the extent to which students are engaged in activities and demonstrate knowledge, attitudes, and dispositions that are conducive to effective learning. Classroom observations are conducted for a minimum of 20 minutes.

Every member of the Diagnostic Review Team was eleot certified and passed a certification exam that established inter-rater reliability. Team members conducted 23 observations during the Diagnostic Review process, including all core content learning environments. The following charts provide aggregate data across multiple observations for each of the seven learning environments.



A. Equitable Learning Environment						
Indicators	**Average**	**Description**	**Not Observed**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Evident**	**Very Evident**
A1	2.0	Learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs.	39%	26%	26%	9%
A2	2.8	Learners have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support.	13%	9%	61%	17%
A3	2.8	Learners are treated in a fair, clear, and consistent manner.	9%	22%	52%	17%
A4	1.6	Learners demonstrate and/or have opportunities to develop empathy/respect/appreciation for differences in abilities, aptitudes, backgrounds, cultures, and/or other human characteristics, conditions and dispositions.	43%	52%	4%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:		**2.3**				

B. High Expectations Learning Environment						
Indicators	**Average**	**Description**	**Not Observed**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Evident**	**Very Evident**
B1	1.9	Learners strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher.	26%	61%	13%	0%
B2	2.2	Learners engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable.	17%	48%	35%	0%
B3	1.7	Learners demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work.	39%	48%	13%	0%
B4	1.9	Learners engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing).	35%	39%	26%	0%
B5	2.2	Learners take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning.	13%	57%	30%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:		**2.0**				

C. Supportive Learning Environment						
Indicators	**Average**	**Description**	**Not Observed**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Evident**	**Very Evident**
C1	2.3	Learners demonstrate a sense of community that is positive, cohesive, engaged, and purposeful.	13%	52%	30%	4%
C2	2.3	Learners take risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback).	17%	39%	43%	0%
C3	2.6	Learners are supported by the teacher, their peers, and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks.	4%	39%	48%	9%
C4	2.6	Learners demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher.	4%	43%	43%	9%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:		**2.4**				

D. Active Learning Environment						
Indicators	**Average**	**Description**	**Not Observed**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Evident**	**Very Evident**
D1	2.0	Learners' discussions/dialogues/exchanges with each other and teacher predominate.	26%	43%	30%	0%
D2	1.9	Learners make connections from content to real-life experiences.	39%	35%	22%	4%
D3	2.2	Learners are actively engaged in the learning activities.	13%	52%	35%	0%
D4	1.9	Learners collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments.	39%	35%	22%	4%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:		**2.0**				

E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environment						
Indicators	**Average**	**Description**	**Not Observed**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Evident**	**Very Evident**
E1	1.6	Learners monitor their own progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored.	48%	48%	4%	0%
E2	2.1	Learners receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work.	22%	48%	26%	4%
E3	2.1	Learners demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content.	13%	61%	26%	0%
E4	1.4	Learners understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed.	65%	30%	4%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:		**1.8**				

F. Well-Managed Learning Environment						
Indicators	**Average**	**Description**	**Not Observed**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Evident**	**Very Evident**
F1	2.7	Learners speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other.	0%	39%	48%	13%
F2	2.3	Learners demonstrate knowledge of and/or follow classroom rules and behavioral expectations and work well with others.	13%	48%	30%	9%
F3	2.1	Learners transition smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another.	22%	52%	22%	4%
F4	2.1	Learners use class time purposefully with minimal wasted time or disruptions.	22%	43%	35%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:		**2.3**				

G. Digital Learning Environment						
Indicators	**Average**	**Description**	**Not Observed**	**Somewhat Evident**	**Evident**	**Very Evident**
G1	1.5	Learners use digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning.	57%	39%	4%	0%
G2	1.2	Learners use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning.	83%	17%	0%	0%
G3	1.1	Learners use digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning.	96%	0%	4%	0%
Overall rating on a 4 point scale:	**1.2**					

eleot Narrative

The Diagnostic Review Team conducted 23 classroom observations in core content classrooms. The Supportive Learning Environment had the highest overall rating of 2.4 on a four-point scale. It was evident/very evident in 57 percent of classrooms that students “are supported by the teacher, their peers, and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks” (C3). In addition, it was evident/very evident in 52 percent of classrooms that students “demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher” (C4) and in 43 percent of classrooms that students “take risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback)” (C2).

