



Report of Readiness for Accreditation for Systems

Triad Math and Science Academy Company

Ben Karaduman, Superintendent

Cary, North Carolina

March 11, 2020

The North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) are accreditation divisions of Cognia.

Purpose

This report is designed to reflect the system’s readiness for accreditation through a review of its Readiness Diagnostic and examining its practices in relation to the Cognia Performance Standards for Accreditation and Assurances. By assessing the system’s readiness, a determination can be made regarding its capacity to meet the Cognia requirements for accreditation including a recommendation to grant candidacy status.

Name of Institution	Triad Math and Science Academy Company						
Telephone of Institution	919-650-2270						
Head of Institution	Ben Karaduman						
Email Address	bkaraduman@tmsapcs.org						
Information about School Locations	Total Number of Schools	3					
	Total Number of States	1					
	Schools in Counties Outside of the Country Wherein the System is Located	Yes		No	X		
	Number of Countries (list countries below)	1					
	United States						
Early Learning School(s)	No	X	Yes		Number of Early Learning Schools	0	

Summary of Readiness Review

The Readiness Diagnostic for Accreditation for Systems report was prepared by school and system leadership. Each of the three schools provided information regarding students and staff, the community, demographics, changes, unique features and challenges, program offerings and expectations. System leadership used the school input in the formation of the system report. Mr. Ben Karaduman, Superintendent, Mr. Eray Idil, Deputy Superintendent, and Ms. Mussarut Jabeen, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, reviewed and analyzed all input as the Readiness Diagnostic was prepared and finalized for submission. Ms. Jabeen, the system contact for the Readiness Review, has previously served as an Accreditation Engagement Review (AER) team member and is knowledgeable of the AER process.

The superintendent, deputy superintendent and curriculum director, as well as the school leadership team members from the three schools, attended the onsite Readiness Review. The superintendent provided an overview of the system, noting academics and operations being coordinated by 15 persons at the system level. Each school team then shared a virtual tour of their facilities, highlighted program offerings, student and staff awards and state report card ratings. School and system personnel described a very detailed continuous improvement planning process used to develop school and system improvement plans. Discussions included the SWOC analysis process in which strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges were identified. Staff turnover rates, survey results, state report card results, formative assessments as measured by Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), and increases in numbers of students participating in athletics, academic clubs and competitions are examples of evidence cited to support the SWOC analysis.

The Cognia representative presented a brief overview of the AER process with a focus on the Performance Standards and Key Concepts as the basis for the review. With continuous improvement as the “heart” of the Engagement Review process, the Cognia representative discussed the continuous process of improvement and quality assurance. Copies of the i3 Rubric were distributed to each of the ten leadership team members, and the Cognia representative explained how the levels are used by review teams to evaluate each Key Concept for every Standard.

A question and answer period was led by the Cognia representative regarding the SWOT analysis for the three domains. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges were highlighted for the Leadership Capacity Domain, the Learning Capacity Domain and the Resources Capacity Domain. The school and system leadership discussed the kinds of evidence and artifacts used to support their findings, while the Cognia representative discussed the three major categories of evidence used during a review: 1) interviews, 2) observations (formal and informal), and 3) documents/artifacts and data. Information and examples of potential evidence were discussed.

The Assurances were reviewed by the Cognia representative, and members of the system leadership team were comfortable with meeting the Assurances. An explanation was provided of how the Assurances would be a component of the AER process. The overall AER process was summarized and a brief discussion of “next steps” was conducted. The Cognia representative stated that the school system would be recommended for Candidacy status.

Leadership Capacity Domain

Summary and Assessment of the Institution's Analysis of Leadership Capacity

The school system identified a commitment to a purpose statement that defines their beliefs about teaching and learning as a strength (Standard 1.1). Leadership members from each school and the system emphasized the mission, vision and core beliefs that are shared across all schools in the system. Presentations revealed how changes in the central office structure over the past two years have contributed immensely to Standard 1.1 becoming a source of strength. Based on the presentations during the onsite Readiness Review and the shared documents, progress made on (Standard 1.3) is quite an accomplishment. The system has engaged in a continuous improvement process that has very defined steps and timelines and results in improvement plans with measures based on identified needs and input from various stakeholders.

