STONE CHILD COLLEGE

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March 1, 2019

Sonny Ramaswamy, President
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
8060 165th Avenue, N.E., Suite 100
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Dr. Ramaswamy,

Stone Child College is pleased to submit its Spring 2019 Mission Fulfillment and Institutional Effectiveness Report. This Report addresses Recommendation 1 of the Year Seven Peer-Evaluation Team Report from the 2017 accreditation visit. "The Committee recommends Stone Child College develop meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement for all core theme objectives. The indicators should form the basis for determination of **mission fulfillment** and be reflective of an **ethos of continuous improvement** (Standard 1.B.2)."

As a result of this recommendation, Stone Child College has increased the college's capacity to fulfill its mission by refining the Core Themes to ensure that its indicators met accreditation standards and that a sustainable process was developed for planning, assessment, and using data for continuous improvement. The SCC Core Themes were diligently modified to reflect the changes that SCC experienced in the last few years, including the addition of a bachelor's degree in elementary education. The current Core Themes are: (a) Increase Accessibility to Post-Secondary Education for American Indian Students, Students who are Economically Disadvantaged, and First-Generation College Students; (b) Provide Quality Post-Secondary Education for Transfer or Workforce; (c) Build Community Partnerships and Provide for Continuing Education; and (d) Support the Cultural Perpetuation, Including the Language, Culture, and History of the Chippewa-Cree.

In addition to revising the core themes, indicators were selected in order to ensure there were verifiable indicators of achievement for each of the four Core Themes (1.B.2). The indicators were selected to ensure the College collects and uses measurements and other indicators of *achievement* rather than records of attendance. Direct connections to the revised General Education Learner Outcome Assessment Plan and departmental Program Assessment plans were made linking them to the Core Themes and strategic planning/resource allocation process.

Stone Child College involved faculty and staff at all levels to gain input into the refinement of the Core Themes and to promote shared accountability for data reporting and usage. In the fall of 2018, Stone Child College created a structure in which each core theme would have proper input and oversight, and thus ensure efficient and accurate management of data. "Core Theme Teams" were established building upon the work of the existing SCC Strategic Planning Committees. Committee Core Theme Teams are comprised of faculty and staff who collectively and individually have the needed experience and expertise to assess, inform and improve SCC's core

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theme work and strategic planning process. Each Committee Core Theme Team is supported with an IT Committee person and a Data Committee representative.

In conclusion, it is exciting for administration, faculty, and staff to be engaged in meaningful work that refines the Core Themes in order to bring the mission of the college to greater fruition. Stone Child College administration, faculty, and staff believe that these efforts will lead to not only an ethos of continuous improvement and mission fulfillment, but will empower Stone Child College to excel as a quality tribal college that exceedingly meets the diverse social and academic needs of American Indian post-secondary students. We appreciate the opportunity to address the recommendations made by the Year Seven Peer Evaluation Team and look forward to future correspondence from the Commission.

Sincerely,

Cory Sangrey-Billy, President

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MISSION FULFILLMENT & INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REPORT

MARCH 1, 2019

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"Making our Dreams Happen with Academic Excellence, Culture and Commitment"

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Institutional Overview

Stone Child College (SCC) is a tribally chartered community college located on the Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation in north central Montana. The Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation is the smallest (115,161.43 acres) of seven reservations in Montana with approximately 3,400 Chippewa Cree tribal members and 1,400 non-Chippewa Cree tribal members living on the reservation. SCC serves approximately 4,800 people residing on the Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation and extends outreach to the local communities of Hill and Choteau Counties.

The Chippewa Cree Tribal Business Committee chartered Stone Child College in 1984. Tribal leaders established the college with the mission of preserving and maintaining Chippewa Cree culture, language, tribal history and providing educational opportunities for tribal members. Stone Child College accepted the challenge to provide quality post-secondary education for the Rocky Boy's community and surrounding areas.

SCC's Mission supports each student's ability to meet his or her educational needs through accredited certificates and degree programs for transfer, workforce entry, community and culturally related education. The College constantly aspires to be responsive to the community while being true to the Mission through cultural enrichment activities, outreach and retention activities, as well as quality degree and certificate program development. Approximately 90% of current students are of American Indian ancestry. The average enrollment for the past 2 years is 529. 68% of the students attending SCC are first generation college students. Class size varies with an average student-teacher ratio of 12:1. SCC employs approximately 16 part-time instructors and 10 full-time instructors each semester. A nine (9) member Board of Directors modeled after Tribally Controlled College Governing Boards governs the College. The Board of Directors membership is selected by the Chippewa Cree Business Committee and is made up of four Chippewa Cree Tribal Council members, four community members and one student representative. The student body elects the student representative. The Board of Directors meets on a monthly basis and participates in the planning, development, operation and evaluation of SCC programs.

Stone Child College is a growing institution with a clear Mission Statement, Core Themes, and measurable outcomes. The Mission Statement was reviewed by field experts, administration, Assessment Committee members; and was adopted and finalized by the Board of Directors in December 2011. As part of the Mission Statement review, five Guiding Principles were developed to further define and give direction to accomplish SCC's mission.

SCC was granted candidacy status during the spring of 1989 and granted initial accreditation in 1993. In 1999, SCC was reaffirmed for a 10-year period. In the spring of 2008, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities completed a comprehensive evaluation and site visit at SCC and provided nine recommendations. In August 2010, SCC received correspondence indicating all recommendations had been addressed and four (4) were in need of improvement. The four recommendations were addressed in the Ad Hoc Self-Evaluation Report in spring 2012. The college received notification on August 10, 2012 that SCC complied with all but one (1) recommendation. The final recommendation was addressed in Addendum II to the Year Three Self-Evaluation Report.

On July 18, 2013, SCC received notification that accreditation had been reaffirmed on the basis of the Spring 2013 Year Three Resources and Capacity Evaluation which was expanded to address Recommendation 2 of the Spring 2010 Focused Interim Evaluation Report. Also included was Recommendation 2 of the Spring 2011 Year One Peer-Evaluation Report with specific concerns regarding revising the mission statement. In addition, the Commission found that Recommendation 2 of the Spring 2011 Year One Peer-Evaluation Report and Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the Spring 2013 Year Three Resources and Capacity Peer-Evaluation Report are areas where Stone Child College is substantially in compliance with Commission criteria for accreditation, but in need of improvement. These recommendations were addressed in the Year Seven Report.

