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## Standards Assessment Report

### Hillcrest Elementary School

6500 Boll Weevil Circle Enterprise, Alabama 36330

Prepared for the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review

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# Standards Assessment Report

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# Introduction & Purpose of the Report

## Introduction

The Standards Assessment Report is designed to serve as a valuable self-assessment and as a tool to help schools prepare for their Quality Assurance Review. The report is based on the AdvancED standards, which serve as the foundation of the accreditation process. In order to earn and maintain accreditation, schools must meet the AdvancED standards, engage in a process of continuous improvement, and host a Quality Assurance Review at least once every five years.

The Standards Assessment Report engages the school community in an in-depth assessment of each of the seven AdvancED standards. In completing the report, the school identifies the data, information, evidence, and documented results that validate that it is meeting each standard. This self assessment helps the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

The Standards Assessment Report also serves as the primary resource for the Quality Assurance Review Team, which uses the report to prepare for the visit to the school. The team uses insights gathered from the report and information obtained during the on-site visit to provide feedback to the school and to make an accreditation recommendation.

## Structure of the Report

The Standards Assessment Report is organized by the AdvancED standards. For each standard, the report includes four sections: 1) considering the evidence; 2) indicators rubric; 3) focus questions; and 4) overall assessment. Each section reinforces the other sections by asking a question that builds on the prior section.

The section entitled "considering the evidence" allows school personnel to think about the practices and/or processes being implemented and identify evidence that will support its responses to the indicators rubric and focus questions. This section helps school stakeholders engage in a discussion about how it knows it is adhering to the standards. The section is not intended to engage the school in a collection of evidence, but rather in thoughtful dialogue about how it can demonstrate that quality practices, conditions, and results are occurring in the school. The section asks, "What practices/processes are being implemented, and are they effective?" or said another way, "How do we know we are doing what we say we are doing?"

The indicators rubric enables the school to assess the degree to which practices and/or processes are in place that indicate adherence to the standard and indicators. For each indicator, the school may check if the practices and/or processes are highly functional in the school, operational, emerging, or not evident. The school should use the rubric as an opportunity to ask itself challenging questions and to respond with accurate answers geared toward self-improvement. After completing the rubric, the school can quickly see areas of strength and opportunity. The section asks, "To what degree are the noted practices/processes in place?"

The focus questions allow the school to expand on and think more deeply about the responses to the

indicators rubric. The focus questions provide an opportunity for the school to describe the systematic and systemic processes that are in place to support its ability to meet the indicators. The section asks, "How are the practices/processes implemented?"

The overall assessment describes how well schools are implementing practices and/or processes and the impact these practices and/or processes have on student results and overall school effectiveness. The overall assessment helps schools judge where they are in relation to each standard. The "operational" level is required in order to demonstrate meeting the standard. The section asks, "How well are we meeting the standard overall?"

## Demographics

Public/Non-public:	<b>Public</b>
School Type:	<b>AdvancED - Elementary</b>
Charter School:	<b>N/A</b>
Enrollment:	<b>671</b>
Gender at School:	<b>Co-Ed</b>
Beginning Grade:	<b>PK</b>
Ending Grade:	<b>6</b>
Alternate Beginning Grade:	
Alternate Ending Grade:	
Location Type:	<b>Rural</b>
Gender at School:	<b>Co-Ed</b>

# Standard 1. Vision and Purpose

**STANDARD:** The school establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the school.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it commits to a shared purpose and direction. The school establishes expectations for student learning aligned with the school's vision that is supported by school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and school effectiveness. The school's vision guides allocations of time and human, material, and fiscal resources.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

## Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

1.1 Establishes a vision for the school in collaboration with its stakeholders:

**Operational**

1.2 Communicates the vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support:

**Operational**

1.3 Identifies goals to advance the vision:

**Operational**

1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the school, its students, and the community:

**Operational**

1.5 Ensures that the school's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process:

**Operational**

1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate:

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**Emerging****Focus Questions:*****1. What is the process for establishing and building understanding of and commitment to the vision statement among stakeholders?***

The Vision and Beliefs team, composed of a chair and six other faculty members, reviewed the 2002-2003 Mission Statement that had been established during that school year and determined the need to update the beliefs and vision statements of Hillcrest Elementary. First, the team surveyed the faculty utilizing the NSSE School Beliefs Inventory. Tallying the faculty surveys resulted in the formulation of seven core beliefs to which our faculty adheres and from which our new Vision and Beliefs statements were born. The Vision draft was presented to the faculty and parent and community representatives for discussion and revision.

The Vision team communicates the Vision and Beliefs statements to build understanding and commitment by posting our Vision and Beliefs statements on the school's web site. Furthermore, these statements are posted in the classrooms and hallways of our school. The updated Vision and Belief statements will be published in the school's newsletter and in the student and parent handbook which will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. Parents and students sign an acknowledgment of familiarity with the contents of the handbook. In addition, plans are made to post our Vision statement in our system-wide calendar and in the local newspapers at the beginning of the school year.

***2. What is the school's process for developing a profile and systematically maintaining and using information that describes the school, its students, and their performance?***

Each year the school's profile data is reviewed and updated. It is published in the Title I Plan. Information is gathered from the Residency, Employment, and Language forms sent home at the beginning of the school year. School disaggregated data from Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Stanford Achievement Test, 10th edition (SAT-10), Alabama Reading and Math Test (ARMT), and the writing assessment provides formal means of assessing student performance and is analyzed and graphically displayed in the Title I Plan. Administrators and/or the reading coach meet with each grade level to review that data and devise plans to address weak areas. As new state assessments are implemented, data for these assessments will be included in the profile. State assessment results are communicated to parents at a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) meeting.

***3. How does the leadership ensure that the school's vision, purpose, and goals guide the teaching and learning process?***

In order to ensure that Hillcrest's vision, purpose, and goals guide the teaching and learning process for all students, the administration annually analyzes the disaggregated data from state assessments. The results from each analysis are discussed with the faculty, and strategies are implemented to target weaknesses and support the teaching and learning processes. Throughout the school year the administration makes certain that student learning is enhanced through classroom observations and evaluation of teaching practices with verbal/written feedback. In addition to system administrators, local and regional Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) staff members conduct walk-throughs to observe the implementation of reading strategies and content. Walk-about provide opportunities for school leadership and ARI staff to evaluate the effectiveness of the room arrangements. To advance the teaching and learning process, the administration continuously monitors the implementation of the school's vision in the following ways:

- DIBELS results/data meeting
- Grade level meetings
- BBSST meetings
- SAT-10 results
- ARMT scores
- Writing assessments

Furthermore, teachers and students have ample resources including supplies, materials, and curriculum support. The administration provides additional support for at-risk students with the assistance of special resources, including extended day, summer school, and paraprofessionals. Teachers are provided with many opportunities for ongoing professional development in the areas related to our goals.

#### ***4. What process is used to ensure that the vision and purpose of the school remain current and aligned with the school's expectations for student learning and school effectiveness?***

A plan was established for the Vision and Purpose team to examine the previously established Mission and Beliefs. A need for revision was determined, based on current profile data and faculty surveys. After the establishment and adoption of the 2008 Vision and Beliefs, the committee decided to meet annually and review the Vision and Beliefs by examining profile data, current legislation affecting educational practices, and changing demographics. If it is decided that a revision is needed, then the Standard I committee will bring the Vision and Beliefs before the stakeholders for discussion and revision. This procedure was shared with the faculty and met with agreement.