Standards 1.4 and 1.5 were identified as areas for improvement as there is a need for the governing board to better understand its roles and responsibilities and commit to policies that are designed to support system effectiveness. System administration shared how there are two governing boards for the three schools with only one board member serving on both boards. Leadership also indicated an awareness of the need to better solicit and analyze a range of feedback data from multiple stakeholder groups (Standard 1.10).

Opportunities for improving the system are embedded in (Standard 1.9) regarding experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness. The system identified a need to include a renewed focus on the principal as the instructional leader. Identified challenges related to leadership include inconsistencies due to expansion and changes in leadership, as well as the need to improve professional practice and organizational effectiveness with the implementation of staff supervision and evaluation processes (Standard 1.6).

Based on the results of the institution's Readiness Diagnostic and discussions during the review process, the following actions are recommended as next steps:

Next Steps	Identify the Standard(s) that relates to the Next Step
Develop and implement formal structures and processes that result in the ongoing and systematic development, review and revision of board policies; governing authority adherence to a code of ethics and board member understanding of defined roles and responsibilities.	1.4 and 1.5
Formulate and execute a data-informed feedback process to inform decision-making that results in improved student performance and organizational effectiveness.	1.10
Formalize and instigate a training plan to cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness with a special emphasis on instructional supervision.	1.9

Learning Capacity Domain

Summary and Assessment of the Institution's Analysis of Learning Capacity

Although regular home visits were identified as an accomplishment connected to the Learning Domain, there is no one Standard directly tied to home visitation. This practice serves as an overall strength in that home/school relationships support positive educational experiences. The system identified Standard 2.2 as a strength in that teachers are supported in the implementation of a STEM focused learning environment. With the STEM focus, creativity, innovation and collaborative problem-solving are promoted.

As areas for improvement were identified, Standard 2.5 was noted based on high expectations not being upheld in every classroom across all grade levels. The SWOC analysis and leadership presentations revealed a need for a standards-based curriculum (Standard 2.6). Teachers identified a need for support in unpacking the standards in order to effectively develop more rigorous lessons. Weaknesses, as well as opportunities, in the Learning Domain focused on the need for instruction to be monitored and adjusted to meet students' needs and the system's learning expectations (Standard 2.7). Changing demographics and changes in academic needs of students have magnified the need for an effective instructional framework. With increasing numbers of students with academic disabilities and the need for expansion of the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), the system identified numerous weaknesses and opportunities in the implementation of processes to address the specialized needs of learners (Standard 2.9). The SWOC analysis divulged teachers' lack of understanding of data analysis coupled with the lack of an appropriate curriculum that is inclusive of reliable assessments for evaluating student progress (Standard 2.11).

Based on the results of the institution's Readiness Diagnostic and discussions during the review process, the following actions are recommended as next steps:

Next Steps	Identify the Standard(s) that relates to the Next Step
Develop and implement a documented process for ensuring the curriculum is based on high expectations and adequately prepares students for success at the next level.	2.5
Develop and implement a documented process for ensuring the curriculum is aligned to standards and best practices.	2.6
Adopt an instructional framework and implement a process for ensuring instruction is monitored and adjusted to address individual learner needs.	2.7
Develop and execute a process to identify and address the specialized needs of learners.	2.9
Institute a formalized process to be used by teachers and administrators for incorporating formative and summative data to enhance and improve student learning.	2.11

Resource Capacity Domain

Summary and Assessment of the Institution’s Analysis of Resource Capacity

Now in year two with new leadership, the system has made strides in securing necessary resources to support student success (Standard 3.8). A director of curriculum and instruction has been added and discussions during the onsite Readiness Review reinforced the school system’s focus on student achievement. The superintendent stated, “This year we have started our academic discussions and feel we are in the education business. That was not the case last year.” Although more intense professional development is needed in several areas, presentations revealed multiple training sessions that had occurred this school year to improve student achievement and system effectiveness (Standard 3.1).

