



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Site Evaluation Report
Democracy Prep at Agassi Campus
Evaluation Date: 1/26/2021
Report Date: 2/26/2021

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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 1/26/2021 at Democracy Prep Academy. 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

Democracy Prep is located in Las Vegas, Nevada in a facility at 1201 W. Lake Mead Blvd. The school serves 1098 students (as of the most recent Validation Day of October 2020) in grades K-12. The mission of Democracy Prep is: "To educate responsible citizen-scholars for success in the college of their choice and a life of active citizenship."

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

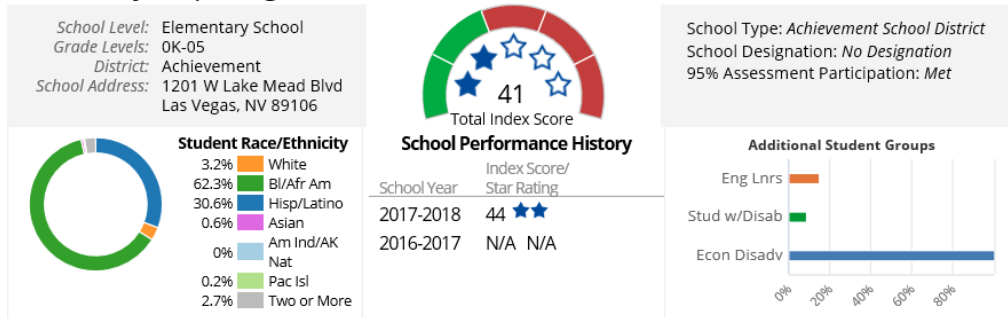
Democracy Prep Nevada School Performance Framework 2019

Democracy Prep Academy serves 1098 students in grades K - 12th

Elementary School

Democracy Prep at Agassi Elementary

School Year 2018-2019 Nevada School Rating



Middle School

Democracy Prep at Agassi Middle

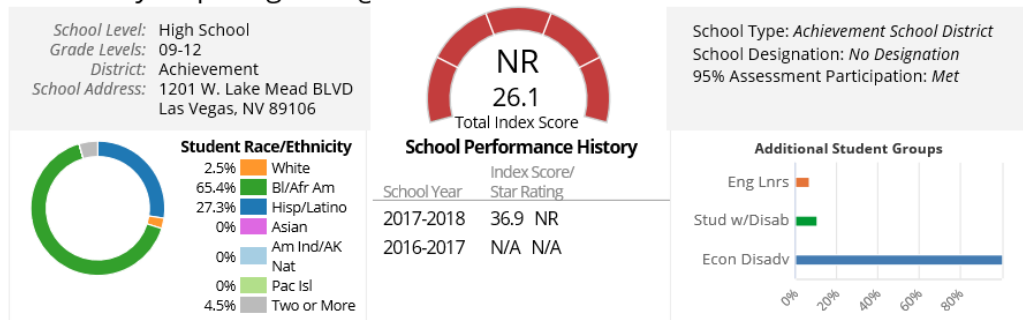
School Year 2018-2019 Nevada School Rating



High School

Democracy Prep at Agassi High

School Year 2018-2019 Nevada School Rating



Democracy Prep 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	35	36.1	48.5	38.1	38.1	45.8
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	-	34.3	-	-	30.9
Asian	-	-	68.8	-	-	67.2
Black/African American	30	29.1	32.3	32.6	32.6	28.8
Hispanic/Latino	41.2	42.7	39.6	42	42	36.5
Pacific Islander	-	-	48.3	-	-	45.6
Two or More Races	-	-	55.3	-	-	52.9
White/Caucasian	36.2	40	59.3	-	-	57.2
Special Education	14.1	16	28.6	9	9	24.8
English Learners Current + Former	42.3	44.7	35.8	39.5	39.5	32.4
English Learners Current	26.3	25.5	-	31.4	31.4	-
Economically Disadvantaged	35	35.7	39	-	-	35.7

