



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Site Evaluation Report

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Horizon

Evaluation Date: 9/24/2020

Report Date: 10/23/2020

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Appendices

A: Nevada State Performance Framework

<http://www.doe.nv.gov/Accountability/NSPF/>

B: SPCSA Academic Framework

http://charterschools.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/CharterSchoolsnvgov/content/News/2019/19062_8-Academic-Performance-Framework-Guidance-Document.pdf

C: SPCSA Organizational Framework

http://charterschools.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/CharterSchoolsnvgov/content/News/2019/19062_8-OPF-Att-1-Ratings-Scorecard.pdf

INTRODUCTION AND SCHOOL BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

This Site Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school evaluation that took place on 9/24/2020 at Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Horizon. The State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all charters within the portfolio during the 1st, 3rd, and 5th year of operation. This comprehensive analysis addresses the academic success of the school and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization.

An analysis of the school's academic and operational success is undertaken by reviewing the most current versions of the Nevada State Performance Framework (Appendix A) and the State Public Charter School Authority Academic Framework (Appendix B) as well as the Organizational Framework (Appendix C).

In addition, the Site Evaluation Team conducts classroom observations within the areas of classroom environment and instruction. The purpose of these observations is to collect evidence using a rubric which has been normed by our team. All classroom rating outcomes will be displayed within this report so that school leaders have an overall idea of what is happening in general, at any time, in any classroom. The overall numbers will provide information about the school outcomes on this one day.

SPCSA staff will track "best practices", using a checklist and a summary of best practices observed, and will be contained within the report. Using information from focus groups of students, parents, staff, school leaders and the school's board, the SPCSA team will conduct focus groups and summarize results for schools within the report. The operational portion of the evaluation will be observed and take-aways recorded using a checklist and observing all aspects of the school's operational components as outlined in the SPCSA operational framework.

This evaluation has been designed to focus on teaching and learning (e.g. curriculum, instruction, assessment, and services for at-risk students) as well as leadership, organizational capacity, and board oversight. The SPCSA uses the established criteria on a regular basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Horizon is located in Henderson, Nevada in a facility at 1360 S. Boulder Highway. The school serves 771 students (as of the most recent Validation Day) in grades Kindergarten – 5th grade. The mission of Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Horizon is: "Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Horizon unites the community to prepare students for college and career."

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

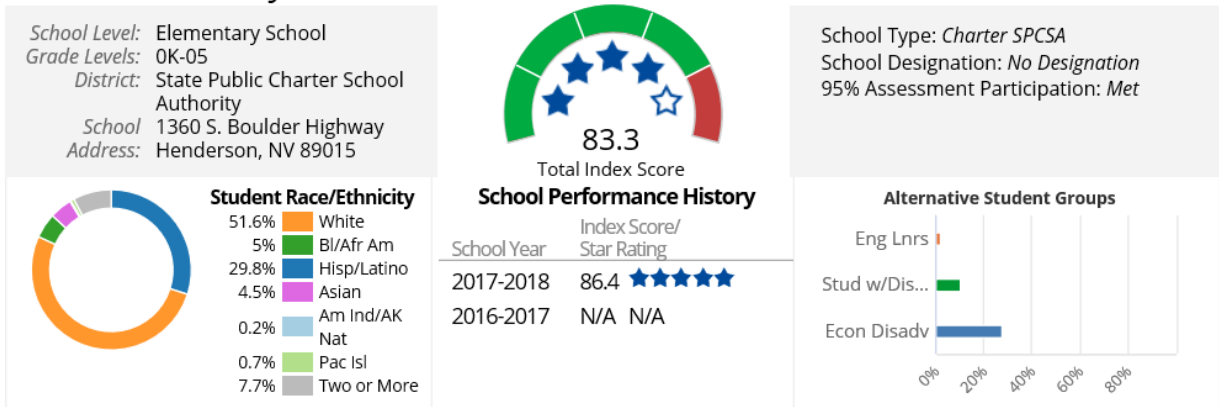
Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Horizon Math and ELA Results Nevada School Performance Framework 2019

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Horizon serves 771 students
in grades Kindergarten – 5th grade

Elementary

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Horizon

School Year 2018-2019 Nevada School Rating



Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Horizon
Math and ELA Results
Nevada School Performance Framework
2019

