



SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONAL
— SOLUTIONS —
A DIVISION OF SYNERGISTIC TRANSFORMATIONS, INC.

Evaluation of the Indianapolis Mayor Sponsored Charter Schools

pilotED Schools
2nd Year Site Visit
12/3/2019

Conducted by:
Dr. Terrence Harewood
Lucy Witte
Cheryl McLaughlin



PILOTED SCHOOLS

December 3, 2019

The Indianapolis Mayor's Office Second Year Charter Review is designed to assess the extent to which a school is meeting the standards for renewal during the second year of its charter term. The Second Year Review Protocol is based on the Mayor's *Performance Framework*, which is used to determine a school's success relative to a common set of indicators, as well as to school-based goals.

Consistent with the Indianapolis Mayor's Office Performance Framework, the following core question and sub-questions are examined to determine a school's success:

- 1. *Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?***
 - 4.1. *Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?*
 - 4.2. *Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?*
 - 4.3. *For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?*
 - 4.4. *Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?*
 - 4.5. *Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?*
 - 4.6. *Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?*
 - 4.7. *Is the school climate responsive to the needs of students, staff, and families?*
 - 4.8. *Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?*
 - 4.9. *Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with special needs?*
 - 4.10. *Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?*

COMPLETION OF THE SECOND-YEAR CHARTER REVIEW

In compliance with the Mayor's Office Accountability framework, pilotED Schools engaged School Organizational Solutions (SOS), LLC to conduct the site visit in its second year of operation. The purpose is to present the school and the Mayor's Office a professional judgment on conditions and practices at the school, which are best provided through an external perspective. The Second Year Charter Review site visit uses multiple sources of evidence to understand the school's performance. Evidence collection begins before the visit with the review of key documents and continues on-site through additional document review, classroom visits and interviews with any number of stakeholders.

Findings provided by the site visit team can be used to celebrate what the school is doing well and prioritize its areas for improvement in preparation for renewal. It is the task of the site visit team to report on the following pre-identified aspects of the *Performance Framework* and to assist the Mayor's Office in its completion of the Second Year Charter Review Protocol: ***Core Question 4 and all of its sub-questions (4.1-4.10).***

Responses to Core Question 1 and all of its sub-questions (1.1-1.4), Core Question 2 and all of its sub-questions 2.1, 2.2 and 2.4 and Core Question 3 and all of its sub-questions (3.1-3.3), will be completed by the Mayor's Office.

The outcome of the Second Year Charter Review will provide the school with a written report that includes a judgment and supporting evidence on various aspects of the school, based on a rubric of indicators developed for the core question number four and its sub-questions as outlined in the Performance Framework above. The assessment system utilizes the following judgments:

Does not meet standard

Approaching standard

Meets standard

Introduction

On December 3, 2019, three external review site team members conducted the 2019 Second Year Charter Review of pilotED Schools. pilotED Schools is an independent, coeducational charter school serving students in grades K-3. The school plans to add a grade level every year and at capacity is projected to have 729 seats available for students in grades K-8, according to its charter application.

Located on the Southeast side of Indianapolis, pilotED, has a bold and audacious mission to bring social identity development front stage as an essential co-requisite to intellectual development. The school's founders firmly believe that connecting school to the students' lived experiences is vital for academic success. The social identity-based model is based on research on stereotype threat and other similar research conducted done by Claude Steele, the University of Chicago, and the NAACP.

The charter application included maximum enrollment at the school in year one at 243 and 324 by year two. The school served 79 students in 2019 and this year fell slightly short of its enrollment target with 160 students.

Even with its small size, the school has a very strong community presence and performs invaluable community service, both within and outside its walls. The school's unique curriculum and social and emotional offerings extend beyond the school barriers as parents and members of the community can take advantage of the mental health counselling, the free eggs and free produce generated by the school's small farm, or the food pantry and parent resource room which are fully stocked with clothing and food supplies.

Academically, the school is in transition after its first year, and has adopted a new goal having learned invaluable lessons from its broad-based approach to development during its first year. The school leader reported that the main priority for the 2019-20 school year is the standardization of the academic environment and consistency across classrooms. In a quest to implement this goal the school leader said all staff in the building, including support staff, have been educated regarding this main school goal and are supportive of establishing a standardized academic environment in all aspects of the pilotED School. As students from pilotED prepare to complete the state's standardized test (iREAD and iLEARN) for the first time next semester, the school leader is optimistic about the growth students are making so far this year.

This report represents an evaluation about performance in each of the standards and indicators that are the responsibility of School Organizational Solutions, LLC to evaluate for this particular school. These indicators: 4.1, 4.2,4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8. 4.9, and 4.10 are outlined in the Mayor's Performance Framework.

About the Process

The External Site Review Team engaged in a number of evidence-gathering activities prior to and during the actual Site Team Visit. On November 26, 2019, a member of the School Organizational Solutions (SOS), LLC site team conducted classroom observations, observing four classroom teachers in four different classrooms, encompassing all grade levels, and approximately 78 students. The observer spent approximately 88 minutes recording a variety of items related to the delivery of instruction and the overall educational climate in the classroom. Data from the classroom observations were assimilated and used as evidence to answer Core Question 4 of the Performance Evaluation.

In addition, the SOS, LLC Special Education Senior Evaluator conducted a comprehensive review of the Special Education and English Language Learner (ELL) files in order to determine how well the school was fulfilling its legal and educational responsibilities. The Site Team also reviewed a binder of written evidence provided by the school in advance of the site visit and in some cases cross-referenced the data provided by the school with information filed at the Indiana Department of Education or with the Office of Education Innovation at the Mayor's Office.

The purpose of the Site Visit on December 3, 2019 was to review further documented evidence in support of Core Question 4 and its indicators, and to gauge perceptions of key stakeholders at the school in relation to the areas of the performance framework that are part of the evaluation. The site team

conducted focus group discussions with general education students, teachers, and parents; special education teachers, parents, and students; ELL teachers, parents, and students, and school administrators.