#### **Artifacts**

- Identified goals for Hillcrest Elementary School (in Title I Plan)
- Vision and Belief Statements (English and Spanish)
- List of core beliefs (English and Spanish)
- Faculty beliefs inventories and tally sheet
- Parent surveys of beliefs
- Student surveys of beliefs
- Graphs of parent and student beliefs surveys
- Minutes of committee meetings
- Faculty meeting minutes regarding stakeholders' involvement in the development of vision, purpose, and beliefs
- Curriculum guides
- Lesson plans including the Course of Study, SAT-10, and ARMT objectives
- Title I Plan
- School profile
- School newsletter
- School handbook page with system's mission statement
- PTO meetings schedule
- Pictures of school projects involving parents and community as participants and observers
- Community demographics
- Textbook adoption notes
- Teacher evaluations
- Faculty meeting agendas

- Data meeting notes
- Grade level meeting notes
- IEPs (Individual Education Plan)
- ELL plans (English Language Learners)
- Enterprise Schools accreditation history/ACT scores/post-graduate trends
- Hillcrest demographic data
- Sample Impact Aid card
- Sample Student Residency Questionnaire
- Sample Employment Survey
- National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) Opinion Inventory Table
- Newspaper clippings showing community support of our school activities
- Parent-teacher conference form
- Professional Development Plan
- Signed statements of agreement to the procedure for reviewing the Vision and Beliefs systematically
- Walk-through by reading coach with feedback
- Signed agreements of the adoption of Vision and Beliefs statements from faculty, parent, and community stakeholders
- 2003 Mission Statement and Beliefs
- School calendar
- Newspaper articles
- Yearbook orders
- I Love Hillcrest t-shirts
- Red Ribbon Week activities
- Missed assignments sheet
- Discipline forms
- Dismissal procedures
- Kindergarten activities
- Teacher talent show
- Relay for Life involvement
- Textbook/Library permission letter
- Student handbook
- PE health form
- School nurse services letter
- School lunch program
- Parent visitation during American Education Week
- Enterprise demographics
- Enterprise magazine

### **Overall Assessment:**

**Operational:** The school has committed to a shared purpose and direction. The school has clearly defined expectations for student learning aligned with the school's vision that is supported by school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and school effectiveness. The school's vision guides allocations of time and human, material, and fiscal resources. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "operational" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Standard 2. Governance and Leadership

**STANDARD:** The school provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and school effectiveness.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it has leaders who are advocates for the school's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction and allocate resources to implement curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders encourage collaboration and shared responsibility for school improvement among stakeholders. The school's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

### Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school operates under the jurisdiction of a governing board that:

2.1 Establishes policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the school:

**Highly Functional**

2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the administrative head of the school:

**Highly Functional**

2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations:

**Highly Functional**

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school has leadership that:

2.4 Employs a system that provides for analysis and review of student performance and school effectiveness:

**Operational**

2.5 Fosters a learning community:

**Operational**

2.6 Provides teachers and students opportunities to lead:

**Operational**

2.7 Provides stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership:

**Operational**

2.8 Controls curricular and extracurricular activities that are sponsored by the school:

**Operational**

2.9 Responds to community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction:

**Operational**

2.10 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel:

**Highly Functional**

**Focus Questions:**

***1. What is the process for establishing, communicating, and implementing policies and procedures for the effective operation of the school?***

Hillcrest Elementary School follows guidelines from the Enterprise City School board policy manual; local, state, and federal laws; and communication from the superintendent's office. Board policy manuals are available to all stakeholders and may be obtained from the school's office. Many pertinent policies are included in the student handbook given each year to all stakeholders. The principal covers policies at Open House meetings, and the office sends out policy reminders several times throughout the year in school newsletters. In communicating with parents verbally and in written form, school employees often refer to board policy and listen to concerns on a case-by-case basis. The steps in the process to satisfy stakeholder concerns are the classroom teacher, the principal, the superintendent, and finally the city school board.

Principals meet periodically to discuss matters affecting all or most of the schools. These discussions yield collaboration among schools. The principal reports to appropriate faculty and staff any information needed to assure our school is abiding by local, state, and federal laws and by board policy.

***2. What process does the school's leadership use to evaluate school effectiveness and student performance?***

School administration at Hillcrest Elementary School reviews SAT-10, ARMT, DIBELS, and Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing, 5th Grade (ADAW) test results at the beginning of the school year to help plan for proper placement of students for reading, to determine potential grade level weaknesses or trends, and to identify students with significant weaknesses. Teachers utilize progress monitoring assessments and DIBELS testing during the year to evaluate instruction and student progress. Data meetings are held several times a year so that student information and teaching techniques/materials may be evaluated and corrections made as necessary.

Teachers are observed during the year by school principals and elementary education supervisors through scheduled observations, walk-throughs/ walk-about. Recommendations are made at this time. Each teacher completes an individual Professional Development Plan each year, and it is reviewed during a meeting with the principal at the end of the year.

Individual Education Plan (IEP), 504, and English Language Learners (ELL) teams, including the parents, meet regularly to discuss student progress, school expectations, and parent concerns. Parent surveys are also utilized to ascertain stakeholder opinion.

***3. In what ways are stakeholders, including staff, given opportunities to provide leadership and to contribute to the decision-making process?***

Faculty and staff are included on various committees involving all aspects of the function of our school, including school budgets, textbook adoption, and parent involvement. They often participate in the training of other faculty and offer guidance in areas of expertise or recent training. All teachers participate on the Building-Based Student Support Team (BBSST) for struggling students in their classes.

Parents are involved with PTO and in numerous classrooms as volunteers. They are often called on to work on various committees, such as parental involvement and fundraising.

Community members are consulted concerning a number of issues, such as emergency plans and the career fair.

***4. What policies and processes are in place to ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation?***

Our school's BBSST meets regularly to discuss the progress of students who are struggling academically and/or behaviorally. The team works together to meet the individual needs of students. Test data, grades, teacher input, medical issues, and parental concerns are addressed. Students on the team are observed using the Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC) to address possible behaviors which may be impeding the learning process. After forty days of intervention, students may be continued, dismissed, or referred for testing. If students qualify, students' needs will be addressed through an IEP team. Students who are not eligible for special services will be served through 504 or BBSST.

Students who achieve above average are referred for testing for the gifted program and, if eligible, are served once a week. All second graders are screened for the Adventures Beyond the Classroom (ABC) program. Flexible reading groups allow for advancement after acquiring of skills. English as a Second Language (ESL) program is offered to students whose primary language is not English.

Our school has incorporated several innovative strategies involving technology to support student learning. Smart Board, Mimio devices, computer lab and web-based technology lessons are utilized by students. Training is provided for all teachers.