The High Expectations Learning Environment scored an overall 2.0. While this learning environment did not receive the overall lowest rating, there were concerns with specific indicators. In 13 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students “strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher” (B1) and that students “demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work” (B3). In addition, it was evident/very evident in 26 percent of classrooms that students “engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking” (B4). It was evident/very evident in 30 percent of classrooms that students “take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning” (B5). In 35 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students “engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable” (B2).

The low ratings in the Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environment revealed an area in need of improvement. Instances of students who “monitor their own progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning is monitored” (E1) were evident/very evident in four percent of classrooms. Students who “receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work” (E2), was evident/very evident in 30 percent of classrooms. It was evident/very evident in 26 percent of classrooms that students “demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content” (E3) and in four percent of classrooms that students “are able to explain how their work is assessed” (E4).

Observations in the Active Learning Environment revealed it was evident/very evident in 30 percent of classrooms that students’ “discussions/dialogues/exchanges with each other and teacher predominate” (D1). Also, instances of students who “make connections from content to real-life experiences” (D2) were evident/very evident in 26 percent of classrooms. It was evident/very evident that students “are actively engaged in the learning activities”

(D3) in 35 percent of classrooms and that students “collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments” (D4) in 26 percent of classrooms.

The Digital Learning Environment received the lowest rating overall with a 1.2. Classroom observations revealed it was evident/very evident in zero percent of classrooms that students “use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning” (G2). Further, it was evident/very evident in four percent of classrooms that students “use digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning” (G1) and that students “use digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning” (G3).

The Equitable Learning Environment rated an overall 2.3 on the four-point scale. While this learning environment was not one of the lowest-rated environments, learning at the expected high levels will continue to be disrupted as long as students are not receiving instruction and support that meet their specific needs both academically and behaviorally. In 35 percent of the classrooms observed, it was evident/very evident that students “engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs” (A1). Also, in four percent of classrooms observed, it was evident/very evident that students “demonstrate and/or have opportunities to develop empathy/respect/appreciation for differences in abilities, aptitudes, backgrounds, cultures, and/or other human characteristics, conditions and dispositions” (A4).

While the Well-Managed Learning Environment received a rating of 2.3, and some students were well-behaved and striving to learn, the absence of clearly defined, practiced, and enforced classroom procedures and expectations led to chaotic transitions. Instances where students “transition smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another” (F3) were evident/very evident in 26 percent of classrooms. To address the combination of chaotic transitions and disruptions, the Diagnostic Review Team suggests that the school develop structures to set clear transitional and behavioral expectations for all students in order to leverage the maximum amount of class time for learning.

Findings

Improvement Priorities

Improvement priorities are developed to enhance the capacity of the institution to reach a higher level of performance and reflect the areas identified by the Diagnostic Review Team to have the greatest impact on improving student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Improvement Priority #1

Develop, implement, and monitor an improvement process focused on improving student learning and professional practice through a professional learning community (PLC) framework that (1) begins with the deconstruction of grade-level standards to produce a skill progression for each standard; (2) provides common formative assessments for each deconstructed standard that assess student learning at a level of rigor to achieve standard mastery; (3) requires every classroom teacher to develop and implement daily standards-based lessons that address core instructional expectations for all students and provide tiered instruction to address intervention, acceleration, and remedial needs of students; (4) includes opportunities for teachers to analyze common formative assessment and discipline referral data to increase student engagement and reduce behavior referrals; and (5) requires leaders to monitor each classroom to ensure fidelity of instructional and learning expectations and provide feedback to faculty and staff. (Standard 1.3)

Evidence:

Student Performance Data:

Student performance data, as detailed in an addendum to this report, suggested that effective instructional processes for supporting student learning and improving the success of all students at all levels were not developed. Students performed below the state averages for proficiency in every content area for two consecutive years on the Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP) assessment. Specifically, students scored at least 15 percentage points below state averages in all content areas with two exceptions: fourth-grade reading scores in 2017-2018 were 11.3 percentage points below the state average, and third-grade math scores in 2018-2019 were 11.0 percentage points below the state average. Over the two years, the lowest score was in 2018-2019 in writing, with students scoring 36.9 percentage points below the state average.

In 2017-2018, the Kennedy Montessori Elementary growth index in math was above the state average; however, in 2018-2019, growth in math was below the state average.

Additional student performance data revealed that among the subgroups, the Not Consolidated student group scored the highest in reading and math in 2018-2019. The lowest scores in all tested areas in 2018-2019 were found in the Economically Disadvantaged subgroup, with 5.8 percent scoring Proficient/Distinguished in science, and in the Disabilities (IEP) subgroup, with 5.1 percent scoring Proficient/Distinguished in math.

