Georgia
Cyber Academy

Atlanta, Georgia

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Digital Learning Accreditation Engagement Review

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Cognia Continuous Improvement System

Cognia defines continuous improvement as "an embedded behavior rooted in an institution's culture that constantly focuses on conditions, processes, and practices to improve teaching and learning." The Cognia Continuous Improvement System (CIS) provides a systemic, fully integrated solution to help institutions map out and navigate a successful improvement journey. In the same manner that educators are expected to understand the unique needs of every learner and tailor the education experience to drive student success, every institution must be empowered to map out and embrace their unique improvement journey. Cognia expects institutions to use the results and the analysis of data from various interwoven components for the implementation of improvement actions to drive education quality and improved student outcomes. While each improvement journey is unique, the journey is driven by key actions.

The findings of the Engagement Review Team are organized by the ratings from the Cognia Performance Standards Diagnostic and the Levels of Impact within the i3 Rubric: Initiate, Improve, and Impact.

Initiate

The first phase of the improvement journey is to **Initiate** actions to cause and achieve better results. The elements of the **Initiate** phase are defined within the Levels of Impact of Engagement and Implementation. Engagement is the level of involvement and frequency of stakeholders in the desired practices, processes, or programs within the institution. Implementation is the process of monitoring and adjusting the administration of the desired practices, processes, or programs for quality and fidelity. Standards identified within Initiate should become the focus of the institution's continuous improvement journey toward the collection, analysis, and use of data to measure the results of engagement and implementation. Enhancing the capacity of the institution in meeting these Standards has the greatest potential impact on improving student performance and organizational effectiveness.

Improve

The second phase of the improvement journey is to gather and evaluate the results of actions in order to **Improve**. The elements of the **Improve** phase are defined within the Levels of Impact of Results and Sustainability. Results come from 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 (a minimum of three years). Standards identified within Improve are those in which the institution is using results to inform their continuous improvement processes and to demonstrate over time the achievement of goals. The institution should continue to analyze and use results to guide improvements in student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

Impact

The third phase of achieving improvement is **Impact,** where desired practices are deeply entrenched. The elements of the **Impact** phase are defined within the Level of Impact of Embeddedness. Embeddedness is the degree to which the desired practices, processes, or programs are deeply ingrained in the culture and operation of the institution. Standards identified within Impact are those in which the institution has demonstrated ongoing growth and improvement over time and has embedded the practices within its culture. Institutions should continue to support and sustain these practices that yield results in improving student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

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Cognia Performance Accreditation and the Engagement Review

Accreditation is pivotal in leveraging education quality and continuous improvement. Using a set of rigorous research-based standards, the Cognia Accreditation Process examines the whole institution—the program, the cultural context, and the community of stakeholders—to determine how well the parts work together to meet the needs of learners. Through the accreditation process, highly skilled and trained Engagement Review Teams gather first-hand evidence and information pertinent to evaluating an institution's performance against the research-based Cognia Performance Standards. Review teams use these Standards to assess the quality of learning environments in order to gain valuable insights and target improvements in teaching and learning. Cognia provides Standards that are tailored for all education providers so that the benefits of accreditation are universal across the education community.

Through a comprehensive review of evidence and information, our experts gain a broad understanding of institution quality. Using the Standards, the review team provides valuable feedback to institutions, which helps to focus and guide each institution's improvement journey. Valuable evidence and information from other stakeholders, including students, also are obtained through interviews, surveys, and additional activities.

Cognia Standards Diagnostic Results

The Cognia Performance Standards Diagnostic is used by the Engagement Review Team to evaluate the institution's effectiveness based on the Cognia Performance Standards. The diagnostic consists of three components built around each of three Domains: **Leadership Capacity**, **Learning Capacity,** and **Resource Capacity**. Results are reported within four ranges identified by color. The results for the three Domains are presented in the tables that follow.

Color	Rating	Description
Red	Insufficient	Identifies areas with insufficient evidence or evidence that indicated little or no activity leading toward improvement
Yellow	Initiating	Represents areas to enhance and extend current improvement efforts
Green	Improving	Pinpoints quality practices that are improving and meet the Standards
Blue	Impacting	Demonstrates noteworthy practices producing clear results that positively impact the institution

Under each Standard statement is a row indicating the scores related to the elements of Cognia's i3 Rubric. The rubric is scored from one (1) to four (4). A score of four on any element indicates high performance, while a score of one or two indicates an element in need of improvement. The following table provides the key to the abbreviations of the elements of the i3 Rubric.