**Artifacts**

- Board policy
- Student handbook
- Faculty handbook
- Teacher observations
- Building Leadership Team
- Local financial plan
- School surveys/parent, students, and faculty

- Attendance policy
- Courses of Study
- Grievance policy
- Financial audits
- SETS/IDEA training and regulations
- Test Trax
- BBSST meetings
- Reading data meetings
- IEPs
- PEPs
- ELL program
- ABC-Enrichment field trips
- Kindergarten farm day
- Parent volunteer lists
- Parental involvement committee
- School web site
- Parent visitation days
- PTO meetings
- Career Fair
- High school Anchor Club visits
- DARE parade
- Fire house
- Altrusa Club visit/donation
- Spanish Club visit
- American Studies visit
- Faculty committee assignments
- Student Government
- National Junior Beta Club
- Student-led pledge, character education, and vocabulary enrichment activities
- Peer modeling among teachers
- Parenting workshops
- PTO with ELL translation, as needed
- Announced school board meetings
- Newsletters/calendars
- Jump Rope for Heart
- Field Day
- Physical Fitness Testing
- Choral group
- Red Ribbon Rally
- AR program

### **Overall Assessment:**

**Operational:** The school has leaders who are advocates for the school's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction and systematically allocate resources to implement curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders encourage collaboration and shared responsibility for school improvement among stakeholders. The school's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation. While these processes and conditions are being implemented, the implementation is not systemic across the school, and the results are varied. The preponderance of the

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evidence supports an overall assessment of "operational" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Standard 3. Teaching and Learning

**STANDARD:** The school provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process. Teachers provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. Teachers give students feedback to improve their performance.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

### Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

3.1 Develops and implements curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning:

**Operational**

3.2 Promotes active involvement of students in the learning process, including opportunities for them to explore application of higher-order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning:

**Operational**

3.3 Gathers, analyzes, and uses data and research in making curricular and instructional choices:

**Operational**

3.4 Designs and uses instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that are research-based and reflective of best practice:

**Operational**

3.5 Offers a curriculum that challenges each student to excel, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity:

**Operational**

3.6 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning:

**Highly Functional**

3.7 Provides for articulation and alignment between and among all levels of schools:

**Emerging**

3.8 Implements interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning:

**Operational**

3.9 Monitors school climate and takes appropriate steps to ensure that it is conducive to student learning:

**Highly Functional**

3.10 Provides comprehensive information and media services that support the curricular and instructional programs:

**Highly Functional**

3.11 Ensures that all students and staff members have regular and ready access to instructional technology and a comprehensive materials collection that supports the curricular and instructional program:

**Highly Functional**

**Focus Questions:**

***1. How does the school ensure that the curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments are aligned and articulated across grade levels in support of the expectations for student learning?***

Hillcrest Elementary School ensures that curriculum and instructional strategies are aligned and articulated through documented lesson plans that state the Alabama Courses of Study objectives. First, our school develops and implements clearly defined course objectives by using the Alabama State Course of Study and the SAT-10 Compendium. Our school also uses National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and ARMT practice activities. Support for these curriculum objectives is given to us by our Elementary Supervisor and our building level Principal and Assistant Principal. Hillcrest Elementary School offers instructional strategies and assessments that challenge students at all levels of learning. Teachers are provided with the latest research-based textbooks. The teacher sets up long term objectives in addition to daily objectives that correlate with the Alabama State Courses of Study and SAT-10. Strategies employed are determined by the needs of the students. Examples of teaching practices are explicit lessons, whole-group, small group, one-on-one, independent practice, and guided practice instruction. Teachers are held accountable through formal classroom observations that are made by an administrator. Teachers participate in system wide and building based grade level meetings, data meetings, and faculty meetings to discuss the expectations and assessment results of student learning.

***2. In what ways does the school ensure the implementation of research-based instructional***

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***strategies, innovations, and activities that facilitate achievement for all students?***

Hillcrest Elementary School implements the Alabama Reading Initiative which is a research-based instructional program that focuses on the five components of literacy: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. ARI strategies, innovations, and activities facilitate achievement for all students. Faculty members participate in ARI workshops, conferences, and embedded trainings to analyze student data and make informed, innovative, and reflective decisions that drive instructional goals. Faculty members have access to a professional library used to gain information about current research and instructional strategies.

In addition to regularly implemented strategies, students at risk are identified and offered targeted instruction. Students are referred to BBSST, intervention reading programs, small group instruction, ESL services, extended day, and special education services. These programs target the specific needs of each student and enable them to achieve success in the general education classroom.

***3. What processes are implemented to ensure that teachers are well-prepared and effectively implementing the curriculum?***

Teachers at Hillcrest Elementary School are well prepared to effectively implement the curriculum through a variety of processes. All teachers were required to attend the Alabama Reading Academy in the summer of 2006. These teachers were trained in a thirty-hour, week long session to effectively implement the five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. All K-3 teachers are required to attend a system wide teacher orientation and ARI teacher training. New teachers are also mentored by experienced teachers within their grade level. Teachers are given opportunities to attend professional development workshops related to the curriculum. All teachers are given copies of the Alabama Courses of Study to establish and code daily lesson plans. Administrators, along with reading coaches, conduct classroom observations, walk-about, and walk-throughs to review lesson plans and ensure that teachers are effectively implementing the curriculum.

***4. How does the school provide every student access to comprehensive information, instructional technology, and media services?***

The Hillcrest Elementary School Media Center, through its media services program, acts as the center of the school for comprehensive information, instructional technology, and media services. Every student participates in a three week library orientation at the beginning of each school year. Students have access to the media center through a semi-flexible schedule, and through whole group, structured technology lessons. Programs such as Kids College, Easy Tech, and Compass/Odyssey Learning are utilized in the media center to teach technology skills and reinforce the curriculum. Teachers have access to programs such as Reading A to Z and Enchanted Learning. Our media center houses over 10,000 books and journals. The collection includes both print and non-print resources. The Alabama Virtual Library is the primary online resource utilized for research in the library while Athena is used for electronic circulation and administration of library materials.

Each classroom is equipped with three or more computers with internet accessibility for students and teachers. Students use these computers for skill reinforcement, Accelerated Reader (AR) assessment, desktop publishing, and research. All students have access to these computers. Fifteen LCD projectors and five Mimio interactive boards are located in teacher classrooms throughout the school.

Our school website is maintained by the media specialist and is updated on a regular basis. The Hillcrest website contains numerous links, documents and data that are practical aids to the classroom teacher and helpful to students learning about technology.

## Artifacts

- SAT 10 Compendium
- Alabama Courses of Study
- ARMT/NAEP lessons
- Lesson plan books
- Formal observation evaluation forms
- BBSST schedule/meetings
- IEP/504 documents
- School Improvement Plan/Title I Plan
- Agendas from Embedded Training
- ESL schedule
- Extended day schedule/roster
- Reading schedules
- Individual Professional Development Plans
- Early education intervention (pre-K program)
- Master schedule
- Walk-about/Walk-through check list
- Demo-Site ARI training at elementary schools within our system
- Lesson plans
- Formal observation evaluations
- Alabama Courses of Study
- Library schedule
- Circulation data (Athena software)
- Internet/textbook permission form
- Technology Course of Study
- School technology plan
- Comprehensive library materials collection
- Smart Board Interactive products
- Mimio Interactive boards
- Accelerated Reader assessments

## Overall Assessment:

**Operational:** The school implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The school demonstrates evidence of alignment between the curriculum and instructional practices with systematic implementation across the school. Teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. Teachers give students regular feedback to improve their performance. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "operational" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

# Standard 4. Documenting and Using Results

**STANDARD:** The school enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and school effectiveness.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures. The system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions to improve student performance. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