Classroom Observation Data:

The classroom observation data suggested that the school was not systematically implementing a continuous improvement process resulting in high expectations and standards of performance. Observation data revealed that instances of students who “strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher” (B1) and students who “demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work” (B3) were evident/very evident in 13 percent of classrooms. Instances where students “monitor their own progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored” (E1) were evident/very evident in four percent of classrooms. It was also noted that students who “transition smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another” (F3) were evident/very evident in 26 percent of classrooms and students who “use class time

purposefully with minimal wasted time or disruptions" (F4) were evident/very evident in 35 percent of classrooms. Students who "are actively engaged in the learning activities" (D3) were evident/very evident in 35 percent of classrooms.

Stakeholder Interview Data:

Stakeholder interview data showed that many interviewees could not share specifics about expectations surrounding standards-based instructional planning other than being aware of using the standards to plan. There was limited discussion around expectations related to standards-based mastery. Administrator interviews revealed that the leadership team used current data to identify goals for the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan; however, they continued with past strategies and activities, waiting to receive improvement priorities from this review. Parent interviews showed an awareness of the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan. but parents were unable to identify specifics about the plan.

In relation to the culture and climate of Kennedy Montessori Elementary, teacher interviews revealed some positive indicators among the faculty. Improvement was acknowledged in relation to student behavior; however, teachers expressed frustration when asked about instructional resources. One teacher stated, "I don't have enough books to use and I spend all my time searching for other resources." Another shared, "With little to no books, I pull from online resources and have to make a great deal of copies. I am then questioned as to the number of copies I am making." Teachers also shared that they received little to no feedback from leaders. They shared that while the current leadership was effectively implementing foundational systems to provide a cohesive learning environment, there was little support or feedback around lesson planning and lesson delivery.

Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

The survey data revealed that 46 percent of staff members agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school has a continuous improvement process based on data, goals, actions, and measures for growth" (C5), while parent survey data revealed that 62 percent agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school has established goals and a plan for improving student learning" (C3).

Perceptions surrounding data collection and data use revealed that staff and parent opinions were aligned. Seventy-six percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school leaders monitor data related to school continuous improvement goals" (G7), while 66 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school ensures that all staff members monitor and report achievement of school goals" (G1). Additionally, 57 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that "Our school has a systematic process for collecting, analyzing, and using data" (G3). Sixty-seven percent of parents say, "Our school communicates effectively about the school's goals and activities" (D5).

Student surveys revealed that 80 percent of students agreed that "My teachers tell me how I should behave and to do my work" (E4); however, 24 percent of students agreed that "In my school students treat adults with respect" (D2).

Documents and Artifacts:

Kennedy Montessori Elementary provided the review team with ample documents and artifacts. One document, *Kennedy Montessori Elementary School-wide Behavior Plan*, included a school pledge, clearly defined behavior expectations with lesson plans for teaching the behavioral expectations, and a list of classroom procedures and routines. Interviews revealed that behavior improved over the past year; however, there was still inconsistency in fidelity to the behavior expectations.

There was a professional learning community (PLC) schedule, an agenda, and copies of meeting minutes that reflected the school's newly implemented PLC protocol; however, the protocol was in its infancy and had not yet shown evidence to indicate PLCs were improving student achievement.

Improvement Priority #2

Develop and implement a curriculum that focuses on high expectations and promotes success for students at their next levels. Include a process that integrates grade-level standards-based monitoring and high-yield classroom strategies. Provide a level of rigorous instruction and performance expectations that prepares every student for success and requires teachers to monitor learning and provide feedback to students. (Standard 2.5)

Evidence:

Student Performance Data:

Student performance on the K-PREP assessment, as detailed in an addendum to this report, suggested that instructional processes for supporting student learning and improving the success of all students at all levels were ineffective. Data showed a declining performance in reading at all grade levels from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019. The most significant decline in reading was in fourth grade with scores declining from 42.4 percent in 2017-2018 to 21.8 percent in 2018-2019.

Further, reading scores declined 10.8 percentage points from third grade in 2017-2018 compared to fourth grade in 2018-2019 and declined 11.2 percentage points from fourth grade in 2017-2018 compared to fifth grade in 2018-2019. Math scores also declined from third grade to fourth grade. In 2017-2018, 25.3 percent of third-grade students scored Proficient/Distinguished, while in 2018-2019, 12.6 percent of fourth-grade students scored Proficient/Distinguished.