Element	Abbreviation
Engagement	EN
Implementation	IM
Results	RE
Sustainability	SU
Embeddedness	EM

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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 Standards										Rating
1.1	The institution commits to a purpose statement that defines beliefs about teaching and learning, including the expectations for learners.									Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	4	
1.2	Stakeholders collectively demonstrate actions to ensure the achievement of the institution's purpose and desired outcomes for learning.									Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	3	
1.3	The institution engages in a continuous improvement process that produces evidence, including measurable results of improving student learning and professional practice.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	3	**EM:**	3	
1.4	The governing authority establishes and ensures adherence to policies that are designed to support institutional effectiveness.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	4	
1.5	The governing authority adheres to a code of ethics and functions within defined roles and responsibilities.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	4	
1.6	Leaders implement staff supervision and evaluation processes to improve professional practice and organizational effectiveness.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	4	**EM:**	4	
1.7	Leaders implement operational processes and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness in support of teaching and learning.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	3	**EM:**	4	
1.8	Leaders engage stakeholders to support the achievement of the institution's purpose and direction.									Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	3	
1.9	The institution provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	4	**SU:**	3	**EM:**	4	
1.10	Leaders collect and analyze a range of feedback data from multiple stakeholder groups to inform decision-making that results in improvement.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	3	

Leadership Capacity Standards										Rating
1.11	Leaders utilize ethical marketing and communication practices.									Improving
	EN:	3	**IM:**	2	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	2	

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 Standards										Rating
2.1	Learners have equitable opportunities to develop skills and achieve the content and learning priorities established by the institution.									Improving
	EN:	2	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	2	
2.2	The learning culture promotes creativity, innovation, and collaborative problem-solving.									Improving
	EN:	3	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	2	
2.3	The learning culture develops learners' attitudes, beliefs, and skills needed for success.									Improving
	EN:	3	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	3	
2.4	The institution has a formal structure to ensure learners develop positive relationships with and have adults/peers who support their educational experiences.									Initiating
	EN:	3	**IM:**	2	**RE:**	1	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	2	
2.5	Educators implement a curriculum that is based on high expectations and prepares learners for their next levels.									Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	3	
2.6	The institution implements a process to ensure the curriculum is clearly aligned to standards and best practices.									Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	3	
2.7	Instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learners' needs and the institution's learning expectations.									Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	3	
2.8	The institution provides programs and services for learners' educational futures and career planning.									Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	3	**EM:**	3	
2.9	The institution implements processes to identify and address the specialized needs of learners.									Impacting

Learning Capacity Standards										Rating
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	2	EM:	4	Impacting
2.10	Learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated.										Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	2	EM:	3	
2.11	Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to the demonstrable improvement of student learning.										Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	3	RE:	3	SU:	2	EM:	3	
2.12	The institution implements a process to continuously assess its programs and organizational conditions to improve student learning.										Improving
	EN:	2	IM:	3	RE:	2	SU:	1	EM:	3	
2.13	The institution ensures authenticity in student learning in a digital learning environment.										Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	2	SU:	1	EM:	3	

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 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 Standards										Rating
3.1	The institution plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the institution's effectiveness.										Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	3	SU:	2	EM:	3	
3.2	The institution's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.										Improving
	EN:	3	IM:	3	RE:	2	SU:	2	EM:	3	
3.3	The institution provides induction, mentoring, and coaching programs that ensure all staff members have the knowledge and skills to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.										Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	3	RE:	2	SU:	2	EM:	3	
3.4	The institution attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the institution's purpose and direction.										Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	3	RE:	2	SU:	2	EM:	3	
3.5	The institution integrates digital resources into teaching, learning, and operations to improve professional practice, student performance, and organizational effectiveness.										Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	3	SU:	2	EM:	4	

Resource Capacity Standards											Rating
3.6	The institution provides access to information resources and materials to support the curriculum, programs, and needs of students, staff, and the institution.										Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	4	
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
	EN:	3	**IM:**	2	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	2	
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.										Improving
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	3	
3.9	The institution provides an effective Learning Management System (LMS).										Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	3	**EM:**	4	
3.10	The institution's technology infrastructure supports teaching, learning, and operational effectiveness.										Impacting
	EN:	4	**IM:**	4	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	4	

Assurances

Assurances are statements that accredited institutions must confirm they are meeting. The Assurance statements are based on the type of institution, and the responses are confirmed by the Accreditation Engagement Review Team. Institutions are expected to meet all Assurances and are expected to correct any deficiencies in unmet Assurances.