ELA Proficient

Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	39.8	39.8	57	43.8	43.8	54.7
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	-	42.5	-	-	39.5
Asian	-	-	75.4	-	-	74.1
Black/African American	34.6	33.5	42.6	38.9	38.9	39.6
Hispanic/Latino	45.2	45.8	48.2	49.2	49.2	45.5
Pacific Islander	-	-	57.9	-	-	55.7
Two or More Races	-	-	64.4	-	-	62.6
White/Caucasian	63.6	53.2	67.4	-	-	65.7
Special Education	14.1	12	30	20	20	26.3
English Learners Current + Former	44.2	44.7	41.4	45.8	45.8	38.4
English Learners Current	23.6	20.8	-	34.2	34.2	-
Economically Disadvantaged	39.8	39.6	46.8	-	-	44

Middle School

Math Proficient

Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	42.7	42.7	36.5	40.4	40.4	33.2
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	-	28.4	-	-	24.6
Asian	-	-	58.6	-	-	56.4
Black/African American	35.8	35.5	23.5	33.8	33.8	19.5
Hispanic/Latino	52.2	50	29.3	50	50	25.5
Pacific Islander	-	-	36.9	-	-	33.6
Two or More Races	-	-	40.6	30	30	37.5
White/Caucasian	-	30	47.1	-	-	44.4
Special Education	9	5.7	18.6	4.7	4.7	14.3
English Learners Current + Former	49	43.7	20.2	51.8	51.8	16
English Learners Current	23.3	17	-	25	25	-
Economically Disadvantaged	42.8	42.3	29.2	-	-	25.5

ELA Proficient

Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	53.2	52.3	54.1	50.2	50.2	51.7
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	-	43.4	-	-	40.5
Asian	-	-	75.9	-	-	74.6
Black/African American	50.2	49.7	37.8	46.7	46.7	34.5
Hispanic/Latino	58.2	55.7	45.1	57.6	57.6	42.2
Pacific Islander	-	-	53.2	-	-	50.7
Two or More Races	-	-	61.3	30	30	59.2
White/Caucasian	-	40	66.3	-	-	64.6
Special Education	27.1	23.5	21.9	9.5	9.5	17.8
English Learners Current + Former	59.1	51.7	24.3	62.9	62.9	20.3
English Learners Current	28	20	-	37.5	37.5	-
Economically Disadvantaged	53.5	52	44.4	-	-	41.4

High School

Math Proficient

Math Proficient Points Earned: 1/10

Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	6.9	6.9	32.83	12	12	29.29
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	-	23.12	-	-	19.07
Asian	-	-	50.27	-	-	47.65
Black/African American	7	7	18.42	13.3	13.3	14.12
Hispanic/Latino	8.3	8.3	22.93	10	10	18.87
Pacific Islander	-	-	29.26	-	-	25.54
Two or More Races	-	-	36.96	-	-	33.64
White/Caucasian	-	-	44.25	-	-	41.31
Special Education	-	-	12.38	-	-	7.77
English Learners Current + Former	-	-	14.52	-	-	10.02
English Learners Current	-	-	-	-	-	6.96
Economically Disadvantaged	6.9	6.9	24	15.3	15.3	20.01

