



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Site Evaluation Report: Amplus Academy- Durango

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Appendices

A: Nevada School Performance Framework

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

B: SPCSA Academic Framework

<http://charterschools.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/CharterSchoolsnvgov/content/News/2019/190628-Academic-Performance-Framework-Guidance-Document.pdf>

C: SPCSA Organizational Framework

<http://charterschools.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/CharterSchoolsnvgov/content/News/2019/190628-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 11/29/2022 at Amplus Academy Durango. The State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all charters within the portfolio during the first, third, and fifth year of operation. This comprehensive analysis addresses the academic success of the school and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization. Schools identified as having a rating of a two-star or below, and those schools with a Notice of Concern, Notice of Breach, or Notice of Termination, will have a differentiated procedure for their site evaluation or a Targeted evaluation. Amplus Academy Durango is in year three of their charter contract thus meeting the criteria for a comprehensive site evaluation.

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.

Members of the SPCSA evaluation team will note additional information regarding the classroom observations on one page of this report. This page will be located on the page immediately after the final classroom rubric ratings. Using information obtained from focus groups of students, parents, staff, school leaders and the school's board, the SPCSA team will summarize results for schools within the report. Observations and take-aways regarding some of the Organizational Framework components will be summarized and outlined in this site evaluation report.

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

Amplus Academy Durango is located in Las Vegas, Nevada in a facility at 8377 W. Patrick Lane. The school serves 1662 students (as of the most recent Validation Day) in kindergarten through 12th grade. The mission of Amplus Academy Durango school is: "Amplus Academy operates as a free public charter school that welcomes and honors all. Our intent is that our students acquire knowledge and skills to become esteemed, distinguished, and productive citizens who preserve the pillars of a free and just society."

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Nevada School Performance Framework 2022

This information is provided to assist in understanding the data sets impacted by the pandemic.

Elementary School Amplus Durango

School Year 2021-2022 Nevada School Rating



Middle School Amplus Durango

School Year 2021-2022 Nevada School Rating



High School Amplus Durango

School Year 2021-2022 Nevada School Rating



Math and ELA Results

Nevada School Performance Framework

2022

This information is provided to assist in understanding the data sets impacted by the pandemic.

Proficiency Rates

Elementary School

Math Proficient

Groups	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP	2021 %	2021 % District	2021 % MIP
All Students	59.2	49.2	51.1			
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	28.5	37.6			
Asian	81.1	72.8	70.4			
Black/African American	47.5	30.3	35.7			
Hispanic/Latino	46.0	37.9	42.7			
Pacific Islander	41.6	47.2	50.9			
Two or More Races	62.5	55.6	57.5			
White/Caucasian	60.3	60.7	61.3			
Special Education	35.2	26.3	32.1			
English Learners Current + Former	50.0	34.9	39			
English Learners Current	36.3	25.5				
Economically Disadvantaged	42.3	35.6	42			

ELA Proficient

Groups	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP	2021 %	2021 % District	2021 % MIP
All Students	63.5	55.4	59.2			
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	40.8	45.4			
Asian	79.2	74.9	76.7			
Black/African American	57.4	39.8	45.4			
Hispanic/Latino	54.0	45.1	50.8			
Pacific Islander	25.0	53.7	60			
Two or More Races	68.7	61.5	66.2			
White/Caucasian	66.0	65.5	69			
Special Education	35.2	25.5	33.5			
English Learners Current + Former	35.7	37.4	44.4			
English Learners Current	27.2	24.4				
Economically Disadvantaged	48.7	42.8	49.4			

Middle School

Math Proficient

Groups	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP	2021 %	2021 % District	2021 % MIP
All Students	44.8	36.5	39.7			
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	36.3	31.9			
Asian	65.7	62.7	60.6			
Black/African American	38.7	18.2	27.3			
Hispanic/Latino	34.5	26.4	32.8			
Pacific Islander	28.5	28.3	40.1			
Two or More Races	40.2	41.8	43.6			
White/Caucasian	45.0	48.1	49.8			
Special Education	10.7	9.7	22.7			
English Learners Current + Former	32.8	20.1	24.2			
English Learners Current	9.6	7.6				
Economically Disadvantaged	34.5	23.9	32.7			