In the following report, standards and indicators are listed with relevant evidence given related to the performance criteria. A judgement of each standard is given based on the evidence collected as it relates to the rubric of the Mayor's Performance Evaluation tool. Following the discussion of each standard, a summary of strengths and areas for attention and/or recommendations, are provided for each indicator of the core question.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

PILOTED SCHOOLS

| <i>Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?</i> | <i>FINDING</i> |
|--|------------------------------------|
| <i>4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?</i> | <i>Meets standard</i> |
| <i>4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?</i> | <i>Meets standard</i> |
| <i>4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?</i> | <i>Meets standard</i> |
| <i>4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?</i> | <i>Approaching standard</i> |
| <i>4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?</i> | <i>Meets standard</i> |
| <i>4.7. Is the school climate responsive to the needs of students, staff, and families?</i> | <i>Meets standard</i> |
| <i>4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?</i> | <i>Meets standard</i> |
| <i>4.9. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with special needs?</i> | <i>Meets standard</i> |
| <i>4.10. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?</i> | <i>Meets standard</i> |

4.1 Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?

| |
|---|
| Overall Judgment: |
| Standard: <i>Does pilotED Schools have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?</i> |
| MEETS STANDARD |

Summary and Overall Judgment:

Through a review of evidence provided by pilotEd Schools, and considering information gleaned from focus group interviews with key stakeholders, as well as data collected from classroom observations, pilotED was able to demonstrate to the School Organizational Solutions site team members that the school has a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade. Thus, the site team granted a **meets standard** to Standard 4.1.

pilotED Schools uses the Engage New York Curriculum - specifically Core Knowledge in ELA instruction and Eureka Math - for all students, which encompasses grades K-3 at this time. Both Eureka Math and Core Knowledge ELA are aligned to Common Core standards. However, pilotED teachers reported in focus group interviews that the school uses correlation guides provided by the Indiana State Department of Education to ensure that the Engage NY curriculum aligns with the Indiana State academic standards. Teachers said they modify and supplement the Engage NY curriculum to ensure this alignment. During classroom observations, it was recorded that 100% of the pilotED classrooms posted the Indiana State standard that was being taught during the observation.

pilotEd provided documentation showing that the curriculum has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is consistent with the logical structure of learning the English Language and building a sound foundation for Mathematics. Site team members viewed evidence that the Core Knowledge ELA curriculum was chosen for the school because it provides strong foundational skills to support young students' reading development as they moved from learning how to read, to comprehending complex texts. Eureka Math was chosen because school personnel favored the sequence of topics across grade levels, that is consistent with the logical structure of mathematics.

Teachers reported to site team members that the pilotED curriculum is housed on a shared google doc which they utilize to access the scope and sequence and pacing guides, in order to plan what to teach and when to teach it to their students. According to school leaders, the scope and sequence of the curriculum, and the pacing guides, are reviewed at the end of each quarter to determine which standards were not covered and/or which ones were not met by a majority of the students. School leaders then adjust the pacing guide to allow for presentation of the standards not covered or to allow time to re-teach the standards not met.

External site team members reviewed an assessment and analysis protocol that listed the timing, format, and follow-up for analyzing assessment data at pilotEd in order to determine student achievement trends and gaps in learning. Teachers and the Director of Curriculum confirmed that this assessment data analysis is also utilized in forming small groups to level instruction in pilotED classrooms and to create curriculum for pilotPODS (small groups) in the classrooms, as well as to plan for re-teaching standards not met by students.

Moreover, teachers reported that they had professional development on implementing lesson plan internalization in order to use the curriculum documents and effectively deliver instruction. Site team members saw evidence of lesson plans that had been "marked up" in the evidence binder and 75% of the classrooms observed by site team members teachers were using lesson plans to guide instruction and to effectively implement instruction at pilotED.

Teachers also told site team members during focus group interviews that they had all of the materials, and more, to deliver the curriculum effectively at pilotED. Observers noted that pilotED classrooms have rich supplies of culturally responsive resources and books in all of the classrooms and one teacher told the site

team that she had never had an administrator buy books for her classroom prior to working at pilotED School.

As noted above the pilotED was adjudged a Meets on this standard.

The following is a summary of the main evidence collected for each indicator.

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|---|------------|
| <i>a) Does the curriculum align with state standards?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site team members viewed evidence that pilotEd utilizes the Core Knowledge ELA curriculum for grades K-3 and Eureka Math curriculum for grades K-3, as part of the overall Engage New York curriculum. Both Eureka Math and Core Knowledge ELA are aligned to Common Core standards, however pilotEd teachers told site team members, and the director of curriculum confirmed, that the school uses correlation guides, provided by the Indiana State Department of Education to ensure that the Engage NY curriculum aligns with the Indiana state standards. Teachers modify and supplement the Engage NY curriculum to ensure this alignment. Classroom observations revealed that 100% of the PilotEd classrooms posted the Indiana state standards that were being taught during the observation. Areas of Improvement: None Noted | |

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|--|------------|
| <i>b) Does the school conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site team reviewed an assessment and analysis protocol that listed the timing, format, and follow-up for analyzing assessment data at PilotEd in order to determine student achievement trends and gaps in learning and a subsequent re-teaching plan. Teachers and the Director of Curriculum confirmed that this assessment data analysis is also utilized in forming small groups to level instruction in pilotED classrooms and to create curriculum for pilotPods in the classrooms. Areas of Improvement: None Noted | |

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|---|------------|
| <i>C) Does the school regularly review its scope and sequences to ensure presentation of content in time for testing?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to teachers and the Director of Curriculum, curriculum pacing guides are housed on a shared Google Drive which teachers use to determine what to teach and when to teach it. pilotED reviews the scope and sequence pacing guides at the end of each quarter to determine which standards have not been covered and to adjust the individual pacing guides to ensure coverage. Areas of Improvement: None Noted | |

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|---|------------|
| <i>d) Does the school have a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that focuses on core learning objectives?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation was provided to the site team showing that the Core Knowledge ELA curriculum, as well as the Eureka Math curriculum has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is consistent with the logical structure of learning the English Language and building a sound foundation for Mathematics. Evidence showed that the curriculums are focused on core learning objectives. Areas of Improvement: None Noted | |

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|--|------------|
| <i>e) Does the staff understand and uniformly use curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During classroom observations site team members observed teachers using lesson plans to guide instruction. • Classroom observations also revealed that in 75% of the pilotEd classrooms instruction was observed to be strongly aligned with course objectives. • School leaders told site team members that one of the school’s goals this year is to implement Lesson Plan Internalization to ensure that teachers uniformly and consistently deliver instruction in all pilotED classrooms. Site team members observed Lesson Plan Internalization documents in the evidence folder. • Teachers said they had professional development on implementing Lesson Plan Internalization to support them in consistently knowing, understanding and delivering the instructional objectives with fidelity. Areas of Improvement: None Noted | |

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|---|------------|
| <i>f) Does the staff have the materials to effectively deliver the curriculum?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers told site team members during focus group interviews that they had all the materials - and more - to deliver the curriculum effectively. One teacher said she found a program to supplement the curriculum and ensure the Indiana State standards were met and when she asked the school leader about it he was totally supportive. • One teacher said she had never had an admin buy books for her classroom library prior to being a teacher at pilotED. • Observers noted that pilotED classrooms have rich supplies of culturally responsive resources and books in all of the classrooms. Areas of Improvement: None Noted | |

4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school’s mission?

| |
|--|
| Overall Judgment: |
| Standard: <i>Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the pilotED Schools’ mission?</i> |
| MEETS STANDARD |

Summary and Overall Judgment:

The mission of pilotED Schools states, in part, “...We seek to lift up our students through a model of social identity development, civic engagement, and academic excellence.” On November 26, 2019, an external site team member from School Organizational Solutions, LLC, conducted classroom observations at pilotED School, observing 78 students, 4 teachers, and spending approximately 25 minutes in each classroom. Through data collected from the classroom observations and evidence accumulated from a review of school documents, as well as information received during focus group interviews with school leaders, teachers, students, and parents, the school demonstrated that its teaching processes are consistent with the PilotEd School’s mission and **meets standard 4.2.**

During classroom observations, data collected showed that in 100% of the pilotED classrooms, mission integration was present and prominent. In fact, site team members noted many initiatives in the classrooms and the school that showed strong mission alignment, including “calming corners” that highlight relevant topics to ponder while calming down. The pilotED classrooms were also stocked with numerous books and resources that promote reflection, social emotional support, and identity development. The school decor is intentionally vibrant and colorful, rather than institutional. Chickens

and goats (and a chicken coop) inhabit the courtyard of the school and represent another emphasis on celebrating life.