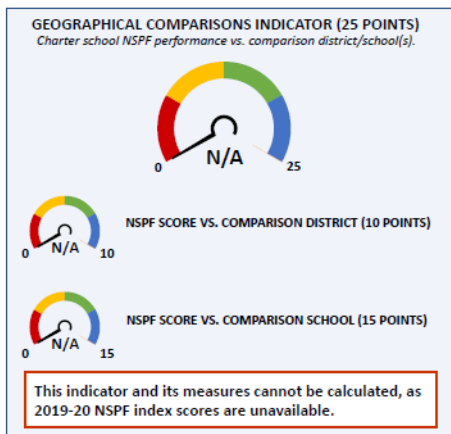
ELA Proficient

ELA Proficient Points Earned: 4.5/10

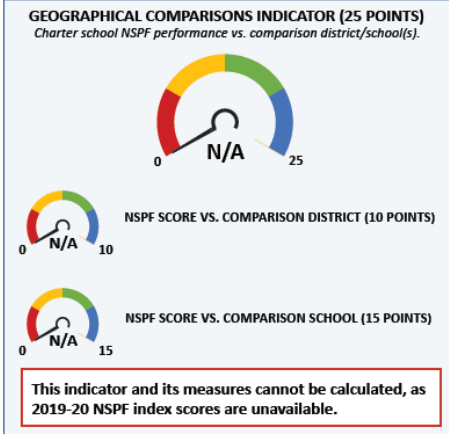
Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	43.8	43.8	48.54	48.2	48.2	45.83
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	-	36.76	-	-	33.43
Asian	-	-	65.11	-	-	63.27
Black/African American	33.2	33.2	31.39	42.2	42.2	27.78
Hispanic/Latino	58.2	58.2	36.5	60	60	33.15
Pacific Islander	-	-	48.75	-	-	46.05
Two or More Races	-	-	58.07	-	-	55.86
White/Caucasian	-	-	62.25	-	-	60.26
Special Education	-	-	15.71	-	-	11.27
English Learners Current + Former	-	-	17.52	-	-	13.18
English Learners Current	-	-	-	-	-	6.9
Economically Disadvantaged	43.8	43.8	37.66	51.2	51.2	34.37

SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Geographic Comparison Report

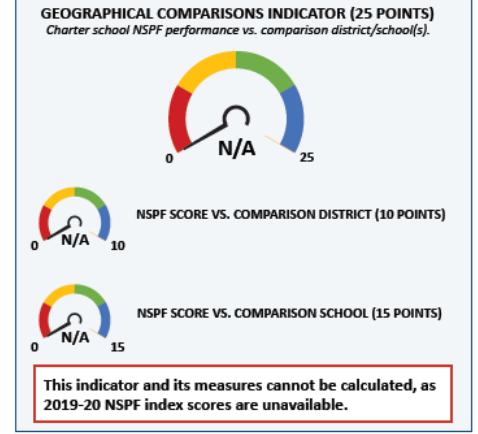
Elementary School



Middle School

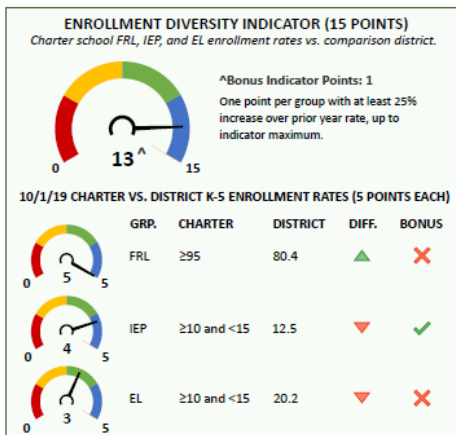


High School

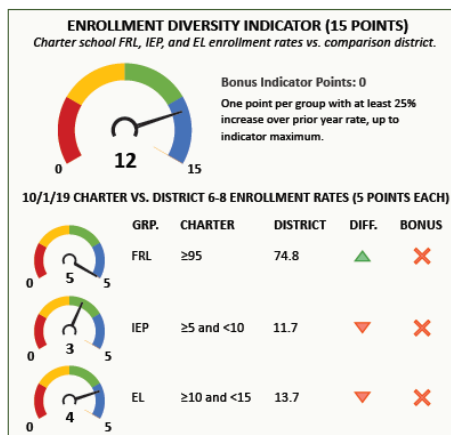


SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Diversity Comparison Results

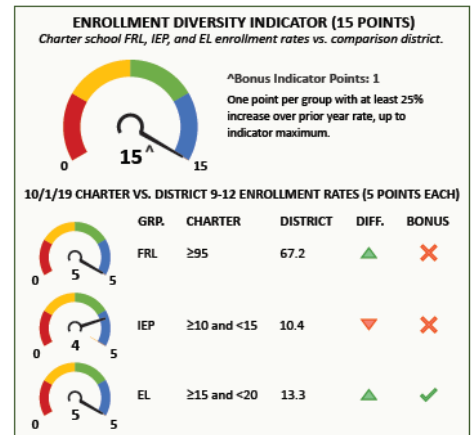
Elementary School



Middle School



High School



FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Group	Number of Participants	Duration of Focus Group
Governing Board ¹	5	30 minutes
Parents/Families	6	30 minutes
Students	5	30 minutes
School Leadership	5	30 minutes
Staff	10	30 minutes