Assurances Met		
YES	**NO**	**If No, List Unmet Assurances by Number Below**
X		

Cognia Observation Tool for Digital Learning

The instrument that is used by the Engagement Review Team is the Cognia Observation Tool for Digital Learning. This tool provides a format for reviewing five major key areas of the digital environment including Instructional Design, Learning Engagement, Platforms and Technologies, Assessment for Learning, and the Digital Learning Community. The tool provided the contextual framework for the team in conducting classroom observations, whether synchronously or asynchronously, and established a common language for team discussion. Additionally, these five areas (with their accompanying indicators) provided support for the team as they interviewed leaders, teachers, and students about the digital learning environment of your school.

The 2-D Learning Rubric looks at the instructional delivery with the key areas from a two-dimensional (2D) perspective that measures the Learning Environments and Learning Experiences. The 2-D Learning Rubric identifies the percentage of scores that fall into nine possible cells and will serve as a baseline for the educational provider's continuous improvement journey. The ratings and averages are in support of the findings of the Engagement Review Team. The results of the observation tool will also be posted in the workspace for additional access. The Learning Experiences are categorized as Digitize, Enhance and Innovation. Learning Environments are categorized as Silos, Connects, and Interconnectivity. The relationship between the experience and the environment is then rated.

These data support the team's findings and your own review of your program. Scores derived from these observations have no mathematical impact on the Index of Education Quality (IEQ) or final ratings of any of the Standards. They, in fact, support the areas of strength and needs for improvement identified in this report.

Cognia Observation Tool for Digital Learning						Institution	Cognia Average
Instructional Design: Instruction is designed to promote interactive engagement with personalized academic content.	**HE**	**EV**	**SE**	**NE**	**NA**	**3.02**	*2.53*
Learners have access to appropriately challenging curriculum (providing rigor, relevance, and fostering positive relationships).	10	15	3	1	0	3.17	*2.92*
Learners engage in a competency-based curriculum.	9	16	2	2	0	3.10	*2.80*
Instructional design incorporates evidence-based strategies appropriate for digital learning environments.	9	15	4	1	0	3.10	*2.56*
Instruction is designed to encourage collaboration with peers and mentors in meeting high learning expectations.	7	9	9	4	0	2.66	*1.97*
Learners demonstrate work that reflects the high expectations of the instructional design.	11	11	5	2	0	3.07	*2.41*
Learning Engagement: Dynamic learning environments support interactive engagement to create personalized learning experiences.	**HE**	**EV**	**SE**	**NE**	**NA**	**2.74**	*2.24*
The mentors and learners collaborate on personalized learning experiences that provide equity in learner voice and choice (e.g. competencies, rigor, time, place, and pace).	3	16	7	3	0	2.66	*2.31*
Learners engage in rigorous learning experiences, including interaction between peers and mentors and the use of higher order thinking skills.	4	15	5	5	0	2.62	*2.12*
Learner interactions with peers, mentors, and the academic content permeate the digital environment.	6	13	6	3	1	2.79	*2.09*
Learners make connections from the digital learning environment to real-life experiences.	9	6	8	2	1	2.88	*2.43*
Platforms and Technologies: Technology platforms are dynamic and enable innovative interactions between mentors and learners in support of personalized learning pathways.	**HE**	**EV**	**SE**	**NE**	**NA**	**3.05**	*2.35*
Learners have equal access to resources in a Learning Management System (LMS) or Content Management System (CMS) to enable classroom discussions, activities, digital tools, and support.	19	8	1	0	1	3.64	*3.04*
Learners use digital resources to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning.	12	7	9	1	0	3.03	*2.50*
Learners use digital resources to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning.	11	7	5	5	1	2.86	*2.24*
Learners use digital platforms to communicate and/or work collaboratively for learning.	9	10	6	4	0	2.83	*2.17*
Learners and mentors engage in interactive digital platforms that have capacity to support new technologies (e.g. adaptive technology, technology-enhanced items, virtual reality, or augmented reality).	8	12	5	3	1	2.89	*1.82*