As mentioned in the introduction, the standardization of the academic environment and consistency across classrooms is one of the school’s priorities for the 2019-20 school year. In support of this goal and the school’s mission, site team members observed that standards-based lessons were being taught in 100% of the pilotED classrooms and explicit objectives formed the basis for instruction in 100% of the pilotED classrooms.

A wide variety of teaching pedagogies such as whole brain learning, small group experiences, guided reading, audio-visual presentations, kinesthetic learning activities, use of manipulatives, independent practice, and use of technology were being utilized by pilotED teachers to deliver instruction at pilotED, as witnessed by the external site team members. During classroom observations, it was noted that students were encouraged to introduce themselves and share something personal that they were grateful for, emphasizing the special interests and individuality of the students. This focus on gratitude also coincided with the upcoming Thanksgiving Day, later that week.

Teachers told site team members that they use data from assessments to form small groups for leveled and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students, including those in their classrooms with IEP’s and 504 plans. One day a week the small groups meet in pilotPODS, with instruction differentiated to meet the needs of students in these small groups.

While classroom observations showed that 50% of the pilotED classrooms were using differentiated strategies, it might be helpful if the school could utilize the pilotPODS more often than one day a week.

Teachers were communicating high expectations for the students at pilotED in 100% of the classrooms observed and the pace of instruction was judged to be appropriate in 100% of the classrooms at pilotED. Both younger and older students, however, indicated during focus group interviews, that they thought the work at pilotED was “easy” or “not challenging” and during classroom observations challenging content was observed in only 25% of the classrooms. Data from the classroom observations also showed that learning activities in pilotEd classrooms were primarily focused on the lower two levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy (Remember, Understand, Apply). pilotED should consider professional development in Depth of Knowledge or Bloom’s Taxonomy strategies in order to inspire more rigor in the classrooms.

Teachers and school leaders confirmed, during focus group interviews, that there are numerous walk-throughs during the course of a week, by school leaders. Site team members observed a daily lesson plan internalization tracker with the pilotEd teachers’ names listed, for instructional leaders to utilize during walk-throughs in order to gauge the levels of success of lesson plan internalization among the teaching staff. The school utilizes the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching in conducting two formal evaluations of the pilotED teachers per year, according to teachers. Danielson’s Framework for Teaching assesses strategies used to provide instruction, identify areas of deficiency, and praise successes.

As referenced above, the School Organizational Solutions site team awarded a meets standard to pilotED for Standard 4.2

The following is a summary of the main evidence collected for each indicator.

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|---|------------|
| <i>a) Is the curriculum implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In 100% of the classrooms, site team members observed that mission integration was apparent, and teachers were adhering to lesson plans linked to the curriculum. ● During classroom observations, site team members noted many initiatives in the classrooms that showed strong mission alignment at pilotED, including “calming corners,” and books and resources that promote reflection, social emotional support, and identity development. <p>Areas of Improvement: None Noted</p> | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| <i>b) As delivered, is instruction focused on core learning objectives?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit standards-based lessons were being taught in 100% of the pilotED classrooms observed by site team members and explicit objectives formed the basis for instruction in 100% of the pilotED classrooms. • According to the pilotED school leader, the standardization of the Academic Environment and consistency across classrooms is one of the school’s priorities for the 2019-20 school year. <p>Areas of Improvement:</p> | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>c) Does the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possess the appropriate rigor and challenge?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 100% of the classrooms observed the pace of instruction was observed to be appropriate in the pilotED classes. • Teachers communicated high expectations in 100% of the classes observed by the site team. <p>Areas of Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During focus group interviews younger students told the site team that the work was “easy” and older students uniformly said the work at pilotED was not challenging. • Challenging content was only observed being taught in 25% of the classrooms observed and learning activities were primarily focused on the lower two levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy (remember/understand/apply). pilotEd could benefit from professional development focused on Bloom’s Taxonomy or Depth of Knowledge strategies. | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>d) Do the instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site team observed a variety of instructional strategies being utilized to deliver instruction, including whole brain learning, small group experiences, guided reading, use of technology and audio-visual activities, kinesthetic learning activities, use of manipulatives, and independent practice. • Some (50%) of the pilotED classrooms observed were differentiating process and/or product through learning activities. • During classroom observations, it was noted that students were encouraged to introduce themselves and share something personal that they were grateful for, emphasizing the special interests and individuality of the students. • Teachers told site team members that they use data from assessments to form small groups for leveled and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students, including those in their classrooms with IEP’s and 504 plans. <p>Areas of Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the wide range of student abilities at pilotED and the focus on individual student identity, it would be helpful in differentiating instruction if pilotED could offer the pilotPOD centers more often than one day a week. | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>e) Does the school supply sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site team members observed evidence showing that the school uses the Charlotte Danielson Framework for formal Teaching Evaluation instrument focusing on the four domains - Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, Professional Responsibilities and providing rubrics for each domain, to evaluate and provide feedback to the teachers. Teachers confirmed that they had had one formal evaluation this semester and they would have one at the end of the year. • Site team members viewed a daily lesson plan internalization tracker with the pilotEd teachers’ names listed, for instructional leaders to utilize during walk-throughs in order to gauge the levels of success of lesson plan internalization among the teaching staff. School leaders and teachers confirmed that there were multiple walk-throughs during the course of a week with feedback given either instantly through a slack message (APP) or an email. | |

4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?

Overall Judgment:

Standard: *Does pilotED Schools use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?*

MEETS STANDARD

Summary and Overall Judgment:

A review of documents provided by the school, in addition to data collected through classroom observations and information obtained through stakeholder interviews, led the School Organizational Solutions external site team to a determination that pilotED effectively uses learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction, and as such, **meets standard 4.4.**

Through focus group interviews teachers confirmed that a variety of well-known and respected standardized assessments, as well as formative assessments from the Engage NY curriculum were used with frequency to measure students' achievement in mastering learning standards and objectives. The site team reviewed the following list of assessments utilized at pilotED, the frequency with which they are used, and the purpose of the tests:

- NWEA, a standardized reading and math assessment used for baseline and summative data, is given in the fall, winter, and spring. Data analysis from the test is used to form small groups and identify standards not met for pilotPODS.
- DIBELS, a K-2 ELA assessment with emphasis on foundational literacy and reading fluency, is given in the fall, winter, and spring, with the results being used for small group creation.
- Engage New York offers ongoing formative and summative assessments in ELA and Math, at the middle and end of each unit (module) of study. Daily exit tickets are also included in the Engage NY curriculum. Data analysis from these ongoing assessments is used to identify gaps in student learning and to prepare a reteach plan.

