ALABAMA BEST PRACTICES CENTER EVALUATION

If your plan is for one year, plant rice.
If your plan is for ten years, plant trees.
If your plan is for 100 years, educate children.
-Confucius

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Table of Contents

Section 2: APPENDICES

Executive Summary

The Alabama Best Practices Center (ABPC), is a program of the A+ Education Partnership, a non-partisan, non-profit organization supporting Alabama educators through high-quality, research-based professional development to improve teaching and learning. Established in 1999, ABPC's programs provide network-based professional development and support to school and district leaders as they work to improve student learning. ABPC's work helps to ensure that all Alabama students are well equipped for college and their careers after high school.

ABPC's four professional learning networks are designed to create job alike teams from participating districts to plan and implement research-based best practices. These teams build long-lasting relationships as they work and learn together to sustainably implement systemwide change in their school districts.

Previous evaluations have documented improvements in teaching methods, increased student engagement, high-level student learning, increased graduation rates, and improved academic achievement from working with ABPC, although these are largely self-reported changes. This is the first time ABPC staff have worked to conduct a comprehensive program evaluation linking district implementation to student outcomes. To accomplish this goal, Shore Research and Agile Analytics partnered to:

- examine the impact of ABPC's programs,
- understand the near- and long-term effects of participation in ABPC professional learning networks,
- understand district implementation of best practices learned during the network training, and
- explore the relationship between implementation and student learning outcomes.

Key Practices

The spotlight districts studied exhibited numerous ways to implement ABPC practices, that varied by their individual needs, contexts and experience with the ABPC Networks. The following practices were consistently observed in the four districts studied and were attributed to their success by district personnel and ABPC staff.

1. **Professional Learning** — ABPC networks provide participants with ongoing professional learning that they can immediately use. Session facilitators model effective teaching practice so participants leave with expanded knowledge and

instructional strategies. One district administrator noted the ABPC networks as "The best professional development I have ever attended, bar none."

2. **Networking** — Networking and community building was one of the most frequently mentioned positive components of participants' professional learning with the ABPC. Connections made at ABPC sessions result in school and districts sharing best practices both in and after the meetings, resulting in better teaching and learning.

3. **Collaborative Planning** — Those interviewed consistently mentioned the value of working collaboratively, sharing leadership, and learning and planning and its impact on improved results. This type of lateral accountability stretches participants and exposes them to the effective practices of others.

4. **Coaching and Partnering** — The ABPC provides instructional coaches, teacher leaders and administrators with coaching skills and best practice that enables them to partner with teachers to improve instruction.

5. **Effective Teaching and Learning Strategies** — ABPC consistently provides participants with strategies and best practice to improve teaching and learning. This learning is not limited to network meetings as the ABPC regularly publishes blogs and uses social media to provide educators with just-in-time learning about key instructional issues.

Student Impact

ABPC has a positive impact on student achievement. Students who attended the four spotlight district had **consistently better performance on state assessments** among the various models used to examine the impact of ABPC best practices on student achievement, even when demographics and prior achievement were controlled.

Although results for math were stronger than those for reading, **there were consistent gains in both subject areas for students attending ABPC spotlight schools** versus students attending matched comparison schools (Table 1).

Additionally, our residual analyses of district-level Academic Achievement scores indicated that overall, ABPC spotlight districts did better than predicted (after knowing their demographic makeup and prior achievement scores).

Finally, there was some evidence that there may be a lag effect of ABPC on student achievement. That is, it may take several years of steady participation and implementation of ABPC best practices for the changes in student outcomes to manifest. Evidence for this is also apparent in that school districts that participated in ABPC gatherings at a sustained level experienced greater growth over time than did those school districts with lower or less sustained participation in ABPC gatherings.

	Growth	Percentile
Math		
Reading		

Table 1. Students attending ABPC schools had positive results on both the paired growth and percentile models.

Limitations

Any study includes some limitations, and ours is no different. First, our study was focused on **understanding how ABPC was implemented** across various districts **to discover common best practices** and **to find impacts on student state level achievement tests.** We worked with the staff from ABPC to identify districts that they felt exemplified the implementation of best practices learned through ABPC network gatherings. **Site visits were conducted to confirm implementation of these district best practices, not to provide a comprehensive examination of implementation quality in all areas.** Site visits were limited, as well, with only two days per district – so even when certain activities were not observed, it cannot be assumed that the school and district were not implementing those practices.

Second, **spotlight districts may not be representative of all school districts in Alabama and perhaps not representative of all participating ABPC districts.** Spotlight school districts were intentionally selected with differing levels of implementation and commitment to implementation strategies. The variation with which schools were implementing these best practices were validated through our site visits. We realize that there are many other districts in Alabama working with the ABPC, but for the scope of this study these four school districts were selected to provide a window into the myriad ways in which districts translate the professional learning and support provided by the ABPC networks into action at their respective schools.

Current Challenges and Opportunities

Opportunities exist for all school districts currently participating in the ABPC networks, and for those school districts considering participation in ABPC strategies. First, districts should **examine attrition and create a plan for continued professional learning and high-quality classroom implementation strategies that take staff turnover into account.** Second, districts must be flexible. Changing environmental (natural disasters, economic shifts, and public health issues) contexts always have the capacity to force educational systems to adapt. COVID-19 forced districts and ABPC to adapt to rapidly evolving community health needs, within shifting political contexts. **Improving on the online learning, support and networking capacities of both ABPC and districts** presents both a challenge and an opportunity as ABPC moves forward in this new educational dynamic.

Although ABPC has conducted several evaluations of its work, **much of the research on its effectiveness has been either anecdotal or based on self-reports from participants**. From these reports it is clear that those participating in ABPC professional learning offerings find them to be useful, and of very high quality. What is less clear is how this translates into high quality implementation and a high level of student learning. The results from this evaluation do suggest that ABPC spotlight schools have better results on the state assessments, particularly in math. But more work is needed.

To improve ABPC's ability to understand its effects on both participants and students, we suggest several updates to their evaluation and tracking systems. First, **ABPC staff should track attendance using an online database that can be easily shared, checked and maintained.** The ability to link attendance and attendance patterns to successful implementation and outcomes is critical to understanding how ABPC offerings impact student outcomes.

In addition to attendance, implementation should also be regularly measured. We suggest that ABPC **use the district implementation tracking tool** the evaluation team has provided to collect implementation data from all participating districts. This will allow for the staff to have a broader understanding of implementation strategies districts use and find successful.

Next, **ABPC should collect and analyze state student testing data annually** for each participating district to analyze the effects of ABPC participation on student academic outcomes. Tracked over time, these data will help ABPC demonstrate its value to school district and state leaders who may be interested in implementing these practices.

Finally, the results of analyses examining student state assessment data have indicated positive effects of student achievement from ABPC. **We recommend expanding the analyses to more school districts to gain a broader picture of ABPC's impact.**

Section 1: Alabama Best Practices Center Evaluation and Findings

About the Alabama Best Practices Center

The Alabama Best Practices Center (ABPC), is a program of the A+ Education Partnership, a non-partisan, non-profit organization supporting Alabama educators through high-quality, research-based professional development to improve teaching and learning. Established in 1999, ABPC's programs provide network-based professional development and support to school and district leaders as they work to improve student learning. In doing so, ABPC staff ensure all Alabama students are well equipped for college and careers after high school.

ABPC's four professional learning networks are designed to create job alike teams from participating districts to plan and implement research-based best practices. These teams build long-lasting relationships as they work and learn together to sustainably implement system wide change in their school districts. The four learning networks are categorized in the following ways (see Table 2 for more of a description):

Superintendents Learning Network (SLN), disbanded in 2017,

Key Leaders Network (KLN),

Instructional Partners Network (IPN), and

Powerful Conversations Network (PCN).

Table 2: An overview of the ABPC networks, participants, and materials.

Network	Attendees	Number of meetings	Materials/Focus
Superintendents Learning Network (SLN) Disbanded in 2017	Superintendents only	3x/year	Focus: Instructional leadership and system wide change Key texts: *The Leadership Challenge*, *The Global Achievement Gap*
Key Leaders Network (KLN) 7 regional networks	Teams of 6 district and/or school-based leaders One team per participating district	4x/year (August through March)	Focus: Instructional leadership Key texts: *Internal Coherence*, *10 Mindframes for Visible Learning*
Instructional Partners Network (IPN)	One team per school including the principal and Instructional Partner (IP)	2x/year and theme-based institutes	Focus: To provide ongoing professional learning and support to instructional coaches to improve teaching and learning Key texts: *Unmistakable Impact, High Impact Instruction, The Impact Cycle, Visible Learning for Teachers* and *The Skillful Team Leader*
Powerful Conversations Network (PCN) 6 regional networks	Can send several teams per district with up to six individuals per team	3x/year and can select an Instructional Round (IR) as one of the gatherings	Focus: Shared leadership, student centered pedagogy, analyzing data Key texts: *Powerful Task Design*, *Leaders of Their Own Learning*

Each of the aforementioned networks provides unique professional learning experiences for district teams to learn together from ABPC staff, national experts, other district teams and from each other. The networks meet several times each year for either an all-day or multi-day gathering wherein participants learn and plan for district and school implementation. Regardless of network type, ABPC staff provide ongoing support to participants throughout the year by helping teams brainstorm, plan, implement and locate additional resources. ABPC staff also provide additional learning opportunities in the form of Instructional Rounds (IRs), targeted learning workshops, and online learning.

ABPC's Service Model

Each ABPC network provides school district leaders with professional learning in regular network gatherings using:

- a guiding text addressing a key education issue such as standards-based instruction or student engagement (Table 3 below along with the reference section provides a list of books and main ideas),
- guided discussions of how teams might implement the practices they have studied,
- planning time to determine the form and timing of implementation,
- use of appropriate learning protocols to examine the topic, and
- networking opportunities that provide support in the form of cohorts of like-minded educators.

All professional development and support opportunities are intentionally designed to model best practices in adult learning.

"[ABPC staff] walk the walk too!"

~ Spotlight school district staff on ABPC training

During the network gatherings, school district teams come together to learn from ABPC staff, examine the latest research, best practices and resources written by national experts, and network and strategize with teams from other districts and each other. The networks meet several times each year (KLN four times and PCN three times with an optional IR visit) where they learn and plan for district and school implementation. Institutes, included with IPN, and allow IPs to meet with and learn from national experts.