Elementary School

Math Proficient

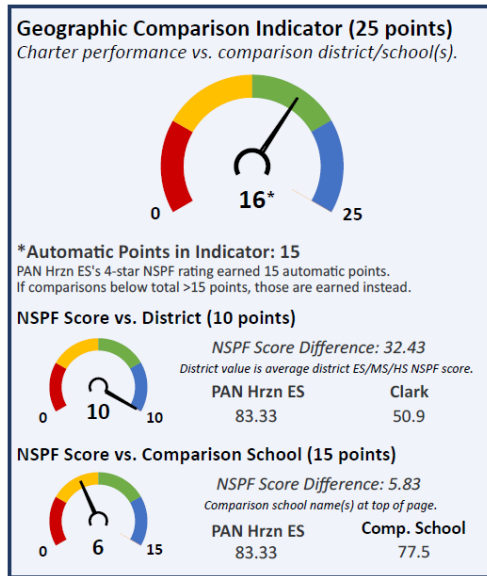
Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	66.2	54.5	48.5	63.6	52.8	45.8
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	45.7	34.3	-	44.8	30.9
Asian	69.2	75.5	68.8	70	75.2	67.2
Black/African American	41.6	31.3	32.3	46.6	30.6	28.8
Hispanic/Latino	56.3	44.6	39.6	53.5	40.2	36.5
Pacific Islander	-	48.7	48.3	-	48.3	45.6
Two or More Races	68	58.2	55.3	57.1	59	52.9
White/Caucasian	72.2	62.2	59.3	70.2	61.1	57.2
Special Education	29.6	27.3	28.6	27.5	29.2	24.8
English Learners Current + Former	81.7	42.2	35.8	72.7	37.4	32.4
English Learners Current	-	32.3	-	-	25.5	-
Economically Disadvantaged	58.7	39.7	39	47.5	33.1	35.7

ELA Proficient

Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	73.7	60.1	57	71.9	58.6	54.7
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	62.5	42.5	-	58.3	39.5
Asian	92.2	78.5	75.4	70	76.2	74.1
Black/African American	66.5	40.8	42.6	43.3	40.5	39.6
Hispanic/Latino	62.2	51.1	48.2	67.1	48	45.5
Pacific Islander	-	51.7	57.9	-	52.6	55.7
Two or More Races	77.2	63.7	64.4	71.4	67.1	62.6
White/Caucasian	77.9	66.7	67.4	78.5	65	65.7
Special Education	38.2	26.6	30	30	29.3	26.3
English Learners Current + Former	90.9	42.2	41.4	54.5	38.9	38.4
English Learners Current	-	29.3	-	-	22.8	-
Economically Disadvantaged	63.2	45.3	46.8	50	40.4	44

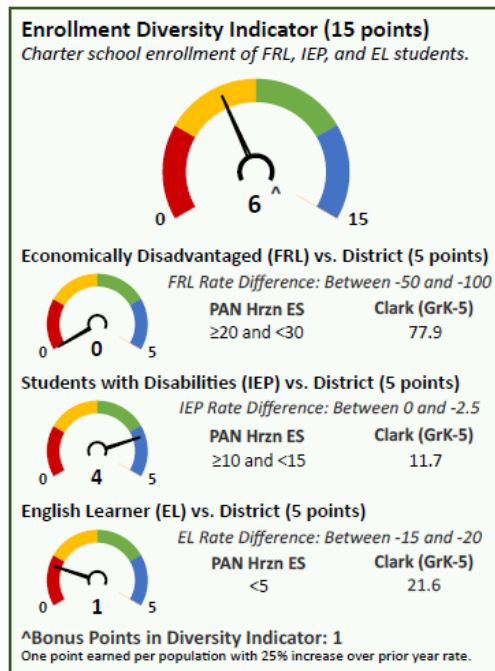
SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Geographic Comparison Report

Elementary School



SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Diversity Comparison Results

Elementary School



FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada is currently in Year 3 of its charter contract. Because all schools within the Pinecrest network rated as 4 or 5 stars according to the most recent statewide accountability ratings, the school qualified for an abbreviated evaluation, and no focus groups were convened. Focus groups will be included in the Year 5 site evaluation.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TOTALS

A total of 5 classrooms were observed for approximately 25 minutes each on the day of the evaluation.

I. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT					
Areas 1 & 2	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
	Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport	Classroom interactions are highly respectful and the teacher demonstrates a passionate commitment to the subject.	Classroom interactions reflect general warmth and caring and a genuine culture for learning.	Classroom interactions are generally appropriate and free from conflict with a minimal culture for learning.	Classroom interactions between the teacher and students are negative and do not represent a culture for learning.
	Total: 2	Total: 3	Total:	Total:	Total:
Establishing a Culture for Learning	Students ensure maintenance of high levels of civility among classmates and assume much of the responsibility for establishing a culture for learning.	Interactions reflect cultural and developmental differences of students. Teacher and students are committed to the subject.	Interactions may be characterized by occasional displays of insensitivity and inconsistent expectations for student achievement.	Interactions are characterized by sarcasm, put-downs, and/or conflict. There is a low teacher commitment to the subject and few instances of students taking pride in their work.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total:	Total: 5	Total:	Total:	Total:
Areas 3 & 4	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
	Managing Classroom Procedures	Classroom routines and procedures appear seamless and student behavior is entirely appropriate.	Classroom routines and procedures have been established and the teacher ensures smooth functioning with little loss of instruction time.	Classroom routines and procedures have been established but function inconsistently, with some loss of instruction time.	Classroom routines and procedures are nonexistent or inefficient, resulting in the loss of much instruction time.
	Total: 1	Total: 4	Total:	Total:	Total:
Managing Student Behavior	There appears to be no misbehavior during the observation. The teacher monitoring of student behavior is subtle and/or preventative.	Teacher responds to student misbehavior in ways that are appropriate and respectful of the students.	Teacher tries to establish standards of conduct for students and monitor behavior. These efforts are not always successful.	Teacher is unsuccessful in monitoring student behavior.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 1	Total: 4	Total:	Total:	Total:

II. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

Area 5					Not
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Observed
Purpose and Explanation of Content, Lesson, Unit or Classroom Activity	The purpose of the lesson or unit is clear and connects with student's real-life experiences. The explanation of content is imaginative, and students contribute to the lesson by participating and/or explaining concepts to their peers.	The purpose for the lesson or learning activity is clear. The teacher's explanation of content is appropriate and connects with students.	The teacher attempts to explain the instructional purpose with limited success. The explanation of the content is uneven. Some explanations are done skillfully, but other portions are difficult to follow.	The purpose for the lesson learning activity is unclear. Teacher's explanation of the content is unclear, confusing or uses inappropriate language.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 1	Total: 4	Total:	Total:	Total:
Area 6	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques	A Students formulate and ask high-level questions.	Teacher formulates and asks several high-level questions.	Teacher questioning and discussion techniques are uneven with some high-level questions.	Teacher makes poor use of questioning and discussion techniques, with low level questions, limited student participation and little true discussion.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total:	Total: 4	Total: 1	Total:	Total:
	B Students assume responsibility for the participation of most students in the discussion.	Teachers assumes responsibility for the discussion which includes most students.	There is some attempt by the teacher to initiate student discussion and student participation.	There is little to no student discussion even though the opportunity is there.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
Total:	Total: 3	Total:	Total:	Total: 2	

II. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION (continued)

II. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION (continued)						
Engaging Students in Learning	Area 7 A	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
		Students are highly engaged throughout the lesson. The pacing and structure of the lesson allows high levels of student engagement.	Students appear to be intellectually engaged throughout most of the lesson. The pacing and structure of the lesson is suitable for this group of students.	Students are partially engaged throughout the lesson.	Students are not at all intellectually engaged in significant learning.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 2	Total: 3	Total:	Total:	Total:	
	Area 7 B	Students make contributions to the representation of content.	There are appropriate activities and materials and instructive representations of content.	The representation of content or structure/pacing is uneven.	There are inappropriate activities or materials, poor representations of content or lack of lesson structure/pacing.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
Total: 1		Total: 4	Total:	Total:	Total:	
Using Formative Assessment in Instruction	Area 8 A	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
		Students are aware of the learning goals/targets for themselves during this instructional timeframe.	Most of the students are aware of the learning goals/targets for themselves during this instructional timeframe.	Some of the students are aware of the learning goals/targets for themselves during this instructional timeframe.	Students are not aware of the learning goals/learning target during this instructional time frame.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 1	Total: 4	Total:	Total:	Total:	
	Area 8 B	The teacher purposefully and consistently provides clear, descriptive feedback in regard to student's demonstration/ understanding of the learning goal/target. The feedback is timely and is in a reasonable amount.	Much of the time, the teacher, provides clear, descriptive feedback regarding student's understanding/ demonstration of learning goal/target. The feedback is timely and is in a reasonable amount.	At times, the teacher provides clear, descriptive feedback but not in a consistent manner regarding learning goal/target. Observing where the work was meeting and where it was not. The feedback is timely and is in a reasonable amount.	The teacher does not provide clear, descriptive feedback regarding learning goal/target and does not observing where the work is and where it is not meeting. The feedback is not timely and is not in a reasonable amount.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
Total: 1		Total: 3	Total: 1	Total:	Total:	

The purpose of this portion of the report is to provide a numerical value to the total number of best practices seen during the classroom observational portion as a whole. This number is indicated at the end of each best practice descriptor/line.