Students also take the ILEARN state assessment in the spring and IREAD in Grade 3. Teachers reported that they also give teacher-created quizzes and assessments in the classrooms.

Furthermore, teachers confirmed that they received assessment data results within 24 hours of an assessment being administered to students. The testing protocol document viewed by the site team showed that assessment results were analyzed by classroom teachers within 1-2 weeks of the tests being completed, in order to determine student gaps, form small groups and identify skills/standards that need to be re-taught.

Teachers and school leaders report that pilotED uses assessment results in a multitude of ways to guide and inform instruction and make any necessary changes to the curriculum. Teachers confirmed that they had had professional development on analyzing and utilizing NWEA data in order to create small leveled student groups and plan leveled pilotPOD center rotations for the upcoming week to reteach standards that were not met, to reinforce skills, and to provide accelerated enrichment for students who had achieved mastery. The school is in the early implementation phase of conducting weekly data meetings. It was reported by teachers that it is currently only happening at the first-grade level, but the director of curriculum told site team members that the goal is to implement the weekly data meetings in all grades at pilotED in the very near future. The school also has a goal of implementing benchmark assessments by next year in order to add another level of testing which could provide relevant data as a guide in re-teaching or modifying the curriculum as needed.

In addition, the school has set several key goals in the area of data-driven instruction, such as adding the benchmark assessments, expanding the weekly data meetings to all grade levels and beginning to use a data wall (viewed by the site team and currently void of data) to display an analysis of the NWEA data. However, a critical shortage in staffing is currently constraining the school in its ability to fully utilize key staff members, such as the Director of Curriculum, in order to execute critical functions related to their roles. The site team recommends that the open grade level teaching positions be filled as soon as possible, which will free up administrators (who are current substituting in some classrooms) to deliver on some of these important goals.

Overall, the site team saw much evidence that pilotED is effectively using learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction and granted a Meets Standard to Standard 4.4.

The following is a summary of the main evidence collected for each indicator.

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|---|------------|
| <i>a) Are the standardized and/or classroom assessments accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site team observed an assessment and analysis protocol listing a variety of well-known and respected standardized assessments used by pilotED to measure established state standards and core learning objectives. Teachers confirmed that a variety of standardized tests, as well as formative assessments from the Engage NY curriculum, were used regularly to measure students' achievement in mastering learning standards and objectives. <p>Areas of Improvement: None Noted</p> | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>b) Does the school distribute assessment results to classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner to influence instructional decisions?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The testing protocol document viewed by the site team showed that assessment results were analyzed by classroom teachers within 1-2 weeks of the tests being completed in order to determine student gaps, form small groups and identify skills/standards that need to be re-taught. Teachers said, and the director of curriculum confirmed, that assessment results were delivered to classroom teachers within 24 hours of the students taking the test. <p>Areas of Improvement: None Noted</p> | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>c) Does the school select assessments that have sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Assessments and Analysis Protocol document listed standardized tests given to students, including NWEA, DIBELS, and Engage NY. In addition, students will take the ILEARN and IREAD exams this spring. The Core Knowledge ELA curriculum viewed by the site team includes formative assessments and exit tickets to check for understanding on a regular basis. It also includes summative unit exams, as does Eureka Math. <p>Areas of Improvement: None Noted</p> | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>d) Does the school use assessments with sufficient frequency to inform instructional decisions effectively?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NWEA is administered to students in the fall, winter, and spring; DIBELS is given to grades K-2 in the fall, winter, and spring; and the EngageNY curriculum provides on-going formative assessments | |

(mid/end of module as well as daily exit tickets) for ELA and Math. Teachers said they frequently used teacher-created assessments to inform instructional decisions regularly also.

Areas of Improvement: None Noted

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|---|------------|
| <i>e) Does the school use assessment results to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers confirmed that they had had a professional development on analyzing and utilizing NWEA data and classroom evidence in order to create small leveled student groups and plan leveled pilotPOD center rotations for the upcoming week to reteach standards that were not met, to reinforce skills, and to provide enrichment for students who had achieved mastery. Documentation of an analysis of NWEA data for each pilotED student was observed by site team members. The Director of Curriculum said the school has a goal of adding benchmark assessments next year in order to add another level of testing which could provide relevant data as a guide in re-teaching or modifying the curriculum as needed. The school is in the early implementation phase of weekly data meetings. Teachers confirmed that it has mainly occurred at the first-grade level but the school hopes to continue the implementation in the other grade levels in the future. <p>Areas of Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No data walls were observed in the classrooms; however, a school-wide data wall was displayed in a conference room but was void of any data input. A critical shortage in staffing is currently constricting the school in its ability to free key staff members in order to fully execute their roles. The site team recommends that open grade level teaching positions be filled as soon as possible. | |

4.5 Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?

| |
|--|
| Overall Judgment: |
| Standard: <i>Has pilotED Schools developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?</i> |
| APPROACHING STANDARD |

Summary and Overall Judgment:

The SOS, LLC site visit team determined that pilotED has a systematic hiring process that is well organized and used to support the success of new staff members. The professional development (PD) offered is related to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement for the most part and is informed by students' academic data. Furthermore, the school has a formal teacher evaluation plan in place that possesses a clear process and criteria, although there was some evidence that the plan is not fully implemented due to time constraints on the part of the Director for Curriculum and Instruction who was recently temporarily re-assigned to the classroom. Two areas of concern, however, one critical and one cautionary, resulted in the team determining that the school is **approaching standard**.

As noted, the electronic binder of evidence provided by the school included an outline of a hiring process that included a comprehensive hiring protocol. The process listed important details relative to recruitment, screening, and interviewing of potential teacher candidates. The document also included explicit details about onboarding of new staff members. The school has a relatively small teaching staff (six classroom teachers plus one special education teacher), but as the school grows, the site team recommends pilotED develops a formal teacher induction process to provide continual support and mentorship to new teachers at the school.

The school provides a number of professional development activities that are determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement. Nearly all of these activities are school-wide sessions held on site for the entire faculty. During focus group interviews, teachers mentioned that pilotED has an early release day on Wednesdays and teachers are engaged in structured professional development (PD)

every other Wednesday. The site team reviewed evidence which shows PD is tied to instructional improvement. For example, teachers recently underwent professional development on lesson plan internalization which is tied to the Engage New York curriculum.