In addition to supporting staff during these gatherings, ABPC provides ongoing support to help teams brainstorm, plan, implement, and locate additional resources necessary to tailor the implementation of best practices to for each school district.

ABPC staff also provide additional learning opportunities for school district leaders in the form of Instructional Rounds (IRs), targeted learning workshops,

As part of our spotlight analysis, we interviewed participating staff about the network gatherings. Most participants had positive reflections regarding their experience with the training provided by ABPC.

and online learning. As the ABPC networks have grown, regional meetings led by trained professionals have been added so districts can attend in closer localities. These meetings occur in locations around the state to provide participants with ways to engage in the same high-quality learning opportunities in a more cost-effective and time efficient manner.

Once teams return to school, they continue studying the texts and research shared during the convenings. They then plan how and when to implement the practices in their schools. This critical "turn around" step requires a careful approach so that teachers and other staff learn the practices while feeling supported in their implementation. During observations and interviews with the spotlight districts, it was noted that leaders from each district approached this "turn around" process differently based on their district's unique set of needs and contexts.

Regardless of how district leaders chose to implement best practices, ABPC staff support their efforts and help brainstorm additional resources they might need to effectively accomplish their goals. ABPC staff also provide ongoing support for school district leaders as they determine which key practices to implement, when to do so, and the overall pace of implementation.

Below (Table 3) is an overview of best practices and resources ABPC has incorporated over the course of their network meetings.

Table 3: An overview of the ABPC concepts, mindsets, and materials.

ABPC concept	Professional learning	Collaborative practices	Coaching/ Instructional partnering	Student-centered teaching and learning strategies	Community building	Documenting and sharing best practices
			Commitment to continuous learning			
Mindsets	*Commitment* by school leaders to make professional learning a priority	I*ntentional* use of job-embedded, just-in-time professional learning	*Commitment* to share learning with colleagues back in the district	*Belief* in student ownership of learning	*Imbues* the partnership principles	*Commitment* to share learning with colleagues back in the district
Skills, knowledge and practices	Highly engaging learner-based instruction and professional learning Use best practices in professional learning and research-based practice Instructional Rounds Modeling Protocols Reflective practice Collaborative dialogue	Modeling of protocols Commitment to continuous learning Collaborative planning Collaborative dialogue Data-based decision-making Collective efficacy Collaborative planning and budgeting Reflective practice	Transfer of learning Collaborative dialogue Walkthroughs Data-based decision-making Use of job-embedded, just-in-time professional learning Reflective practice	Standards-based instruction, social-emotional learning, formative assessment, data-driven instruction Transfer of learning Highly engaging standards-based instruction Learner-centered strategies Data-based decision-making	Valuing the expertise of educators as professionals Networking (i.e., connecting with and learning from others)	Blogs and articles Websites or web pages that share materials Instructional rounds/ walkthroughs

The Current Study

Previous evaluations have documented improvements in teaching methods, increased student engagement, high-level student learning, increased graduation rates, and improved academic achievement, although these are largely self-reported changes. This is the first time ABPC staff have worked to conduct a comprehensive program evaluation linking district implementation to student outcomes. To accomplish this goal, Shore Research and Agile Analytics partnered to:

- examine the impact of ABPC's programs,
- understand the near and long-term effects of participation in ABPC professional learning networks,
- understand district implementation of best practices learned during the network training, and
- explore the relationship between implementation and student learning outcomes.

We used both past and current ABPC data to answer key research questions related to implementation and mid and long-term goals. First, the evaluation team examined ABPC's past evaluations to garner context necessary to design well-informed research questions. Next, we gathered information about current program implementation in a select sample of highly invested school districts. Finally, student, and district-level demographic and state assessment data from 2010 to 2019 were gathered and analyzed.

> **Evaluation Questions:**
>
> 1. What are the connections between implementation of ABPC best practices and student achievement on standardized tests?
> 2. How do school district staff translate the professional learning from ABPC into high quality district wide implementation?
> 3. How can staff participating ABPC school districts and ABPC staff as a whole improve their work and outcomes?

Spotlight School Districts

The Process

To best address the evaluation questions, ABPC identified four districts they believed were implementing ABPC best practices in a high-quality manner. ABPC staff used a thorough and intentional process to identify the four spotlight school districts:

1) First, ABPC staff examined attendance data from the network gatherings and used their knowledge of each participating school district's history to determine which districts were not only were effectively implementing ABPC best-practices, but also were committed to the process.
2) Next, the pool of potential spotlight school districts was categorized based on how long each school district had participated with ABPC and how far along ABPC staff felt each school district was in the implementation process.
3) Finally, ABPC considered the ability to match these districts to other school districts that were not involved (or much less involved) in ABPC. Districts that were not able to be easily matched (due for example, to a unique combination of district size, demographic makeup, and prior achievement) were removed from the pool.

The four spotlight districts chosen were:

Athens City Schools

Florence City Schools

Oxford City Schools

Saraland City Schools

The spotlight school districts ranged in geographic location, representing the south-western coastal area, central-eastern Alabama and the northern part of the state (near the Tennessee border, see map). Years of implementation varied, with Oxford City Schools implementing ABPC's best practices the longest amount of time, (about 10 years), and Athens, implementing for the shortest amount of time (about 4 years). Regardless of longevity of implementation, each spotlight school district has implemented ABPC's best practices specific to their context and constituencies, increasing staff buy-in and making long term success viable.

Spotlight District Demographics

At the time of our study, the participating spotlight school districts were medium sized, with three of the four participating school districts serving over 4,000 students, and one (Saraland City school district) serving around 3,000 students.

About half of all students in these districts were identified as economically disadvantaged and just over 10% were served through Special Education services. All four of the participating school districts served a small percentage of Limited English Proficient students, with Athens City school district serving the most LEP students (Table 2).

Although all districts served a majority of white students, Florence City school district was the most racially diverse and the most similar to Alabama's student population as a whole. Saraland City school district was the least similar demographically to Alabama's student population (Table 4).

Table 4: Student demographic characteristics of spotlight school districts.

	Alabama	Athens	Florence	Oxford	Saraland
Special Education	13%	12%	12%	13%	11%
Limited English Proficiency	3%	8%	3%	4%	1%
Economically Disadvantaged	53%	47%	50%	56%	47%
Gender: Female	49%	50%	50%	48%	48%
Gender: Male	51%	50%	50%	52%	52%
Race: African American/Black	33%	19%	34%	26%	16%
Race: Asian	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Ethnicity: Hispanic	7%	17%	11%	13%	3%
Race: White	54%	65%	56%	67%	77%
Race: Other	5%	7%	9%	4%	5%
Number of students	739,667	4,139	4,217	4,074	3,073

Source: Alabama State Department of Education Enrollment Data, 2019

Evaluation Approach

To understand the key practices, mindsets and skills promoted by ABPC Networks, the evaluation team sought as much extant information as possible. After interviews with ABPC leadership, the team gathered documents from ABPC and each of the four spotlight school districts included in our study. ABPC staff provided an exhaustive list of the books and research used in their network trainings. The spotlight school districts provided the evaluation team with information about which resources were the most salient and influential in their implementation.

Next, spotlight districts' leaders were interviewed to learn what they saw as key practices, how they implemented what they had learned, where they felt they were successful and where there were opportunities for growth. Finally, the evaluation team scheduled a two-day site visit at each of the four spotlight school districts to observe the best practices in action. Additionally, we conducted interviews and focus groups with teachers, administrators, and the Instructional Partners (IPs).

From these activities we generated a list of key practices, mindsets and skills necessary for effective ABPC implementation. We then compared this list to the information gathered from all of the evaluation activities to create a common list of the messages and practices that were clearly in evidence at each district. These key findings are explored in the next section ("ABPC Findings").

In addition to this qualitative data, we also collected quantitative data from the spotlight districts and 12 similar districts in Alabama in an attempt to understand the effect of the implementation of ABPC's best practices on student learning. These results are explored in the section "ABPC's Impact on Student Achievement."

One Best Practice, Many Ways to Implement

While the practices, skills and mindsets that district teams learn through participation in the ABPC networks are similar, they can be implemented in a variety of ways. ABPC's training is ongoing, and as such, teams can enter ABPC's implementation training cycle at any time. As a result, district leaders can learn different concepts at different times depending upon the year in which they begin participating.

This non-linear process and the ABPC's differentiated approach to implementation means that at any given time there will be a variety of ways in which districts approach implementation. The benefit of this strategy is that school districts can take ownership of implementation, ensuring staff buy-in for the strategies. It is hoped that the increased ownership and buy-in will lead to systemic change.

Promoting differentiated implementation strategies means that there are a variety of valid configurations of practices, processes and mindsets school district leaders use to implement ABPC. Doing so poses a challenge to evaluating the districts and the implementation of ABPC as a whole. In this evaluation, we describe the ways the spotlight districts were similar to and different from each other and avoid stating that one implementation method was more effective than another.

Together, it is our hope that this information will be useful not only for ABPC and the spotlight districts we visited, but also other school districts wishing to begin or increase their participation in ABPC networks.

ABPC Findings

The ABPC Network meetings, institutes, other services and activities include many more critical concepts, skills and knowledge. In this section, we describe the key concepts and topics that were most salient and widespread in the spotlight districts we visited. The spotlight school district case study reports include books and resources the school districts indicated were most influential to their implementation journey.

Key Practices

Professional Learning

The first key practice is professional learning, which starts at ABPC network meetings. The meetings are attended by role-similar teams of school and/or district-based members. During the meetings, participants study relevant research and how to implement best practices. These best practices can come from the following:

> *"The **BEST** professional development I have ever attended, bar none."*
>
> -District administrator

- relevant journal articles,
- books,
- examples from participating districts.

Teams are encouraged to discuss the application of these practices and mindsets to their specific school districts and to plan for implementation.

> *"We have to be vulnerable, and say 'I don't know.' That's when you really start to grow. ABPC really connected us with other districts to learn, to support and be supported."*
>
> -District administrator

Additionally, professional learning includes:

- learning about best practices as they occur in other participating school districts,
- collaborative planning and dialogue regarding implementation strategies, and
- learning to be a reflective continuous learner.