Cognia Observation Tool for Digital Learning						Institution	Cognia Average
Assessment for Learning: Assessment for learning promotes the development of learning goals, support and progress monitoring, and student ownership of the learning process.	**HE**	**EV**	**SE**	**NE**	**NA**	**2.82**	*2.26*
Learners engage in a process that includes goal setting, self-assessment, and reflection on learning with support from mentors.	7	12	4	6	0	2.69	*2.18*
Learners engage consistently in active communication (static and dynamic) with mentors about their learning goals.	9	11	4	4	1	2.89	*2.30*
Learners engage in the coaching process with their mentors in their progress towards learning goals.	9	10	5	5	0	2.79	*2.20*
Learners take responsibility in the creation and attainment of their learning goals.	9	8	6	4	2	2.81	*2.17*
Learners engage consistently in active feedback (static and dynamic) with mentors.	9	11	6	3	0	2.90	*2.44*
Digital Learning Community: The community promotes positive interactions and relationships between and among learners and mentors.	**HE**	**EV**	**SE**	**NE**	**NA**	**2.77**	*2.18*
Learners are engaged in promoting digital citizenship and a culture of connectedness.	4	13	9	3	0	2.62	*2.18*
Learners communicate and interact respectfully with mentor(s) and each other.	11	13	3	2	0	3.14	*2.65*
Learners and mentors have opportunities to develop empathy and respect for personal and socio-cultural differences among members within the community.	5	11	5	6	2	2.56	*1.75*
Learners and mentors have opportunities to build a sense of community by fostering positive relationships (peer to peer, peer to adult, adult to adult).	6	14	5	4	0	2.76	*2.14*

2-D Learning Rubric

Learning Environments		Digitize	Enhance	Innovation
	Interconnectivity	6.9%	8.3%	0.7%
	Connects	21.4%	35.9%	0.7%
	Silos	18.6%	7.6%	0.0%

Learning Experiences

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Accreditation Status and Index of Education Quality®

Cognia will review the results of the Accreditation Engagement Review to make a final determination concerning accreditation status, including the appropriate next steps for your institution in response to these findings. Cognia provides the Index of Education Quality (IEQ) as a holistic measure of overall performance based on a comprehensive set of standards and review criteria. This formative tool for improvement identifies areas of success and areas in need of focus. The IEQ comprises the Standards Diagnostic ratings from the three Domains: Leadership Capacity, Learning Capacity, and Resource Capacity. The IEQ results are reported on a scale of 100 to 400 and provide information about how the institution is performing compared to expected criteria. Institutions should review the IEQ in relation to the findings from the review in the areas of Initiate, Improve, and Impact. An IEQ score below 250 indicates that the institution has several areas within the Initiate level and should focus their improvement efforts on those Standards within that level. An IEQ in the range of 225–300 indicates that the institution has several Standards within the Improve level and is using results to inform continuous improvement and demonstrate sustainability. An IEQ of 275 and above indicates the institution is beginning to reach the Impact level and is engaged in practices that are sustained over time and are becoming ingrained in the culture of the institution.

Below is the average (range) of all Cognia Improvement Network (CIN) institutions evaluated for accreditation in the last five years. The range of the annual CIN IEQ average is presented to enable you to benchmark your results with other institutions in the network.

Institution IEQ	324.56	CIN 5 Year IEQ Range	278.34 – 283.33

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Insights from the Review

The Engagement 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, with examples of programs and practices, and suggestions for the institution's continuous improvement efforts. The Insights from the Review narrative should provide contextualized information from the team's deliberations and analysis of the practices, processes, and programs of the institution organized by the levels of Initiate, Improve, and Impact. The narrative also provides the next steps to guide the institution's improvement journey in its 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 Accreditation Engagement Review Report will assist the institution in reflecting on its current improvement efforts and to adapt and adjust their plans to continuously strive for improvement.