**Definitions of Indicators Rubric:**

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
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<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

4.1 Establishes performance measures for student learning that yield information that is reliable, valid, and bias free:

**Operational**

4.2 Develops and implements a comprehensive assessment system for assessing progress toward meeting the expectations for student learning:

**Operational**

4.3 Uses student assessment data for making decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning processes:

**Highly Functional**

4.4 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness and uses the results to improve student performance:

**Operational**

4.5 Communicates the results of student performance and school effectiveness to all stakeholders:

**Operational**

4.6 Uses comparison and trend data of student performance from comparable schools in evaluating its effectiveness:

**Emerging**

4.7 Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance:

**Operational**

4.8 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations:

**Highly Functional**

**Focus Questions:**

***1. How is the assessment system currently used in your school to analyze changes in student performance?***

*State-wide Assessment Systems*

At Hillcrest Elementary School, we use state-wide assessment systems to analyze changes in student performance. Each year, data from the SAT-10 and ARMT are examined and disaggregated for trends throughout the school, for each grade level, and by subject. Similarly, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is used to determine school-wide progress. We also use data from the 5th grade writing assessment to analyze any changes in writing performance. The 5th grade science assessment will also be used in the future to measure progress. The DIBELS assessment is used three times each year to identify grade-level and individual progress in reading skills. Our English Language Learners are given the ACCESS test each spring to determine individual progress in acquiring English language proficiency. Twice each grading period, BBSST data is used to ascertain whether at risk students are making sufficient academic progress.

*School-wide Assessment Systems*

Hillcrest Elementary School uses a variety of assessments in order to monitor progress and to ensure proper placement. Our School Improvement Plan acts as a guide as we consistently strive to monitor changes in student performance. The Standardized Test of Assessment of Reading (STAR) test is given to determine each child's reading level. Placement tests, unit or chapter tests, and selection tests from the core instructional programs also aid in analyzing success and monitoring progress. Fry word assessments and the Core Phonics Assessment are used as indicators of each child's academic performance and to guide daily instruction. Teachers use DIBELS progress monitoring to assure each child is making adequate gains. This data is easily accessible as each teacher maintains a data box containing a reading folder for each child. The data collected is placed into the child's folder and examined at grade level data meetings that are held to analyze student performance and to target specific skills that need attention.

*Teacher Initiated Assessments*

We use teacher initiated assessments to check student performance daily. Teachers use writing checklists/folders, cold reads, chapter tests, running records, and oral assessments to evaluate and analyze student class work as well as homework to determine which areas they need to reteach. Teachers also analyze end of the unit tests and conduct informal observations to observe changes in students' performance. They also use computer programs such as Kids College and Compass

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Learning Odyssey to assist students with mastery of skills.

**2. What are you doing to ensure that assessment results are timely, relevant, and communicated in a way that can be used by teachers, students, parents, and external stakeholders to aid the performance of individual students?**

Student assessment information is used to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning processes. After the administration reviews statewide assessment test scores (noted in focus question 1) teachers receive individual student scores. Teachers use this data along with school-wide and teacher initiated assessments to analyze student achievement and guide instruction.

Parents also receive their child's standardized test scores at the beginning of the school year to inform them of their child's academic achievement. Further explanation is given as requested at parent teacher conferences with assistance for non-English speaking parents. Our school counselor meets with fourth through sixth graders to assist students in analyzing their individual strengths and weaknesses.

Additionally, ongoing and periodic assessment results are sent to parents. These include: mid-term and nine-week report cards; progress monitoring and DIBELS; and ADAW. Our school offers an after-school-tutoring program, and our system offers a summer learning program for at-risk students.

Information from other schools with similar demographics is compared with the scores from our school to evaluate its effectiveness. Statewide assessments (noted in focus question 1) from comparable schools are weighed against each other to determine areas of comparative strength as well as weakness.

Various methods are used to improve our overall effectiveness. DIBELS, SAT-10, and ARMT are used to place students in appropriate language arts groups. Data meetings are held throughout the year to ensure student achievement. Scores are analyzed and instructional changes in the classroom are made based on student needs. For example, open ended responses are an area in which we need to improve as a school. Since open ended responses are a weakness (ARMT) we are taking large strides in providing student opportunities to respond to open ended questions.

**3. How are data used to understand and improve overall school effectiveness?**

Data meetings are held to analyze student scores. Our instruction is guided by our data. After reviewing the scores, students are placed in an appropriate reading group. Teachers also complete instructional grouping forms to see areas of weakness (SAT-10, DIBELS). Each student in our school has a specific data folder in which DIBELS, progress monitoring, fry words, core phonics, and unit test scores are kept. Folders are grouped into data boxes by teachers and are used to evaluate and guide instruction.

Another way we improve overall effectiveness is through walk-throughs. Administrators and the reading coach perform walk-throughs looking for the five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. As a result of the walk-throughs, teachers receive embedded training sponsored by Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI). This training takes place throughout the year to improve teaching techniques and strategies.

We also organize our data through the use of Student Information Systems (STI) grade book. Teachers input grades into the STI system weekly. This allows for instant grade monitoring.

**4. How are teachers trained to understand and use data in the classroom?**

Teachers attend training throughout the school year and during the summer to learn to disaggregate student data. The Alabama Reading Academy (ARA) was sponsored for grades K-3 and other resource teachers as part of the ARI during the summer of 2006 to receive training in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Teachers attend training sessions to

analyze student data and make informed, innovative, and reflective decisions that drive instruction and address student needs.

Teachers are trained to read and interpret DIBELS, SAT-10, and ARMT scores. They complete instructional grouping sheets to classify students and form small groups that concentrate on the weaknesses of individual students.

Teachers are trained to take data and match it with the Alabama Courses of Study to ensure that they are teaching the required content for student testing.

Teachers receive training on how to use programs, technology, and textbooks to effectively plan lessons that identify, target, and provide instruction.

### Artifacts

#### State-wide

- State Report Card 2002-2003
- State Report Card 2003-2004
- State Report Card 2004-2005
- State Report Card 2005-2006
- State Report Card 2006-2007
- DIBELS
- ACCESS (ESL)
- Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing, 5th Grade
- BBSST
- AYP

#### School-wide

- Data boxes/reading folders
- STAR
- Placement Tests
- Fry Words
- CORE Phonics
- Progress Monitoring
- Data Meetings
- Unit Tests
- School-Improvement Plan

#### Teacher Initiated

- Cold Reads
- Chapter Tests/Selection Tests
- Running Records
- Oral Assessments
- Performance Assessments/Portfolios
- Writing folders/checklists
- Rubrics
- Kids College, Compass Learning Odyssey
- State Report Card 2006-2007
- Hillcrest Happenings Newsletter
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- Comparison Report
- Progress Monitoring booklets
- DIBELS student reports
- STI grade book (<https://stihillcrest/iclassroom/>)
- Teacher Privacy and Security Statements (personnel file)
- Professional development records
- ARI Turnaround Training
- Data meetings
- Textbook adoption
- System grade level data meeting
- Personnel files (located in office)

**Overall Assessment:**

**Operational:** The school uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures that yield valid and reliable results. The system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions to improve student performance. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "operational" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Standard 5. Resource and Support Systems

