NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS
SPIRIT | PRIDE | EXCELLENCE
Achieves

Cognia Accreditation



Dr. Shelia Thomas
Chief Strategy and Support Services Officer
May 13, 2025

What is Cognia?

Cognia

- is a globally recognized non-profit organization that provides accreditation, certification, assessment, and professional learning services.

Cognia Accreditation

- is a rigorous, research-based process for evaluating and certifying that an educational institution.
- ensures that schools and systems meet high-quality standards and are engaged in continuous improvement efforts.

Engagement Review Requirements

- Executive Summary
- Cognia Assurances
- Cognia's Self-Assessment Ratings and Reflections' Narrative
- NCS Accreditation Documents for Cognia's Review
- Superintendent's Presentation to Cognia
- Cognia Accreditation Team Review

District Preparation Process

- **District Cognia Engagement Review Orientation** – December 2023
- **District Staff Participates in Cognia Engagement Review Training** - March 2024
- **District's Preparation Process Began** – March 2024
- **Cognia Timeline Presentation at Principal's Network Meeting** – August 2024
- **Committees' Work -** September 2024 - ongoing
  - Data Collection and Analysis **-** Perception Data, Student Performance, Learning Environment, and district documents
  - Rating of Characteristics and Standards - Culture of Learning, Leadership of Learning, Engagement of Learning, and Growth in Learning
- **Leadership Review of Characteristics and Standards Ratings** – January 2025
- **Presentation to the Cognia Engagement Review Team** – March 2025

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

Newton County Schools

Cognia’s School System Accreditation Received

2025-2031

Index of Educational Quality - IEQ

Accreditation Year	Overall NCS IEQ Score	CIN Average IEQ Score*
2019	321.13	278.34-283.33 (5-year average)
2025	**330**	296 (1 year average)

- Average (range) of all Cognia Improvement Network (CIN)

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

Cognia Standards Diagnostic Score

Cognia Standards Rating Scale 1-4

Cognia Standards	NCS's Score	Cognia Network Avg.
Culture of Learning – (Standards 1-6)	3.3	3.1
Leadership for Learning – (Standards 7-15)	3.1	3.0
Engagement of Learning – (Standards 16-23)	3.0	2.8
Growth in Learning – (Standards 24-30)	2.9	2.8

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

Four Star Ratings

- **Standard 1** - Leaders cultivate and sustain a culture that demonstrates **respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion**, and is free from bias.

- **Standard 2** - Learners' **well-being is at the heart of the institution's** guiding principles, such as mission, purpose, and beliefs.

- **Standard 8** - The governing authority demonstrates a **commitment to learners** by collaborating with leaders to uphold the institution's priorities and to drive continuous improvement.

- **Standard 18** - Learners are **immersed in an environment that fosters lifelong skills**, including creativity, curiosity, risk-taking, collaboration, and design thinking.

Findings - Noteworthy Practices

Standards 1 and 2

- Leaders establish a **culture of equity, respect, inclusion, and learner well-being**, ensuring that every learner feels valued, supported, and empowered to learn.

Standards 17 and 18

- Learners are immersed in an environment that **honors student voice, fosters responsibility for their learning**, and cultivates lifelong skills such as creativity, curiosity, risk-taking, collaboration, and design thinking.

Findings - Area for Improvement

Standard 23

- Review and revise curriculum to integrate digital resources that deepen student engagement, stimulate curiosity, and advance instructional effectiveness.

Standard 27

- Review and monitor the effectiveness of behavior support systems to promote a positive school culture, reinforce expectations, and ensure a respectful, inclusive learning environment for all students.

SPIRIT | PRIDE | EXCELLENCE

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

Achieves