ELA Proficient

Groups	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP	2021 %	2021 % District	2021 % MIP
All Students	66.3	57.3	56.4			
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	53.7	46.3			
Asian	75.9	79.0	77.1			
Black/African American	60.9	41.1	40.9			
Hispanic/Latino	62.8	48.2	47.9			
Pacific Islander	52.3	53.3	55.5			
Two or More Races	61.9	64.6	63.2			
White/Caucasian	68.2	67.2	68			
Special Education	32.1	18.0	25.8			
English Learners Current + Former	54.2	38.8	28.1			
English Learners Current	26.6	16.7				
Economically Disadvantaged	61.9	45.9	47.1			

High School

Math Proficient

Math Proficient Points Earned: 7.5/10

Groups	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP	2021 %	2021 % District	2021 % MIP
All Students	36.8	25.2	36.19			
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	-	26.96			
Asian	65.2	55.1	52.76			
Black/African American	22.7	10.2	22.5			
Hispanic/Latino	20.0	14.2	26.78			
Pacific Islander	-	23.0	32.8			
Two or More Races	10.0	31.9	40.11			
White/Caucasian	50.0	33.8	47.04			
Special Education	-	6.6	16.76			
English Learners Current + Former	-	<5	18.8			
English Learners Current	-	<5	16.04			
Economically Disadvantaged	30.0	14.6	27.8			

ELA Proficient

ELA Proficient Points Earned: 10/10

Groups	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP	2021 %	2021 % District	2021 % MIP
All Students	60.5	54.3	51.11			
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	-	39.92			
Asian	86.9	78.7	66.85			
Black/African American	54.5	40.6	34.82			
Hispanic/Latino	48.0	42.3	39.67			
Pacific Islander	-	35.8	51.31			
Two or More Races	30.0	60.5	60.16			
White/Caucasian	68.7	65.7	64.14			
Special Education	-	16.5	19.92			
English Learners Current + Former	-	12.5	21.64			
English Learners Current	-	9.2	15.98			
Economically Disadvantaged	60.0	43.4	40.77			

SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Geographic Comparison Report

Elementary School

GEOGRAPHICAL COMPARISONS INDICATOR (25 POINTS)
SPCSA school NSPF performance vs. comparison district/school(s).

25/25 15 automatic points in indicator.
A 4- or 5-star equivalent NSPF score earns 15 or 25 automatic points.

NSPF SCORE VS. COMPARISON DISTRICT (10 POINTS)

10/10 NSPF score difference of 27.4 between school (76.5 points) and comparison district (49.1 points).

NSPF SCORE VS. COMPARISON SCHOOL (15 POINTS)

15/15 NSPF score difference of 25.5 between school (76.5 points) and comparison school (51 points).

Middle School

GEOGRAPHICAL COMPARISONS INDICATOR (25 POINTS)
SPCSA school NSPF performance vs. comparison district/school(s).

25/25 15 automatic points in indicator.
A 4- or 5-star equivalent NSPF score earns 15 or 25 automatic points.

NSPF SCORE VS. COMPARISON DISTRICT (10 POINTS)

10/10 NSPF score difference of 27.4 between school (76.5 points) and comparison district (49.1 points).

NSPF SCORE VS. COMPARISON SCHOOL (15 POINTS)

15/15 NSPF score difference of 25.5 between school (76.5 points) and comparison school (51 points).

High School

GEOGRAPHICAL COMPARISONS INDICATOR (25 POINTS)
SPCSA school NSPF performance vs. comparison district/school(s).

22/25 15 automatic points in indicator.
A 4- or 5-star equivalent NSPF score earns 15 or 25 automatic points.

NSPF SCORE VS. COMPARISON DISTRICT (10 POINTS)

7/10 NSPF score difference of 17.7 between school (80.5 points) and comparison district (62.8 points).

NSPF SCORE VS. COMPARISON SCHOOL (15 POINTS)

15/15 NSPF score difference of 27 between school (80.5 points) and comparison school (53.5 points).

SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Diversity Comparison Results

Elementary School

ENROLLMENT DIVERSITY INDICATOR (15 POINTS)
SPCSA school FRL, IEP, and EL enrollment rates vs. comparison district.

7/15 Indicator bonus points for: FRL.
One bonus point per group with 25%+ increase over prior year.

ENROLLMENT RATES VS. COMPARISON DISTRICT (5 POINTS EACH)

2/5 School FRL rate of ≥ 30 to $< 40\%$ compared to district GrK-5 FRL rate of $> 95\%$.

