

Insights from the Review

The evaluators engaged in professional discussions and deliberations about the effectiveness of the processes, programs, and practices within the institution to arrive at the findings of the report. Guided by evidence, the evaluators arrived at findings that will inform your institution's continuous improvement efforts. The findings are aligned to research-based criteria designed to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness.

The findings are organized into narratives around four Key Characteristics critical to the success of any educational institution: culture of learning, leadership for learning, engagement of learning, and growth in learning. The narratives also provide the next steps to guide your institution's improvement journey in its efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities for all learners. The feedback provided in this Accreditation Engagement Review Report will assist your institution in reflecting on its current improvement efforts and adapting and adjusting your plans to continuously strive for improvement.

Culture of Learning

Stakeholders are actively engaged in Heartland High School's (HHS) guiding principles that prioritize learners' well-being. Learners' academic and non-academic needs are at the core of decisions and practices that are regularly documented and reviewed. The school's mission emphasizes the student-centered theme of perseverance, patience, purpose, and respect. The mission focuses on whole-child support and graduation pathway completion. Using individualized graduation plans and credit recovery systems that support goal attainment, students engage in and monitor their own progress toward graduation under the guidance of staff advisors who build strong and lasting relationships with students. Experiencing alternative instructional delivery models, online and live instruction, and a flexible scheduling approach, students are afforded opportunities to learn, earn credits toward graduation and participate in their own learning and growth in meaningful ways. HHS uses an integrated approach, offering programs that focus on social-emotional support and strong counseling services. Procedures, practices, and artifacts provided by the institution support that there are many pathways for students to achieve their academic, career, and personal goals. HHS professional staff create and sustain community

partnerships that support exploration of various apprenticeships and career pathways. Stakeholder engagement is authentic, meaningful, and consistent. The community is very supportive of HHS staff and students, especially in employer partnerships and community leadership. This is a direct result of the intentional relationship building that professional staff create and sustain. Business and community partners provide funding, career exploration, leadership opportunities, and resource support. The accreditation team suggests that HHS continue to strengthen formal stakeholder engagement systems by adding formal family-focused programs and feedback systems, which can broaden and deepen the relationship-centered culture already built and sustained with community partners and businesses.

Leadership for Learning

Leaders at HHS frequently recognize and encourage leadership potential among stakeholders while regularly engaging professional staff in advancing the continuous improvement process. Professional staff assuming leadership roles and actively advancing the continuous improvement process create a sense of autonomy while deepening their commitment to meeting district goals and advancing the school improvement priorities. HHS leaders provide multiple opportunities for professional staff to recognize their leadership potential using a distributed leadership structure. Additionally, staff have opportunities to contribute to a variety of leadership team activities, including curriculum and improvement plan review cycles, identifying and providing professional development to support instructional adjustments, and participating in collaborative teams that positively influence the school.

By delegating leadership through an intentional and defined distributed leadership model, teachers assume leadership roles as program coordinators, individual learning plan advisors, intervention leaders, and other team leaders. As a result, HHS staff take initiative and assume ownership of various programs under development and actively engage in a variety of student support structures. These leadership actions positively shape instructional quality. Learning environment observation data, analysis, and stakeholder feedback identify that learners are actively engaged in coursework and instruction that is increasingly student-centered and tied to academic



goals. Leaders are strengthening staff leadership roles through offering professional development opportunities based on professional staff needs and allocating resources using a team approach and with data that identifies learners' needs. Professional staff are encouraged by school leaders to engage in the annual district continuous improvement process review and enthusiastically participate. While the continuous improvement review process is collaborative and purposeful, the accreditation team suggests that review cycles be tied specifically to student outcome metrics at the institution level.

Engagement of Learning

Learners at HHS are frequently immersed in collaborative learning environments and have the support and opportunities to realize and reach their full potential. Maintaining a consistently positive and supportive learning environment is characterized by many indicators, including strong student-teacher relationships, structured instructional practices, clear learning expectations, student ownership of learning, individualized support, and student-initiated academic discourse. When students are included in the learning process, have agency over their learning, and participate with confidence, engagement in learning is demonstrated. HHS leaders analyzed data from multiple sources to present findings on students' learning environments and experiences. Evidence includes data results from Cognia's Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool; the McCall-Donnelly School District's classroom observation tool, which is based on Charlotte Danielson's Instructional Framework for Teaching; and Marzano's New Art and Science of Teaching observation protocol within the High Reliability Schools framework. Observation data were collected across content areas throughout the school year. HHS utilizes personalized instructional support, mastery-based credit recovery opportunities, flexible course offerings, academic and career counseling, and engaging instructional activities and experiences for students to encourage collaboration and curiosity and to foster life-long skills. Most instruction is learner-centered and includes personalized instructional supports. The accreditation team suggests that leaders create and support greater consistency in learner-centered practices across classrooms including student voice and choice, to create the possibility of aligning instruction with students' needs and interests.

Growth in Learning

HHS leaders design and deliver relevant training

to professional staff and regularly evaluate the instructional program to advance learning.

Professional development that is tied to instructional improvement goals invites inquiry and reflection. Each year, HHS professional staff members set professional goals within an individual professional learning plan based in part on domains identified in the teaching framework protocols. Leaders regularly observe and evaluate instruction and engage professional staff in growth conversations focused on the goals staff have set for themselves. Instructional staff report that school leadership encourages collaboration and professional conversations and sustains an environment where peers learn from one another. These actions serve as a model for instructional staff.

Instructional staff engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential. Most professional staff members engage with learners regarding their individual learning goals, assisting them in setting attainable and meaningful goals and self-monitoring their progress. Most learners demonstrate active ownership of their academic career and personal goals. Evaluation of these programs by analyzing data collected from learning plans systematically can advance learning. By intentionally creating and preserving a culture that utilizes data and other sources of information to inform decisions, leaders encourage reflection, create an environment of inquiry, and staff may engage deeper in collecting data and reporting results. Creation of a team whose purpose is to analyze the sources of information and data that are currently available, determine its relevance, and identify any new sources of data and information that can be analyzed to inform decisions could benefit learners. The accreditation team suggests that leaders engage a team of professional staff members in professional development regarding the use of data and information as a tool to inform continuous improvement.