The professional learning sessions are delivered by facilitators who model best practices in adult leaning and deliver engaging, relevant, and thought-provoking content. Through participation and study, school district leaders develop a commitment to continuous learning.

All four of the spotlight districts participated in ABPC professional learning networks in addition to ongoing in-house professional learning opportunities, often in the form of collaborative planning meetings or working with their IPs or school/district administrators. All of the spotlight school districts we observed produced extensive in-house professional learning opportunities that varied in terms of content but were consistent in terms of quality and utilization of best practices in adult learning. Across all of the spotlight school districts, there was a strong commitment to ongoing professional learning, most often described by school staff as integral to their school district's vision.

Networking and Community Building

A second critical component of ABPC network gatherings is the formation of a community of school and district colleagues. During our conversations with staff from the spotlight school districts, networking and community building was one of the most frequently mentioned positive components of their professional learning with the ABPC.

Participating school staff said that they valued the time spent in these gatherings with like-minded colleagues. They were able to learn and to share with each other. Interestingly, many administrators said that the networks were also where they learned the most because they learned to be vulnerable about what they did not know. One administrator said that the ABPC network gatherings were where administrators learned to be learners.

School districts participating in ABPC networks used these gatherings to build relationships with other leaders throughout the state. In doing so, they often relied on each other to learn how to implement best practices on their schools. For example, they might call colleagues in other districts to ask how they were implementing a certain practice, or what challenges they might have encountered. All school district leaders stated that they had been on Instructional Rounds (IRs) to visit other participating districts to see a new practice in action before implementing it themselves.

Three of the four spotlight school districts we observed indicated they had participated in IRs at the fourth spotlight district, and all four spotlight districts had both hosted and attended IRs at other school districts.

Collaborative Practices

A third key practice school district leaders learn is the value of working collaboratively, sharing leadership, and learning and planning through regularly scheduled collaborative meetings.

Spotlight school district staff were observed having regular collaborative planning time for at least some, if not all, core content teachers across all or most grade levels. School leaders from these districts have also ensured that their staff have regular collaboration time with their administrators.

> *"The knowledge is in the building."*
>
> -School principal

During our observations, we found that collaborative teacher meetings were most often used to:

- assess student learning
- develop lesson plans tied to specific learning standards
- create common assessments, and/or
- analyze student work

Collaboration also occurred regularly during school meetings. School staff incorporated meeting protocols that included a formal agenda with planned activities, and agenda items often timed. Observations at two of the four districts indicated high standards for these meetings, including high-quality discussions of data and/or student learning. We frequently observed one school district using rigorous challenging of ideas and critical thinking, with other school districts engaging in this type of collaboration less frequently.

> *"I loved my last school where I was but it was not a family. That's the big difference - we really help each other."*
>
> -School teacher

The spotlight school districts also varied in the extent to which they shared leadership - also considered a collaborative practice - even though they all indicated this was a valuable best practice. A few school district leaders reported struggling with this ideal, with one administrator stating, "We fight the bossy." She further explained, "It's hard to change your mindset even when you know changing means [eventually] better outcomes. We have to resist making unilateral decisions in the name of expediency, because we really do value the voices of our teachers and staff."

Coaching and Partnering with Teachers

A fourth crucial component of ABPC's implementation support systems is an in-school coach called an Instructional Partner (IP). IPs have their own ABPC network in which they learn to support teachers by 'partnering' with them rather than using a more traditional coaching model. During our interviews with IPs, they described the partner process as empowering the teacher to set the learning agenda while the IP provides support, information and resources when the teacher wants or needs it.

*"We are missionaries, not messengers - we learn **with** teachers. We don't bring the information and leave.*

-Instructional Partner

The ABPC model also ensures that in addition to the IP, both school and district administrators learn to be coaches and partners with teachers and staff. This mindset is critical for shared leadership and learning to occur. It is important to note that this deep learning is not only a time commitment for school leaders to engage in, but often results in a budgetary commitment for the school district.

Indeed, all spotlight school districts have committed to financially support the IPs. In two of the four spotlight school districts we observed, shared leadership and partnership practices were prominent. In the other two school districts, there was varying evidence of commitment. IPs also varied in their roles and influence within the districts. Despite these differences, all school district staff were working to shift the collective mindset to one of learning together.

"We are like chameleons and we evolve and change to do what [teachers] need us to do."

-Instructional Partner

Another critical function of the IPs is to help school leaders 'turn around' the learning garnered from the various network meetings. Each district we observed had a unique approach to this process. During focus groups with IPs, some described how they provided the structure for professional learning and others described how they supported teachers and administrators in designing professional learning opportunities for the staff.

Student-Centered Teaching and Learning Strategies

A fifth component critical to driving systemic change is the creation of student-centered teaching and learning strategies. School districts implementing student-centered practices use pedagogical strategies that make class time engaging,

active, and focused. Students in these classrooms are active participants in their own learning and are held accountable for not only learning the material but *knowing that they know it*.

To help students reach this level of self-awareness in their own learning, teachers must deeply study the learning standards, incorporate the knowledge and skills necessary for student mastery, and design rigorous lessons focused on these skills. During our focus groups with teachers on this topic, several stated that to effectively use student centered practices, teachers must also use data to understand what students currently know, and what they need to learn next.

"We know not only our grade standards but those above and below. We don't teach what they will learn in the grade above. We are focused on students knowing deeply the critical standards for this grade."

-Teachers, during focus groups
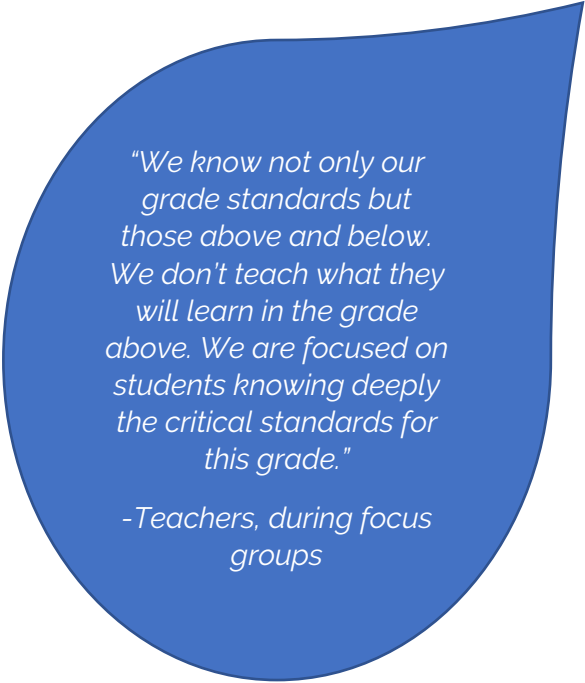
To gain better understanding of student-centered teaching and learning strategies, classroom observations were conducted in three of the four spotlight school districts. Additionally, collaborative planning meetings were observed in all four of the spotlight school districts. We observed high quality student engagement in many classrooms, using the following techniques, with nearly all teachers observed in two school districts using these techniques:

- learning targets,
- student self-assessments,
- pedagogical techniques that promoted student discussions, critical thinking and explanations of that thinking.

Most notably, during our observations in two school districts, nearly all teachers observed were using these techniques.

Staff from two of the spotlight school districts we observed indicated that they used student data notebooks to promote student's responsibility for their own learning. During discussions in the collaborative planning meetings, teachers focused on assessing student knowledge, planning for increased rigor of lessons and determining how to best teach particular concepts.

Several of the spotlight school districts demonstrated the process they have developed for analyzing the lessons to ensure they were rigorous and addressed important (and not tangential) standards and content. As an example, during one observation several teachers were having a debate about the centrality of a biological concept included in a lesson. Teachers wanted to be certain that this concept was critical before they planned their next set of lessons around this topic.

After they agreed among themselves it was critical, they added the concept to the lesson.

Documenting and Sharing Best Practices and Resources

The final component critical to maintaining a growing knowledge of best practices is to document them for the community. ABPC staff have been quite prolific in publishing articles and blog posts about their meetings and professional learning events.

ABPC is tireless in the promotion of participating school districts' successes. Any media coverage of district progress is well distributed in the area, as well as any research and educational articles about ABPC implementation strategies.

Additionally, ABPC encourages participating school districts to:

- submit posts for ABPC blogs and other teaching blogs
- publish units of study relevant to their experience with ABPC implementation strategies
- share best practices with teachers within and outside of their respective school districts
- create teaching videos
- present at conferences
- publish model lessons
- share success stories with local media

This focus on generously sharing resources has helped to solidify a sense of community among participating school district staff and to encourages ABPC participants to be active in their own knowledge communities.

All of the spotlight school districts shared learning with others in a variety of ways. Three of the four spotlight school districts have webpages devoted to sharing lesson plans and resources for learning within their own school districts. One school district is just beginning to upload lesson plans on their internal website for teachers in the district to use.

"It's hard work but it works."

-Teacher

Two of the three spotlight school districts shared information with the research team regarding ways in which their work had been highlighted in state or local news. Several of the spotlight school districts have been commended for the work they have done to improve teaching and learning. One district has published several blogs and articles on their own school district blog as well as the ABPC blog.

Consistent Messaging

Although all of the key practices were observed in one or more the spotlight districts, analysis of the site visit data indicated **several consistent messages connecting all of the spotlight school districts' processes**. **The following were the messages that permeated across all four of the spotlight districts:**

"We are in this for the long haul."

All of the spotlight school districts espoused a deep and long-term commitment necessary for systemic change to occur. During conversations with spotlight school administrators and teachers, they stated that they knew they were committing to systemic change when they embarked on their journey with ABPC. A few staff stated that they knew the change was here to stay when staff who typically "waited an initiative out" began implementing the changes and were excited about them.

One component of being committed for the long haul involved slowing down the pace of implementation. One staff member from a spotlight school district said, "this is a marathon not a sprint." An administrator from another spotlight school district stated, "It takes a long time to turn a big ship, and if you don't want it to capsize, you have to turn with slow, steady pressure."