The percentage of students scoring Proficient/Distinguished was below 30 percent in numerous areas, including 21.8 percent in fourth-grade reading, 12.6 percent in fourth-grade math, 21.5 percent in fifth-grade math, 10.3 percent in science, 19.4 percent in social studies, and 9.7 percent in writing.

Data also revealed an increasing gap between the school's scores and state averages. This gap increased at every grade level and in all content areas except third grade math from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019.

Classroom Observation Data:

The classroom observation data, as previously discussed in this report, suggested that the school was not systematically implementing an instructional process that promoted high learning expectations for students and was not incorporating high-yield instructional strategies that promote student collaboration and higher-order thinking skills. Instances of students who "are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher" (B1) and who "demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work" (B3) were evident/very evident in 13 percent of classrooms. Students who "engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing)" (B4) were evident/very evident in 26 percent of classrooms. It was evident/very evident in 30 percent of classrooms that students "take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning" (B5).

The Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environment received an overall score of 1.8 on a four-point scale. Instances of students who "monitor their own progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning is monitored" (E1) were evident/very evident in four percent of classrooms. Also concerning was the lack of feedback to students for improvement; it was evident/very evident in 30 percent of classrooms that students "receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work" (E2). In 26 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students "demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content" (E3), and it was evident/very evident in four percent of classrooms that students "are able to explain how their work is assessed" (E4).

Stakeholder Interview Data:

Interview data showed that teachers struggled with a lack of resources in all content areas. While the district invested in and provided resources for the Jan Richardson *Guided Reading* curriculum, teachers were unable to speak to an adopted curriculum to teach foundational reading skills. When questioned in reference to foundational

reading and math curricula, teachers shared that the school lacked a horizontal and vertical alignment of resources in both content areas.

School leaders shared that teachers created some common formative assessments but that this work did not include the deconstruction of content standards. Leaders were therefore not able to ensure that the assessment items were at the level of rigor needed for students to be successful.

District-level support staff indicated that using the PLC framework would provide teachers opportunities to collaboratively plan standards-based lessons and verify their capacity to increase student performance.

Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

Even though the principal shared that every classroom was expected to have a uniform daily agenda posted and teachers did identify this posting as a daily practice during their interviews, the Diagnostic Review Team observed agendas in very few classrooms. These observations were supported through perception data where 49 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “all teachers in our school use a process to inform students of their learning expectations and standards of performance” (E5). Staff response was not aligned with parent perception, as 84 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that “my child knows the expectations for learning in all classes” (E10).

As to providing students with feedback related to learning, 36 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “all teachers in our school provide students with specific and timely feedback about their learning” (E6), while 80 percent of students agreed that “my teachers tell me how I should behave and do my work” (E4).

While 41 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “all teachers in our school use multiple types of assessments to modify instruction and to revise the curriculum” (E7), 74 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that “my child is given multiple assessments to measure his/her understanding of what was taught” (E12).

Additionally, 68 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “our school uses data to monitor student readiness and success at the next level” (G5), while 80 percent of students agreed that “my teachers help me learn things I will need in the future” (E1), and 76 percent of students agreed that “in my school, I am learning new things that will help me” (C2).

Documents and Artifacts:

A review of documents and artifacts provided evidence of written expectations; however, in some circumstances, observation, interview, and survey data did not support that expectations were being implemented and/or monitored. One example was a PowerPoint training, “Acceleration Plans for Tier-Three Readers,” that provided explicit expectations for the development of common formative assessments. There was no evidence to support that the assessments were completed or administered.

The artifacts and documents shared with the review team were foundational in establishing schoolwide processes and procedures related to behavioral expectations. While planning expectations were included in the artifacts and documents, the review team had to request examples of lesson plans and unit plans to verify planning for differentiated instruction. The information in the lesson plans did not detail strategies and/or resources that would be used to meet the intended outcomes.

Improvement Priority #3

Plan and provide instructional lessons that meet individual students' needs and the school's grade-level learning expectations. Deconstruct state standards to provide a tiered level of skills needed to reach standard mastery and develop a uniform process for planning daily lessons that address core lesson expectations, instructional adjustments for Tier II intervention lessons, and Tier III remedial lessons that lead to standard mastery for every student. Include a process to monitor implementation and make adjustments as needed. (Standard 2.7)

Evidence:

Student Performance Data:

Classroom observations and interview data suggested a lack of effective instructional processes for supporting student learning and improving the success of all students at all levels. Kennedy Montessori Elementary students performed below the state average for proficiency in all content areas for two consecutive years on the Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP) assessment.