Several themes emerged as a result of the Engagement Review Team's (team) review of evidence and completion of interviews at Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA), including the school's culture, relationships, equity, data analysis and use, curriculum and resources, and planning. The team offer these themes to strengthen and complement the school's improvement journey.

GCA fosters a culture that carries out its mission and vision with an emphasis on access and relationships. The organization is trusted, meeting stakeholder needs and making a difference in participants' lives. The GCA mission guides all activities, curriculum, instruction, procedures, and policies. The school has adopted mission, vision, and belief statements as its purpose documents. GCA conducted a development process and regularly reviews these documents. The mission, which is "Georgia Cyber Academy provides an interactive virtual learning environment designed to support individualized and differentiated student-centered educational experiences serving students from kindergarten through the 12th grade," drives the school in all endeavors. The organization's commitment to the mission was echoed during focus groups, including teachers, parents, and students throughout the review.

GCA has made substantial changes in its organizational and institutional culture and has grown through these changes. The shift from using an Educational Management Organization to becoming self-managed has resulted in a school that knows its stakeholders well and has grown a culture that is truly committed to its purpose. Many of the leaders and staff interviewed expressed that they have received focused training and support as they have taken on new roles in the organization. Leadership development training has enabled staff to grow and to take on new responsibilities. A strong system of recruitment and retention encourages staff to stay at GCA.

The school has grown into an organization that is truly student-focused. During focus group interviews, all stakeholders shared the strength of family engagement. Communication between school and home is regular. Parents reported that they receive newsletters and messages regularly. Field trips provide student experience and engagement. Outreach and community partnerships provide numerous opportunities for curriculum enhancement and for work-based learning.

GCA provides high-quality, flexible, individualized educational experiences in a safe, technology-enabled learning environment to empower students to achieve their academic and personal goals. GCA is dedicated to providing quality academic programs through individualized learning, professional expertise, and reliable academic support. This was also reflected in focus group interviews and in the documents and evidence shared to support the review. The purpose statements serve as integral pillars

on which to continue to build the digital learning environment. The organization has years of operation, data, and stakeholder involvement which flow from the mission statement.

The mission drives stakeholder support. Stakeholders take actions that align with the school's mission. Stakeholders choose to come to the school because of the mission. It was evident in the school's documentation and in stakeholder interviews that GCA is truly a mission-centered community. Staff, leaders, parents, teachers, and students all provided words that describe the motto and mission when they spoke in focus group interviews when asked to describe GCA. When asked for words that describe the organization, stakeholders reported descriptors such as innovation, commitment, and relationships, which echo the motto and mission statement. Documents such as agendas and minutes show that school leaders work to offer instruction that provides students with opportunities to carry out the mission. Students are exposed to digital resources and tools during their work. The mission is carried out with quality and fidelity.

The choice of Canvas and Jigsaw as Learning Management Systems (LMS) are serving the school well. Students report that the system is intuitive to navigate and gives them the learning opportunities that they are seeking. The Cognia Digital Observation Tool® report shows that the LMSs are appropriately paced and challenging. Students report that they receive prompt scoring of assignments and responses from teachers and leaders.

Going forward, the school is reminded to continue to build the staffing infrastructure of the organization. The current educational environment is very competitive. Newly trained teachers are in high demand. Traditional school districts are establishing digital learning functions that provide staffing flexibility similar to that offered at GCA. Continuing to grow the next generation of staff is key to maintaining and growing the positive culture that is now in place.

Georgia Cyber Academy engages students and families deeply in the educational process. The online learning environment poses challenges for schools in fostering relationships between students and teachers and among students themselves. GCA shared documentation of the rich community partnerships that support field trips and work-based learning. During a well-attended focus group session, a wide array of community partners shared their work in developing relationships with students and their families. During separate focus group interviews, stakeholders shared their perspectives on the relationships that they have developed. It is clear that regular school communication keeps families and students well informed. The family engagement and outreach functions are in place and appreciated by parents and students. Students value homeroom to connect with both teachers and peers. One student commented specifically about the value of "lunch and learn," where she regularly has video sessions with a counselor and other students. Older students participate in structured meetings such as student council. Students and parents remarked on bonding through field trips and other events. These opportunities are helping students to connect on a deep level.