The two aforementioned concerns raised at the school are both related to staffing. The first concern is regarding the instructional capacity. The school roster lists six teaching positions, two Kindergarten, two first grade, one second and one third grade respectively, but only four were filled. Two vacant positions are currently being temporarily filled by two of the school’s administrators. This comes at a cost to the school, however, as critical services such as curricular and coaching support for the teachers are not fully being delivered since the admins have been placed in these temporary teaching roles. While the site team lauds the creative assignment of the staff to meet a critical shortage, the site team recommends the school fills these vacant positions as soon as possible so the administrators can get back to their duties as quickly as possible.

The other area of concern addresses the status of teacher licensure at pilotED. As mentioned, of those teachers (four classroom and one Special Education teacher) working at pilotED, one is not currently licensed. Because the staff is so small, this amounts to 20% of the teachers at pilotED who have valid Indiana teacher licenses and deployed in the areas in which they are licensed to teach (indicator c). The State of Indiana stipulates that at least 90% of teachers in a given school must have a valid teaching license. Based on the analysis of data, the school does not meet the threshold for this indicator since only 80% of the current instructional staff are fully licensed. The site team, therefore, adjudged the school an approaching standard.

The following is a summary of the main evidence collected for each indicator.

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|--|------------|
| <i>a) Are the school’s hiring processes organized and used to support the success of new staff members?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school provided documentation of a comprehensive hiring protocol. The process listed important details relative to recruitment, screening, interviewing and onboarding of potential teacher candidates. ● Site team also reviewed, and the school leader and teachers confirmed, the onboarding process which includes a new staff orientation. ● Description of the hiring process provided by teachers during the focus group interviews, matched the information outlined in the binder of evidence. ● The school leader also said some mentoring is available to support staff in orienting to the building. <p>Areas of Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● While the school leader described the basic structure for a mentoring program at the school, pilotED should consider some type of formal induction program in order to provide continued support and development for new staff members perhaps through their first two years. | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>b) Does the school deploy sufficient number of staff to maximize instruction?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● According to information provided pilotED has nine teaching positions for its six classrooms. ● The school also employs an Occupational Therapist, a Speech Therapist, and a Family & Community Coordinator. ● pilotED also currently has one teacher aide to support instruction. ● In response to the staffing challenge, the school has utilized its administrative staff creatively to ensure effective instruction is taking place. <p>Areas of Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At the time of the site visit, only four of the six classrooms were filled by full-time teachers. ● Two classrooms were currently temporarily filled by two of the school’s administrative staff. ● An EL teacher was listed among the three vacancies. ● With 33% of its listed positions vacant at the time of the site evaluation, the site team pondered whether the school has sufficient staff to maximize its instructional capacity. Because the school is heavy on administrators, who are also licensed as teachers in Indiana, the site team did not penalize | |

| the school on this indicator. | |
|---|------------|
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>c) Are faculty and staff certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned?</i> | No |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site team confirmed valid Indiana teacher licenses for three of four full-time teachers at pilotED. • The Special Education Teacher is also fully licensed. • The school leader reported that the one unlicensed teacher is in the process of seeking an Indiana teaching permit, although the site team could not verify this information at the time of the site visit. <p>Areas of Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the five current instructional positions in the school, one teacher does not have a current Indiana teacher permit. • This amounts to 20% of the instructional staff. • The State of Indiana law stipulates that at least 90% of teachers in a given school must have a valid teaching license. • Based on the analysis of data, the school does not meet the threshold for this indicator since only 80% of the current instructional staff are fully licensed. | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>d) Is professional development related to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To prepare staff members for success at the school, pilotED offers a three-day professional development retreat prior to the beginning of the school. • Teachers and staff also participate in a two-week series of professional development. • The school has an early-released day on Wednesdays and teachers are engaged in structured professional development every other Wednesday. • The site team reviewed evidence which show PD is tied to instructional improvement. For example, teachers recently underwent professional development on lesson plan internalization which is tied to the Engage New York curriculum. • Teachers also engage in short PD related to culture or academics every Tuesday morning before school. <p>Areas of Improvement: None Noted</p> | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>e) Are professional development opportunities determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leader noted that decisions regarding professional development topics are based on important data related to the students. • An analysis of the NWEA Data, and trends from classroom observations inform PD activities. <p>Areas of Improvement: None Noted</p> | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>f) Does the school explicitly and regularly implement its teacher evaluation plan with a clear process and criteria?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pilotED has a comprehensive teacher evaluation system that is based on the Charlotte Danielson framework. • As described, teachers are formally evaluated three times yearly (beginning, middle and at the end). • Teachers also receive a minimum of one formal observation and up to four additional classroom walkthroughs weekly. • Teachers either receive immediate feedback (Here is what I saw, and here's how it could get better), or more expansive feedback during the weekly meetings with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. • The system is designed to support and develop teachers. | |

- The school leader noted that the system is also based on five principles of clarity: Clear expectations, (providing clear and concise information on what is expected during the observations, for example); clear capability (are parties capable and have the resources and materials they need to succeed), clear measurement (providing explicit criteria for measurement), clear feedback and clear process.
- Teachers and school leaders’ description of the plan aligned with the descriptions outlined in the written documents.
- Teachers’ retention and bonus pays are linked to their evaluations.

Areas of Improvement: None Noted

4.6. Is the school’s mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?

| |
|--|
| Overall Judgment: |
| Standard: <i>Is pilotED Schools’ mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?</i> |
| MEETS STANDARD |

Summary and Overall Judgment:

One of the key strengths of pilotED Schools, Inc. is the internalization, buy-in and execution of its mission by all constituents. The bold mission of pilotED is to “empower students through a model of social identity development, civic engagement and academic excellence in order to interrupt generational poverty.” The mission is fully understood by all stakeholders, including the principal, teachers, parents, and students. The site team determined, following a comprehensive review of data, the school **meets standard**.

According to information contained in the electronic binder of evidence, the school’s mission is founded upon five pillars which are: perseverance, relationships, integrity, discipline and engagement. Classroom activities reflect the mission. The site team saw evidence of the mission being integrated in all four classrooms observed. Moreover, to promote social identity development—one of the core aspects of the pilotED mission—students at all grade levels take a specific course on identity development twice a week. The social and emotional learning curriculum for this class is based on the Sandford Harmony curriculum, which focuses on celebrating diversity, recognizing commonalities and developing empathy, among other things. Students learn the mission at the beginning of the school year, and recite the creed daily during pride meetings, and weekly during whole school assemblies.

The school also models and facilitates civic engagement through the service and outreach it provides to the community. This includes: a parent resource room with food clothing and supplies available for any family; providing mattresses and shelter support to school families who are in need, a job fair twice a year; financial literacy, resume building, and abuse-prevention workshops held at the school. In addition, the two pilotED in-house therapists provide counselling to students and families. The principal is passionate about the mission and proudly shows off the school’s vegetable garden and mini-farm (two goats, several chickens and two cats) from which produce and eggs are donated to members of the community.