On October 16 through October 18, 2017, a seven-person evaluation team conducted a Year Seven Evaluation Visit to Stone Child College. The visit covered Standard One through Standard Five in response to the *Year Seven Report* submitted by the College to the Commission in September of 2017. The evaluation team recognized and honored the cultures and context of the College and its unique mission to serve American Indian students. The report provided by the evaluation team, The Comprehensive Year Seven Peer Evaluation Report, was reviewed by SCC administration, staff, and faculty. SCC believes the Report is prudent, accurate, and insightful. Furthermore, the recommendations made by the Committee are attainable, relevant, and provide SCC with actionable steps to further refine its ability to achieve high levels of success in delivering post-secondary opportunities to American Indian students. SCC expediently began work on each recommendation and area of concern.

Preface

a) Brief update on institutional changes since the institution's last report
Stone Child College experienced a few administrative changes since the last reporting cycle. When President St. Pierre who served from October 1, 2013 to August 13, 2017 passed away, the Dean of Academics, Cory Sangrey-Billy fulfilled the duties of her current position and that of interim President. On July 24, 2018 Ms. Sangrey-Billy was selected by the Board of Directors to become the new President. Wilma Tyner was hired as the Dean of Academics. Both of these leaders are ensuring that SCC retains its strong reputation as a tribal college offering quality programs for community, cultural, and workforce development. Additionally, an institutional research director and ALO, Jessie Jones was hired. Ms. Jones will ensure that the data collected and analyzed for SCC Core Themes is a continuous process that provides actionable data for institutional and program planning.

Stone Child College's institutional changes include the following:
1) a restructuring of the general education and program assessment process;
2) a restructuring of the core themes and strategic plan; and
3) minor changes in the program offerings.

1) The General Education Assessment Plan at Stone Child College was restructured in order to provide a common, measurable educational foundation for all students. The General Education Assessment Plan was designed to measure student learning around the general education coursework and to outline SCC's plan to use this assessment information to improve programs of

study, educational performance, and institutional effectiveness. The data from the General Education Assessment Plan are analyzed in order to provide SCC faculty, staff, and administration *evidence* of its institutional and student outcomes. SCC believes that assessment is a process to determine how well student learning goals have been achieved and to explore what strategies would improve all students' educational performance.

The learner outcomes for the General Education Assessment Plan
As a result of completing the general education program and coursework, SCC students will:
1. Demonstrate the fundamental skills of effective written communication;
2. Demonstrate the skills of effective oral communication;
3. Demonstrate the fundamental skills of mathematical reasoning;
4. Exhibit the fundamental skills of scientific inquiry;
5. Demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of Native American history and cultures, particularly the history, language, and culture of the Chippewa Cree;
6. Apply appropriate technology skills across the curriculum;
7. Demonstrate the ability to engage and reflect upon their intellectual and creative development within the arts, humanities and social sciences; and
8. Demonstrate knowledge of the nature of interpersonal relationships and positive communication, and apply this knowledge to on-the-job situations (for certificate programs with 30 semester credits or more).

Program Assessment
In addition to the changes to the General Education Assessment Plan, the Program Assessment Plans for each degree and certificate programs were updated and a standardized process for collecting and reporting program data was created. Each certificate and degree programs describes and measures specific student learning outcomes, as listed in the SCC Course Catalog. Each department leader reviewed the program outcomes, updated them if needed, and designed or selected an assessment to evaluate each outcome. The assessment was delegated to a particular course in the program, and was included in the course syllabus to ensure that students were informed about the assignment. Electronic spreadsheets were developed for each program leader to collect and analyze student learning data each semester and a Program Assessment Report Form was created for annual reporting of program assessment data.

Assessment Elements
The assessment plans for the General Education and Program Assessments at Stone Child College are both formative and summative, and allow faculty and staff to assess student learning and conduct remediation or provide timely support, as needed. In addition, the College uses assessment data to make needed changes to the general education program that may include revisions to curricula, faculty training, as well as, revising the assessments themselves.

The assessment plans are inclusive of both direct and indirect assessment methods. Direct assessment methods require students to demonstrate what they know and are able to do. This includes portfolio artifacts in which students submit scored evaluations of their evidence of learning for each of the learner outcomes. Indirect assessment methods of assessment include student reflections, which are based upon each student's perceptions of her or his ability to demonstrate the essential elements of each of the learning outcomes.

Identifying and maximizing the reliability and validity of the data and subsequent findings generated and collected in the General Education and Program Assessments is an essential consideration. Content, face, construct, and predictive validities are all appropriate forms of validity to establish over time with assessment data and associated findings. Such consideration will serve as an important parameter regulating the kind, volume, distribution, and utilization of the assessments used to guide, inform, and improve the General Education and Program Assessment Plans and consequent student quality.

General Education and Program Assessment Structure
The emphasis of the General Education and Program Assessment Plans at SCC centers on course-embedded assessments in specific courses. These assessments consist of critical assignments, such as essays, research papers, or pre-and post-tests, which are collected in a digital portfolio and submitted during the student's final semester. These assessments are evaluated by the instructor of the course using a consistent rubric, which evaluates student performance relative to each of the learning outcomes. The levels of progress are measured on all student evaluations for critical assessments according to **"unacceptable, developing, proficient, or exemplary."** Unacceptable (0) is defined to be a level of work lacking clear demonstration of more than one essential elements being assessed. Developing (1) is defined to be a level of work that indicates all essential elements have been demonstrated, but one of those critical elements are underdeveloped to the degree it would be prudent for the student to receive additional preparation in the underdeveloped area. Proficient (2) is defined to be a level of performance that indicates all assessed elements have been developed to the degree that it is reasonable to conclude the student has succeeded in meeting the stated expectations of the assessment. Exemplary (3) is defined to be a proficient student who has developed beyond expectations in 50% or more of the essential elements being assessed.