**STANDARD:** The school has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it has sufficient human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables students to achieve expectations for student learning, to meet special needs, and to comply with applicable regulations. The school employs and allocates staff that are well qualified for their assignments. The school provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness. The school ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

### Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

5.1 Recruits, employs, and mentors qualified professional staff that are capable of fulfilling assigned roles and responsibilities:

**Operational**

5.2 Assigns professional staff responsibilities based on their qualifications (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience):

**Operational**

5.3 Ensures that all staff participate in a continuous program of professional development:

**Operational**

5.4 Provides and assigns staff that are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school:

**Operational**

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5.5 Budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement:

**Operational**

5.6 Monitors all financial transactions through a recognized, regularly audited accounting system:

**Highly Functional**

5.7 Maintains the site, facilities, services, and equipment to provide an environment that is safe and orderly for all occupants:

**Highly Functional**

5.8 Possesses a written security and crisis management plan with appropriate training for stakeholders:

**Operational**

5.9 Ensures that each student has access to guidance services that include, but are not limited to, counseling, appraisal, mentoring, staff consulting, referral, and educational and career planning:

**Highly Functional**

5.10 Provides appropriate support for students with special needs:

**Highly Functional**

### **Focus Questions:**

***1. What is the process for recruitment, induction, placement, development, evaluation, and retention of qualified teachers, administrators, and support staff?***

The Enterprise City School System seeks to employ highly qualified professionals who are capable of fulfilling assigned roles and responsibilities within its schools. An applicant pool is generated for available job openings as system personnel attend recruiting fairs across the state several times a year. Job openings are posted on numerous organizational websites in addition to the school system's website. Each school within the school system posts available positions in a designated area of the building.

New hires are assigned according to credentials and are acclimated to school policies, procedures, curriculum, and instruction by grade level chairpersons and teachers. The administration conducts training in the teacher evaluation system and schedules faculty meetings for the dissemination of information. Annual grade level meetings are held with the elementary supervisor, the system conducts an annual orientation for new teachers, and frequent training meetings are held with the school reading coach. The Alabama mentoring program is in place for teachers who lack classroom experience. Professional development occurs at the school level as well as the system level. Teachers complete annual individual professional development plans which focus on the needs of the individual. Professional development funds allow teachers to attend conferences and workshops that support the instructional program of the school. System-level administrators conduct workshops throughout the year for teachers, support staff, and administrators. School training in the Alabama Reading Initiative is ongoing. Professional development hours are documented in personnel folders for state and accreditation requirements.

All school administrators and teachers undergo an evaluation process. Teachers are evaluated through classroom observations and a structured interview. Non-tenured teachers receive observations from building-level and system-level administrators while tenured teachers are observed on a three-year cycle. Administrators are evaluated by a designated superior using The Principal Evaluation Process of the Professional Education Personnel Evaluation Program of Alabama.

The state of Alabama currently has a Deferred Retirement Option Plan to encourage retention of school personnel who qualify. Management of the schools and provision for the instructional program encourage retention of personnel. Enterprise City Schools offers building-level management with strong administrative support, sound fiscal management, abundant professional development opportunities, and safe, clean schools.

### ***2. How does the leadership ensure that the allocation of financial resources is supportive of the school's vision, educational programs, and its plans for school improvement?***

All Hillcrest Elementary stakeholders are committed to ensuring that all financial resources are supportive and reflective of the school vision. McAleer Accounting Solutions, a Mobile, Alabama, software company, provides Nextgen software for local school accounting. Nextgen is a Microsoft Windows- based financial management system.

At the local level, Nextgen enables tracking of local school accounting, including activity account deposits and balances and generating reports. The data is backed-up to the server at Central Office and allows Central Office or the Alabama SDE to review our files at any time.

For Board of Education and state funds, the software allows purchase order entry and allocation tracking reports. The budget committee votes for each teacher to receive the state allotment of Classroom Instructional Support funds (\$525/unit) and Technology funds (\$350/unit). Professional Development funds (\$90/unit), Collective Purchases (\$200/unit) and Library Enhancement (\$200/unit) monies are pooled. Purchase orders are entered into Nextgen, printed, approved by the Superintendent, and returned to the school via inter-school mail.

This year, the budget committee approved the purchase of six Mimio interactive boards, and three laptops which were purchased with Title I money. They will be used by classroom teachers with an emphasis on writing. Each year the school's PTO raises money that goes toward the funding of items that are beneficial to our students, such as materials for our reading coach, technology needs, PE playground maintenance, and supplies for school nurses.

Our school is located in a new building due to the tornado that destroyed Hillcrest Elementary on March 1, 2007. Some materials and supplies were recovered, but most were not. Because of this, much of the classroom and office furniture was replaced along with classroom instructional supplies, audio/visual materials and equipment, and technology hardware and software. Much of this was purchased with local and state funds.

Hillcrest Elementary School routinely conducts a building equipment inventory. An inventory listing for each room is created, and inventory is checked annually. The bookkeeper completes monthly financial reports and submits those to the Central Office by the tenth of each month. The principal is also given a copy. Teachers receive written and verbal instructions on how to complete purchase orders. Teachers also receive their account balance as each purchase order is submitted.

### ***3. How does the leadership ensure a safe and orderly environment for students and staff?***

Safety is the first duty of school leadership. In order to achieve a safe and orderly environment, a combination of factors must be present: the supervision of students, adherence to procedures and policies by all stakeholders, and cleaning and maintenance of the facility.

School safety begins with the supervision of the building. The morning and afternoon duty rosters ensure that students are supervised before school and after school. As students load and unload, whether in the car zone or the bus zone, they are supervised. Personnel are assigned in designated student waiting areas, such as the lunchroom, gymnasium and the Pod C hallway.

In the mornings, students are escorted by teachers from the designated waiting areas to the classrooms. In the afternoons, students are again led by teachers either to the car waiting area, late

bus waiting area, or directly to the early bus loading zone. As students transition throughout the day, they are with a teacher or possess a hallway pass that indicates their destination. All Hillcrest personnel, including custodial, lunchroom, and instructional support staff, participate in encouraging the safe behavior of students during transitions.

The safety of students is protected during the instructional day by locking down the building each morning. All outside doors are locked at eight o'clock except the front office door and a door adjacent to the lunchroom that allows students housed in the trailers to access the building. Visitors to the school must sign in at the office and wear a name tag during the visit.

School procedures and policies contribute to the safety of the facility. System, school, and classroom discipline policies help minimize conflict and maximize learning. The policies address issues such as behavior, attitude, work ethic, and attire.

Students are expected to adhere to classroom rules. If students do not comply, they follow a school-wide consequence plan that ends with an office referral.

Procedures are in place to prepare for unexpected events. The school's crisis management plan is provided to all personnel and is updated annually. Drills for fire, severe weather, and lockdowns are practiced to guarantee a successful response in the case of an emergency. Teachers are supplied with an emergency pack that includes emergency management necessities such as a flashlight, a first aid kit, and a two-way radio. Communication is maintained with system staff and schools with cell phones and system frequency two-way radios. All schools have a direct link to the Enterprise Police Department.

All faculty and staff participate in the Universal Precautions training. The full-time general education school nurse provides instruction in the proper procedures for dealing with body fluids and the use of proper hygiene. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation training is offered annually. Crisis bags are distributed throughout the building for emergency medical needs. In addition to equipping the staff, the nurse is available daily to deal with accidents or injuries. The general education nurse and the special education nurse work together to ensure that all needs of Hillcrest Elementary School students are met.