Discussions during the onsite Readiness Review, coupled with the results of the SWOC analysis, indicated a strong need for staff retention (Standard 3.4). Although recruitment and retention initiatives such as an increase in salary structure and benefits packages helped staff retention this school year, there is still a documented need for staff retention. One of the three schools has a new principal who has 32 of her 61 staff members as new hires for 2019-2020. An opportunity connected to staff retention is the need to personalize the mentoring and coaching for beginning teachers across the system (Standard 3.3). Although Professional Learning Structures (PLCs) have been implemented, a need exists to improve the PLCs to increase collegiality and to provide more time for professional development opportunities (Standard 3.2). Long-range planning (Standard 3.7) and the acquisition and usage of digital tools to enhance teaching and learning (Standard 3.5) are additional areas for improvement. The superintendent spoke of the need and the SWOC analysis disclosed the need for long-range financial and facilities planning. The lack of sufficient digital equipment was given as the challenge for students and teachers to integrate technology into the core curriculum.

Based on the results of the institution’s Readiness Diagnostic and discussions during the review process, the following actions are recommended as next steps:

Next Steps	Identify the Standard(s) that relates to the Next Step
Develop and implement a staff recruitment and retention plan that includes formalized processes for identifying staff needs and attracting, recruiting, and retaining qualified personnel.	3.4 and 3.3
Establish and utilize a strategic resource management plan that is inclusive of long-range planning and allocation of human, material and fiscal resources in alignment with system needs and priorities to improve student	3.7

performance and organizational effectiveness.	
Refine and implement a system-wide technology plan with a shared vision to enhance the infrastructure, equipment, training and support necessary for an effective digital learning environment focused on student learning.	3.5
Enhance the Professional Learning Structures (PLCs) to ensure all professional staff participate in structured and ongoing activities to improve student learning.	3.2

Assurances

Verification of the institution’s adherence with the Cognia Assurances.

Cognia Assurances for Systems	Yes	No
1) Cognia Policies and Procedures The institution has read, understands, and complies with the Cognia Policies and Procedures.	X	
2) Substantive Changes The institution has reported all substantive changes in the institution that affect the scope and/or have an impact on the institution's ability to meet the Standards and Policies.	X	
3) Security and Crisis Management Plan The institution implements a written security and crisis management plan which includes emergency evacuation procedures and appropriate training for stakeholders.	X	
4) Financial Transactions The institution monitors all financial transactions through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system.	X	
5) Improvement Plan The institution engages in a continuous improvement process and implements an improvement plan	X	
6) Performance Standards for Schools The system verifies that all institutions within its jurisdiction meet the Standards for Schools.	X	

Next steps for any Assurance with a response of “No.”	Identify the Assurance (s) that relates to the Next Step
NA	

NOTE: Some institutions may have specialized Assurances related to the institutions or to requirements of partnership agreements. If any of the specialized Assurances were found with a response of “No,” please include the Assurance(s) above.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the evidence, the recommended status for the institution is:

- Candidate for Accreditation
- (Remain as an) Applicant for Accreditation

Dr. Cheryl Allread
Cognia Representative

March 15, 2020
Date

Cognia Office Approval

Jennifer Thomas
Director

March 16, 2020
Date

- Approved as a Candidate for Accreditation
- Approved to remain as an Applicant for Accreditation

The institution is congratulated for its readiness efforts and for its commitment to a quality educational program. The institution must take measures to address the “Next Steps,” for all sections of this report, prior to scheduling the Accreditation Engagement Review. At that time, please contact our office at least six months in advance of the desired dates. Cognia looks forward to celebrating your successes, and supporting your journey with accreditation and continuous improvement.