Evidence of adapted materials/assessments: Area 5

- Lessons are designed to encourage student curiosity and learning beyond classroom time. 2
- The explanation of the content is imaginative. 3

Evidence of questioning and discussion techniques: Area 6

- Questions are planned ahead of time and tied to learning target(s): 1
- Teacher questions are open ended: 3
- Teacher allows time for students to answer – 3 seconds or more: 3
- Teacher extends the thinking and discussion by encouraging students to say more, restate or summarize: 3
- Teacher purposefully signals to entire group of students to wait/think before volunteering a response: 1
- Teacher provides the opportunity for all students to answer the question (think, pair, share, written response): 1

Evidence of engaging students in learning area: Area 7

- Active learning is taking place (rather than just listening or viewing): 2
- Students are using reasoning and critical thinking: 1
- The lesson is rigorous and includes cognitively complex tasks: 1
- Students engage in several types of activities during the lesson including:
 - Speaking Writing Reading Listening Discussing Creating Problem Solving
- Cooperative groups
- Student-led classroom
- Technology is integrated into learning/outcomes: 6
- Project-based learning

Evidence of Formative Assessment During Instruction: Area (enter area number here)

- Teachers provide the students feedback about their learning referring to examples taking anecdotal notes:
- Students incorporate the feedback by revising their work:
- Students receive frequent and meaningful feedback regarding their work:
- A wide range of instructional practices that are likely to motivate and engage most students are used during the lesson: 2

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The SPCSA uses the Organizational Performance Framework to collect evidence of performance and evaluate schools, at least annually, to monitor schools throughout their charter terms, to report to schools and the public annually, to intervene in schools that do not meet expectations and to make high-stakes decisions, including: renewal, non-renewal, possible revocation, expansion or replication. Most of this work is done through routine submissions by the school to the SPCSA.

A limited number of measures within the organizational performance framework may be at least partially evaluated during the site evaluation process. Measures are partially evaluated based upon evidence from school focus groups, school observations, documents reviewed and information from the school presentation portion of the evaluation. SPCSA staff will note the evidence provided by the school and also outline any questions or potential concerns.

Measure	Description	Evidence Collected Through	Takeaways
1a	The school implements material terms of the education program.	School Presentation Classroom Observations Epicenter	In alignment with the mission statement, Pinecrest Horizon staff and school leaders have worked collaboratively with each other, the community, students, and families to maintain a community school atmosphere. Even during the current pandemic, school staff worked to strengthen the school culture by welcoming Scouts at the front of the school to celebrate local heroes, producing a daily video which is played for students each day and available on the website and reaching out to students in a number of ways and instances.
1b	The school complies with applicable education requirements.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	The Horizon campus staff and leaders have taken on a "Business as Usual" attitude when distance learning became a mandate, interventions for students continued, routines were kept in place, and academic goals for Special Education students have not been interrupted.

1c	The school protects the rights of students with disabilities.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	All IEP goals are tracked via progress monitoring and through collaboration between regular/special education teachers, students, and family members. There was evidence within the classroom observations of students with special needs receiving separate support to help participation in the regular ed classroom.
1d	The school protects the rights of ELL students.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	WIDA testing is performed each year and students receive instruction to support their on-going focus to read, write, speak, and listen in English, all while continuing to learn new content within the grade level NVACS as required.

Measure	Description	Evidence Collected Through	Takeaways
3a	The school complies with governance requirements.	School Presentation Epicenter	All expected items are uploaded to Epicenter in a timely manner. The school's student handbook is updated regularly and revised as needed.
3b	The school holds management accountable.	School Presentation	All school leaders are evaluated on a yearly basis.
4a	The school protects the rights of all students.	School Presentation Epicenter Classroom Observations	The Horizon school handbook is updated yearly. All Pinecrest campuses have developed restorative justice practices.
5b	The school complies with health and safety requirements.	School Presentation Epicenter Classroom Observations	School staff conducts safety checks on a routine basis and makes improvements as the need demands. The distance learning platform is highly secure and ensures the confidentiality of all students.