Governing Board:

- The board shared that one of the biggest strengths of the school is the school leadership team and Executive Director. Board members described him as strong in many areas such as social justice issues and other areas that affect the lives of Democracy Prep (DPAC) scholars. Another strength, according to the board is that the school is nimble and has been able to keep students at the center of their decision making throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The board has complemented the school personnel as being increasingly responsive. Focus group participants stated that the school leaders put together a fantastic re-opening plan and then had to change the plan in response to what was actually happening in the community. The board said that school leaders continue to monitor student learning outcomes and work to maximize learning.
- Members of the board voiced that the model that DPAC uses to educate students, such as small group learning, is difficult to provide given the amount of funding that is provided in Nevada. One person commented, "The funding is so tight and I think it is important to maximize intervention programming whenever we can. I have concerns about the messaging taking place in the city of Las Vegas with regard to charter schools. Many of the families and students don't realize that the charter schools are an option to all those in a given geographical location."
- Members of the DPAC Board explained that they work with the National Board of Democracy Prep, the CMO, on a somewhat regular basis. Focus group participants shared that the Democracy Prep CMO chair came to the local DPAC board meeting recently, and there is a national CMO update and regular e-mail updates on initiatives on a regular basis. Local board members said that they check-in with their national counterparts when appropriate. The CEO of the CMO talked with a recent prospective member of the local DPAC board prior to them finally joining and made sure the new board member would be a good fit and understand the mission and vision of the national board.
- New Board members receive information when formally joining the board according to

¹ Four members of the 12-member board participated. Quorum was not met, and Open Meeting Law was not violated.

focus group participants. Some members already have some background but spend time talking with the Executive Director and meet with people from the Democracy Prep central office to discuss the mission and values. A new member shared that she is comfortable speaking up right away and does not feel the need to stay quiet during board meetings just because she is a new member. The board admits that they realize their role has changed since being sponsored by the Achievement School District Board. Board members in this focus group said that they have plans to conduct additional training for themselves in the months ahead.

- The Board spoke about parent engagement and said that they have parent and scholar representation on the board. The board has access to surveys with both qualitative and quantitative information and are very interested in considering future members that are willing to serve. The DPAC elementary school was a 2-star rating and the Board said that they appreciate the new SPCSA academic performance framework. According to board members, the executive director provides information to the board regarding benchmarks of achievement and they see monthly updates in regard to student achievement. The board said they review the data and have contracted with a consultant to look more in-depth at the data.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

Parents/Families:

- There are many reasons families attend Democracy Prep and one big reason is the college focus and the civic engagement, according to parents and families. As far as civic engagement, family members said that there was an anti-bullying campaign at DPAC. One parent remarked, “My child was able to talk about it and take part in many of the activities.” One parent loves having a single school campus for her three children. Another parent said that she wanted a diverse campus for her daughter, who is bi-racial and identifies as a person of color. This parent went on to say that this school provides a diverse experience for her student. Another family member with a child with special needs explained that she is from the east coast and is new to this entire set up. With the transition she liked the smaller environment and additional control at speaking up about concerns.
- Parents spoke about communication and reported that they have been super impressed with the responsiveness of the school. One person said, “The principal, Executive Director, the teacher and I speak often and I have several questions most of the time. I am vocal and I have been very pleased with the responsiveness from the people at the school.” Another parent agreed and said that the leadership team is totally responsive. One parent moved to Las Vegas a few years ago and enrolled at Democracy Prep. She shared that she has been happy with the e-mail, communications, and even e-mails that are positive to say great things. She said, “ I feel very informed and appreciate the open door policy. Teachers text, call, or e-mail if a family member needs some information.”
- Family members said that the teachers at the school have been outstanding with regard to helping their children. For example, one parent said that her son can be difficult and struggled in preschool but the kindergarten teacher has been a positive influence on her son and his behavior. A second parent said that her children in elementary school and middle school have very good relationships with their teachers. The parent went on to say that her daughter swims competitively and the teachers actually came to the meet and supported her during competitions. Another parent added that because the teachers know her son so well, they were able to determine that her son needed extra help and worked together to provide it. One of the advisors at the school contacted a parent and helped the family to see that they should not settle for college choices and to aim high. Parents feel that staff at the school are like family.
- One family member suggested that the school extend its ability to offer additional extra-curricular activities. To add to this, another parent wrote up a proposal for a health and wellness club and then the school has helped make this to happen. Family members suggested that the school have a National Honor Society Chapter and support scholars by having an extra point on admissions to college. Family members wanted the SPCSA to know that more funding for the school would be nice. One family member felt that educators should be paid much more than they are. Another parent noticed that class sizes have increased and would like to see DPAC return to smaller classes in the future.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