Community and system support plays an integral part in school safety. The Enterprise Fire Department annually visits kindergarten and first grade students for Fire Safety Week. Firefighters cover procedures on creating a fire escape plan and safely exiting a burning building. An Enterprise Police Department's School Resource Officer conducts DARE classes and is available to deal with any situations that threaten the safety of the school. The school system's transportation department coordinates bus safety classes. Students learn proper bus conduct and how to respond to emergency situations.

Proper cleaning and maintenance of the school contribute to a safe learning environment. A custodial schedule is used to ensure that all areas of the building are kept clean.

Maintenance issues are addressed as they arise. The custodial staff, working with the system-level maintenance team, addresses any maintenance problems that could become safety hazards.

#### ***4. What process is used to ensure and monitor that each student has access to guidance and resource services that meet the needs of the student?***

Hillcrest Elementary employs the skills of its full-time guidance counselor to ensure each student has access to guidance services. Whole group classes are held by grade level utilizing the character education curriculum "Too Good for Drugs." This program addresses goal setting, bullying, and conflict resolution for all students in kindergarten through sixth grade. The curriculum is supplemented by the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program that is implemented by an Enterprise Police Department School Resource Officer.

Multi-age, small group counseling sessions are held for students dealing with common issues. These groups are structured and facilitated by the guidance counselor. Individual counseling is also offered. Referrals can be made for small group or individual counseling by parents or teachers, or a student

may request counseling. In concert with scheduled programming, the guidance office operates under an “open door” policy to offer availability when unexpected needs arise.

Additional counseling resources are offered from groups and individuals outside the educational setting as approved by the superintendent. These are utilized when needs arise that are beyond the scope of training or time restraints of the guidance office. The system contracts a private, licensed counselor who provides weekly or bi-monthly sessions for students with more intense needs. Sessions are coordinated through the guidance office.

The guidance office provides career training by offering a career fair for fifth and sixth grade students. Students complete interest inventories and meet with professionals within their area of interest. Additionally, students are assisted annually in test score analysis. Students use scores to identify strengths that may guide their future while identifying weaknesses that need to be addressed. The guidance office sponsors a chapter of the Junior Beta Club which allows students to exercise leadership skills.

### **How does Hillcrest Elementary School ensure that students receive resource services?**

At-risk three- and four-year-olds are referred for evaluation to determine if early intervention for developmental delay or speech disorder is necessary. These referrals may come from anyone having knowledge of the at-risk preschooler. Those who are eligible for services may attend the Early Intervention Preschool Program at Hillcrest Elementary School or services may be provided in the home or daycare. The program is managed by a developmental specialist, a speech therapist, and five paraprofessionals.

At-risk elementary-aged children are referred for intervention by the teacher or parent. These students are served by the Building-Based Student Support Team in order to receive academic or behavioral interventions. The team composes a plan for each student and monitors progress monthly. Those who do not show progress or who decline in performance after a designated period may be referred for special services. Students who are eligible may receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or 504.

Furthermore, students may be served under IDEA or 504 when medical disabilities impair learning. A screening process is in place to identify academically or creatively gifted students who require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Each student in the second grade is screened for potential giftedness. Those students displaying gifted characteristics are entered into the special education referral process. In addition, students may be referred by a teacher or parent based on classroom performance, testing achievement, or gifted characteristics. Students found eligible for services attend weekly enrichment classes during their third through sixth grade years.

Students requiring resource services under IDEA or 504 are instructed under the requirements of Individual Education Plans, Gifted Education Plans, or Pupil Education Plans. Achievement is monitored by progress reports and quarterly report cards. Annual plan meetings are held to discuss student progress and to amend or revise documentation. Related services, such as speech, occupational therapy, and physical therapy, are provided as eligibility is determined.

Hillcrest allocates personnel to meet the needs of its special population. Hillcrest serves two self-contained multi-handicapped classes and three resource classrooms with five special education teachers, three special education paraprofessionals, four resource paraprofessionals, and one special education nurse. Scheduling of designated personnel is tailored to support the educational program of the school's special population. Scheduling and staffing for gifted services, however, is coordinated at the system level.

Hillcrest utilizes the services of outside groups and agencies to meet the needs of its special population and its general education population. City, county, state, and federal agencies offer programming for schools and families that addresses the diverse needs encountered in the academic setting. Training workshops, materials and equipment, behavioral interventions, and extracurricular activities are just a few of the resources that benefit the students of Hillcrest Elementary School.

## Artifacts

- Administrator evaluation forms
- Alabama Mentoring Program data
- Alabama Reading Initiative Training
- Accreditation/State Equivalency Credit Documentation Forms
- Board policy
- Faculty/grade level meeting agendas
- Job postings/Job fair data
- Teacher applications
- Teacher certificates
- Teacher evaluation forms
- Teacher observation forms
- Individual Professional Development Plan
- Professional development allocations (Principal's Office)
- Calendar of financial due dates
- Purchase Order instructions handout
- Monthly financial report
- Copy of blank purchase order
- Local Allocations Budget
- State Allocations Budget
- MCAI Budgetary Accounting System Principal's Report
- MCAI Budgetary Accounting System Reconciliation Report
- MCAI Budgetary Accounting System Fund Report
- MCAI Budgetary Accounting System General Ledger Budget Report
- Copies of purchase orders used for technology
- Budget Committee Instructional Materials State Funds (Proposed Budget 2008)
- Budget Committee Technology Budget State Funds (Proposed Budget 2008)
- Budget Committee Library Enhancement Budget State Funds (Proposed Budget 2008)
- Budget Committee Professional Development Budget State Funds (Proposed Budget 2008)
- Budget Committee General Common Purchases State Funds (Proposed Budget 2008)
- Duty roster
- Duty assignment map
- Hall pass
- Crisis Management Plan
- Faculty Handbook
- Student Handbook
- Drill documentation
- Universal precautions sign-in
- CPR training documentation
- Hillcrest calendar
- Custodial schedule
- Career Fair brochure
- Guidance calendar
- Guidance office brochure
- Junior Beta Club induction program
- Test Score analysis sheet
- Agency resource list
- BBSST guidelines

- BBSST referral packet
- Faculty roster
- PEP sample
- Special education referral packet
- Special education referral process
- Special education teacher/paraprofessional schedules

**Overall Assessment:**

**Operational:** The school has human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables students to achieve expectations for student learning, to meet special needs, and to comply with applicable regulations. The school employs and allocates staff members who are well qualified for their assignments. The school provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness, including both professional and support staff. The school ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "operational" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

# Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

**STANDARD:** The school fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it has the understanding, commitment, and support of stakeholders. School personnel seek opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership among stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

**Definitions of Indicators Rubric:**

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning:  
**Emerging**

6.2 Has formal channels to listen to and communicate with stakeholders:  
**Operational**

6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the school:  
**Operational**

6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders:  
**Operational**

6.5 Provides information about students, their performance, and school effectiveness that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders:  
**Operational**

**Focus Questions:**

***1. How does the school's leadership ensure that the school is responsive to community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction?***

The leadership of Hillcrest Elementary School ensures that the school is responsive to community expectations and stakeholders in a variety of ways. When attempting to work with our stakeholders, we have the parents complete a Title I needs assessment. We also use the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE Survey) for parent, faculty, and community members. These are used by our school and the school system's parental involvement specialist to help determine the needs of our school. Community leaders, parents, and community helpers are often asked to be guest presenters. They share about their responsibilities and occupations with individual classrooms and grade levels. Hillcrest is receptive to parents as well as members of the community at large being involved in the total program of our school. We attempt to openly communicate with them and address any concerns which they might have.