The school's 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 growth index measures were below the state averages in all areas except for the math growth index in 2017-2018 (18.1 for the school compared to 14.5 for the state average).

Additional student performance data revealed that subgroup reading and math scores in 2018-2019 were highest for the Not Consolidated student group. The Non-Economically Disadvantaged group outperformed the Economically Disadvantaged group by at least 20 percentage points in all content areas except writing. Writing scores were lower than scores in the other content areas for all subgroups except the Economically Disadvantaged and Male subgroups.

Classroom Observation Data:

Classroom observations did not support the implementation of standards-based, rigorous, and differentiated lesson delivery. The observation data revealed that students who "engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs" (A1) and "engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable" (B2) were evident/very evident in 35 percent of classrooms. It was evident/very evident in 57 percent of classrooms that students "are supported by the teacher, their peers, and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks" (C3).

The Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environment was a concern. In four percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students "monitor their own progress of have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored" (E1) and "understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed" (E4). Students who "demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content" (E3) were evident/very evident in 26 percent of classrooms. Classroom observations also revealed that it was evident/very evident in 30 percent of classrooms that students "receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work" (E2).

Stakeholder Interview Data:

Interview data showed that teachers created formative and summative assessments but did not deconstruct standards to ensure the assessment items were aligned with the expected levels of performance and rigor. Interview data also revealed that the school did not adopt a core instructional resource for math or a foundational reading resource for teaching students to read, other than the district-mandated guided reading curriculum.

Stakeholders shared that the school had a uniform instructional planning format, with teachers required to submit instructional plans weekly, but no evidence supported that lessons were aligned to the standards. During interviews, teachers described intervention as a program and/or place or time but were unable to share how tiered instruction was planned and delivered. Staff was unable to describe how students moved through the tiered intervention process other than that students were placed based on assessment screener performance.

Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

Perception data revealed that 47 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “all teachers in our school have been trained to implement a formal process that promotes discussion about student learning (e.g. action research, examination of student work, reflection, study teams, and peer coaching)” (E10). Sixty percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that “all of my child’s teachers meet his/her learning needs by individualizing instruction” (E4) and 50 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “all teachers in our school personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs of students” (E2).

As to monitoring and making adjustments for learning, 50 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “all teachers in our school monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment based on data from student assessments and examination of professional practice” (E1) while 76 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that “all of my child’s teachers use a variety of teaching strategies and learning activities” (E3).

While 41 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “all teachers in our school use multiple types of assessments to modify instruction and to revise the curriculum” (E7), 74 percent of parents agreed/strongly agreed that “my child is given multiple assessments to measure his/her understanding of what was taught” (E12).

Additionally, 80 percent of students agreed that “my teachers help me learn things I will need in the future” (E1), and 76 percent of students agreed that “in my school, I am learning new things that will help me” (C2).

Documents and Artifacts:

A review of documents and artifacts revealed that the district Classroom Instructional Framework included expectations and components for tiered instruction. The framework also included suggestions for high-quality classroom math instruction and essential components of literacy instruction. While teachers at Kennedy Montessori Elementary completed and submitted daily lesson plans in the adopted format, a review of the plans revealed that teachers were not including specific strategies and/or resources that could be used to meet the diverse needs of their students. Classroom observations supported the absence of differentiated instruction (other than the level of text) in small groups and in reading and math centers.

The existing PLC framework could be leveraged to train teachers to plan tiered lessons and monitor student progress.

Insights from the Review

The Diagnostic Review Team engaged in professional discussions and deliberations about the processes, programs, and practices within the institution to arrive at the findings of the team. These findings are organized around themes guided by the evidence, examples of programs, and practices and provide direction for the institution's continuous improvement efforts. The insights from the Review narrative should provide contextualized information from the team deliberations and provide information about the team's analysis of the practices, processes, and programs of the institution within the **Levels of Impact of Engagement**, **Implementation**, **Results**, **Sustainability**, and **Embeddedness**.

Engagement is the level of involvement and frequency with which stakeholders are engaged in the desired practices, processes, or programs within the institution. **Implementation** is the degree to which the desired practices, processes, or programs are monitored and adjusted for quality and fidelity of implementation. **Results** represent the collection, analysis, and use of data and evidence to demonstrate attaining the desired result(s). **Sustainability** is results achieved consistently to demonstrate growth and improvement over time (minimum of three years). **Embeddedness** is the degree to which the desired practices, processes, or programs are deeply ingrained in the culture and operation of the institution.