Students:

- Students had many reasons for choosing to attend Democracy Prep. One student said he likes that the school and other scholars hold each other accountable. Another student said she actually chose to come to this school and she wanted to give it a chance and see what it is like. She said she is being taught how to be held accountable. She said, "It is not just the curriculum but the school has helped me as a human being." With regard to virtual learning, students shared that they like how the teachers introduced themselves to the students and have fully explained their classroom expectations. Another student said that online learning is difficult because it is hard to have relationships with others. Students felt that one disadvantage for the school and online learning is the workload, especially for high school seniors. One student remarked, "I provide for my family and it can get a little bit overwhelming, but there is a way to work with it when you have a job and I understand when it seems overwhelming." Another older student added that with the due dates for assignments and the fact that his guardian does not have a job, dad does not have a job, she is providing for the family. She appreciates that the DPAC teachers listen to her and give her extensions.
- The students were asked about classroom expectations, to which they responded that DPAC teachers expect students to leave their camera on and try to engage students by having them put the answers in the chat box privately. Another student said that the teachers expect daily chats from older students but if you are uncomfortable and put it out in front of others there is a private way to evaluate and receive feedback. Focus group participants went on to explain that if the student camera is off, they don't get participation points. Students stated that not everyone likes to go to tutoring, but they also have the option to look at Infinite Campus to make sure grades are staying up. Students shared that the school is very demanding with regard to grades. Each week students get a grade report for the week. Students said that there are amnesty days when students could still get credit for an assignment. Additionally, students said that they might not get all the points but the grade would not be a zero.
- Students said the school is good for sports and has clubs. In addition, students explained that they can form a club if there is the right number of students in an interested group. Students were proud that many of the seniors earned scholarships for football and the teachers have connections for colleges. Students explained that school staff is really into the college part of the motto and as a result, students are allowed to volunteer, have marches, and are encouraged to get involved.
- Students were asked to provide suggestions to improve the school. One of the older students said that, "This school is pushing for college, but I would like there to be inclusion for students that don't want to attend a traditional college right away, but would want to go to a trade school instead. The school itself seems to take on the stance that you absolutely must go to college and that isn't always for everyone. Maybe the school staff would consider showing that going to college is a good thing, but not going right away and coming up with a plan is a good thing, too." Another student said, "Maybe a scholar needs to save some money or may want to enter a trade school instead." One student shared that they would like to change how options are provided. He commented, "I didn't know that the school offered me a college counselor or even the option to go and talk to this person."

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

Leadership:

- The leadership team shared that the schedule at the school has changed to provide 90-minutes per class with the teacher. Leaders believe this will help find a balance with students doing the work on their own and with the teacher online. The team added that the general expectation at the school is for scholars to have their cameras on. Leaders added that the school must remember to have scholars advocate for themselves. Therefore, if a special circumstance exists, students are encouraged to e-mail the teacher with the reason for the exception.
- When asked about online learning and instruction, school leaders said that the operations team has been very helpful with the technology and helps keep things up and running for both scholars and teachers. With distance learning, school leaders voiced that engagement strategies are important. One leader shared some of the engagement strategies that the school is implementing include *Near 2Pod*, online chat, and logging into *GoGuardian*³ to see what scholars are doing. Leaders said that they are taking part in the third of three professional development sessions on engaging students using the online platform.
- The leadership team explained that the framework for teacher evaluations is the same as far as classroom observations normally are conducted. School leaders shared that they try to observe teachers one time per week. The actual evaluation on paper has changed. This new format considers the new variables which are important during a virtual learning setting. Leaders expressed that they recognize that they still need to evaluate instruction based on the parts of learning that continue to be the same in a virtual format.
- When leaders were asked about the high number of staff retention from year to year, they shared that Democracy Prep provides high levels of development and support for educators as well as the opportunity to grow as a professional. One leader commented, “Adult culture is really important to me and we celebrate wins and comfort losses. If a person has a goal in mind, the team may stretch you them to achieve that goal.” Another leader added that the school leadership team looks at how one thing the school implements extends across the campus. School leaders stated that they have a support team that works to keep the students attending school. Leaders also shared that they offer an advisory class and have the scholars attend this class in order to let scholars know that they are seen and it is noticed if they do not show up. Another leader said that there is a connection between the engagement strategies and the likelihood that students will be coming back to class if they are interested in what they are learning. He said, “We want scholars to be excited about attending school.”

² Nearpod is an instructional platform that merges formative assessment and dynamic media for collaborative learning experiences

³ GoGuardian is a software company that helps school staff manage a fleet of Chromebooks and is primarily used to filter the content of the Internet on the district-owned Chromebooks

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

Staff:

- There were ten staff members contributing to this focus groups and they shared several reasons for teaching at this school. One teacher explained that she was an employee at the previous school but decided to stay at DPAC for the sake of the families. Then she continued to cultivate relationships with those involved with Democracy Prep. She added that, “I’ve been able to be a teacher and then move to a grade level chair, and on to being a Literacy Specialist”. Another teacher shared that he came from out of the country and heard from a friend about the unique mission at the Democracy Prep schools. He decided he wanted to be a part of such noble work. Other instructional staff spoke about some of the changes they have made due to the need for distance learning. One teacher said it was a big jump for first graders to go from classroom all day to online instruction all day. Another teacher said the reduction in time for classes has been super hard. This teacher went on to say that he has to teach the literature lesson in 45 minutes and it doesn’t seem like enough time. Others agreed with this response, and one person said it is difficult to condense the material and make sure the important content is given enough emphasis.
- One of the instructional coaches said that the school leaders do everything they can to provide strong levels of support to the staff. For example, she holds town hall meetings and provides a platform for teachers to express all of their concerns. The school uses surveys, an open door policy, and town hall meetings to keep track of what is desired or could help teachers and students. Staff said that data-based decision-making is important and teachers use exit tickets to formatively assess students. Teachers also stated that they use these exit tickets, results of MAP testing to form small groups and provide office hours to students in order to support their learning even more.
- The staff was well aware of the school-wide goals. When asked, staff explained that they strive to meet or exceed the schoolwide attendance goal of 96%. Teachers said that DPAC offers different rewards for those student in attendance, and conduct “shout outs” for improvement. Teachers also shared that they offer challenges such as a “turn-in” challenge with a prize. Teachers explained that sometimes in this distance learning setting, students don’t turn in work so they try to push scholars to do the work and turn it in while also monitoring scholar mastery as well. Non-instructional staff assists by reaching out to parents and providing hot spots, helping with students logging into the distance learning platform, and calling each time a student is not logged in. Staff shared that sometimes they rely on text messages to reach students and families.
- Community involvement is major focus for the DPAC campus and staff explained its importance. For example, they said that the Boys and Girls Club provides help with access to Harbor (which is a truancy program). In addition, the school provides wrap around services including help with medication, and access to basic needs. From the perspective of what the school offers to families, the staff commented that they know education is an important pillar and all of the staff is involved.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TOTALS

A total of 13 classrooms were observed for approximately 25 minutes on the day of the evaluation.

I. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT					
Areas 1 & 2 Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport Establishing a Culture for Learning	Distinguished Classroom interactions are highly respectful and the teacher demonstrates a passionate commitment to the subject.	Proficient Classroom interactions reflect general warmth and caring and a genuine culture for learning.	Basic Classroom interactions are generally appropriate and free from conflict with a minimal culture for learning.	Unsatisfactory Classroom interactions between the teacher and students are negative and do not represent a culture for learning.	Not Observed This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 3	Total: 9	Total:	Total: 1	Total:
	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: 12	Total: 1	Total:	Total:
Areas 3 & 4 Managing Classroom Procedures Managing Student Behavior	Distinguished Classroom routines and procedures appear seamless and student behavior is entirely appropriate.	Proficient Classroom routines and procedures have been established and the teacher ensures smooth functioning with little loss of instruction time.	Basic Classroom routines and procedures have been established but function inconsistently, with some loss of instruction time.	Unsatisfactory Classroom routines and procedures are nonexistent or inefficient, resulting in the loss of much instruction time.	Not Observed This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 2	Total: 11	Total:	Total:	Total:
	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: 4	Total: 8	Total: 1	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: 10	Total:	Total:	Total: 2
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: 11	Total:	Total:	Total: 2
	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: 11	Total:	Total:	Total: 2	

II. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION (continued)

		Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
Area 7 Engaging Students in Learning	A	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:	Total: 8	Total: 2	Total: 3	Total:
	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:	Total: 10	Total: 3	Total:	Total:
		Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
Area 8 Using Formative Assessment in Instruction	A	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:	Total: 13	Total:	Total:	Total:
	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: 9	Total: 2	Total:	Total: 1

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: 3
- 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): 3
- Teacher questions are open ended: 3
- Teacher allows time for students to answer – 3 seconds or more: 4
- Teacher extends the thinking and discussion by encouraging students to say more, restate or summarize: 2
- 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): 3

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: 3
- The lesson is rigorous and includes cognitively complex tasks: 3
- 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: 5
- Project-based learning:

Evidence of Formative Assessment During Instruction: Area #8

- Teachers provide the students feedback about their learning referring to examples taking anecdotal notes: 4
- Students incorporate the feedback by revising their work: 1
- Students receive frequent and meaningful feedback regarding their work: 2
- 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	Priorities for the school include: Increased rigor: The quality of work you put in front of scholars matters for their long term education gains More time: If we need to catch up or advance past our peers, we need more instruction time Joyous Culture: Learning & joy should be linked, so it is critical we celebrate scholars and allow them to enjoy school authentically Inspiring Talent: The adults (specifically teachers in the classroom) drive learning so we develop and support our teachers.
1b	The school complies with applicable education requirements.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	Democracy Prep's K-12 curriculum is tightly aligned to the Nevada Academic Content Standards. DPAC curriculum comes from national publishers, is highly rated by external groups & is vetted by

			DPAC teachers & leaders.
1c	The school protects the rights of students with disabilities.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	Integrated, co-taught content classes across grades K - 12, small group special education teacher support services, and individualized portfolio courses with direct 1:1 remediation. SPED managers/coordinators support teachers and school leaders through scheduling and professional development.
1d	The school protects the rights of ELL students.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	2019 AGP (Annual Growth Percentile) data indicated that 56.3% of DPAC ES scholars met AGP, putting them above the 50th state percentile, and 50.0% of DPAC MS scholars met AGP, putting them above the 75th state percentile. 2019 data indicated only 7.6% of DPACHS scholars met AGP, indicating a need for increased programming.

Measure	Description	Evidence Collected Through	Takeaways
3a	The school complies with governance requirements.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	All staff is evaluated regularly and at least annually. Members of the board evaluate the CMO on a consistent and annual basis.
3b	The school holds management accountable.	School Presentation	The Executive Director is evaluated on a yearly basis by the governing board.
4a	The school protects the rights of all students.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	Staff attend events and partner with organizations dedicated to increasing the diversity of school-based instructional and leadership. Examples include involvement with the School Leaders of Color Conference, outreach to HBCUs & HSIs, and attendance at the Diversity in Education Recruitment Fairs held through Diversity Recruitment Partners.
5b	The school complies with health and safety requirements.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	The school has a full Social Work team for Social Emotional Help. The CMO HR staff provides all-around staff support. DPAC has a school nurse plus telehealth program.