Another way administrative staff showed their commitment to systemic change was by advocating for financial resources. For example, most of the districts had successfully requested their respective school boards to hire additional staff to allow for collaborative planning time and to pay for substitute teachers to ensure staff could attend professional learning on a regular basis. By committing time, effort, and money the school district leaders ensured long-term success.

"The knowledge is in the room."

This statement indicates the value spotlight school district staff place on the knowledge, experience and commitment they receive from their colleagues. During our observations at all participating spotlight school districts, we heard this statement in a myriad of ways. Utilizing the experience of colleagues helps district staff feel that they are not 'reinventing the wheel' with each new best practice, and also demonstrates the shared leadership that is encouraged by ABPC.

This way of thinking was embedded in Learning Walks, Walkthroughs, and Instructional Rounds (IR). The purpose of these activities was for teachers and administrators from different districts to share and learn best practices from each other. Additionally, staff frequently met to discuss implementation strategies from colleagues in their own school districts.

This mindset was also modeled in the way teachers took control of their own learning by leading collaborative planning meetings or by planning for new learning with their IPs.

"What's best for students?"

Although framed here as a question (and often stated that way) this mindset was used as a motto: "We Do What is Best for Students." This slogan was observed in written form at many of the meetings we attended, but was also a common refrain in collaborative meetings as teachers struggled with how to approach a concept or practice. If teachers found themselves at an impasse and could not agree on how to proceed, they would often ask the question, "What's best for students?" This allowed teachers to refocus and decide on the best course of action to take with a given lesson or topic.

"We are one district with XX schools, not XX schools in one district."

All four of the spotlight school districts we visited used this idea as part of their collective vision for ABPC implementation. In doing so, staff understood that they were not going several different ways but were keenly focused on everyone going the same way and learning together. This idea was often expressed as, "not having too many initiatives," (e.g., separate initiatives that differ among schools or even many initiatives in the district as a whole) but instead staying focused and going the same direction using the same implementation strategies with the same goal in mind – student success. District staff were also meaning this when they said, "We invest in people, not programs." Staff from one of the spotlight districts rebranded this concept, making it their district motto "1Athens!" using it on all of their district messaging.

ABPC's Impact on Student Achievement

The spotlight districts examined clearly believed that ABPC had a positive effect on their districts. But was this effect supported by improvements in student achievement? This section of the report sheds light on this question by examining the spotlight districts' state assessment data.

Analysis Strategies

We used three distinct strategies to examine academic performance among students in ABPC and non-ABPC schools.

Percentile Changes – We first examined simple percentile changes, using 2010 and 2012 as baseline years and then looking at differences in student achievement in 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2019 for ABPC spotlight districts and comparison districts. Examining data in this way allowed us to look at students in all grade levels tested. Any positive deviations from the 50th percentile indicated growth.

Paired Growth – These models looked at individual students' changes over time. Students in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 in 2010 and/or 2012 were paired with similar students using a sophisticated matching technique called Propensity Score Matching (PSM) based on their demographic characteristics and prior Alabama Math and Reading Test (ARMT) scores. Next, scores on ACT Aspire or ACT Plan for these students in Grade 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10 were compared for students in the spotlight districts and those in the matched comparison group. These models are the most robust.

District Level Change - To obtain a broader view of ABPC's effectiveness across the state, we created a model that predicted the 2018 Academic Achievement score (a score from 0-100, given to each district from the state of Alabama based on the rolled-up results of the state Scantron assessment) from 2018 districtwide demographic variables (e.g., the percentage of students at each district who received free/reduced lunch) and 2010 Alabama Reading and Math Test (ARMT) performance in reading and math. These analyses were at the district (and not student) level and included all districts in the state.

The results of these analyses can be combined to give a broad picture of the effect of ABPC on student achievement. For more information on the analyses, including the assessments used and the districts involved, please see the Appendix.

Changes in Percentiles

Reading

ACT Aspire (2014, 2016)

We first examined changes in percentile over time. At baseline, (2010 and 2012) there were no differences between groups. There were no differences in ACT Aspire in 2014, but by 2016 students within ABPC spotlight districts had a slightly higher percentile average than did students in the comparison districts See Figure 1.

Figure 1. ABPC students saw a slight increase in ACT Aspire reading percentiles in 2016 compared to baseline while the **comparison group's** percentile average did not vary.
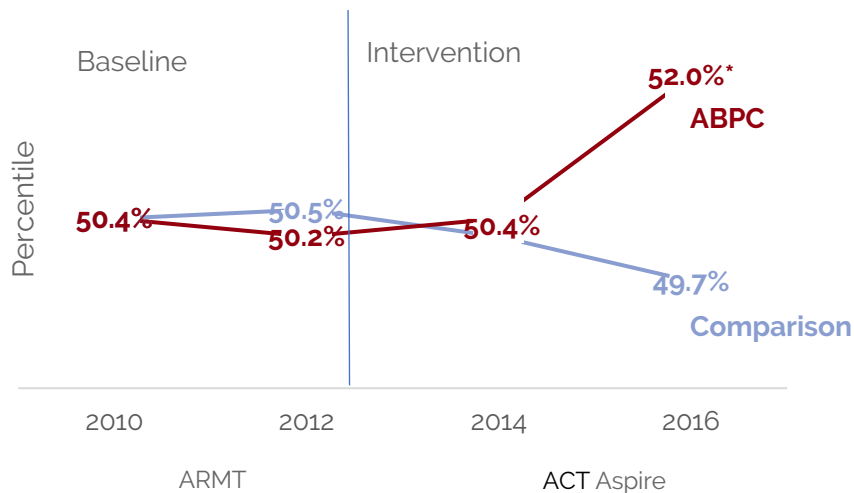
Source: ARMT-10 and ACT Aspire data for ABPC spotlight and comparison districts, Grades 3-8; 2010 – 2016.

Notes:

Percentile labels are rounded to the nearest whole number but are graphed in their unrounded state. The 50th percentile was the average score on the state assessment.

* indicates a significant difference between groups. In this graph, there was only a significant difference in 2016 ACT Aspire. The difference in 2016 ASPIRE scores remained after demographic variables were controlled.

Florence did not participate in ACT Aspire in 2016.

Scantron (2018, 2019)

We next examined changes in percentile for the end-of-year Scantron reading assessment, administered in 2018 and 2019. We found a small but significant difference between students attending ABPC spotlight districts in 2019 and their comparison peers. Students attending ABPC districts had slightly higher Scantron reading percentiles. There were no differences between groups in 2018. See Figure 2.

Figure 2. Both **ABPC** and **comparison group** students experienced slight increases in their Scantron reading percentiles in 2018 and 2019 compared to baseline. **ABPC students** experienced significantly higher increases in 2019 than did **comparison group students**.
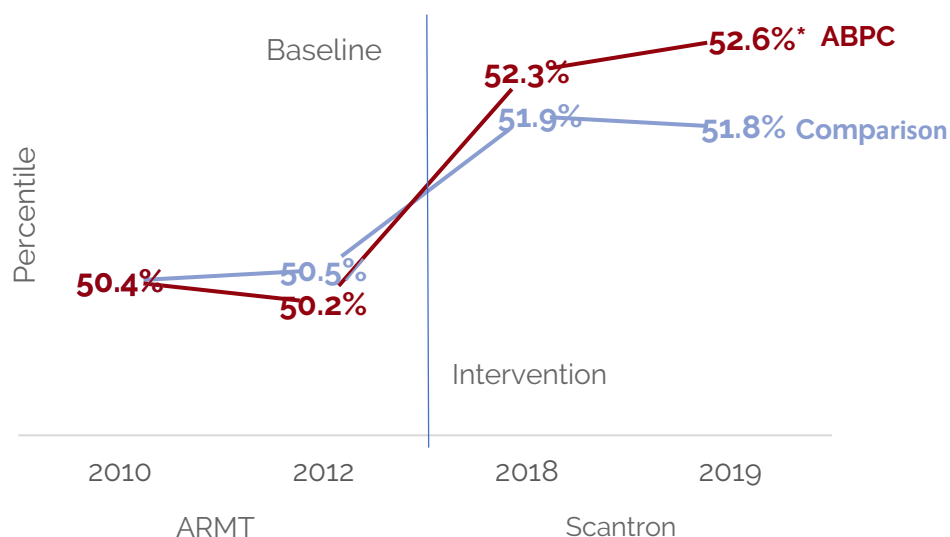
Source: ARMT-10 and Scantron data for ABPC spotlight and comparison districts, Grades 3-8; 2010-2012, 2018-2019.

Notes:

Percentile labels are rounded to the nearest whole number but are graphed in their unrounded state. The 50th percentile was the average score on the state assessment.

* indicates a significant difference between groups. The difference in 2019 Scantron scores remained after demographic variables were controlled.

Math

### ACT Aspire (2014, 2016)

In contrast to reading, there was a baseline difference between the ABPC group and the comparison group on ARMT-10 Math in 2010. Students in ABPC districts had slightly higher scores than did students in comparison districts. By 2012, these differences had disappeared (and in fact, the control group had a slightly higher percentile average).

When we examined ACT Aspire data in 2014 and 2016, we saw a large jump in percentiles by the ABPC students. By 2016, there was an average of a six-percentile point difference between students attending the ABPC spotlight districts and those from the comparison districts (Figure 3). Students in the spotlight districts had much higher math percentiles in 2016 than did students in the comparison district.