Hillcrest Elementary School communicates with parents by using monthly newsletters, the school website, and weekly folders. Parent teacher conferences and e-mail are used to communicate with parents on an individual basis. The PTO of Hillcrest provides opportunities for communication between parents and teachers by meeting regularly. Two open house sessions are held each school year to allow parents to meet with teachers in an informal manner. One of these meetings gives the parents the opportunity to meet with their child's homeroom teacher while the other enables them to meet with the reading teacher.

***2. How does the school's leadership foster a learning community?***

The leadership at Hillcrest Elementary School strives to foster a learning community in various ways. In order to achieve this, teachers, parents, and community members all become an integral part of this process. Working as a team with a common goal is important in establishing an effective learning community.

The principal facilitates opportunities for teachers to become increasingly effective in the classroom. Professional development activities (i.e. in-house training, system-wide training, ARI embedded training) and educational conferences are made available to teachers with the cost usually covered by the school or system. Teachers are also encouraged to collaborate with colleagues within our school to strengthen their effectiveness in various areas. In addition to the encouragement of in-house collaboration among professionals, our teachers are encouraged to visit other schools and classrooms (informal, formal, and demo-site visits) to observe routines and procedures that may increase their effectiveness in areas that may require strengthening. These outside experiences are provided in an effort to allow adequate opportunities for our teachers to expand their foundation of knowledge in order to become better educators. All of the above options allow our teachers the opportunity to continuously improve their ability to provide an effective learning community.

Our school leadership believes that parents play an integral part in the success of their children's educational experience. Our school's PTO has provided our teachers opportunities to purchase resources that enhance their classroom instruction. In addition to those purchase opportunities provided to our teachers, the PTO has also purchased Accelerated Reader resources with funds raised by the organization throughout the year. We are fortunate to have a versatile population of parents who are talented in various areas. Many of our parents are willing to share these talents and information with our students. Many of our parents are part of the military since Ft. Rucker is located nearby. These parents are able to share experiences and present lessons that provide authentic learning experiences in history, as well as other subject areas. We also have many parents who are involved as school

volunteers. These parents willingly give their time to listen to children read or help teachers in many other capacities. The support of parents enables our school to further enrich the learning opportunities of our students.

Utilizing members of our community to help educate our students is another way leadership fosters our learning community. During our school system's annual Red Ribbon Week, guest speakers are brought in to discuss the dangers of drug use with our students. Our local firefighters spend a week at our school educating our Kindergarten and first grade students about fire safety. For the fifth and sixth grade students, we host a Career Day where community members share information about careers that the students may one day be interested in. The local community provides our school with many resources that help foster a learning community.

### ***3. What avenues are used to communicate information to stakeholders about students, their performance, and school effectiveness?***

In order to communicate not only our expectations for student learning but also our goals for improvement with our stakeholders, an Open House is held at the beginning of each school year. At this time, recent test data results (which include SAT-10, ARMT, and fifth grade writing assessment) are disclosed. The school nurse, counselor, media specialist, PE teachers, and other administration are all in attendance and elaborate on the services and care that will be provided by each.

Parents are asked to visit their child's classroom. In-depth discussions pertaining to the teacher's procedures and expectations, subject matter, grading policies, and the student handbook take place. An opportunity to schedule parent-teacher conferences is made available.

The school and system calendars set aside times to visit the classroom during National Education Week and Parent/Teacher visitation days.

Hillcrest Elementary uses various methods of communication. We have implemented an All Call system which allows our school office to automatically distribute messages based on telephone numbers. We also use e-mail, telephone, and hand-written notes. Each Wednesday students take home folders that contain two letters that explain reading group level placement, any graded work for the previous week, and a report of their child's behavior at school. The parents also receive monthly calendars/newsletters of upcoming school events and are given an opportunity to attend quarterly PTO meetings.

Mid-quarter progress reports are issued while report cards are distributed at the end of each nine-week grading period.

### **Artifacts**

- Parent Needs assessment
- Monthly newsletters
- School website ([hillcrest.enterpriseschools.net](http://hillcrest.enterpriseschools.net))
- NSSE surveys
- Parent-Teacher Conference Summary
- Open house parent sign-in
- Workshop notices
- DARE form
- Red Ribbon Week activity schedule
- Fire Prevention Week handout
- Career Fair documents
- Elementary School Handbook
- SAT-10 results
- ARMT results
- 5th Grade Writing results

- Miscellaneous handouts (Nurse, Counselor, Media Specialist, PE)
- Teacher procedures and policies
- System calendar
- Wednesday folder letters
- Monthly calendars/newsletters
- Progress Report
- Report Card
- Automatic Phone System

**Overall Assessment:**

**Operational:** The school has the understanding, commitment, and support of stakeholders. School personnel seek opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership among stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts and can demonstrate good participation by some stakeholder groups. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "operational" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

# Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

**STANDARD:** The school establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.

**Impact Statement:** A school is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the school with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained and the school demonstrates progress in improving student performance and school effectiveness. New improvement efforts are informed by the results of earlier efforts through reflection and assessment of the improvement process.

**Indicators Rubric:** Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school. The responses to the rubric should help the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school's responses to the focus questions and examples of evidence.

**Definitions of Indicators Rubric:**

<b>Not Evident</b>	Little or no evidence exists
<b>Emerging</b>	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
<b>Operational</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
<b>Highly Functional</b>	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

**Indicators:** In fulfillment of this standard, the school:

7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the school is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, school effectiveness, and the school community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform what happens next (Results):

**Operational**

7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement:

**Operational**

7.3 Ensures that plans for continuous improvement are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school and expectations for student learning:

**Emerging**

7.4 Provides professional development for school personnel to help them implement improvement

interventions to achieve improvement goals:

**Emerging**

7.5 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders:

**Operational**

7.6 Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement:

**Operational**

**Focus Questions:**

***1. What is the process for continuous improvement used by the school and what are the results that this process is delivering for student performance and school effectiveness?***

Our mission at Hillcrest Elementary School is to provide all students with a quality education in a safe, orderly, and supportive environment that promotes self-discipline, motivation, and excellence. In order to facilitate this goal, we are committed to utilizing our strengths and correcting our weaknesses through constant self-evaluation. The process of continuous improvement at Hillcrest Elementary involves faculty, staff, and parents working together to support the mission, analyze the school profile through data, plan improvement, and analyze results. The heavy use of data related to our goals from many sources allows us to make logical decisions that are data driven and personalized to students' performance needs. This process allows Hillcrest Elementary School to be successful through a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement which aligns the procedures of the school to meet the full potential of each student. Through self-evaluation of the data collected and reflection of the instructional strategies teachers implement, we are able to successfully identify our weaknesses. Finally, all the information is compiled and the school improvement plan is updated with changes to be put into practice.