Strengths:

The principal at Kennedy Montessori Elementary was in her second year in the position. Her ability to address conflicts and misunderstandings with students, parents, and staff served to build positive relationships with the community, students, and staff during her short tenure as the leader of the school. She implemented foundational systems that were needed, including schoolwide behavioral expectations for students and staff, an expectation that teachers develop, submit, and implement daily instructional plans, and the creation of various school teams to address the diverse needs of students. Parents and staff acknowledged the work that had been done.

Artifacts and documents provided evidence that the school established structures for staff and students to promote learning and build collaborative relationships (e.g., PLCs, teams, professional development opportunities). The artifacts and documents were organized, and the information included in them was clear and concise. Initiatives to address and guide student behavior were being put in place through restorative practices.

A PLC framework was created and could be leveraged to adopt the Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle of improvement.

Continuous Improvement Process:

While evidence from documents and artifacts indicated the school had processes and structures to support student success, the observation, interview, and survey data revealed a lack of full implementation and follow-up. The interview and survey data and review of documents and artifacts indicated that teachers and leaders inconsistently engaged in continuous improvement and decision-making processes to build instructional and organizational capacity. An ongoing and effective use of data to drive decision-making by teachers and leaders was not evident in practices or processes. Although students were assessed and teachers had multiple sources of data to analyze, school leaders had not established clear processes and practices for how findings from data analysis would alter instructional practices. The school lacked a concerted focus on continuous improvement.

While the school had structures (e.g., faculty meetings, PLCs) that provided time for teachers to learn and plan collaboratively, teachers and school leaders rarely used data to inform their collaboration. The classroom observation and interview data confirmed that students had few opportunities to engage in personalized or differentiated learning tasks. While some research-based instructional strategies were used in some classrooms, implementation was inconsistent across the school. When asked about the expectation of using data to plan for and deliver differentiated instruction, teachers could discuss the process of analyzing data; however, most could not explain how findings were changing their instructional practices. Stakeholder interviews revealed that school leaders expected data to inform daily instructional practices, but the expectation was not formally monitored.

School leaders were conducting walkthroughs or observations beyond the required observation process and initial "look-fors" were communicated to teachers (*Beginning of Year Look-fors*). However, evidence did not show that teachers were receiving feedback that would lead to positive changes in instructional practices.

Overall, the school had not established an effective continuous improvement planning process with systems, programs, and practices to improve student achievement. Further, the school did not routinely use data to evaluate program effectiveness or monitor the impact of specific strategies. The Diagnostic Review Team suggests the school use performance benchmarks and measures to monitor progress toward meeting improvement goals. PLCs could be leveraged for data-driven collaborative work if data processes and procedures were uniformly developed, implemented, and monitored.

To grow toward proficiency and create opportunities for school improvement, teachers and leaders would benefit from intentional coaching and mentoring designed to maximize the implementation of high-yield instructional practices. Additional support for classroom teachers to analyze data effectively for differentiated instruction could be a lever for improvement. Further, systematically infusing higher levels of thinking, problem-solving, and creativity into instruction and student learning tasks would increase the level of rigor in instruction. Finally, the team suggests that school leaders and staff members collectively embrace and consistently use a research-based instructional walkthrough process to provide teachers with authentic feedback for improving individual and schoolwide instructional practices.

The school's Backpack of Skills Success initiative could be leveraged to increase opportunities for staff, parents, and students to share and discuss high-level learning expectations and could be an additional opportunity for monitoring learning over time. This district initiative captures individual student learning over time as students are expected to add information each year. Students are required to "defend" their backpack portfolio information in grades 5, 8, and 12. These intervals provide school and district personnel opportunities to ensure each student is prepared to transition from elementary to middle, from middle to high, and from high school to work and/or college.

With declining scores over the past two years on state assessments and the designation of Comprehensive Support and Improvement status, the team encourages the school to address internal factors under its control rather than focusing on external barriers. A sense of urgency for improvement and a concerted effort to develop, implement, and monitor uniform expectations for all staff could create a culture of academic and behavioral excellence within the school.

Next Steps

The results of the Diagnostic Review provide the next step for guiding the improvement journey of the institution with their efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities for all learners. The findings are aligned to research-based criteria designed to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness. The feedback provided in the Diagnostic Review Report will assist the institution in reflecting on current improvement efforts and adapting and adjusting their plans to continuously strive for improvement.