Evidence shows that parents, teachers, students and other constituents clearly understand the mission, support it, and feel that the school is making progress in achieving the mission’s goals. Based on the high visibility of the mission throughout the site visit process, the SOS, LLC site visit team concluded that pilotED meets the standard in this area.

The following is a summary of the main evidence collected for each indicator.

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|--|------------|
| <i>a) Does the school have a mission that is shared by all stakeholders?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |

Strengths:

- According to documents provided by the school, the bold mission of pilotED is to “empower students through a model of social identity development, civic engagement and academic excellence in order to interrupt generational poverty.”
- Site team concluded that the mission is internalized by its stakeholders.
- Students learn the mission at the beginning of the school year, and recite the creed daily during pride meetings, and whole school assemblies.
- The school leader noted that the mission is internalized through a focus on five pillars: perseverance, relationships, integrity, discipline and engagement.
- To facilitate identity development, the school has a specific course that is designated for all students twice per week. The content for the identity development course is based on the Sandford Harmony curriculum which focuses on celebrating diversity, recognizing commonalities and developing empathy.
- The school also models civic engagement through the service and outreach it provides to the community. This includes: a parent resource room with food clothing and supplies available for any family; providing mattresses and shelter support to school families who are in need, a job fair twice a year; financial literacy, resume building and abuse-prevention workshops. In addition, the two pilotED in-house therapists provide counselling to students and families.
- The school a vegetable garden and a mini-farm (two goats, several chickens and two cats) where produce and eggs are donated to members of the community.

Areas of Improvement: None Noted

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|---|------------|
| <i>b) Do stakeholders possess widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school’s mission?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All stakeholders could recite key parts of the mission, especially academics, identity development, and civic engagement. • Students could recite the creed and state key components of the mission. • Parents loved the school’s focus on student identity. • Evidence of the commitment could be found in the level of mission integration documented by classroom observers, where aspects of the mission were recorded in 100 % of the classrooms. • Teachers reported the school’s focus and commitment is what keeps them here at the school. | |
| Areas of Improvement: None Noted | |

4.7 Is the school climate responsive to the needs of students, staff, and families?

| |
|--|
| Overall Judgment: |
| Standard: <i>Is pilotED Schools’ climate responsive to the needs of students, staff, and families?</i> |
| MEETS STANDARD |

Summary and Overall Judgment:

During the summer of 2019, the Office of Educational Innovation (OEI), the educational arm of the Office of the Mayor of Indianapolis, made modifications to the Performance Framework, particularly as it relates to the assessment of the culture and climate of the school, which is measured under core question four. The focus of standard 4.7, was expanded from, “Is the climate conducive to student and staff success” to, “Is the school climate responsive to the needs of students, staff, and families? Consequently, all four indicators for this standard were either changed or modified substantially. This change meant that for the first time in the 2019-20 academic year, mayor-sponsored charter schools were being held to a higher standard of rigor, particularly as it relates to responding to the needs of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Because of the timing of the roll-out (August 2019), many schools did not have the luxury of modifying their practices or accumulating a storehouse of data to support the new indicators as they did for many of the other sub-questions in this core question.

The SOS, LLC site team was sensitive to this plight, and considered these factors in carefully evaluating

the evidence, in light of the new requirement from the mayor's office. Despite the new requirements, the site team concluded pilotED **meets standard**.

Indicator A of the revised standard addresses whether pilotED has culturally responsive instructional interventions and teaching strategies that are implemented consistently schoolwide. With its extensive focus on social identity development, the site team found that many of the pedagogical practices at pilotED were consistent with the principles of cultural responsiveness. Chief among them, pilotED has a particular identity development class that all students take twice per week. Students in kindergarten engage with this content for 30 minutes each class, whereas students in first through third grades meet for 45 minutes each class. The site team reviewed sections from the Sanford Harmony curriculum which is used for the identity development course. The Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) text explicitly focuses on culturally relevant themes such as celebrating diversity, recognizing commonalities and developing empathy.

Moreover, the site team noted pilotED offers students a plethora of opportunities to learn about themselves as well as various social identities. Classrooms were very rich with diverse posters and texts. The site team was amazed by the plethora of diverse literature that was available in the classrooms for students to read. Classroom walls were also plastered with many posters highlighting positive, affirming messages.

Although the school demonstrates a commitment to cultural responsiveness as described above, the site team only saw evidence of culturally responsive teaching in one of the four core subject classrooms (25%). Outside of the identity development class, the site team was expecting to see culturally responsive interventions embedded within the core courses. The site evaluation team recommends pilotED considers explicit professional development explicitly addressing culturally responsive instructional interventions and teaching strategies in order to make use of the wealth of curricular resources it has on hand.

Moreover, the site team saw evidence that the school is in the early stages of implementing a Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to support behavior management in the school. The school has a color-coded, multilevel behavioral management system to promote positive behaviors. The system is well understood by students and parents. Students and teachers described the system with explicit details that aligned with the descriptions provided by the schools' Director of School Culture and the Culture Coordinator.

This site team also found that pilotED is intentional about developing strong and caring relationships among members of its community. When asked what they liked most about the school, students almost unanimously cited the relationships they had with teachers and the school leader. During classroom observations, the site team documented 10 instances of demonstrated care and respect between teachers and students. Parents lauded the school for the strong relationships the staff and admin have with their children. One parent noted, "I love the culture. Everyone knows my child's name." Moreover, teachers pointed to the high level of support and collegiality that was present throughout the school. Teachers also said the staff at pilotED is like a family. The school plans several social gatherings for staff members to meet regularly outside of school. Furthermore, the school also organizes monthly events to connect and engage with families. Some events organized by the school this year include: movies in the park, a Hispanic Heritage month cookout, a "donate and wrap" toy drive, a fright fest and trunk or treat during Halloween, and a school dance once a year.

The site team saw evidence that the school systematically examines discipline data and disaggregates it by various subgroups (race, gender, Special Education) etc. in an effort to promote greater equity. Although the site team did not observe discipline interfering with learning in any of the four classrooms, some stakeholders stated there are different levels of implementation with the schoolwide behavior plan which leads to inconsistency.

Out-of-school suspension (OSS) rates have been relatively high at this school since opening. Last year, the school suspended a total of 23 of its 79 students (29%). This year so far, the school has suspended 25 of its 160 (16%) students. pilotED should consider evaluating its use of exclusionary discipline practices.

The chart below illustrates suspension rates at pilotED since its opening.

| Academic Year | Total Enrollments | Total Students Suspended | Percent of Students Suspended |
|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2018-19 | 79 | 23 | 29% |
| 2019-20 As of 12-03-19 | 160 | 25 | 16% |

The following is a summary of the main evidence collected for each indicator.