Figure 3. ABPC students had higher ACT Aspire math percentiles than did **comparison group students** in 2010, 2014 and 2016. The difference in 2016 was quite large and was much larger than the baseline difference in 2010.
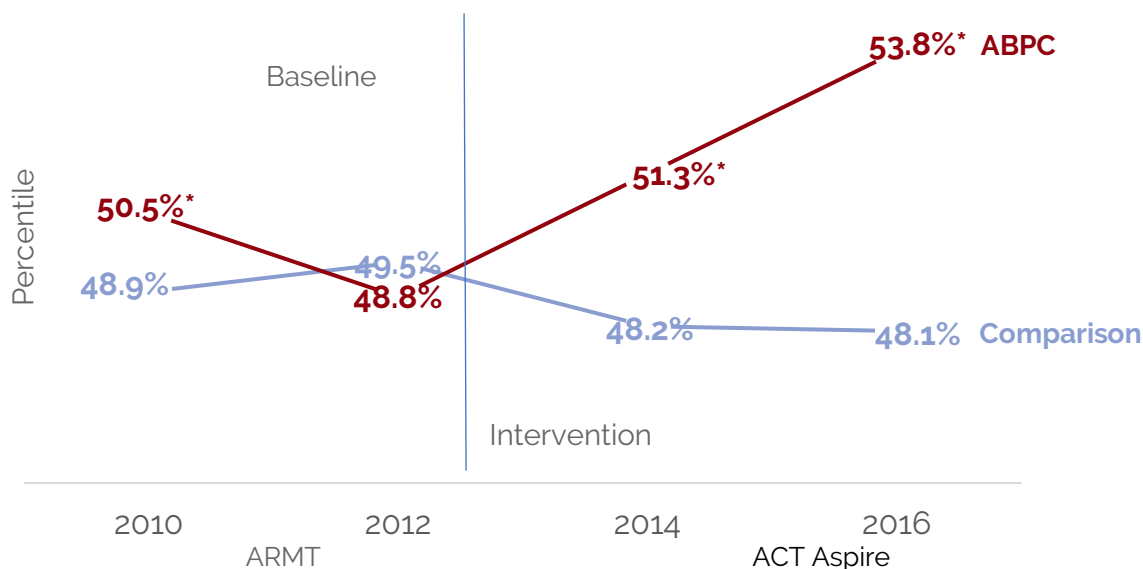
Source: ARMT-10 and ACT Aspire data for ABPC spotlight and comparison districts, 2010 – 2016; Grades 3-8

Notes:

Percentile labels are rounded to the nearest whole number but are graphed in their unrounded state. The 50th percentile was the average score on the state assessment.

* Indicates a significant difference between groups. The difference in 2010, 2014 and 2016 Aspire scores remained after demographic variables were controlled.

Florence did not participate in ACT Aspire in 2016.

We next examined percentile changes in the end-of-year Scantron math exam. As mentioned in the previous section, there were pre-existing differences in student performance at baseline, with ABPC students having higher percentiles in 2010 than did students from the comparison districts (but slightly lower percentiles in 2012).

In 2018, ABPC students had higher math percentiles than their counterparts (53% vs 50%). By 2019, the difference had lessened but was still statistically significant (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. ABPC students had higher percentiles in math in 2010, 2018, and 2019 than did students in the **comparison group**.
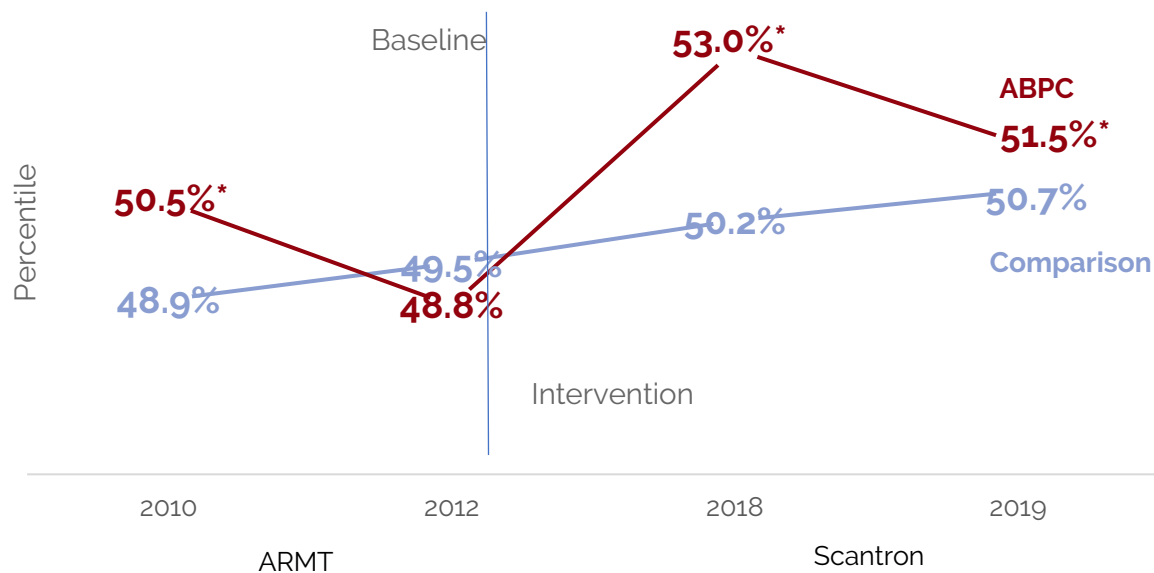
Source: ARMT-10 and Scantron data for ABPC spotlight and comparison districts, 2010 – 2016; Grades 3-8

Notes:

Percentile labels are rounded to the nearest whole number but are graphed in their unrounded state. The 50th percentile was the average score on the state assessment.

* Indicates a significant difference between groups. The difference in 2010, 2018, and 2019 scores remained even after controlling for demographic variables.

Paired Growth Models

The next set of analyses were paired growth models. These models compare differences in reading and math scores for students served by ABPC districts and for a sample of students who were similar in terms of demographics and prior achievement but attended districts that were not supported by ABPC.

Reading

We created eight paired growth models for Aspire Reading. Students were paired either in 2010 or 2012 based on their demographics and ARMT scores (see sidebar for more information).

The results showed small increases in percentile for ABPC students in the majority (5/8) of analyses, even after controlling for gender, ethnicity, economic disadvantage, special education status, EL status, gifted and talented status, **and** prior achievement test score. These results indicated small effect sizes in the 0.07 – 0.10 range (Table 5).

Table 5. On average, participating in ABPC predicted an increase in students' ACT Aspire Reading percentile of about 2 percentage points.

	READING		
	5-6	7-8	10
Growth Model, 2010 to 2014		0%	0%
Growth Model, 2010 to 2016			+3%
Growth Model, 2012 to 2014	+3%	+3%	0%
Growth Model, 2012 to 2016		+4%	+2%
Average change	+3%	+2%	+1%

Math

Similar to reading, we conducted eight paired growth models for Aspire Math. Results were even stronger for these analyses, with ABPC students showing advantages of up to 11 percentile points even after

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Paired Growth Model Analyses

Step 1: Each grade level's scores were converted to percentiles for all years of data collected (students in grades 3-8 only).

This was the same as step 1 in the percentile change models.

Step 2: ABPC students were paired with similar non-ABPC students based on their demographic data and their 2010 or 2012 ARMT scores using PSM.

Propensity Score Matching (PSM) was used to find a one-to-one match for each ABPC student among the comparison districts. Students were matched on gender, ethnicity, free/reduced lunch status, and prior math/reading scores.

Step 3: Baseline equivalency was determined

Next, we confirmed that there were no differences between the ABPC students and the matched control on any demographic or prior achievement variables.

Step 4: Post intervention changes were assessed.

Finally, we assessed differences between the groups in 2014 and 2016 using linear models that included demographic variables and prior achievement.

The final numbers represent the coefficients from those models for ABPC vs. non-ABPC districts and indicate the overall impact of ABPC on student achievement percentile after student effects are taken into account.

controlling for all other potential factors, indicating an effect size of up to 0.29 (Table 6).

Table 6. On Average, participating in ABPC predicted an increase in students' ACT Aspire Math percentile of about 6 percentage points.

	MATH		
	5-6	**7-8**	**10**
Growth Model, 2010 to 2014		+2%	0%
Growth Model, 2010 to 2016			+5%
Growth Model, 2012 to 2014	+8%	+8%	0%
Growth Model, 2012 to 2016		+11%	+5%
Average change	+8%	+7%	+3%

Overall, the paired growth models indicated consistent positive effects of ABPC on student achievement.

District Level Change

To obtain a broader view of ABPC's effectiveness across the state, we created a model that looked at the 2018 Academic Achievement score (a score, from 0-100, given to each district from the state of Alabama based on the rolled-up results of the state Scantron assessment). Importantly, this model contained data from the entire state, and was not limited to comparison district data used in the other models.

The linear model was created using Academic Achievement as the dependent variable and 2018 districtwide demographics (e.g., the percentage of students at each district who were Hispanic, the percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch) and the average 2010 ARMT reading and math scale scores for each district as predictor variables.

The final model indicated that the state Academic Achievement score for each district could be predicted well just by knowing the composition of students in the district plus the prior achievement of the district. We next calculated the difference between the predicted score using this model and the actual score each school district received from the state of Alabama. Results are presented in Table 7, below.

Table 7. Collectively, ABPC schools had higher Academic Achievement scores in 2018 than were predicted with our model. Separated by school district, **Saraland City, Oxford City, and Florence City** school districts performed better than predicted, but **Athens City** school district performed worse than predicted.

District	Actual Score	Predicted Score	Residual Z	Percentile	Interpretation
Athens City	69.32	75.93	-1.30	10	Well below prediction*
Florence City	74.80	73.78	+0.20	58	Slightly above prediction
Oxford City	73.62	69.98	+0.72	76	Well above prediction
Saraland City	87.15	76.09	+2.19	99	Outstanding
OVERALL			+0.45	61	Well above prediction

Note: Residual Z score was taken by subtracting the difference between the actual score and the predicted score (the residual) and dividing by the standard deviation of the all residuals (in this case, 5.15). *Athens City data include an online K-12 school that serves students across the state and does not participate in ABPC practices. Results may not be indicative of results where practices are more firmly in place.

Averaged together, the four districts exceeded their predicted 2018 Academic Achievement scores by over 11 percentile points - a significant improvement. Additionally, two school districts' actual scores were well above what we predicted for their academic achievement scores – Oxford City and Saraland City school districts. That is, Saraland City school district was in the 99th percentile (second in the state), Oxford City School district was above the 75th percentile (25th in the state). Florence City school district was slightly above average when compared to other school districts in Alabama.

Athens City school district received an academic achievement score far below the model's prediction. There are several things to consider when contextualizing this finding. First, Athens City school district was also the newest member of the spotlight districts in our sample. Second, and perhaps most importantly, the Athens City district-level data included data from an online K-12 school that serves students across the state and does not participate in ABPC. There was not a way to separate these data in this set of analyses, so findings for Athens should be interpreted with extreme caution.