2/5 School IEP rate of ≥ 5 to $< 10\%$ compared to district GrK-5 IEP rate of 11.9%.

2/5 School EL rate of ≥ 5 to $< 10\%$ compared to district GrK-5 EL rate of 19.3%.

Middle School

ENROLLMENT DIVERSITY INDICATOR (15 POINTS)
SPCSA school FRL, IEP, and EL enrollment rates vs. comparison district.

9/15 Indicator bonus points for: FRL EL.
One bonus point per group with 25%+ increase over prior year.

ENROLLMENT RATES VS. COMPARISON DISTRICT (5 POINTS EACH)

2/5 School FRL rate of ≥ 30 to $< 40\%$ compared to district Gr6-8 FRL rate of $> 95\%$.

2/5 School IEP rate of ≥ 5 to $< 10\%$ compared to district Gr6-8 IEP rate of 11.9%.

3/5 School EL rate of ≥ 5 to $< 10\%$ compared to district Gr6-8 EL rate of 13.6%.

High School

ENROLLMENT DIVERSITY INDICATOR (15 POINTS)
SPCSA school FRL, IEP, and EL enrollment rates vs. comparison district.

9/15 Indicator bonus points for: FRL EL.
One bonus point per group with 25%+ increase over prior year.

ENROLLMENT RATES VS. COMPARISON DISTRICT (5 POINTS EACH)

2/5 School FRL rate of ≥ 20 to $< 30\%$ compared to district Gr9-12 FRL rate of $> 95\%$.

2/5 School IEP rate of $< 5\%$ compared to district Gr9-12 IEP rate of 10.3%.

3/5 School EL rate of $< 5\%$ compared to district Gr9-12 EL rate of 13.2%.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Group	Number of Participants	Duration of Focus Group
Governing Board ¹	2	30 minutes
Parents/Families	4	30 minutes
Students	10	30 minutes
School Leadership	6	30 minutes
Staff ²	9	30 minutes

Governing Board³:

- Two members of the board participated in the focus group and said they stay well informed about academics and events taking place at both campuses. Board members reported that prior to each board meeting, they receive a packet of information to review ahead of time, giving them opportunity to formulate questions in preparation for the board meeting. During the board meeting, the Amplus Managing Director provides a detailed report which includes updates relevant to academic performance, finances, and operational events. One board member commented, “We have worked on transparency and making sure we, as a board, are doing everything with fidelity.”
- One of the participants in the focus group was a member of the board when Amplus transitioned away from the previous EMO⁴ and became an independent public charter school. This member commented, “We transitioned during the pandemic, and it was a learning curve. The organization, the strategic planning, and aligning our practices to the mission and vision has been a major focus of our oversight. We had a tremendous amount of growth and change these past two years and are looking at a strategic plan which will include both short-term and long-term goals. We are considering finances, student academics and increasing the number of members on our board.” The current board has five members, and the board would like to expand to seven.
- Board members have several areas of expertise including two members with educational experience, one with finance, and another with a background in health insurance. Members shared they are interested in filling additional board seats, should they expand the board, with a person with legal background, as well as one or two parents whose child attends Amplus. Members shared that there are currently three special board committees: school improvement, educational curriculum, and financial oversight.
- Board members reported that they would like to see an increase in the number of students within special populations at the school. Students enrolled in Special Education, those learning to speak English, and students eligible to receive free and reduced lunch. One member commented, “A school lunch program, and maintaining strong academic outcomes for all students is under discussion.

¹ A single board governs both the Durango and Rainbow campuses.

² The members of the staff group were comprised of individuals from both Amplus campuses.

³ Two members of the five member board participated. Quorum was not met, and Open Meeting Law was not violated.