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

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

Team Roster

Diagnostic Review Teams comprise professionals with varied backgrounds and professional experiences. All Lead Evaluators and Diagnostic Review Team members complete Cognia training and eleot® certification to provide knowledge and understanding of the Cognia tools and processes. The following professionals served on the Diagnostic Review Team:

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Kellie Yeager	Kellie Yeager has over 34 years of experience as a teacher, district specialist, and school improvement specialist. She served as assessment and accountability coordinator for the Jefferson County District in Birmingham, Alabama, until her retirement on July 1, 2018. In that position, she coordinated the assessment implementation process, accountability tracking, and school improvement activities for 56 schools. Kellie also has experience as an instructional coach for grades K-12, a school improvement coach, and a regional school improvement field coordinator with the Alabama Department of Education. Currently, Kellie serves as a Cognia Lead Evaluator for Diagnostic Reviews and as a professional consultant with Cognia.
Mike Murphy	Mike Murphy is currently serving as a state manager for Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), Office of Continuous Improvement and Support. In this role, he serves as the designee for the Chief State School Officer. Responsibilities include all administrative, operational, financial, personnel, and instructional aspects of the management of the school district formerly exercised by the local school board and the superintendent. Prior to this role, he was an Education Recovery Leader for KDE. He has taught special education and regular education science classes at the elementary and middle school levels. He has served as an elementary and high school principal. During his tenure as a high school principal in Kentucky, he led a bottom five percent high school to the top five percent.
Charlotte Jones	Charlotte Jones has 22 years of experience in the education field. Currently she is in her sixth year working with the Kentucky Department of Education as an Education Recovery Specialist serving schools that are identified as Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools. Prior to this position, Charlotte was a high school social studies teacher at Montgomery County High School in Mount Sterling, Kentucky. She also served as the gifted and talented coordinator, building assessment coordinator, and School-based Decision Making council vice chair, and she volunteered for various student support organizations and events.
Jeremy Reynolds	Mr. Jeremy Reynolds has 22 years of experience as a teacher and administrator in public schools. He is currently the principal of Southside Elementary in Versailles, Kentucky. Mr. Reynolds has experience with elementary school students of all ages, having served as a teacher and administrator in Jessamine and Woodford counties in Kentucky.
Sarah Woodford	Sarah Woodford has 19 years of experience in education. Currently, she is serving as principal of Garrett Morgan Elementary in Lexington, Kentucky. Prior to this position, Sarah was the principal of Camargo Elementary, the principal of Montgomery County Intermediate School, a curriculum specialist, a gifted and talented teacher, and a classroom teacher for third, fourth, and fifth grades

Addenda

Student Performance Data

Kennedy Montessori Elementary School performance results

Content Area	Grade	%P/D School (17-18)	%P/D State (17-18)	%P/D School (18-19)	%P/D State (18-19)
Reading	3	32.6	52.3	30.3	52.7
	4	42.4	53.7	21.8	53.0
	5	36.8	57.8	31.2	57.9
Math	3	25.3	47.3	36.4	47.4
	4	16.3	47.2	12.6	46.7
	5	24.1	52.0	21.5	51.7
Science	4	15.2	30.8	10.3	31.7
Social Studies	5	21.8	53.0	19.4	53.0
Writing	5	14.9	40.5	9.7	46.6

Plus

- In 2018-2019, the percentage of students scoring Proficient/Distinguished in math at the third-grade level reduced the gap from the previous year between the school's scores and state averages.

Delta

- From 2017-2018 to 2018-2019, the gap between the school's scores and state averages in the percentage of students scoring Proficient/Distinguished increased in third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade reading and in fourth- and fifth-grade math.
- The gap between the school's scores and state averages in the percentage of students scoring Proficient/Distinguished increased in writing from 25.6 percentage points in 2017-2018 to 36.9 percentage points in 2018-2019.
- The gap between the school's scores and state averages in the percentage of students scoring Proficient/Distinguished increased in social studies from 31.2 points in 2017-2018 to 33.6 points in 2018-2019.

Growth index elementary

Content Area	School (17-18)	State (17-18)	School (18-19)	State (18-19)
Reading	15.4	19.7	32.0	57.8
Math	18.1	14.5	42.5	57.6
English Learner	16.7	18.8	47.6	70.5
Growth Indicator	16.8	17.1	37.3	57.7

Note: The formula for calculating growth changed between 18-19 and 19-20. Comparisons should only be made between school and state ratings.