2) The Core Themes: In order to more explicitly meet standards 1.B.1 and 1.B.2, and to address the addition of a four-year degree program, Stone Child College re-examined and reframed its Core Themes and related indicators. The indicators were revised to ensure the College collects and uses measurements of *achievement* rather than records of attendance. Direct connections to the revised General Education Assessment Plan and Program Assessment plans were made linking them to the core themes and strategic planning/resource allocation process. The process for evaluating the objectives of the core themes was not only data intensive, but the validity and utility depended upon some very well-designed instruments as well as an analysis that went well beyond reporting just calculated values. Additionally, communication channels among the departments and faculty needed to be clearly established so that the data remains usable and accessible for planning and resource allocation.

In the fall of 2018, Stone Child College created a structure in which each core theme would have proper input and oversight, and thus ensure efficient and accurate management of data. "Core Theme Teams" were established buildings upon the work of the existing SCC Strategic Planning Committees. By allocating each of the four core themes to a strategic planning committee, shared accountability for the work is assured. Furthermore, Committee Core Theme Teams are comprised of faculty and staff who collectively and individually have the needed experience and expertise to assess, inform and improve SCC's core theme work and strategic planning process.

Each Committee Core Theme Team is supported with an IT Committee pand a Data Committee representative.

Core Theme One: *Increase Post-Secondary Education Opportunities, Achievements, and Attainments for American Indian Students, Students who are Economically Disadvantaged, and First-Generation College Students* was assigned to the SCC STUDENTCENTERED CAMPUS/ RETENTION (Theme Team Leader: John Mitchell, III).

Core Theme Two: *Provide quality Post-Secondary Education for Transfer or Workforce* was allocated to INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT (Theme Team Leader: Wanda St.Marks).

Core Theme Three: *Build Community Partnerships and Provide for Continuing Education* was assigned to Community Development/Safety (Theme Team Leader: Helen Windy-Boy).

Core Theme Four: *Support the Cultural Perpetuation, including the language, culture, and history of the Chippewa-Cree* was combined with the Culture Committee (Theme Team Leader: Peggy Aquino).

On January 10, 2019, the Theme Teams met in order to review the Core Theme Plan, which contains SCC's proposed indicators, sources for verifiable evidence, and rationale for each core theme indicator. The committee core theme groups were asked to 1) review the proposed indicators for the core theme, 2) review the rationale, and 3) discuss plans to obtain data or to provide data and benchmarks to the form when able. Once the Core Theme Plan is completed and data is collected and analyzed, the Committee Core Theme Teams will meet at least once a semester in order to:
1) Continuously review indicators, measures, and evidence;
2) Discuss and analyze the data;
3) Provide a written annual report to SCC administration on the process and the data so that it remains a continual cycle of improvement, and that the information is meaningful to inform SCC staff, faculty and administration on mission fulfillment and strategic planning. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the Committee Core Theme Teams to reach out and involve all appropriate stakeholders in the planning and data collection/analysis process. It is hoped that information is widely shared among committees to inform other committees about their work and gain perspectives on the work of other committees for their use.

3) Based on a review of program data, SCC made minor changes to its program offerings. SCC Faculty agreed to place in moratorium the following certificate programs that have had low numbers and interest in the past two catalog years: the one-year building trades certificate program, and the hospitality/customer relations certificate program. All certificate programs were aligned with the General Education Plan and include all relevant and required general education learner outcomes. This action met Recommendation 2 of the Comprehensive Year Seven Peer Evaluation Report: "The evaluation panel recommends Stone Child College take prompt action to ensure all workforce degrees and certificates of 30 semester credits or more in length contain a recognizable core of related instruction or general education with identified

outcomes in the areas of communication, computation, and human relations that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes (Standard 2.C.9)."

b) Response to topics previously requested by the Commission
The Comprehensive Year Seven Peer Evaluation Report was reviewed by SCC administration, staff, and faculty. The recommendations made by the Committee provided SCC with actionable steps to further refine its ability to achieve high levels of success in delivering post-secondary opportunities to American Indian students. The focus of this 2019 Mission Fulfillment and Institutional Effectiveness Report is to address the actions taken by SCC to fully address Recommendation 1 of the Comprehensive Year Seven Peer Evaluation Report.

Recommendation 1: The Committee recommends Stone Child College develop meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement for all core theme objectives. The indicators should form the basis for determination of **mission fulfillment** and be reflective of an **ethos of continuous improvement** (Standard 1.B.2).

Action:
1. **Refinement of the alignment between Mission, Core Themes, and Indicators and by further developing Stone Child College's approaches to planning, assessment, and continuous improvement.**

   Mission: *Stone Child College (SCC) is a tribally chartered college established to deliver post-secondary educational opportunities through degrees, certificates and continuing education. SCC stresses the importance of preserving the Chippewa Cree language, culture and history. SCC will promote transfer students, professionally prepared and career-ready individuals.*

   Original Core Themes: *a) Transfer Education; (b) Workforce Education; (c) Cultural Education; and (d) Community Education.*

   Modifications to Core Themes and their relationship to strategic planning, assessment, resource allocation, mission fulfillment, and an ethos of continual improvement. The SCC Core Themes were modified to reflect the changes that SCC experienced in the last few years, including the addition of a bachelor's degree in elementary education. Indicators were then selected for each Core Theme to provide the College with meaningful and actionable data. Please refer to **Attachment A** for the revised Core Themes and Indicators.

   Current Core Themes: (a) Increase Accessibility to Post-Secondary Education for American Indian Students, Students who are Economically Disadvantaged, and First-Generation College Students; (b) Provide Quality Post-Secondary Education for Transfer or Workforce; (c) Build Community Partnerships and Provide for Continuing Education; and (d) Support the Cultural Perpetuation, Including the Language, Culture, and History, of the Chippewa-Cree.

2. **Achievement Indicators for Core Themes: In addition to revising the core themes, indicators were reviewed and selected to ensure they and the related objectives are verifiable indicators of achievement for each of the four Core Themes** (1.B.2). The indicators were revised to ensure the College collects and uses measurements of *achievement* rather than records of attendance. Direct connections to the revised General Education Learner Outcome Assessment Plan and departmental Program Assessment plans were made linking them to the Core Themes and strategic planning/resource allocation process.

Recommendation 2: The evaluation panel recommends Stone Child College take prompt action to ensure all workforce degrees and certificates of 30 semester credits or more in length contain a recognizable core of related instruction or general education with identified outcomes in the areas of communication, computation, and human relations that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes (Standard 2.C.9).