While these mechanisms are in place, GCA has opportunities to take support of student relationships to the next level and to make sure that all students develop these relationships. Students who participated in focus group interviews are motivated to develop adult and peer relationships. During the overview presentation, GCA shared that it is looking to expand the range of clubs and activities that are available to students. The school is encouraged to carry through on this plan. Students and parents could be asked for feedback in this area. Building expanded student clubs and activities based on student interest would help students to connect through these opportunities. The school is encouraged to keep listening to students through surveys and documented feedback opportunities. These efforts will feed into the school's ongoing work to know students well and to support student social and emotional learning in addition to academics.

Georgia Cyber Academy does not yet prepare all students for advanced academic opportunities at higher grade levels. One of the main goals of GCA is to provide personalization of the educational experience for each student. Students have flexibility in terms of time, place, and pace for their learning. GCA has created a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to make sure that students that need help receive assistance. A focus group presentation and documentation provided by the school demonstrate that the MTSS is data-driven and that data are regularly analyzed to tailor instruction to meet the needs of students who need help.

GCA is encouraged to continue to look at programming and opportunities that are in place for all students, including gifted and others preparing for academic work. The school shared that policies currently in place for advanced academic programming at the high school level limit participation in Advanced Placement (AP) and dual enrollment classes to students above certain grade levels. The school is reminded that many students can be ready for these programs before 11th or 12th grade. GCA is encouraged to include in its review of curriculum and course offerings ways to build the skills so that students are ready for advanced opportunities as early as possible. The College Board offers a strong pre-AP program that GCA might consider as it looks at this issue going forward.

GCA is becoming a data-driven organization that collects many forms of data on a regular basis. During interviews with school leaders and staff and in the review of documentation and evidence, it became clear to the team that data are regularly collected through the LMSs, regularly administered academic assessments, and through stakeholder surveys. The major sources of summative academic achievement data are course completion data, academic assessments, and curriculum-based assessments administered at the end of each course in the LMSs. Stakeholder feedback data come from the administration of surveys. Parents and students know how to access data about course pacing and student learning. Leaders are aware of the data collected and where the data are housed.

GCA has the opportunity to document how these data are used in making decisions to inform the improvement process. GCA gathers many forms of data and would benefit if staff document, on an ongoing basis, what the data are telling them and the decisions that they make based on the data. Connecting data that may be isolated is part of this effort. GCA is in a position to respond to the need for reliable, applicable, and useful metrics that bring together summative student achievement measures. Summative student achievement data will be an integral part of an assessment of the needs for training and professional development for faculty and staff. GCA might consider building data analysis capacity to strengthen its planning and evaluation efforts. The organization will find that analyzing the data longitudinally and looking at the data deeply and broadly will help the community to come together to revisit goals.

GCA has built capacity to analyze its data to look at the impact and effectiveness of academic efforts in terms of gender and racial/ethnic groups. The school notes that while some students have been at GCA for many years, others have enrolled more recently. Looking at student longevity at GCA as a demographic marker may help school staff to analyze the impact of enrollment more consistently at the school in terms of student success. Graduation rate, academic achievement, and stakeholder feedback data could be broken down in this format for analysis. The school is encouraged to look at longevity and other appropriate demographic designations as it continues to dive deeply into its rich sets of data.

A strength for GCA is the teacher observation protocol, where it has the opportunity to collect, analyze, and use the data for continuous improvement efforts. The school is encouraged to continue to use student achievement data, stakeholder survey data, and observation data as part of the assessment of needs for professional learning and as part of the process to review and refine the goals that form the basis of the improvement process.

The school could better document how it uses its data to measure outcomes and to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and initiatives. The school might initiate a process of reflective evaluation of the effectiveness of these efforts in terms of student achievement and stakeholder satisfaction. Documenting the analysis of data and the evaluation of programs and initiatives will help the organization to focus its efforts.