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|---|------------|
| <i>a) Does the school have Culturally responsive instructional interventions and teaching strategies that are implemented consistently school-wide?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pilotEd schools, Inc. is committed to supporting students in developing healthy social identities including racial, ethnic, and gender identity. • Classrooms were print rich with several posters with positive affirming messages lining the walls. • Classrooms were also very rich with diverse literature related to a variety of social identities including a book about the Stonewall Riots and others about LGBTQ themes. • The school has an identity development course, where students meet twice a week for 30 (kindergarten) or 45 minutes (Grades 1—3). • The site team saw evidence that teachers engaged in professional development during pilot Camp (a three-day Summer PD program), where the focus was on several themes related to cultural responsiveness (unconscious bias, gender bias, racial bias, etc.). • The site team reviewed evidence that the school systematically examines discipline data and disaggregates it by various subgroups (race, gender, Special Education) etc. in an effort to promote greater equity. <p>Areas of Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the school demonstrates a commitment to cultural responsiveness, the site team only saw evidence of culturally responsive teaching in one of the four classrooms (25%). • pilotED should consider explicit PD regarding culturally responsive instructional interventions and teaching strategies. | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>b) Does the school have a multi-tiered framework for teaching behavioral expectations and provides evidence-based interventions that are implemented with fidelity?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site team saw evidence that the school is in the early stages of implementing Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to support behavior management in the school. • pilotED has a color-coded, multilevel behavioral management system to promote positive behaviors. • Students and teachers described the system with exact details that aligned with the descriptions provided by the schools' Director of School Culture and the Culture Coordinator. <p>Areas of Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the site team did not observe discipline interfering with learning in any of the four classrooms, some stakeholders stated there are different levels of implementation with the schoolwide behavior plan which leads to inconsistency. • Out of school suspension rates have been relatively high at this school since opening. Last year the school suspended a total of 23 of its 79 students (29%). This year so far, the school has suspended 25 of its 160 (16%) students. pilotED should consider evaluating its use of exclusionary discipline practices. | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>c) Are Interactions between adults and students built upon strong, positive relationships?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |

| Strengths: | |
|--|------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students almost unanimously cite the relationships with teachers and the school leader as the number one thing they liked about the school. • Site team documented 10 instances of demonstrated care and respect between teachers and students during the classroom observations. • Parents lauded the school for the strong relationships the staff and admin have with their children. One parent noted, “I love the culture. Everyone knows my child’s name.” | |
| Areas of Improvement: None Noted | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>d) Do the Students, Staff, and Families have a strong sense of connectedness and engagement with the school?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| Strengths: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers pointed to the high level of support and collegiality that was present throughout the school. • Staff described the environment as being a family. • The school plans several social gatherings for staff members to meet regularly outside of school. • The school also plans monthly events to connect and engage with families. Some events organized by the school include: movies in the park, a Hispanic Heritage month cookout, a “donate and wrap” toy drive, a fright fest and trunk or treat during Halloween, and a school dance once a year. • All stakeholders indicated feeling a strong sense of connection to the school. | |
| Areas of Improvement: None Noted | |

4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?

| |
|---|
| Overall Judgment: |
| Standard: <i>Is ongoing communication with students and parents at PilotED Schools clear and helpful?</i> |
| MEETS STANDARD |

Summary and Overall Judgment:

In light of consistent evidence gleaned from the electronic binder provided by the school, and interviews with various constituents, the SOS, LLC site team concluded the ongoing communication with students and parents at pilotED Schools is clear and helpful. The school was, therefore, adjudged to **meet standard 4.8.**

The site team confirmed that pilotED utilizes multiple modes of communications to connect with families. These include: phone calls, texts, emails, monthly newsletters, conversations at drop offs and pick-ups, and quarterly parent/teacher conferences. The school also has a Facebook page and families commented that they liked viewing the photos posted. Of particular note, the monthly newsletters generated by the school are informative and appreciated by the parents.

Parents also indicated they were highly satisfied with the communication from the school regarding meetings and events. The school hosts monthly community meetings with families. In addition, pilotED has an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) that organizes monthly meetings and other school events.

Site team members observed evidence that the school uses a Portal (Dean’s List) for parents and guardians to see (in real time) their students’ daily progress as well as updated class announcements and other relevant information. Parents also learn about their children’s academic progress during quarterly parent-teacher meetings and through the report cards. The parents confirmed that they understood progress reports and grade reports.

In addition to the diverse modes of communication used by pilotED, the school translates its communication into Spanish to engage with its Spanish speaking parents and community. The site team also saw notices posted on bulletin boards in both English and Spanish. Furthermore, pilotED employs a Family Community Coordinator and a Social Work Coordinator; both of whom are fluent in Spanish.

They translate all school communication into Spanish and assist teachers with making phone calls. The Family Community Coordinator is also very active with fundraising and raised over \$54, 000 and thousands more in supplies for the school last year. The school leader boasted that she hoped to double that amount this year.

Based on the evidence, the SOS, LLC site visit team concluded that there is strong ongoing communication with students and parents that is both clear and helpful. This is one of the school’s important strengths, and, therefore, the site visit team determined that pilotED meets this standard.

The following is a summary of the main evidence collected for each indicator.

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|---|------------|
| <i>a) Does the school have active and ongoing communication with parents?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Site team members observed evidence that the school uses a Portal (Dean’s List) for parents and guardians to see (in real time) their students’ daily progress as well as updated class announcements and other relevant information. ● The school has a multitude of communications modes it uses with pilotED families, to include: phone calls, texts, emails, monthly newsletters and conversations at drop offs and pick-ups, and quarterly parent/teacher conferences. The school also has a Facebook page and families commented that they liked viewing the photos posted. ● All school communications are translated in Spanish also. ● pilotED holds monthly Community meetings with families and ensures that they are culturally relevant. Such community activities are movie nights and an upcoming Holiday Extravaganza. ● There is an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) that holds monthly meetings and supports many school events as well as the food pantry. <p>Areas of Improvement: None Noted</p> | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>b) Does the school utilize communications that are both timely and relevant to parental concerns?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flyers promoting pilotED schools for student enrollment in the community were observed by site team members. ● The school employs a Family Community Coordinator and a Social Work Coordinator; both of these individuals are fluent in Spanish. They translate all school communications in Spanish and assist teachers with making phone calls. ● The school makes daily phone calls for student absences. <p>Areas of Improvement: None Noted</p> | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>c) Does the school communicate student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents confirmed that they understood progress reports and grade cards. ● All school communications are translated in Spanish. <p>Areas of Improvement: None Noted</p> | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>d) Are the school’s communication methods designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Site team members observed that flyers sent home to parents were translated into Spanish as well as English to meet the needs of their Hispanic population. <p>Areas of Improvement: None Noted</p> | |

4.9 Do the school's special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and that it is moving toward best practice?

| |
|---|
| Overall Judgment: |
| Standard: <i>Does pilotED Schools' special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and that it is moving toward best practice?</i> |
| MEETS STANDARD |

Summary and Overall Judgment:

At the time of the site team visit, the school leadership team at pilotED reported an enrollment of 11 students with disabilities (SWDs). This represents 7% of the total school enrollment. A comprehensive review was conducted on all of the special education files. This review provided critical information regarding general trends in the documentation and delivery of special education services for educational benefit. pilotED was found to have instituted numerous systems in compliance with state and federal mandates regarding special education. The files were well organized, and each file contained a "log-in" sheet for confidentiality purposes. The school participates in and utilizes the Indiana IEP (IIEP) which is compliant by statute and contains the components needs in the case conference process for completion of the Individual Education Plan (IEP). From the file review it was evidenced that the case conference meetings were held in a timely manner. The pilotED teacher of record (TOR) utilized an "Objective/Activity Service Log" where the annual goals were listed and remained a focus with services/activities logged with specifics, including dates and times. This site team commends this practice and lauds the schools for this clear process and best practice.