Action: Stone Child College reorganized its General Education Learner Outcome Assessment Plan, which includes the general education requirements for the certificate programs of 30 semester credits or more. The general education requirements include all required outcomes, including the areas of communication, computation, and human relations that align with and support program goals and/or intended outcomes. Specific changes, as recommended, include the certificate in Accounting/Information Management, which did not clearly include human relations and the Certificate in Rural Public Health, which appeared to lack computation (2.C.9).

Recommendation 3: Since the core theme outcomes are directly related to the institution's mission fulfillment, the connection between the assessments related to core themes and the assessments related to strategic planning needs to be made evident. The committee accordingly recommends Stone Child College more directly align Core Theme assessment with the outcomes assessed as part of the college's strategic planning processes (Standards 3.B.3, 4.A.6, 4.B.1).

Action:
1. **Impacting Resource Allocation**: Since it was not clear the extent to which core theme assessments are used by SCC to inform planning and resource allocation, a process was developed to align the core themes with its institutional and program planning process. This process was created to "close the loop" and provide clear evidence to illustrate the alignment of data with resource allocation. The new alignment and strategic planning process address the Committee's concerns: "It is not clear the extent to which core theme assessments are used to inform planning and resource allocation." And "...evidence that illustrates how these efforts impact resource allocations was lacking."
2. **Core Themes and Strategic Planning Assessment Alignment**: Stone Child College aligned its revised Core Theme assessments with the outcomes assessed as part of the college's strategic planning processes (Standards 3.B.3, 4.A.6, 4.B.1). Both program strategic planning and institutional strategic planning processes have been created.

In addition to the three recommendations from the Committee, the following areas of concern were addressed in the Evaluation Report.

SCC Autonomy: "The Board should consider developing its own instrument for regular periodic evaluation (2.A.1 through 2.A.8)."

Action: A board evaluation process and tool were recently developed to assist with the SCC Board evaluation process. The Board is reviewing its evaluation process and will consider the new evaluation tool as a potential instrument. In particular, the Board will utilize the results of the evaluation for reflection, discussion, and possible action.

Human Resources: "A concern in this area is the high turnover reported in key positions and the difficulty in finding qualified staff. Additionally, staff and faculty talked about the number of key faculty and staff nearing retirement. Staff reported that conversations had started on these topics and the Committees encourages a formal strategy to address recruitment, retention, and succession planning (2.B.1)."

Action: A committee to address faculty and staff planning will be developed as part of the core theme strategic planning process and be based upon current and projected data.

Evaluation of Part-time Faculty: "The Committee is concerned about the evaluation of part-time faculty. While the process is rigorous for full-time faculty, the process appears to be inconsistently applied to part-time faculty (2.B.6)."

Action: Although SCC does have an evaluation process in place for part-time instructors and does conduct such evaluations on a regular basis, it recognizes that the process may be improved upon and more consistently employed. To accomplish this goal, a new evaluation tool was developed for part-time instructors and will be utilized beginning spring term 2018.

Alignment of Instruction Components with Certificate Program Goals: "The related instruction component of certificate programs has not been separated from the professional core in most instances. Work in this area appears to be underway and the panel encourages the college to continue work on ensuring the related instruction components are aligned with the certificate program goals and that related instruction outcomes are assessable and assessed. These components can be taught through stand-alone blocks or may be embedded in other courses, but the faculty responsible for this content must be appropriately qualified (2.C.11)."

Action: Work on revising each of the certificate programs has begun and will be done in a manner to ensure all standards are successfully and properly met.

Delineate Workforce from Community Education: "Finally, the Committee wishes to express the concern that SCC may wish to more carefully delineate programs offered as Workforce Development and those offered as Community Education, as well as between credit and non-credit programs. (C.2.16-19)."

Action: To address the concern regarding credit and non-credit programs and to distinguish Workforce Development programs from Community Education programs, SCC developed a Continuing Education Unit Policy, aligned with IACET Standards.

Title IX: "A concern is in documentation and training for students related specifically to Title IX policies and procedures. It also does not appear the college has a trained Title IX investigator. There is information on sexual harassment, but it does not appear to cover the whole breadth of the Violence Against Women Act or some of the other federal regulations found in the Dear Colleague Letter. This is a potential risk to students and to at the college which relies heavily on federal grant funding. (2.D.2)"

Action: SCC recognizes the critical need for Title IX compliance and has begun to develop policies and procedures to ensure that the whole breadth of the law is included. One such change is to list on each SCC syllabus a statement regarding Title IX.

Records: "A concern is that currently the institution does not appear to have good comprehensive back up for records. During previous flooding some records were destroyed, and while improvements have been made in the safe storage of records many different types of records are not backed up electronically. This was stated as a goal (2.D.7)."

Action: The College now employs a data manager whose responsibilities include ensuring records are transferred electronically.

Summary of previous topics reviewed by the Commission
Stone Child College received formal notification and official record of action taken by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities at its meeting on January 9-11, 2019, concerning the Fall 2018 Ad Hoc Report from Stone Child College. The action taken was to accept the Fall 2018 Ad Hoc Report. Therefore, recommendation 2 of the Fall 2017 Peer-Evaluation Report is fulfilled and no further action is required.

Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations
a) Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirements 2 and 3
2. Authority
The Chippewa Cree Tribe chartered Stone Child College. The Charter was granted pursuant to the authority granted by the Constitution of the Chippewa Cree Tribe through passage of Resolution No. 45-84 on May 17, 1984 "To Approve the Charter and Establishment of the Rocky Boy/Stone Child Community College," In October 1992, the Chippewa Cree Tribal Business Committee approved Tribal Ordinance 2-92, which further strengthened the chartering of Stone Child College. The Chippewa Cree Tribe delegated to its chartered corporation, Stone Child College, wide ranging authority to provide post-secondary opportunities and to grant post-secondary degrees and certificates in order to meet the educational needs of the Chippewa Cree people. In December 1987, the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (now Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities) granted Stone Child College formal authority to operate as an affiliate campus of Salish-Kootenai College, Pablo, MT. In September 1987, the State of Montana University System Board of Regents granted Stone Child College formal authority to offer associate degree programs. In June 1989, the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges granted candidacy status as a two-year post-secondary institution to Stone Child College.