Summary

Taken together, these analyses suggest that ABPC has a positive impact on student achievement. Importantly, results remained **consistently positive** among the various models used to examine the impact of ABPC best practices on student achievement, even when demographics and prior achievement were controlled.

Although **results for math were stronger than those for reading**, there were consistent gains in both subject areas for students attending ABPC spotlight schools versus students attending matched comparison schools (Table 8).

	Growth	Percentile
Math		
Reading		

Table 8. Students attending ABPC schools had positive results on both the paired growth and percentile models.

Additionally, our residual analyses of district-level Academic Achievement scores indicated that overall, ABPC spotlight districts fared better than predicted (after knowing their demographic makeup and prior achievement scores).

Finally, there was some evidence that there may be a lag effect of ABPC on student achievement. That is, it may take several years of steady participation of ABPC best practices for the changes in student outcomes to manifest. Additionally, school districts that participated in ABPC gatherings at a higher level also experienced greater growth over time than did those school districts with lower participation in ABPC gatherings.

Limitations, Challenges and Opportunities for the Future

In this section, we explore the limitations of the current study, as well as challenges identified and opportunities for the future.

⚠️ Limitations

Any study includes some limitations, and ours is no different. First, our study was focused on **understanding how ABPC was implemented across various districts to discover common best practices and to find impacts on student state level achievement tests.** We worked with the staff from ABPC to identify districts that they felt exemplified the implementation of best practices learned through ABPC network gatherings. **Site visits were conducted to confirm implementation of these district best practices, not to provide a comprehensive examination of implementation quality in all areas.** Site visits were limited, as well, with only two days per district – so even when certain activities were not observed, it cannot be assumed that the school and district were not implementing those practices.

Second, **spotlight districts may not be representative of all school districts in Alabama and perhaps not representative of all participating ABPC districts.** Spotlight school districts were intentionally selected with differing levels of implementation and commitment to implementation strategies. The variation with which schools were implementing these best practices were validated through our site visits. We realize that there are many other districts in Alabama working with the ABPC, but for the scope of this study these four school districts were selected to provide a window into the myriad ways in which districts translate the professional learning and support provided by the ABPC networks into action at their respective schools.

Additionally, there were several limitations of note for the student achievement findings. Although these findings suggest that ABPC positively influences student achievement, it is important to point out limitations to these findings:

- **Comparison districts may be different in other ways from ABPC districts.** Comparison districts were chosen based on similarity in size, demographic composition, and academic achievement. However, districts that choose to work with ABPC may have more motivated staff or more talented teachers, and these factors may be what are driving the observed results, rather than ABPC's contributions.
- **Testing data are a snapshot of student performance in limited domains**. The data analyzed in this section are primarily from state assessments, administered once or twice per year. Additionally, the assessments included in our analyses only examined students' math and reading performance failing to provide the full picture of student learning.
- **Assessments changed over time, and some are more reliable than others**. The assessments we used in our analyses changed several times over the course of our

study (e.g., 2010 to 2019; see Appendix for detailed information on all assessments). Comparing performance between years on different tests can be problematic because the tests can tap different domains, ask questions in different ways, and have differing levels of measurement error. We have heard through this evaluation process and also casual conversations with teachers and school staff in Alabama (not related to ABPC) that the Scantron tests administered in 2018 and 2019 were especially problematic and that some schools learned to 'game' the system. The ACT Aspire test is likely the most reliable, as it is based on a college admissions test using national design and norming standards.

- **Missing ACT Aspire data for Florence City School district in 2016.** Florence City School district did not participate in ACT Aspire in 2016 (using Scantron, instead); therefore, their data were not included in our analyses for 2016.
- **Statistical models do not account for everything**. Although our statistical models attempted to control for everything we could measure, there were many factors we were unable to measure in the data set. For example, English Learner (EL) and Multiracial status was not widely available until 2014 and were not used in the growth models. Additionally, there were other external factors that we could not measure, such as student motivation and family structure, that may have influenced student achievement.
- **Statistical models and tests are not perfect.** Every statistical model and test rely on underlying assumptions, and all have a certain amount of error inherent to them. It is important to consider that looking at data in another way, or utilizing different assumptions, may give different results.

Current Challenges.

Opportunities exist for all school districts currently participating in the ABPC networks, and for those school districts considering participation in ABPC strategies. These opportunities for growth include **examining attrition and creating a plan for continued professional learning and high-quality classroom implementation strategies that take staff turnover into account.** Finally, changing environmental (natural disasters, economic shifts, and public health issues) contexts always have the capacity to force educational systems to adapt. COVID-19 forced districts and ABPC to adapt to rapidly evolving community health needs, within shifting political contexts. **Improving on the online learning, support and networking capacities of both ABPC and districts** presents both a challenge and an opportunity as ABPC moves forward in this new educational dynamic.

In addition to a plan for employee attrition, school district leaders should also consider creating a **sustainability plan** that includes attention to succession of district leadership (including the superintendent and board members), as changes at this level have long term and widespread implications for sustaining this type of work. To support these plans, **ABPC staff should develop professional learning sessions focused on helping districts plan for attrition and succession**. Many of the superintendents at the spotlight

districts have been in place for a considerable time; therefore, helping them plan for succession would be an opportunity for both district and school board members.

Further, future ABPC districts should be aware that the ABPC practices are not a magic bullet. **School districts with successful implementation have been implementing these strategies for many years**. Spotlight districts had been working with ABPC between 4 and 10 years. Results of the ABPC student achievement analyses are very encouraging but indicate that there may be a lag effect from beginning to work with ABPC to seeing results on state assessments. All four spotlight districts had spent considerable financial resources as well as staff time at all levels to support this work. Schools new to the ABPC model should understand that this is **a deep-level, long-term commitment to systemic change.**

Finally, ABPC staff have several clear opportunities with regard to implementing these strategies. First, during the course of our study the COVID-19 pandemic hit, closing schools and forcing school personnel and support staff to pivot to online learning and/or home schooling of all children for the last few months of the 2020 school year. To say that all involved did an amazing job of developing school materials for home use would be an understatement. However, the fast transition to online education was not optimal in any sense of the word. Currently state and local leaders are planning that at least some of the next school year will take place in an online environment. Thus, it is imperative **that best practices for online teaching and learning are shared with district leaders.**

Opportunities for the Future.

Although ABPC has conducted several evaluations of its work, **much of the research on its effectiveness has been either anecdotal or based on self-reports from participants**. From these reports it is clear that those participating in ABPC professional learning offerings find them to be useful and of very high quality. What is less clear is how this translates into high quality implementation and a high level of student learning. The results from this evaluation do suggest that ABPC spotlight schools have better results on the state assessments, particularly in math. But more work is needed.

To improve ABPC's ability to understand its effects on both participants and students, we suggest several updates to their evaluation and tracking systems. First, **ABPC staff should track attendance using an online database that can be easily shared, checked and maintained.** Online sign in should be collected and entered into the attendance database so that ABPC has the ability to link attendance and attendance patterns to successful implementation and outcomes.

The evaluation team has designed an additional plan for data collection and measurement to help with this issue. Some of the methods included in this plan are tools created by ABPC that have been improved upon, as well as new tools for ABPC staff to use. As a result, we suggest that **ABPC use the district implementation tracking tool to collect state provided student testing data annually for each participating district to analyze the effects of ABPC participation on student level outcomes.** Tracked over time, these data will help ABPC demonstrate its value to Alabama and to others school district and state leaders who may be interested in implementing these practices.

Finally, the results of analyses examining student state assessment data have indicated positive effects of student achievement from ABPC. However, these analyses only examined the results in four spotlight districts, a small portion of the districts in Alabama that utilize ABPC. **We recommend expanding the analyses to more school districts to gain a broader picture of ABPC's impact.**

Appendix I: Impact on Student Achievement

One key question that this evaluation was designed to answer was the impact of ABPC on student achievement.

Data Collection

To determine if there was a significant impact, we collected data from the state of Alabama from 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2019 from the four spotlight districts (Athens, Florence, Oxford, and Saraland) and from 12 similar districts.

Districts in the Analyses

Student data from the following districts were used for the percentile change and paired student growth models.

ABPC Spotlight districts:
- Athens City
- Florence City
- Oxford City
- Saraland City

Similar districts used for the matched comparison group:

- Cherokee County
- Clay County
- Dale County
- Escambia County
- Franklin County
- Homewood City
- Jasper City
- Marion County
- Mountain Brook City[1]
- Opelika City
- Pell City
- Tallassee City

Student Data

Student data were collected for the following years: 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2019. Data was pulled from any student who was in attendance in the above districts in those years who also had data from a state assessment.

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[1] * Mountain Brook City was used in the initial analyses; however, it was removed from subsequent analyses after careful examination of demographics and discussion with ABPC.

Data collected included:

Demographic data:

- Gender
- Ethnicity – detailed data was provided, and the following were used in the analyses:
    - Ethnicity = Hispanic
    - Race = White
    - Race = Black/African American
    - Race = Asian
- Special Education status
- Gifted and Talented status
- Free and Reduced Lunch status (coded so a student who received a free *or* reduced lunch was "1" and all other students were "0"

State assessment data:

Scale scores were collected. Please see "Assessments used" for more information on each assessment.

- 2010, 2012: ARMT
- 2014, 2016: ACT Aspire & ACT Plan
- 2018, 2019: Scantron

Assessments Used

The state assessment changed several times over the course of 2010-2019. The tests used in the analyses were:

Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test (ARMT): 2010, 2012

The ARMT consisted of selected items of the Stanford Achievement Test (Stanford 10) in reading and mathematics plus additional items to ensure that all content standards were covered. Students took the test in grades 3-8 from 2005 to 2013.

ARMT results showed between 80% and 85% of Alabama's students were proficient, though the gold standard test, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), showed barely 20% of Alabama's students were proficient[2]. The test was replaced by the more stringent ACT Aspire test for the 2013-14 school year.