The file review evidenced the following components present:

- 91% Educational Evaluations
- 82% Notice of Case Conference
- 100% Case Conference Committee Report
- 100% Measurable Goals
- 91% Progress Reports
- 100% LRE 50 (where 80% or more of the student's time is spent in general education classes).

Based on the evidence reviewed, the site team adjudged that pilotED **meets standard** 4.9.

The following is a summary of the main evidence collected for each indicator.

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|---|------------|
| <i>a) Do services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) adequately match the exceptional needs of the student?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● pilotED utilizes the Indiana IEP which is compliant by statute and contains the required components of the case conference process. The case conference committee identifies the needs and strengths of each student through the present levels of performance. From each identified need, a goal is written, and the goals determine the services. 100% of the case conference committee reports/IEP were evidenced in the file review. ● From the file review it was evidenced that 100% of the goals were measurable. The goals were written in the SMART format. ● All of the students with disabilities (SWDs) at pilotED had an LRE of 50, where 80% or more of the student's time is spent in general education classrooms. Access to a viable core curriculum is an excellent predictor of success. ● There are 11 SWDs at pilotED. <p>Areas of Improvement:</p> | |

- From the file review it was observed that 82% of the student files had the educational evaluation. This document is essential to the student's file as it is the initial document that determines eligibility for special education services. The educational evaluation identifies the needs and strengths of each student and guides the case conference committee in creating an individual education plan. pilotED staff need to make a concerted effort to have an educational evaluation for each SWD as it provides a roadmap. The school must also always complete a Notice of Case Conference and share with the family when scheduling a case conference.

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|-----------|------------|
|-----------|------------|

| | |
|---|------------|
| <i>b Do each of the needs identified within the IEPs have a corresponding goal and plan for assessment?</i> | Yes |
|---|------------|

| Evidence |
|----------|
|----------|

Strengths:

- It was evidenced from the file review that the needs were identified, and the present levels of performance were rich with current data.
- Each need had a corresponding goal and the goals were written in the SMART goal format. The goals were specific and measurable. An example of such a goal is: "the student will demonstrate improved fine motor skills by composing, copying 5+ word sentences with correct shape and spacing on 80% trials."
- pilotED's teacher of record (TOR) utilizes an Objective/Activity Service Log. On the top of this log sheet are the goals that the student is working on and below the TOR documents the service provided along with the date and time. This is a commendable practice.

Areas of Improvement: None Noted

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|-----------|------------|
|-----------|------------|

| | |
|---|------------|
| <i>c) Are the goals outlined in IEPs rigorous and based on state and national learning standards?</i> | Yes |
|---|------------|

| Evidence |
|----------|
|----------|

Strengths:

- pilotED utilizes the Indiana IEP (IIEP) which requires each goal to be based on state and national learning standards.
- It was evidenced from the file review that 100% of the IEP goals were specific and measurable. The present levels of performance were rich with data and also used when writing goals.

Areas of Improvement: None Noted

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|-----------|------------|
|-----------|------------|

| | |
|--|------------|
| <i>d) Does explicit evidence exist to demonstrate that goals have evolved each year as the student develops?</i> | Yes |
|--|------------|

| Evidence |
|----------|
|----------|

Strengths:

- Due to the newness of this school, there was little historical data to note if goals evolved each year as the student develops. However, it was evidenced that the present levels of performance were rich with current data and the data changed.
- Goals were written using the present levels of performance as a source of data.

Areas of Improvement: None Noted

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|-----------|------------|
|-----------|------------|

| | |
|---|------------|
| <i>e) Is a specifically designed curriculum outlined in each IEP?</i> | Yes |
|---|------------|

| Evidence |
|----------|
|----------|

Strengths:

- All of the files contained the case conference committee report/IEP at pilotED.
- Each goal section of the IIEP has an area to address the "specially designed instruction." Specially designed instruction means adapting the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the student as a result of the student's disability and ensure access to the general curriculum. Each goal reviewed addressed specially designed instruction.

Areas of Improvement: None Noted

4.10. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligation related to

access and services to students with limited English proficiency?

| |
|--|
| Overall Judgment: |
| Standard: <i>Is pilotED Schools fulfilling its legal obligation related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?</i> |
| MEETS STANDARD |

Summary and Overall Judgment:

At the time of the site team visit, the school leadership team at pilotED reported an enrollment of 12 EL (English Language) learners. A comprehensive review was conducted on all of the EL files. This review provided critical information regarding general trends in the documentation and delivery of EL services. pilotED uses the IDOE English Language Guidebook as its policies and procedures template. The school also uses the forms from the IDOE Guidebook. From the file review it was evidenced that all the required documents were observed in the students' files. pilotED employs a Family Community Coordinator who speaks Spanish along with a bilingual Social Worker. Communications to families is in English and Spanish and culturally relevant activities are scheduled at pilotED. These findings support a judgment that school **meets standard**.

The following is a summary of the main evidence collected for each indicator.

| Indicator | Evaluation |
|--|------------|
| <i>a) Do appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pilotED utilizes the IDOE English Learner Guidebook as its policies and procedures. pilotED also uses the IDOE forms, to include: home language survey, parent notification letter, WIDA results, and the Individual Language Plan (ILP). • pilotED employs an inclusive model with push-in/pull-out services. A master schedule at each grade is maintained that delineates EL services. • pilotED employs a Family Community Coordinator and a Social Work Coordinator; both of these individuals speak Spanish and are a great resource to families. A teacher assistant (TA) is used for language support in the classrooms. <p>Areas of Improvement: None Noted</p> | |
| Indicator | Evaluation |
| <i>b) Are relationships with students, parents, and external providers well-managed and comply with law and regulation?</i> | Yes |
| Evidence | |
| <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pilotED employs a Family Community Coordinator and social worker who both speak Spanish. These individuals make phone calls to families for the teachers. They also send texts to families and translate the monthly school newsletter. All school communications are translated in two languages. • There are 12 EL learners at pilotED. • The school makes a concerted effort in providing monthly community activities for its families. They have a movie night once a month from 5pm to 6:30pm. An upcoming Holiday Extravaganza is planned with culturally relevant activities inserted. <p>Areas of Improvement: None Noted</p> | |