3. Mission and Core Themes

Stone Child College (SCC) is a tribally chartered college established to deliver post-secondary educational opportunities through degrees, certificates and continuing education. SCC stresses the importance of preserving the Chippewa Cree language, culture and history. SCC will promote transfer students, professionally prepared and career-ready individuals.

Stone Child College core themes are to increase accessibility to post-secondary education for American Indian students, provide quality post-secondary education for transfer or workforce entry, build community partnerships and continuing education, and support cultural perpetuation of the Chippewa and Cree language, culture, and history.

SCC devotes substantial resources to support its educational mission and core themes, and has the organizational independence and capacity to meet the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities standards and eligibility requirements.

b) Standard 1.A Mission
Stone Child College Mission Statement

Stone Child College (SCC) is a tribally chartered college established to deliver post-secondary educational opportunities through degrees, certificates and community education. SCC stresses the importance of preserving the Chippewa Cree language, culture and history. SCC will promote transfer students, professionally prepared and career-ready individuals.

Core Values: Preserving the Past, Educating the Present, Planning for the Future

Vision: "Making our Dreams Happen with Academic Excellence, Culture and Commitment"

Guiding Principles:
1. Preserve and promote the language, culture, and history of the Chippewa Cree.
2. Assist tribal organizations in staff development, planning, research, and other needed services.
3. Collaborate with other institutions and agencies in furthering the interests of the college and community.
4. Continually assess institutional programs and student achievement for increased efficiency and effectiveness.
5. Maintain a student-centered, life-long learning-oriented environment, including opportunities for leadership and community service.

Stone Child College Interpretation of Mission Fulfillment

Stone Child College defines mission fulfillment as demonstrating an acceptable level of performance on the objective indicators for each of the Core Themes: (a) Increase Accessibility to Post-Secondary Education for American Indian Students, Students who are Economically Disadvantaged, and First-Generation College Students; (b) Provide Quality Post-Secondary Education for Transfer or Workforce; (c) Build Community Partnerships and Provide for Continuing Education; and (d) Support the Cultural Perpetuation, Including the Language, Culture, and History, of the Chippewa-Cree.

In order to more explicitly meet standards 1.B.1 and 1.B.2, and to address the addition of a four-year degree program, Stone Child College re-examined and reframed its Core Themes and related indicators. The indicators were revised to ensure the College collects and uses measurements of *achievement*. Direct connections to the revised General Education Learner Outcome Assessment Plan and departmental Program Assessment plans were made linking them to the core themes and strategic planning/resource allocation process.

Articulation of an Acceptable Threshold, Extent, or Degree of Mission Fulfillment
An acceptable level of performance for each Core Theme indicator has been reviewed and refined by a Committee Core Theme Team. (Refer to pages 5 and 6 of this report for a complete description of the Committee Core Theme Teams.) For each indicator, specific measurement parameters were defined and performance levels were benchmarked over at least two (2) assessment cycles when the data was available. Proposed targets for acceptable performance will monitored. This framework will be used as a working model throughout two (2) assessment cycles to determine viability. The changes to the Core Themes were widely shared with faculty and staff beginning with staff and faculty meetings. In addition to a clear plan and measurable outcomes and indicators, attention was given to ensure that a sustainable process for collecting and analyzing data was in place. Benchmarks indicators were developed based on historical trends and minimum acceptable levels of performance. National data was also reviewed and utilized as relevant. SCC tracks, analyzes, and utilizes data on a continual basis to measure progress and demonstrate commitment to the mission.

As part of this process, SCC collects data for analysis and bases program decisions and improvements using the following practices:

- A rubric was developed and implemented by the Assessment Committee to objectively review and score each department's program assessment plans and reports, and the General Education Assessment reports;
- A standardized rubric was developed and is utilized by all faculty to add uniformity to the student assessment process;
- Student assessment of general education outcomes includes a student-based assessment in which the students describe their perceptions of the instruction, relevance, and support of the general education outcome in an essay;
- A sustainable process for collecting, analyzing and reporting program and general education data was created and being utilized;
- All staff have been provided with professional development around the core themes and have been included in multiple opportunities to review the core themes, indicators, and data plan;
- Indicators for the core theme were developed with focus on measurable and actionable outcomes.

SCC staff and faculty understand the value of linking data to mission fulfillment and are dedicated to the data collection process. SCC administration aspires to create an environment which is mission focused and driven by institutional values and data.

c) Standard 1.B Core Themes

Core Theme One: Increase Post-Secondary Education Opportunities, Achievements, and Attainments for American Indian Students, Students who are Economically Disadvantaged, and First-Generation College Students

Description:
The overall mission of Stone Child College is to provide access and quality post-secondary education to American Indian students. Data on enrollment, persistence and graduation rates will provide meaningful and relevant information to SCC on both mission fulfillment and possible areas for improvement. The indicators for Core Theme One were selected as they are essential aspects to measuring and monitoring who is being served and how well. Entry and exit data can inform SCC on student characteristics common to many American Indian students, which often impede success in post-secondary education. These characteristics include being a first-generation college student, being economically disadvantaged, or being academically ill-prepared for higher education. These characteristics may provide challenges, but not barriers if the institution is aware and proactively addresses issues as guided by the ongoing data analysis.

Persistence is defined as the percentage of students who maintain their enrollment and/or complete their program. Persistence data are an essential measure of SCC's mission fulfillment, as it is not only critical to increase access to post-secondary opportunities for American Indian students, but it is also essential to provide the support and education necessary for continued enrollment or completion. Graduation rates alone will only provide a partial picture of institutional fulfillment as many students do not count if they transfer to another institution. SCC has elected to track the trends and changes in Indian Student Count from entry to exit in order to develop strategies, such as increasing recruitment activities and program revisions that are relevant and tied to SCC's strategic planning process. Included in the planning process are justifications for resource allocation, based upon data.

