Bridges Middle School

Portland, Oregon

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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 in the Reaccreditation Review Report 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 administrations 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 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.

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 Cognia Evaluator(s) review evidence and information pertinent to evaluating an institution's performance against the research-based Cognia Performance Standards. Cognia Evaluator(s) use these Standards to assess the quality of learning environments 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 Cognia Evaluator(s) gain a broad understanding of institution quality. Using the Standards, the Cognia Evaluator(s) provide valuable feedback to institutions, which helps to focus and guide each institution's improvement journey.

Cognia Standards Diagnostic Results

The Cognia Performance Standards Diagnostic is used by the Cognia Evaluator(s) 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

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:	3	IM:	3	RE:	2	SU:	3	EM:	4	
1.2	Stakeholders collectively demonstrate actions to ensure the achievement of the institution's purpose and desired outcomes for learning.										Impacting
	EN:	3	IM:	3	RE:	3	SU:	3	EM:	4	
1.3	The institution engages in a continuous improvement process that produces evidence, including measurable results of improving student learning and professional practice.										Initiating
	EN:	2	IM:	2	RE:	2	SU:	2	EM:	1	
1.4	The governing authority establishes and ensures adherence to policies that are designed to support institutional effectiveness.										Initiating
	EN:	2	IM:	2	RE:	2	SU:	1	EM:	2	
1.5	The governing authority adheres to a code of ethics and functions within defined roles and responsibilities.										Improving
	EN:	2	IM:	4	RE:	2	SU:	2	EM:	2	
1.6	Leaders implement staff supervision and evaluation processes to improve professional practice and organizational effectiveness.										Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	3	RE:	2	SU:	1	EM:	3	
1.7	Leaders implement operational processes and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness in support of teaching and learning.										Improving
	EN:	4	IM:	3	RE:	2	SU:	1	EM:	2	
1.8	Leaders engage stakeholders to support the achievement of the institution's purpose and direction.										Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	3	RE:	2	SU:	3	EM:	4	
1.9	The institution provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness.										Improving
	EN:	3	IM:	3	RE:	3	SU:	2	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.										Improving
	EN:	3	IM:	3	RE:	2	SU:	1	EM:	3	

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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.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	4	EM: 4	
2.2	The learning culture promotes creativity, innovation, and collaborative problem-solving.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	3	SU:	3	EM: 4	
2.3	The learning culture develops learners' attitudes, beliefs, and skills needed for success.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	4	EM: 4	
2.4	The institution has a formal structure to ensure learners develop positive relationships with and have adults/peers who support their educational experiences.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	3	EM: 4	
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:	3	EM: 4	
2.6	The institution implements a process to ensure the curriculum is aligned to standards and best practices.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	4	EM: 4	
2.7	Instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learners' needs and the institution's learning expectations.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	4	EM: 4	
2.8	The institution provides programs and services for learners' educational futures and career planning.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	3	SU:	3	EM: 4	
2.9	The institution implements processes to identify and address the specialized needs of learners.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	4	SU:	3	EM: 4	
2.10	Learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated.									Impacting
	EN:	4	IM:	4	RE:	3	SU:	3	EM: 4	

Learning Capacity Standards										Rating
2.11	Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to the demonstrable improvement of student learning.									Improving
	EN:	3	**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:	3	**IM:**	2	**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.									Initiating
	EN:	3	**IM:**	2	**RE:**	1	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	2	
3.2	The institution's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.									Initiating
	EN:	3	**IM:**	2	**RE:**	1	**SU:**	1	**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:	3	**IM:**	2	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	3	
3.4	The institution attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the institution's purpose and direction.									Improving
	EN:	3	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	3	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	3	
3.5	The institution integrates digital resources into teaching, learning, and operations to improve professional practice, student performance, and organizational effectiveness.									Improving
	EN:	3	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	2	**EM:**	3	
3.6	The institution provides access to information resources and materials to support the curriculum, programs, and needs of students, staff, and the institution.									Improving
	EN:	3	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	1	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	3	
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:**	1	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	2	

Resource Capacity Standards										Rating
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:	3	**IM:**	3	**RE:**	2	**SU:**	1	**EM:**	3

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 Cognia Evaluator(s). 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		

Accreditation Status and Index of Education Quality®

Cognia will review the results of the Reaccreditation 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	316.00	CIN 5 Year IEQ Range	278.34 – 283.33

Insights from the Review

Cognia Evaluator(s) review evidence about the processes, programs, and practices within the institution to arrive at findings. 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 about the practices, processes, and programs of the institution. 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 Reaccreditation 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.