In addition to student performance improvement, teachers acknowledge the vital link between professional development, in-service training, and school effectiveness. Therefore, teachers participate in high quality and ongoing professional development.

Using the most recent accountability results, Hillcrest Elementary has met the Annual Yearly Progress goals established by The Alabama State Department of Education and required by No Child Left Behind.

***2. What steps are taken to ensure that the improvement goals reflect student learning needs that are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school?***

At Hillcrest Elementary School, our first step in making progress toward improving student achievement is our commitment to expand the analysis of student data. With the increased amount of data available to us, we are striving to ensure that each child is directed toward reaching his or her full potential. As we analyze data and look at our school needs each year, we are determined to target identified groups of children who need extra assistance and intervention programs. In order to ensure that improvement goals reflect the needs of students, teachers review test data from a variety of resources to target specific areas needing improvement. After reviewing the data, we analyze the information to target specific individual needs and develop lesson plans based on student weaknesses. Teachers generate classroom assessment instruments based on identified needs to correct weaknesses. Teachers are provided with focused professional development and scheduled weekly times for teachers to meet to clarify state content standards and indicators, analyze student achievement results, discuss high quality instructional practices, examine student work, and develop common, formative grade level

assessments. Our continuous process of data analysis and reflection ensures that the improvement goals reflect student learning needs that are aligned with the vision and purpose of our school.

***3. What process is used to ensure that the school personnel are provided professional development and technical assistance to implement interventions and achieve improvement goals?***

At Hillcrest Elementary, professional development is provided for all personnel by both our school district and our school. This year an effort has been made within our system to thoroughly train new teachers to our system on our efforts to meet the Alabama Reading Initiative. New teachers go through an orientation offered by our district. However, more development needs to be provided for new teachers on all system adopted textbook series as well as school-wide procedures. New teachers need to be trained on everyday activities such as recording grades in STI, managing data boxes, administering progress reports and report cards, determining possible retention procedures, analyzing data to drive instruction, and all other instructional programs. Data throughout the year is used to gauge how successful the professional development has been and to determine what areas still need further development. At the end of every professional development activity, an evaluation chart is filled out by each attendee. These evaluations are used by the sponsor of the workshop to gauge the effectiveness of the professional development activity. The data from the evaluation chart helps the administration plan for future professional development activities.

At Hillcrest Elementary School, our personnel is provided with ARI training and given opportunities to attend teacher workshops. The ARI training is provided throughout the year. The reading coach at Hillcrest leads data meetings periodically. These data meetings are used to look at all of the reading data available on our students to guide further instruction. During these meetings, the coach and teachers pinpoint weak areas and plan instruction.

At the beginning of each year, all faculty members complete an individual professional development plan. This plan must include at least three areas in which they will seek professional development. Throughout the year, the individual plan is updated as professional development activities are completed. At the end of the year, the principal evaluates all teachers. He ensures that the goals of the professional development plan have been met. This process aids in the achievement of our school-wide professional development.

***4. How does the leadership ensure that the improvement plan is implemented, monitored, achieved, and communicated to stakeholders?***

The administration at Hillcrest Elementary School uses many different methods to ensure that the improvement plan is being monitored and achieved. All members of our faculty serve on a committee to update our improvement plan each year. Faculty members work together with a chairperson to update data within their assigned area to see what achievement is being made. The principal at Hillcrest Elementary School leads a Title I meeting open to all employees, parents, and community members during which he reviews all the recent data that has led to changes in our improvement plan. He communicates to the stakeholders our areas of weakness and strength. He ensures that all stakeholders know what we are working towards for the improvement of our school.

Hillcrest Elementary administration shares the district report card with all stakeholders involved. This report compares all schools in our system and shows the areas of strength and weakness. It also shows our academic yearly progress. When we have our grade level meetings, we discuss DIBELS and progress monitoring data which places our students in their appropriate reading groups. We also monitor our plan by reviewing ARMT, Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT), and SAT-10 scores school wide. Parents are able to monitor their child's progress by reviewing their weekly grades and work in the Wednesday folders and discussing the work with their child and the child's teacher.

Newsletters and calendars from the school allow teachers and administration to communicate with parents. Parents are encouraged by all administrators and educators to voice all questions and concerns. The employees of our school strive to maintain an open line of communication with the parents and community of Enterprise.

### Artifacts

- Reading data boxes
- Minutes from data meetings
- Title I plan
- Data from SAT-10, ARMT, DIBELS, STAR
- Parent Conference form
- Mission and Vision Placement test evaluation sheet
- Lesson plans
- Instruction grouping forms
- Targeted student instruction sheet
- Schedule of grade level meetings
- Placement data sheets for reading groups (DIBELS, ARMT, SAT-10)
- Profession development evaluation charts
- Take 20 survey (<http://www.take20alabama.org/>)
- Data meeting minutes provided by reading coach
- Kid's College and Compass professional development
- Professional Development completion forms
- Academy certificates
- Individual Professional Development plans Committee list
- Newsletters and calendars
- Parent reports
- School report cards

### Overall Assessment:

**Operational:** The school implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns most functions of the school with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained and the school demonstrates progress in improving student performance and school effectiveness. New improvement efforts are informed by the results of earlier efforts through reflection and assessment of the improvement process. The preponderance of the evidence supports an overall assessment of "operational" and is substantiated in the responses to the Indicators Rubric.

## Conclusion

The following focus questions reflect the school's overall analysis of its internal evaluation of the accreditation standards.

### Focus Questions

***As you review your responses to the standards, what major trends, themes, or areas of focus emerge that cut across the seven standards?***

- Reading is a main focus as we review data and modify instruction to meet the needs of all students as a requirement of the Alabama Reading Initiative.
- We are experiencing an increase in our ELL population that has affected our instructional program.
- Our school recognizes that safety is an important component of a positive learning environment.

***Based on your review of these cross-cutting themes/trends and each of the seven standards, what would you consider to be your school's greatest strengths?***

- We monitor student data closely to make sure students are placed in the appropriate reading group.
- Student data is readily available to teachers. Scheduled meetings are held to analyze data and make necessary changes to instruction.
- Access to various types of technology and related training by our on-site technologist allow us to better meet the needs of students and communicate effectively with parents.
- Our faculty and staff are involved in various committees that collaborate to strengthen school improvement.
- Student success is very important at our school. We as teachers pride ourselves on preparing students to do well on state assessments.

***What would you consider to be your school's greatest challenges?***

- Involving our community in our school's improvements seems to be our greatest challenge. While some students and parents are aware of what is going on in our school, we do not always include the community stakeholders.
- The Alabama Reading Initiative has caused reading to take precedence over math. We feel that a more balanced approach is needed.

***How will you use the insights gained from this self-assessment to inform and enhance your quality assurance and continuous improvement efforts?***

- We are continually strengthening our data driven instruction. We will strive to increase the emphasis on math instruction, therefore bringing a more balanced approach to our curriculum.
- We realize the need to increase community involvement. It is our goal to provide awareness training to stakeholders who desire to take an active role in the education of our students.
- In our efforts to bridge the academic gaps between our ELL students and their peers, it is our goal

to create more collaboration between parents, students, and teachers. While our ESL teacher works well with parents, we know it is becoming increasingly important for all teachers to make efforts to become more capable of effectively communicating with parents of ELL students.