Objective:
To increase the post-secondary education opportunities, achievements, and attainments for American Indian students, students who are economically disadvantaged, and first-generation college students

Indicators:
1. Number and percent of American Indian students
2. Number and percent receiving PELL
3. Number and percent first generation college students
4. Persistence in semesters
5. Retention year to year
6. Graduation rates
7. Dual enrollment numbers and credits earned

Rationale:
1. Number and percent of American Indian students: **Rationale for Criteria:** The overall mission of Stone Child College is to provide access and quality post-secondary education to American Indian students. Data on enrollment, persistence and graduation rates will provide

meaningful and relevant information to SCC on both mission fulfillment and possible areas for improvement.

2. Number and percent receiving PELL: **Rationale for Criteria:** Entry and exit data can inform SCC on student characteristics common to many American Indian students, which often impede success in post-secondary education. These characteristics include being a first-generation college student, being economically disadvantaged, or being academically ill-prepared for higher education. These characteristics may provide challenges, but not barriers if the institution is aware and proactively addresses issues as guided by the ongoing data analysis. One factor that places AI college students at risk is lack of financial resources. Therefore, students who receive financial aid, including PELL grants will be tracked by year in school.

3. Number and percent first generation college students: **Rationale for Criteria**: First Generation College students are defined as students entering SCC who do not have a parent or guardian with a bachelors degree. First generation college students are often at risk for not graduating as they do not have access to the support and information about the nuances of college work and life and often lack the tools for college success. Tracking first generation college students will provide SCC with information on how well it is serving these potentially at-risk students.

4. Persistence in semesters: **Rationale for Criteria**: Persistence is defined as the percentage of students who maintain their enrollment and/or complete their program. Persistence data are essential measures of SCC's mission fulfillment to increase access to post-secondary opportunities for American Indian students. Persistence data are also essential to provide the support and education necessary for continued enrollment or program completion.

5. Retention year to year: **Rationale for Criteria**: Retention rate is the percentage of a school's first-time, first-year undergraduate students who continue at that school the next year. Data on retention are often linked to student satisfaction. Students whose academic needs are being met are more likely to return.

6. Graduation rates: **Rationale for Criteria:** Graduation rates provide a partial picture of institutional fulfillment as many students do not count as completers if they transfer to another institution. SCC has elected to track the trends and changes in Indian Student Count from entry to exit in order to develop strategies, such as increasing recruitment activities and program revisions that are relevant and tied to SCC's strategic planning process.

7. Dual enrollment numbers and credits earned: **Rationale for Criteria:** Student data (numbers, credits completed, courses completed, continued enrollment) on those who enroll in dual enrollment courses (students who take college courses for both college and high school credit) will provide SCC with actionable data on improving the educational services and offerings.

Core Theme Two: Provide quality Post-Secondary Education for Transfer or Workforce

Description:
Stone Child College defines quality post-secondary education as the framework wherein students have an *abundant* **opportunity** to **access** higher education with the additional qualities of

exemplary instruction and support for their educational *achievement* and *laudably honored* when having **attained a marked degree of growth.** There are three components within Core Theme Two: quality programs and curricula, quality services, and quality student outcomes. These three elements were selected to provide specificity to the overarching goal of proving quality post-secondary education for students to transfer and further their education, and/or to enter the workforce. SCC believes all three components contain critical aspects of a quality post-secondary education.

The indicators were selected to provide meaningful, verifiable and assessable data on SCC's work in creating and delivering quality programs and curricula. The data, which are focused on student outcomes and institutional achievements, will appraise SCC of its institutional effectiveness and mission fulfillment. By connecting the data to institutional strategic planning and resource allocation, the process will empower SCC by increasing its capacity to continuously improve the quality and relevance of education provided to its students.

Indicators of student learning are perhaps the most important measurement of a quality education. General Education Outcomes are assessed in selected general education courses and provide the institution and programs with information on SCC's general education program. Program assessments are collected and reported for each academic department annually. Effectiveness of the curriculum is measured through student, graduate, and employer surveys. The surveys provide an indirect measure of quality of education as perceived by those who employ SCC graduates.

In summary, the indicators for the three components for Core Theme Two provide the means to evaluate the quality of educational programs and their effectiveness in preparing students for entry into the workforce or to transfer for further education.

Objectives:
To provide quality educational programs and curricula; to provide quality student support services, and to ensure quality student outcomes.

Indicators:
Quality Programs and Curricula
1. Student satisfaction surveys
2. Course evaluations: Evaluation of course; 2. Evaluation of student learning; 3. Evaluation of teaching
3. Program assessments and Student Learning Outcomes
4. Exit surveys of graduates
5. MOUs for transfer/dual enrollment
6. Quality faculty
7. Quality leadership
8. Teacher/student ratio

Quality Services
9. Satisfaction surveys from students and faculty
10. Funding and support
11. Quality staff

12. Use and success rate of students using student services (transportation, learning center, childcare, and retention)

Quality Student Outcomes
13. General Education Outcomes and Data Analysis
14. Institutional assessment of program and general education assessments; number of programs improving student learning using program data
15. Graduate survey of student perceptions of the degree to which curricula prepared them for employment or transfer

Rationale:
1. Student satisfaction surveys: **Rationale for Criteria**: The CCSSE survey is conducted every other year and provides data on SCC student satisfaction. This data leads to institutional changes when indicated.
2. Course evaluations: **Rationale for Criteria**: Course evaluations provide information and data on individual courses, student development and learning, and an evaluation of teaching. These evaluations provide SCC with actionable data for improving each component.
3. Program assessments and Student Learning Outcomes: **Rationale for Criteria**: Indicators of student learning are perhaps the most important measurement of a quality education. Program assessments are collected and reported for each academic department annually. Each degree program has developed a Program Assessment Plan, which outlines the assessments and related courses that support and assess each learner outcome. The analysis for this indicator will consist of aggregated and disaggregated data (by degree program). The analysis is used for institutional and program planning.
4. Exit surveys of graduates: **Rationale for Criteria:** A graduate/exit survey is administered each year and taken by each student. Questions 6, 7 and 34 from this survey will be analyzed to provide information on students' perceptions of their college experience and learning.
5. MOUs for transfer/dual enrollment: **Rationale for Criteria:** MOUs with other colleges provide expanded opportunities to SCC students for continued education or for education in areas not offered at SCC. Additionally, MOUs for dual enrollment provide local high school students with opportunities to gain college credit and experience while still enrolled in high school. Therefore, MOUs will provide SCC with information on its ability to offer expanded educational opportunities through partnerships with other colleges and high schools.
6. Quality faculty: **Rationale for Criteria**: Quality faculty are key to student learning and development. Quality faculty will be measured through student evaluations, CCSSE survey data; a qualifications review of degrees, experience and other skills/knowledge; and an analysis of the peer evaluation process.
7. Quality leadership: **Rationale for Criteria:** Quality leadership is essential at all levels. Quality leadership will be measured through graduate survey questions which address the leadership of the SCC president. Leadership will also be measured through a self-evaluation of the Board of Directors with a plan for improvement.
8. Teacher/student ratio: **Rationale for Criteria:** Small class sizes are indicative of individualized student support and are preferred by SCC students. Therefore,

teacher/student ratios provide SCC with information that needs to be monitored to ensure that proper teacher/student ratios continue.