ACT Aspire and ACT Plan: 2014, 2016

ACT Aspire and ACT Plan are tests that are vertically aligned with the ACT, the national college entrance exam. Students in grades 3-8 took the ACT Aspire and students in grade 10 took ACT Plan from 2014 to 2017. The Aspire was ended in 2016; state board of education

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[2] https://birminghamwatch.org/5-things-you-should-know-about-test-results-for-alabamas-public-schools/

members stated concerns with alignment to the state curriculum, although it was reported that official alignment studies were never completed.[3]

Scantron: 2018, 2019

The next test used was Scantron's Performance Series in 2018 and 2019. This computer adaptive test is administered twice: at the beginning and end of the school year, and districts can also use the Scantron benchmark tests throughout the year for formative feedback. Around 70% of districts already used the exam for formative purposes prior to its official use in the state.[4] Although 46-48% of students were deemed 'proficient' by the test in 2019, the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) indicated otherwise – Alabama schools scored dead last in the assessment for math (52 out of 52 states/territories) and near last in reading.

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[3] https://www.al.com/news/2018/01/an_a_an_f_or_something_else_wh.html
[4] https://aplusala.org/blog/2017/06/22/state-board-ditches-the-act-aspire/

Analysis Strategies

We used three distinct strategies to examine academic performance among students in ABPC and non-ABPC schools. The information below details how analyses were conducted.

Basic Percentile Changes

We first examined simple percentile changes, using 2010 and 2012 as baseline years and looking at student achievement in 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2019 for ABPC spotlight districts and comparison districts. Examining data in this way allowed us to look at students in all grade levels tested. Any positive deviations from the 50th percentile indicate growth.

Step 1: Each grade level's scores were converted to percentiles for each state assessment.

Percentiles were created by first converting scale scores to Z-scores.

Z scores are calculated by taking a score for an individual (in this case, a student's score on a state assessment), subtracting the sample mean (the mean score on the state assessment for the sample) and dividing by the sample standard deviation (the standard deviation of the state assessment for the sample).

Z scores were then converted to percentiles – this can be easily done using a calculator such as this one: https://measuringu.com/pcalcz/

With Z-scores, the 50th percentile represents the average.

Using percentiles allows us to easily compare performance:

- Between grade levels
- On different exams

It is important to note that percentiles were created only with the data from the districts in "Districts in the Analyses" – therefore, these are localized percentiles and are not based on state or national norms. A district in the 52nd percentile is in the 52nd percentile **in this sample** and could be in the 78th percentile statewide or the 23rd percentile nationally.

Step 2: Percentiles were averaged across year for ABPC non-ABPC schools

Next, a simple average was calculated for ABPC and non-ABPC students for each year: 2010, 2012, 2014. 2016, 2018, and 2019. The overall average is the 50th percentile.

Note that Mountain Brook City Schools were removed from the sample, so the average was slightly different from 50 in the final analysis.

Step 3: Percentiles were graphed

Percentiles were graphed to show differences visually.

Step 4: Back-end analyses controlled for demographic variables

Finally, we conducted analyses to see if percentile differences were still significant even after controlling for demographic variables. In these analyses, the score on the state assessment was the dependent variable (DV), and demographic variables plus group (ABPC, non-ABPC) were independent variables (IV). If the "group" variable was significant in the model, that indicates that group still predicts success even after other variables have been accounted for.

Paired Student Growth

These models look at individual students' changes over time. Students in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 in 2010 and/or 2012 were paired with similar students using a sophisticated matching technique. Next, scores on Act Aspire or Act Plan for these students in either grade 5, 6, 7, 8 or 10 were examined. These models are more robust but only allowed for us to examine performance for certain years and grade levels.

Step 1: **Each grade level's scores were converted to percentiles** for all years of data collected

This was the same step used in the "Basic Percentile Changes" above.

Step 2: **ABPC students were paired with similar non-ABPC students**

Next, Propensity Score Matching (PSM) was used to find a one-to-one match for each ABPC student among the comparison districts. Students were matched on gender, ethnicity, free/reduced lunch status, and prior math/reading scores (either 2010 or 2012 ARMT).

In a PSM analysis, we generally try to match students on as few variables as possible while still providing baseline equivalency. Therefore, not all potential variables were used in the match, and the formulas varied for each match.

Sample code (from "R" using the package "MatchIt")

```
m.out = matchit(Group~GenderMale + EthAfAm + EthHisp + EOD + SPED + TAG +
math10pct, data = ab10forMatch, method = "nearest") # run matching
```

In the above code, students are matched based on their gender, race (Black/African American), ethnicity (Hispanic), free/reduced lunch status, special education status, talented and gifted status, and finally their percentile rank on the ARMT in 2010.

All matches were done with up to two grade levels (e.g., Grade 3 and 4, grade 5 and 6).

Step 3: Baseline equivalency was determined

Next, we confirmed that there were no statistical differences between the ABPC students and the matched control on any demographic or prior achievement variables.

Generally, baseline equivalency is determined by examining the effect size of all differences between groups. Differences of d <= 0.05 are considered negligible, and groups are considered equivalent. Differences between d > 0.05 and d < .0.25 are considered significant and required statistical adjustment to satisfy baseline equivalence. Any variable

in this range would need to be included in a model prior to comparing differences between groups. Importantly, all variables included in these analyses were d <=0.05.

Step 4: Post intervention changes were assessed.

Finally, we assessed differences between the same students in 2014 and 2016. Because the groups were determined to be statistically the same at baseline, any differences observed between groups were potentially due to the intervention (e.g., the presence of ABPC within students' school).

Of course, we can't be 100% sure that these effects were caused by ABPC and not something else. For example, all four spotlight school districts might have decided to try a new math intervention at the same time as they were participating in ABPC and that may have driven the effect. Given the fact that these districts were geographically far apart, this seems unlikely, but it's always important to note these caveats.

District Level Change

This model was created to give a broader view of the effects of participation on ABPC. It utilized statewide data (and not just data from the spotlight districts).

Step 1: Data download
Data were downloaded from the alsde.edu website from the following link:
https://www.alsde.edu/dept/erc/Support/ 2017-2018%20Accountability%20Data.xlsx

Data for all districts in Alabama were downloaded, analyzed, and are in the final model. Data were similar to the previous model with one important addition: the 2018 Academic Achievement score was added.

2018 Academic Achievement has scores ranging from 0-100. This score, along with five others, is rolled up into an overall score for districts (not analyzed). The score was created using results from the state assessment for the year (Scantron).

Step 2: Linear model

Next, a linear model was created using Academic Achievement as the dependent variable and 2018 demographic variables plus the 2010 ARMT reading and math average scale scores as predictor variables.

The final model (see below) contained data on student racial distribution, the percentage of students at each school who had limited English proficiency, the percentage who were economically disadvantaged (i.e., qualified for free/reduced lunches), the number of students in each grade level (a proxy for district size), and 2010 math and reading standardized test scores.

The average reading percentile for 2010 was predictive of academic achievement in 2018. Additionally, the percentage of student who were economically disadvantaged, multiracial, and Asian were predictors (economic disadvantage was a negative predictor; that is, districts with a high percentage of students who were economically disadvantaged tended

to have worse 2018 academic achievement results, even after controlling for performance in 2010).

	Estimate	Pr(>|t|)			Estimate	Pr(>|t|)	
(Intercept)	-36.88	0.14		*PctLEP*	-1.50	0.97	
ReadingAvg	33.69	0.00	***	*PctEOD*	-20.21	0.00	***
MathAvg	-1.00	0.86		*PctMulti*	77.00	0.00	**
PctHisp	-18.32	0.34		*numPK2*	0.00	0.98	
PctAsian	95.72	0.03	*	*num35*	0.00	0.93	
PctAfAm	-5.65	0.68		*num68*	0.00	0.60	
PctWhite	8.23	0.54		*num912*	0.00	0.49	

The R squared value for the model – an indicator of the fit of the model – was 0.87. This means that, given a districts' average 2010 ARMT Math and Reading scores and demographic data, we can predict the Academic Achievement score with 87% accuracy. This is an indication of a strong fit, and means that the residuals (step 3) are likely meaningful indicators of difference between districts and not just random error.

Step 3: Calculate residuals & analyze differences

After the model was created, we calculated residual scores. What is a residual? After a statistical model is created, each participant (in this case, each district), receives a predicted score based on the model. The difference between this predicted score and the actual score is called the "residual".

In this case, a positive residual indicates that a district had a higher 2018 Academic Achievement score than predicted, and a negative residual indicates that the district had a lower Academic Achievement score than predicted.

Appendix II: References

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Whetstone Education. New Orleans, LA. www.whetstoneeducation.com

Appendix III: Evaluation Resources

Evaluation Tools

Alabama Best Practices Center Essential Elements:

SCALE OF ADOPTION SELF-ASSESSMENT

Implementation 2020-21

Institution Name: [   ]

Date: [   ]

This tool is designed to help your districts assess how far along you are toward adopting the ABPC essential elements at scale. The Scale of Adoption Assessment (SOAA) includes essential practices covered over the course of Network Study from 2010-2020 in the following resources.

In the era of COVID and the need to provide instruction at a distance, the SOAA has been updated to include "Technology and/distance learning considerations" in each practice area so that your team can discuss and articulate the ways in which you have adapted, improved or supported robust learning using technology to facilitate that process. Your team does not need to answer all of these questions as part of the SOAA process and they are not intended to be used as assessments. Also, don't be concerned if your district has had minimal discussion and/or efforts related to any given question. We hope the questions help initiate or advance conversations about whether and how practices have differential impact when implemented online or through distance technologies.

Essential elements practices

We suggest that you convene faculty, staff, and administrators from across campuses to discuss the extent to which each essential practice listed in the first column is currently implemented in your district as of spring 20____.

In column two, indicate the extent to which the practices have been adopted at your district using the following scale:x

Scale of Adoption	Definition
Not occurring	District is currently not following, or planning to follow, this practice
Not systematic	Practice is incomplete, inconsistent, informal, and/or optional
Planning to scale	District is has made plans to implement the practice at scale and has started to put these plans into place
Scaling in progress	Implementation of the practice is in progress for all students
At scale	Practice is implemented at scale—that is, for all students at all campuses

In column three, describe the progress your district has made toward implementing each practice at scale. For practices that are *scaling* or *at scale*, note that we ask you to indicate which semester a practice first reached this point.

In column four, indicate the next steps your district plans to take toward implementing the given practice at scale and your district's timeline for implementing these steps. *Don't be concerned if your district has made minimal progress implementing any given practice.* This assessment will help your district develop and refine a plan for implementing the practices at scale and will help the ABPC follow your district's progress in implementing guided the essential elements over time.