Plus

- In 2017-2018, the school's growth index in math was higher than the state index.

Delta

- In 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, the school's growth index for all areas was lower than the state with the exception of math in 2017-2018.
- In 2018-2019, the school's growth index for reading was 32.0, lagging behind the state index of 57.8.

2018-19 Percent Proficient/Distinguished

Group	Reading	Math	Science	Social Studies	Writing
African American	23.4	21.6	9.1	12.2	6.8
Alternative Assessment					
American Indian					
Asian					
Consolidated Student Group	25.1	22.0	10.1	16.5	8.2
Disabilities (IEP)	10.3	5.1	8.3	8.3	
Disabilities Regular Assessment			8.3		
Disabilities with Acc.					
Economically Disadvantaged	22.0	18.2	5.8	10.8	7.7
English Learners	21.1	10.5			
English Learners Monitored	23.8	14.3			
Female	32.5	26.5	11.9	16.3	8.2
Foster					
Gifted and Talented					
Hispanic	35.3	23.5			
Homeless	13.3	20.0			
Male	22.7	21.1	8.9	22.7	11.4
Migrant					
Military					
No Disabilities	30.8	27.1	10.7	21.0	
Non-Economically Disadvantaged	45.7	41.4	27.8	39.3	14.3
Non-English Learners	28.5	25.0		18.4	10.3
Non-Migrant			10.3	19.4	9.7
Not Consolidated Student Group	58.3	45.8			
Not English Learners Monitored	28.3	24.8		17.6	10.3

Group	Reading	Math	Science	Social Studies	Writing
Not Gifted and Talented	28.0		10.3	19.4	9.7
Not Homeless	28.8	24.2			
Pacific Islander					
Total Students Tested	28.0	24.0	10.3	19.4	9.7
Two or More	41.7	33.3			
White	56.0	40.0			

Plus

- The Female group outperformed the Male group in reading, math, and science.

Delta

- The Male group performed lower than the Female group in all areas except social studies and writing.
- The African American subgroup performed lowest of all groups in writing.

Schedule

Monday, January 13, 2020

Time	Event	Where	Who
4:00 p.m.	Brief Team Meeting	Hotel Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members
5:30 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.	Principal Presentation/Overview	Hotel Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members
6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #1	Hotel Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

Time	Event	Where	Who
8:15 a.m.	Team arrives at Kennedy Montessori Elementary	School Office	Diagnostic Review Team Members
9:15 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Interviews / Classroom Observations / Stakeholder Interviews / Artifact Review	School	Diagnostic Review Team Members
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Team returns to hotel		
5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #2	Hotel Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

Time	Event	Where	Who
8:15 a.m.	Team arrives at Kennedy Montessori Elementary	School Office	Diagnostic Review Team Members
9:20 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Interviews / Classroom Observations / Stakeholder Interviews / Artifact Review	School	Diagnostic Review Team Members
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Team returns to hotel		
5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Team Work Session #3	Hotel Conference Room	Diagnostic Review Team Members

Thursday, January 16, 2020

Time	Event	Where	Who
9:15 a.m.- 11;50 a.m.	Team arrives at school/Preparation/Informal Interviews	School	Diagnostic Review Team Members
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Final Team Work Session	School	Diagnostic Review Team Members

School Diagnostic Review Summary Report
Kennedy Montessori Elementary

Jefferson County Public Schools
January 13-16, 2020

The members of the Kennedy Montessori Elementary Diagnostic Review Team are grateful to the district and school leadership, staff, students, families, and community for the cooperation and hospitality extended during the assessment process.

Following its review of extensive evidence and in consideration of the factors outlined in 703 KAR 5:280, Section 4, the Diagnostic Review Team submitted the following assessment regarding the **principal's capacity** to function or develop as a turnaround specialist, including if the principal should be reassigned, to the Commissioner of Education:

> The principal does have the capacity to function or to develop as a turnaround specialist and, accordingly, should continue as principal of Kennedy Montessori Elementary.

The Commissioner of Education has reviewed the Diagnostic Review and recommends, pursuant to KRS 160.346(6), the Superintendent adopt the assessment of principal capacity submitted by the Diagnostic Review Team.

_____Date:_____
Associate Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

I have received the Diagnostic Review for Kennedy Montessori Elementary.

_____Date:_____
Principal, Kennedy Montessori Elementary

_____Date:_____
Superintendent, Jefferson County Public Schools