9. Satisfaction surveys from students and faculty: **Rationale for Criteria:** Effectiveness of the curriculum is measured through student, graduate, and employer surveys. The CCSSE and CCFSSE surveys provide information on SCC student and staff perceptions of satisfaction.

10. Funding and support: **Rationale for Criteria:** Adequate funding for academic and student support services is essential. A review and analysis of the annual budget and other areas of support is critical for institutional management.

11. Quality staff: **Rationale for Criteria:** Quality staff provide quality services to ensure that students are well supported. Quality staff will be determined by reviewing qualifications of staff members and through an analysis of the Graduate Survey.

12. Use and success rate of students using student services (transportation, learning center, childcare, and retention): **Rationale for Criteria:** Students attending tribal colleges often experience challenges and hardships that create barriers to their academic success. These challenges may force students to fail or withdraw from courses and even withdraw from college. Therefore, student support services are critical to student success if they adequately address these challenges. Student services that have been identified as being essential are transportation, financial aid, childcare, and tutoring. Data on these services will assist SCC in measuring their impact and importance.

13. General Education Outcomes and Data Analysis: **Rationale for Criteria:** Indicators of student learning are perhaps the most important measurement of a quality education. General Education Outcomes are assessed in selected general education courses and provide the institution and programs with information on SCC's general education program.

14. Institutional assessment of program and general education assessments; number of programs improving student learning using program data: **Rationale for Criteria:** Indicators of student learning are perhaps the most important measurement of a quality education. General Education Outcomes are assessed in selected general education courses and provide the institution and programs with information on SCC's general education program. Program assessments are collected and reported for each academic department annually. The SCC Assessment Committee utilizes a 5-point rubric to analyze each General Education and Program Assessment Plan and Report.

15. Graduate survey of student perceptions of the degree to which curricula prepared them for employment or transfer: **Rationale for Criteria:** The graduate and employer surveys provide an indirect measure of quality of education as perceived by those who employ SCC graduates and by the graduates who become employed. Question #13 of the graduate survey directly asks students about their perceptions of how well they were prepared for employment or transfer.

Core Theme Three: Build Community Partnerships and Provide for Continuing Education

Description:
Community partnerships and collaboration with community and tribal agencies are common and essential components of tribal colleges. Tribal colleges function and flourish within rich

reciprocal networks of community support and cooperation. These symbiotic relationships empower both the college and the outlying schools, agencies, and community resources.

Providing training for tribal organizations on the Rocky Boy Reservation and local community is an integral part of the SCC Mission. SCC makes a regular effort to collaborate with tribal organizations, plan trainings, identify needed coursework, and attend meetings that support tribal organization staff development, planning, research, and other needed services. The indicators selected to measure SCC's work with community entities and provide quality community education are meaningful, verifiable and assessable. They will provide SCC with outcome-based data to improve its partnerships and the quality of community education.

Objectives:
To build community partnerships and to provide continuing education

Indicators:
1. Employer performance evaluations of graduates
2. Quality of community events and learner outcomes held on the SCC campus
3. Continuing education credits and outcomes
4. Number and percent of faculty and staff who participate in community events
5. Number of formal partnerships and MOUs with community and tribal organizations

Rationale:
1. Employer performance evaluations of graduates: **Rationale for Criteria:** The graduate or employer surveys provide an indirect measure of quality of education as perceived by those who employ SCC graduates and by the graduates who become employed.
2. Quality of community events and learner outcomes held on the SCC campus: **Rationale for Criteria**: Community partnerships and collaboration with community and tribal agencies are common and essential components of tribal colleges. Tribal colleges function and flourish within rich reciprocal networks of community support and cooperation. These symbiotic relationships empower both the college and the outlying schools, agencies, and community resources. Providing training for tribal organizations on the Rocky Boy Reservation and local community is an integral part of the SCC Mission. SCC makes a regular effort to collaborate with tribal organizations, plan trainings, identify needed coursework, and attend meetings that support tribal organization staff development, planning, research, and other needed services. The indicators selected to measure SCC's work with community entities and provide quality community education are meaningful, verifiable and assessable. They will provide SCC with outcome-based data to improve its partnerships and the quality of community education.
3. Continuing education credits and outcomes: **Rationale for Criteria**: The indicators selected to measure SCC's work with community entities and provide quality community education are meaningful, verifiable and assessable. They will provide SCC with outcome-based data to improve its partnerships and the quality of community education.
4. Number and percent of faculty and staff who participate in community events: **Rationale for Criteria:** Faculty and staff engagement in community events is a crucial part of mission fulfillment for SCC. SCC participation in the community is vital to its growth

through partnerships, service provisions and individual and personal exchanges. The relationship of SCC and the local community is symbiotic.

5. Number of formal partnerships and MOUs with community and tribal organizations: **Rationale for Criteria:**. The relationship between SCC and community and tribal organizations is essential for both entities and can be tracked through formal agreements and MOUs.

Core Theme Four: Support the Cultural Perpetuation, including the language, culture, and history of the Chippewa-Cree

Description:

One of the primary motivations and vision for originally establishing Stone Child College was to preserve the history of the Chippewa Cree people and retain/preserve the language on the Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation. Core Theme Four reflects Stone Child College's vision of preserving culture, history and language. The core theme is used as a guiding principle to foster opportunities for continuing Chippewa Cree culture in perpetuity.