In the three rows at the end of each set of essential practices, please describe any partnerships your district has developed with external stakeholders such as local colleges and universities, professional learning providers, employers, and community organizations; the key successes you would like to highlight; and the challenges your district has encountered and strategies you may employ to address these challenges.

* This tool is adapted for Alabama School Districts and Campuses and the ABPC by Shore Research and Agile Analytics from the CCRC Scale of Adoption Assessment.

We are interested in how districts connect technology efforts to their ABPC essential elements, planning, and discussions. The guiding questions in each of the four areas can help districts consider how technology intersects with essential practices. As themes, ideas, or areas for future work emerge during your discussion, please note the ways in which these connect with implementation in "Progress to Date" and "Next Steps" as well as during follow-up conversations.

Technology/distance learning considerations in Essential Element 1:

- Are the district's professional learning website and program pages easy to navigate and understand for teachers, staff, students and administrators without/limited prior experience with technology?
- How could the district ensure that access to and use of professional training and resources/ information is accessible for staff/administrators/educators who have limited experience and/or access to technology/distance learning?
- How are financial costs, potential debt, and economic benefits of training with technology made clear for teachers, staff, families, and students?
- What are the technology requirements for professional learning using technology and/or distance learning?
- What information is needed to assist all in learning effectively with technology? What are best practices for use and how are these communicated?

ABPC Essential Practices	Scale of Adoption at Our District	Progress to Date Implementing Practice (If Scaling in Progress or At Scale, please indicate which semester (e.g., fall 2015) the district first reached this point)	Next Steps Toward Implementing Practice at Scale & Timeline
Professional learning			
Commitment by school leaders to make professional learning a priority	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

		Progress to date:	Next steps:
Highly engaging learner-based instruction and professional learning	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	• [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	• [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Use best practices in professional learning and research-based practice	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	• [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	• [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Attends and/or hosts Instructional Rounds	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	• [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	• [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Uses and models meeting protocols	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	• [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	• [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

		Progress to date:	Next steps:
Uses reflective practices	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	• [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	• [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Models and implements collaborative dialogue	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS Please share a narrative about the external partners with which you have collaborated as you have implemented the elements of this essential practice.

• [ ]

SUCCESSES Please share a narrative about the key successes your district has achieved in the area of implementing ongoing professional learning.

• [ ]

CHALLENGES Please share a narrative about the challenges your district has faced as you have implemented ongoing professional learning. Indicate how you may address these challenges.

• [ ]

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">

Technology/distance learning considerations in Essential Element 2:

- Does the district assess whether all teachers, staff and administrators have access to technology to collaborate?
- What types of support and training might be needed to ensure all are able to make use of/have a quality experience with the technologies used for distance collaboration?
- What are best practices related to collaborating online and how are these implemented/communicated to all?

</td></tr>
</table>

ABPC Essential Practices	Scale of Adoption at Our District	Progress to Date Implementing Practice (If Scaling in Progress or At Scale, please indicate which semester (e.g., fall 2015) the district first reached this point)	Next Steps Toward Implementing Practice at Scale & Timeline
COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES			
Intentional use of job-embedded, just-in-time professional learning	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Modeling of protocols	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

Collaborative planning occurs for all teachers, and administrators	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling:[ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Collaborative dialogue	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling:[ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Data-based decision-making	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling:[ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Collective efficacy	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling:[ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Collaborative planning and budgeting	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic	Progress to date: • [ ]	Next steps: • [ ]

	☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
👤 Reflective practice	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS Please share a narrative about any external partners with which you have collaborated as you have implemented collaborative practices.

• [ ]

SUCCESSES Please share a narrative about the key successes your district has achieved in the area of collaborative practices.

• [ ]

CHALLENGES Please share a narrative about the challenges your district has faced as you have implemented collaborative practices. Indicate how you may address these challenges.

• [ ]

- How does the district support online instructional partnering/coaching for all teachers?
- Are all teachers, IPs and others trained in best practices for technological coaching/partnering?
- What are the challenges that teachers and others are encountering and how can they be ameliorated?

ABPC Essential Practices	Scale of Adoption at Our District	Progress to Date Implementing Practice (If Scaling in Progress or At Scale, please indicate which semester (e.g., fall 2015) the district first reached this point)	Next Steps Toward Implementing Practice at Scale & Timeline
COACHING AND INSTRUCTIONAL PARTNERING			
Commitment to continuous learning	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Commitment to share learning with colleagues back in the district	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Transfer of learning	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale	Progress to date: • [ ]	Next steps: • [ ]

		Progress to date:	Next steps:
	☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
💬 Collaborative dialogue	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
🚶 Walkthroughs	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
📊 Data-based decision-making	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Use of job-embedded, just-in-time professional learning	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress	Progress to date: • [ ]	Next steps: • [ ]

		☐ At scale	Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
👤	Reflective practice	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS Please share a narrative about any external partners with which you have collaborated as you have implemented strategies to coach and partner with your teachers.

• [ ]

SUCCESSES Please share a narrative about the key successes your district has achieved in the area of coaching and partnering.

• [ ]

CHALLENGES Please share a narrative about the challenges your district has faced as you have implemented strategies related to coaching and partnering. Indicate how you may address these challenges.

• [ ]

Technology/distance learning considerations in Essential Element 4:

- How is the district communicating with families about best practices for student centered teaching and learning in an online environment?
- What are best practices for student centered teaching and learning in an online environment?
- How is the district ensuring that all students and families have access to and training for using technology for distance learning?

ABPC Essential Practices	Scale of Adoption at Our District	Progress to Date Implementing Practice (If Scaling in Progress or At Scale, please indicate which semester (e.g., fall 2015) the district first reached this point)	Next Steps Toward Implementing Practice at Scale & Timeline
STUDENT CENTERED TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES			
Belief in student ownership of learning	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Standards-based instruction	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

			Progress to date:	Next steps:
	Social-emotional learning	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	• [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	• [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
	Formative assessment	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
	Data-driven instruction	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

		Progress to date:	Next steps:
⟳ Transfer of learning	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	• [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	• [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Highly engaging standards-based instruction	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Learner-centered strategies	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS Please share a narrative about any external partners with which you have collaborated as you have implemented student centered teaching and learning strategies.

• [ ]

| |
|---|
| **SUCCESSES** Please share a narrative about the key successes your district has achieved in the area of student-centered teaching and learning strategies.

• [ ] |
| **CHALLENGES** Please share a narrative about the challenges your district has faced as you have implemented student centered teaching and learning strategies.

Indicate how you may address these challenges.

• [ ] |

Technology/distance learning considerations in Essential Element 5:
• How does the district support online community building for all teachers/staff/administrators?
• Are all in the district trained in best practices for online community building?
• What are the challenges that teachers and others are encountering and how can they be ameliorated?

ABPC Essential Practices	Scale of Adoption at Our District	Progress to Date Implementing Practice (If Scaling in Progress or At Scale, please indicate which semester (e.g., fall 2015) the district first reached this point)	Next Steps Toward Implementing Practice at Scale & Timeline
COMMUNITY BUILDING			
Imbues the partnership principles	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling:[ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Valuing the expertise of educators as professionals	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling:[ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

Networking (i.e., connecting with and learning from others)	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Collaborative planning and learning	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS Please share a narrative about any external partners with which you have collaborated as you have implemented strategies to ensure community building.

• [ ]

SUCCESSES Please share a narrative about the key successes your district has achieved in the area of community building.

• [ ]

CHALLENGES Please share a narrative about the challenges your district has faced as you have implemented strategies to build community. Indicate how you may address these challenges.

• [ ]

Technology/distance learning considerations in Essential Element 4:			
• How is the district sharing resources online with all constituents? • How are you ensuring that all have the proper technology to access the resources and best practices? • What challenges have you encountered in sharing best practices and resources using technology? How might this challenge be overcome?			
ABPC Essential Practices	Scale of Adoption at Our District	Progress to Date Implementing Practice (If Scaling in Progress or At Scale, please indicate which semester (e.g., fall 2015) the district first reached this point)	Next Steps Toward Implementing Practice at Scale & Timeline
DOCUMENTING AND SHARING BEST PRACTICES AND RESOURCES			
Commitment to share learning with colleagues back in the district	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Blogs and articles	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

Websites or web pages that share materials	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]
Instructional rounds/ walkthroughs	☐ Not occurring ☐ Not systematic ☐ Planning to scale ☐ Scaling in progress ☐ At scale	Progress to date: • [ ] Semester, if at scale or scaling: [ ]	Next steps: • [ ] Timeline for implementing next steps: • [ ]

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS Please share a narrative about any external partners with which you have collaborated as you have documented and shared best practices and resources.

• [ ]

SUCCESSES Please share a narrative about the key successes your district has achieved in the area of documenting and sharing best practices and resources.

• [ ]

CHALLENGES Please share a narrative about the challenges your district has faced as you have implemented strategies to document and share best practices and resources. Indicate how you may address these challenges.

• [ ]

Example Evaluation Plan and Data Collection Schedule

Evaluation Activity	Timeline	Sample	Analysis Plan	Data Use
Individual level attendance by network/event for all activities- include position, tenure at position, and campus/district	Ongoing as events occur	All	Sum by network, district and position across years	Use to understand the extent of attendance per district and network- monitor how this related to implementation
SOAA survey	Collect in fall, verify in spring	All districts- one per district, one per campus	Examine for types of mindsets, skills, and knowledge implemented; determine if attendance is related; over time, examine patterns of implementation to determine which configurations are most successful	Examine for patterns of implementation- if some more successful than others, use to improve
State test data – individual level by district, campus and student with demographics	Collect annually in the summer	All students	Examine to see if implementation pattern or length of involvement continue to be related to test outcomes	Use to show ABPC success and value
Case studies	Annually	4-6 per year	Examine for themes and patterns- describe implementation in depth	Use to document implementation in more depth, share best practices and resources with a wider audience
Professional Learning feedback survey	Ongoing as offerings are complete	All participants – by position, district and network	Summary data for ratings by area and themes for qualitative remarks	Examine for ways to improve offerings