The curriculum at GCA is regularly adjusted based on data collected to identify achievement gaps. In documentation provided and during focus group interviews, GCA staff shared the ongoing process in which curriculum is regularly reviewed and adapted to make sure that student needs are met. Achievement data are regularly used at every level and in every content area to monitor student learning, to identify curriculum gaps, and to adjust curriculum to address those gaps. This work is ongoing through professional learning communities (PLCs) and is guided by content specialists and leadership at each grade band. The Canvas LMS provides staff the opportunity to quickly adjust and adapt based on the analysis of both formative and summative achievement data. The school has a strong set of structures in place to monitor and adjust the curriculum. Going forward, GCA is reminded to address the cultural relevance of the curriculum and resources, in addition to standards attainment. The student population at the school is diverse, in both a demographic and a geographic sense. Cultural relevance will help to build student engagement and meaning.

GCA provides access to a wealth of instructional resources through the Clever platform. Students shared, during focus group interviews, how they use these resources to extend their learning. GCA shared the data that are continually collected to track the use of these resources. The school is encouraged to continue to evaluate the effectiveness of resources and to document the actions and decisions that it makes in terms of these resources.

Georgia Cyber Academy has an improvement planning process; however, the school has opportunities to be more formal regarding strategic planning. GCA shared academic outcomes data and its improvement plan. The reviewed improvement goals are appropriate. Teachers reported in focus groups that they are actively engaged in the improvement process. The school is reminded to continue to use data to drive the improvement goals and to document and evaluate its monitoring of the activities designed to carry out the improvement goals.

The school shared initial efforts toward visioning and planning for where the organization sees itself in three to five years. However, it was reported during focus group interviews that the board has not yet begun to formally engage in the strategic planning process. GCA has the opportunity to pull together its academic, operations, and finance data into a more formal strategic plan. The plan should lay out where the school wants to be in three to five years and track measurements for getting there. The strategic plan should address systems-level, long-range planning for areas such as facilities, enrollment, technology, partnerships, and resource allocation. The school's extensive data will be an asset to the planning process. Resource allocation should be based on the identified needs through the use of data, including stakeholder input. The strategic plan could lay out where the school wants to be and include processes to monitor the implementation and revisions of long-range plans based on internal data or changes in external factors, such as enrollment and partnerships. Development and review of the strategic plan will provide opportunities to involve additional stakeholders and voices in the planning process.

In conclusion, there are many sustained initiatives and programs in place at Georgia Cyber Academy. All stakeholders, including the leaders, staff, students, and parents, are committed to the success of all students, staff, and community. Communication and support were also observed to be evident among all stakeholders. While there are many successes, there are several ongoing opportunities for improvement

that can be undertaken by collective effort. This work will take the school to even higher levels of performance and student outcomes.

Next Steps

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

- Review and share the findings with stakeholders.

- Develop plans to address areas for improvement identified by the Engagement 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.

- Continue the improvement journey.

Team Roster

The Engagement Review Teams are comprised of professionals with varied backgrounds and professional experiences. All Lead Evaluators and Engagement 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 Engagement Review Team:

Team Member Name	Brief Biography/Title
Paul Bielawski, **Lead Evaluator**	Paul Bielawski is a field consultant and lead evaluator with Cognia, working with schools, school systems, and corporations on accreditation and school improvement. He has degrees from Albion College and the University of Michigan with advanced training in the areas of curriculum, foundations, history of education, international and comparative education, sociology of education, evaluation, and educational policy. He retired following a career of 37 years with the State of Michigan in leadership positions in grants, technology, curriculum, school improvement, assessment, policy, accountability, and data collection and reporting. In his state role, he spent many years engaged in the work of Cognia in Michigan. In his consulting role, he focuses on policy and data analysis related to school improvement.
Alisa Bourne	Administrator, University of Mississippi High School, Pre-College Programs, Division of Outreach
Mendy Felton	Academic Administrator, Arkansas Virtual Academy
Amber Hurley	Assistant Principal, Hartley Elementary, Bibb County School District, Macon, Georgia
Altamese Larkins	National Board Certified Teacher, Fulton County, Georgia
Christina Paulk	Director of School Partnerships, Sevenstar, Global Leader in Online Christian Education
Scherrie Pickett	Education Specialist, Educational Technology, Alabama State Department of Education
Audra Plummer	Head of School, Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy
Ranyatta Roland	Director of Assessments, Rockdale County School, Conyers, Georgia
Monika Wiley	Director of Fine Arts and School Choice, Clayton County Public Schools, Georgia

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