The indicators for Core Theme Four are divided into two components: language and culture/history. These two components are inclusive of the mission of SCC and its guiding principles. Chippewa-Cree language was separated from culture and history in order to signify its importance. There are only a few fluent speakers alive today thereby making language a critical need to ensure the perpetuation of the culture. "The wisdom of humanity is coded in language," says Lyle Campbell, director of the University of Utah's Center for American Indian Languages. "Once a language dies, the knowledge dies with it."

One of the challenges in measuring and assessing cultural objectives is the difficulty in defining "culture." SCC believes that culture consists of those values that sustain the essential nature of a group of people, whereby if you change a cultural value, you change the very essence of the lives of those people. Traditions on the other hand, while enduring to some degree, can change without changing the form by which people live their lives.

Objectives:

To support the cultural perpetuation, including the language, culture, and history of the Chippewa-Cree

Indicators:

1. General Education learner outcome data from native language classes
2. Number of Class 7 licenses with year of expiration, and number of language course completers
3. Evidence of native language learning among faculty and staff and its contributions to their work
4. Completion hours, events, and outcomes for attending cultural events by faculty and staff
5. General Education Learner Outcome data on cultural outcomes
6. Evidence of cultural exchanges among students, faculty, staff and the community
7. Historical and cultural holdings in the library and their usage

Rationale:

1. General Education learner outcome data from native language classes: **Rationale for Criteria:** All SCC students are required to successfully complete a course on Cree or Chippewa language. To measure students' learning, SCC's General Education Learning Outcome # 5 (Demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of Native American history and cultures, particularly the history, language, and culture of the Chippewa Cree) provides data on students' perceptions of native language learning. Students demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of Native American history and cultures, particularly the history, language, and culture of the Chippewa-Cree by creating a Kinship Chart and summarizing their learning about the Chippewa-Cree language, history and culture in an essay in NASX 100 Cree I. The SCC General Education Learning Outcome rubric and essay will be used to assess students' demonstration of the outcome and the core theme indicator.

2. Number of Class 7 licenses with year of expiration, and number of language course completers: **Rationale for Criteria:** SCC oversees the preparation and certification of Class 7 licenses that are required in order to teach Cree language in K-12 public schools. This is an important aspect of ensuring perpetuation of Cree language and SCC's mission fulfillment. Class 7 teachers are in high demand in local K-12 schools.

3. Evidence of native language learning among faculty and staff and its contributions to their work: **Rationale for Criteria:** It is the belief of SCC that native language learning is the crux of its mission. Therefore, SCC leadership encourages faculty and staff to learn and use Cree language. Tracking data on the number of faculty and staff engaged in language classes and the associated learning outcomes provides SCC with information on this critical aspect of its mission.

4. Completion hours, events, and outcomes for attending cultural events by faculty and staff: **Rationale for Criteria:** By tracking data, particularly the outcomes achieved by participating in cultural events, SCC can improve upon its ability to offer culturally relevant programs and services. Note: One of the challenges in measuring and assessing cultural objectives is the difficulty in defining "culture." SCC believes that culture consists of those values that sustain the essential nature of a group of people, whereby if you change a cultural value, you change the very essence of the lives of those people. Traditions on the other hand, while enduring to some degree, can change without changing the form by which people live their lives.

5. General Education Learner Outcome data on cultural outcomes: **Rationale for Criteria:** SCC will analyze General Education Learner Outcome #7 (students will demonstrate the ability to engage and reflect upon their intellectual and creative development within the arts, humanities and social sciences.) In ART 110 Art Appreciation, students create a winter count story synthesizing the elements of the arts, humanities, and social sciences to tell their personal, cultural journey. This assessment is evaluated by the SCC GELO rubric and includes an essay in which students describe their learning in relationship to the outcome.

6. Evidence of cultural exchanges among students, faculty, staff and the community: **Rationale for Criteria:** The cultures of the Chippewa Cree are heart of SCC's mission. Therefore, cultural exchanges and events are essential to ensure that SCC stays true to its

mission. In order to offer culturally responsive academic programs and student services, a common cultural knowledge base among faculty, staff and students is foundational. This foundation is best built through authentic cultural learning opportunities in which students, faculty and staff participate and learn together, when possible.

7. Historical and cultural holdings in the library and their usage: **Rationale for Criteria**: SCC Library continues to expand the library collection specific to Chippewa and Cree history, language and culture. To ensure that its collections are relevant, authentic and useable, data will be gathered and analyzed on the usage of its cultural and historical holdings and resources.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is exciting for administration, faculty, and staff to be engaged in meaningful work that brings the mission of the college to greater fruition. Stone Child College administration, faculty, and staff believe that the work of accreditation and assessment will lead to not only an ethos of continuous improvement and mission fulfillment, but will empower Stone Child College to excel as a quality tribal college that exceedingly meets the diverse social and academic needs of American Indian post-secondary students. Stone Child College is particularly pleased that the process has been refined so that everyone is involved. Faculty, staff, and administration are able to share, review, discuss and utilize data for multiple purposes. By connecting the Core Themes to the Strategic Plan and Committees, the process of data collection is transparent and actionable. One of the frustrations previously expressed by faculty and staff was the lack of usable data. Information was provided, but there was little follow through and action taken. Now that there is a viable process in place and a clear understanding of shared accountability for data collection and usage, there is much more engagement around the Core Themes and accreditation standards.

In addition to the data collection and analysis, connections are being made between the Core Themes and projects that focus on strategies for improving student success. One such project is "Achieving the Dream" in which financial and technical support are given for using and measuring multiple strategies designed to enhance the educational performance of students and increase retention and graduation rates. Implementation of a data driven model stemming from a consistent strategic plan for this and other projects is conducive to making and measuring institutional improvements.

Data from the refined Core Theme process are emerging that will allow for determination of relevant baseline and benchmark data points. Once the data collection has reached the appropriate level, the initial findings of the process will be analyzed, communicated, and actualized prior to incorporating them into the strategic plan. The College is committed to ensuring a sustainable process and will work to continually improve the Core Theme process and indicators based upon current issues, indicator language and clarification, relevant benchmarks and thresholds, and relevancy to the institution. Revisions will be made as needed and become part of the data collection for the next annual cycle. Utility of Core Theme data will be paramount throughout the process and will ensure that processes and plans are in place for both mission fulfillment and continuous improvement.