The Cognia Evaluators (team) identified the following themes as part of the continuous improvement journey for Bridges Middle School. These areas of strength and opportunities for further action offer a guide as the school continues to refine its improvement journey. These themes emerged after review and analysis of a variety of evidence that included standards ratings in leadership, learning, and resource domains, evidence provided by the institution, website information, and interviews with leadership.

The staff and stakeholders at Bridges Middle School are clearly committed to the vision and mission of the school. Through reviewing the evidence, the school's website, watching the school's video, and interviewing the school's leadership, the team inferred that a consistent message about commitment to the school's vision of "Building Confidence and Competence" was deeply ingrained in the culture of the institution. As the team viewed the "About Us" video, it was clear they are passionate about their students learning in a safe environment. During the interview, the school leadership shared the process of hiring staff, looking for people who are passionate about working with students with learning challenges, and helping them discover their strengths. Student comments in the PowerPoint presentation illustrated that students' perception of the school matches the vision. For example, one student shared, "Bridges means so much to me! At my old school kids were mean and bullied me and teachers didn't have time for me. At Bridges, you are protected, and teachers understand you, and always have time for you. I love it here." Another student shared, "Safety, friendship, success, future, and education." During the interview and reviewing the evidence, the school indicated that they provide classes for fifth and sixth graders in social-emotional learning and self-advocacy classes to help set the stage for the students to be successful during their seventh and eighth grades. The staff and stakeholders are committed to creating a safe learning environment to support the students as they relearn that they are capable and valuable. This passion will help support the school through future changes and challenges as they work to formalize what they do for their students. The team suggests that the school continue its review of data gathered from stakeholders with keen attention to data gathered over time to identify trends for further study and attention.

Bridges Middle School staff members effectively meet the needs of their students to ensure they continue to progress in their academics. Through meeting with the school's leadership, reviewing the evidence provided, and observing the school's video, it was clear that the staff members have the ability and desire to meet their students' academic needs to ensure they are successful. The school's leadership shared that all teachers have at least a master's degree. Many of the teachers have a degree in special education and other related fields to ensure the students receive effective teaching methods to meet students' needs. Each student has a learning plan based on their needs. Bridges Middle School uses MAP assessments to provide teachers with data to determine how to best

assist students. The teachers utilize this data to determine interventions and accommodations. Newslela is utilized to provide students with the information needed for assignments written at their reading level. This demonstrates that the staff could provide access to the curriculum for all their students. During their eighth-grade year, the staff focuses on teaching students skills to help them be successful in high school, whether they attend public, private, or online high school. Bridges Middle School effectively determines what the students need to be successful and can utilize this expertise to formalize what they do to ensure the continuation of their students' success. The team suggests that the school may wish to consider the development of a formal process for follow-up of its graduates to determine their success in their high school endeavors and to further inform strategic planning at the school.

Formalizing processes will strengthen Bridges Middle School's efforts to meet its vision of building confidence and competence. In reviewing the school's self-assessment and speaking with the school's leadership, it is clear that Bridges Middle School is a special place. It is also clear that not all protocols are characterized by a solid process, and the school has been using institutional knowledge and expertise to build the culture and system at Bridges Middle School. The school has a clear foundation as to what makes their school successful. While the school collects data on individual students and uses that data to create a learning plan for that student, the school does not have a systematic process to do so for the institution. As the school grew, the school's leadership did not have time to create formal processes, document these processes, and analyze and house data to determine if the school as a whole is meeting its goals. Bridges Middle School has just hired an additional administrator. This will allow the newly hired administrator to lead the instructional vision of the school while the current administrator can focus on the finances, policies and procedures, and fundraising. This transition also demonstrated the need to have processes that are more formalized thus ensuring the culture and vision of the school continue for years to come. While Bridges Middle School had limited formalized processes and procedures, the hiring of the new administrator will assist in continuing the work of this special school.

In closing, the team gives thanks to the institution for their genuine engagement in the continuous improvement process and hopes the Bridges Middle School stakeholders use the insights from this review as they move forward in their continuous improvement journey.

Next Steps

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

- Review and share the findings with stakeholders.
- Develop plans to address the areas for improvement identified by the Cognia Evaluator(s).
- 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.

Cognia Evaluator(s)

Team Member Name	Brief Biography/Title
Cynthia Orr, Lead Evaluator	Dr. Cindy Orr is the education program director for the Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections. She is a 30-year veteran educator who served as a teacher, principal, federal programs director, and superintendent. Cindy holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education, a master's degree in the art of teaching, and a doctorate in education. She has led several Cognia engagement review teams over the past three years.
Becky Wells	Director Pacific Region

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