SITE EVALUATION FINDINGS

STRENGTHS

A summary of Strengths as observed through academic achievement indicators, classroom observations, focus group feedback and portions of the Organizational Performance Evidence are found within the body of the report and summarized here.

- The SPCSA would like to acknowledge the laudable efforts of educators at the Pinecrest Campuses, who during a pandemic used existing knowledge to create meaningful learning opportunities for students. They didn't miss a beat, stepped up to make sure students continued to learn.
- The Horizon Campus has continued to monitor student learning using diagnostic test measures and interim assessments for learning since the pandemic began in March of 2019. This decision is to be commended as the campus seeks to continuously improve learning outcomes for all students in alignment with the mission statement.
- The Horizon Campus prides itself on the ability to build a strong culture and community at the school. These efforts were put to the test during the current pandemic, especially with the need to be socially distanced from one another. The school staff and leaders are to be commended for the ability to overcome obstacles regardless of the barriers in place. Examples of purposefully continuing to create a strong educational community and culture are as follows:
 - The Principal wrote a personal note to every student at the school.
 - A daily affirmation communicated through announcements which include positive messages of hope.
 - The school has partnered with the Henderson Police Department to arrange to have officers deliver backpacks to the homes of students in need of school supplies.
 - The school has supported the Scouts to celebrate heroes in the community and organize a drive to send letters and gifts of thanks to these individuals.

CHALLENGES

A summary of challenges as observed through academic achievement indicators, classroom observations, focus group feedback and portions of the Organizational Performance Framework Evidence are described within the body of the report and summarized here.

There are two main challenges at Pinecrest Horizon. The first, has been to stabilize the staff and students at this campus, after several transferred to newly opened Pinecrest campuses. This has been achieved with only 12 new hires for the 20-21 school year. Secondly, Pinecrest Horizon continues to hold instructional staff and students to high expectations of achievement. The quality and procedures for on-line, distance education continues to evolve. Considering the circumstances, it is our finding that the Horizon Campus has continued to uphold the mission statement through distance learning amidst budget cuts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended items are provided so charters may increase their school-wide ratings as well as their overall success. SPCSA School Support Team members will follow up on each listed recommendation.

1. The SPCSA recommends taking time to build upon the variety of distance learning practices to become even more skilled, purposeful, and intentional with this platform. We suggest using what has been learned in both face-to-face and distance learning environments to leverage what works best to impact student achievement. In both settings research has shown, the following best practices apply to both settings (*Fisher, Frey & Hattie, 2020*) that:
 - Fostering student self-regulation is crucial for moving learning to deep and transfer levels.
 - Learning accelerates when the student, not the teacher, is taught to be in control of learning.
 - There needs to be a diversity of instructional approaches (not just some direct instruction and then some off-line independent work).
 - Well-designed peer learning impacts understanding.
 - Feedback in a high-trust environment must be integrated into the learning cycle.

(Fisher et al.,2020)

2. The SPCSA recommends that the Horizon campus continue to attract and enroll a diverse student population. In particular, the FRL and Second Language Learners as compared to Clark County have low numbers according to the SPCSA Enrollment Diversity Indicator. The Enrollment Diversity Indicator displays a 6 of a possible 15 points in this area. This breaks down to 0 of 5 possible for FRL, 4 of a possible 5 for IEP, and 0 of a possible 5 for ELL. Intentional dedicated efforts by the Board and staff will be necessary to improve in this area.
3. Continue efforts to focus on MGP (Median Growth Percentile) as measured under the NSPF. This specific measure is an important component and weighted heavily within the NSPF. Because this measures growth of students (not the proficiency), the Horizon campus may have the opportunity to make improvement in its NSPF star rating in this are for both reading and math.
4. Continue to work on strategies to improve chronic absenteeism. The Horizon campus chronic absenteeism rate is 10.4 as compared to the SPCSA average of 8. Chronic school absenteeism has been identified as a precursor to undesirable outcomes in adolescence, including academic failure, school dropout, and juvenile delinquency. Consider creating a task force or working group that focuses on key educational strategies to improve school attendance. This new team might consider developing a comprehensive set of strategies to reduce absenteeism, analyze data, and launch interventions. Some schools have encountered success by tapping community resources, celebrities, mentors, and businesses to encourage students as early as kindergarten to go to school more regularly.

DEFICIENCIES

There were no deficiencies identified for the Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Horizon campus during this evaluation.