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.

1. Strong Rigor: Democracy Prep provides scholars with comprehensive and rigorous college preparation including extensive literacy and math instruction. The school staff has implemented the use of technology to assess progress and ensure checks for understanding, and appropriate teacher pacing.
2. A joyous culture exists throughout the school. There was evidence of enthusiasm within the learning and academic experiences observed in classrooms. The SPCSA evaluation team noted examples of students encouraging other students to take a risk and try a new academic endeavor. The instructional staff appeared to be passionate about teaching and learning and provided both support and meaningful feedback. Staff used student's first names, offered many genuine smiles, and displayed a great deal of patience with the technology needed at this time.
3. The student and staff population at DPAC are diverse. Studies show that students do indeed benefit from teachers who look like them. According to Johns Hopkins University and American University, black students who have even one black teacher by third grade are 13 percent more likely to enroll in college. The same researchers also found that the positive "role model effect" of having a teacher who looks like you are especially beneficial for low-income young Black men, who are 39 percent less likely to drop-out of high school if they had at least one black teacher in elementary school. It is evident and commendable that DPAC strives to be a school that is representative of the community it serves.

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.

1. Democracy Prep has a robust programmatic model that provides intensive support for scholars. Two new programs were implemented this year in the area of K-5 Math (Eureka Math) and 6-8 Study Sync. The school is challenged to monitor the effectiveness of these newly implemented programs while continuing to learn about and effectively teach them.
2. The school is challenged with the need to use different tools to approximate ongoing scholar growth or lack thereof. The need to accelerate the academic growth is a challenge and the need to move the overall result from a 2-star NSPF rating in the Elementary level to a 3-star or higher is critical for the long-term success of the school.
3. COVID-19 has had a definite impact on families at the school and staff must compete with the home environment while trying to keep students engaged. The use of technology for research-based practices in the distance learning model is a challenge. Teachers have adapted to the distance learning format, changing technology, and continue to do so.

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 Democracy Prep board should continue to become solidified and seek out training for current and future board members. The SPCSA recommends that the training become routine and on-going. SPCSA highly encourages the full DPAC board receive governance training prior to the start of the 2021 -22 school year. The SPCSA can connect with the board and assist in facilitating this need if helpful.
2. SPCSA staff recommends that Democracy Prep begin to develop and make available to all students an array of both college preparation and high quality career pathways. As noted in the student focus group, it appears that some students could benefit from dual messaging. By combining rigorous academics, an applied curriculum, and work-based learning opportunities the school will improve the success rate for their students, in alignment with the mission statement. By including the support of focused career planning and guidance, Democracy Prep can also improve student outcomes.
3. It is recommended that the leadership team work together to cultivate and delegate some of the responsibilities that are operationally important. When possible consider the idea of delegating operational tasks to ensure that excellent teaching and learning are spread school-wide as well as overseeing that internal systems operate in an on-time and functional manner. The SPCSA notes that there have been late and missing submissions within Epicenter since the transition from the Achievement School District. More recently, the final FY20 Financial Audit was submitted nearly two months after the statutory deadline. Items to be completed ahead for this site evaluation were also received late. There is room to grow in this regard and the Democracy Prep team should strive to appear well-prepared and timely in internal and external communications.
4. It is recommended that school staff continue to work on a variety of distance learning practices to become even more schooled, purposeful, and intentional with this platform. In both distance learning and in person platforms, research has shown (*Fisher, Frey & Hattie, 2020*) that the following best practices apply.
 - 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 his or her learning.
 - There needs to be a diversity of instructional approaches.
 - Well-designed peer learning impacts understanding.
 - Feedback in a high-trust environment must be integrated into the learning cycle. (*Fisher et al.,2020*)

This recommendation is provided so that Democracy Prep considers using newly published materials based on Hattie's 2020 research to further strengthen the online instruction even more than it is now. As virtual learning decreases, the same strong strategies will apply to the in-person learning environment as well.

DEFICIENCIES

There were no deficiencies identified for Democracy Prep Academy during this site evaluation.