⁴ EMO is an acronym for Education Management Organization which is a for-profit educational organization that operates public charter schools in the United States.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

Parents/Families

- Several family members communicated that their relationship with Amplus school leaders has been positive. One parent has had six children attend the school. She indicated she had some serious conversations with administration. She said, “[The school leaders] are respectful, and items get addressed.” This parent felt Amplus is a good public school. Another parent specifically provided a very personal, intimate example of a situation with her child and a teacher. The parent said the administration validated and recorded evidence regarding the situation and it was resolved.
- Parents spoke about their relationship with teachers at Amplus. Family members agreed that some teachers are “great”. One parent said this year, one teacher had been challenging for students. The parent was concerned that many of the students were struggling with the material and did not feel comfortable asking for help from the teacher. The parent felt that students were confused and frustrated. A different parent said that homework seems overwhelming for students in high school because the load is so much that it infringes upon sleep and family time. One of the high school family members reported that the transition to ninth grade is “huge and adding mountains of homework” which can deplete student’s self-esteem and self-efficacy. Another parent said, “Teachers don’t always have patience with students who have special needs such as (ADHD).” One parent stated, “The teachers need more training on how to manage and better support students with disabilities or special needs and some of these families have left the school. There seems to be a lack of training in some cases.”
- Parents were thankful for the counseling staff. One family member explained, “The counseling staff has a great deal of compassion and will drop everything to assist a student or families who are experiencing mental health concerns.” Families added that student services staff are very communicative and adept at addressing and supporting students’ needs in a timely manner.
- Family members were asked if they have suggestions to improve Amplus Durango campus. One person said, “Carpool including drop off and pick up takes too long. Sometimes my child is late to class because we have been in the carpool line, and we can’t rush that.” This parent also said they were going to leave the school due to the drop-off and pick-up procedures, but the children liked the school so much the family decided to stay. A different family member spoke about available parking at the campus and described it as problematic. The person said, “Many students park across the street on a dirt berm. There are very few visitor parking spaces and few parking spots for high schoolers.”

Students

- Students were asked if they are challenged to achieve at high levels at Amplus. One student said, “We begin by learning things we already know and then moving to things we need to know. For example, in math, we learned about integers and then we went to fractions. We still learn fractions, but the teachers will talk about integers so that information is built upon.” Another student said the learning is differentiated so students who do well in a certain subject can learn new strategies to do something different while those who struggle can continue to build on their skills. Students said that in both the honors and regular classes, “There is a really good support system from peers and teachers to support students to take responsibility for their learning.”

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

- Students said they appreciate the diversity of the school. One student explained, “There are so many races and genders at this school.” One student who previously attended another public school and had been at Amplus for three years said, “The environment is completely different here, it is more welcoming.” Students like being given the opportunity to contribute to lessons. One student explained, “We have opportunities to speak with peers about the topic and share our thoughts. I like working with groups because I am able to hear different perspectives and look at things in a new way.”
- Students shared their perspectives on improving the school. Students would like the parking and carpool arrangement to improve. One student commented, “Picking up and dropping off is cumbersome and time-consuming. It sometimes takes 45 minutes to get through pick-up.” Students said there is not enough parking at the school for high school students who drive. At times high school students park across the street in a small area of dirt and cross a busy street to get to school. Another student said they would like more club opportunities after school. Students said the process for creating a club is lengthy, and stringent. Students felt that the process creates an environment in which students don’t want to go through the process to create a club. One student said the following about acceptance. “I want to see improvement at this school in the area of acceptance of all. I have had at least 10 friends leave Amplus because they didn’t feel accepted. The teachers are great, but there is a need for services for students with special needs such as ADHD. I believe the teachers don’t know how to handle some of these situations or address certain needs of students.”

Leadership:

- Amplus school leaders shared information about changes that have taken place at both campuses since they separated from their EMO and are now fully self-managed. Stakeholders are currently focusing on creating a more refined and meaningful student experience. One leader commented, “We review the mission and vision every few years. We have undergone three revisions to our charter in the past year and are taking a break from re-writing amendments. The topic of school lunch program was addressed. One school leader explained, “Our current facility was designed without a proper lunchroom. Now we want to offer lunch and to serve a higher free and reduced lunch population. We need to conduct a capital campaign to develop and launch a lunch program and have a cafeteria.” The Amplus leadership team is continuing to work with their governing board and inform the board of the school’s needs.
- School leaders described some of the differences between the Durango and Rainbow campuses. Leaders said the Durango campus has students who have started with the charter and stayed. There are several family members in different grades at Durango. The Rainbow campus has newer families. Instructionally, there is a good balance at each school. A cross section of new and veteran teachers are at both campuses.
- School leaders explained progress in the area of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Restorative Justice Practices. One leader said, “The faculty refer to the AMPLUS standard for Multiple Tiered System of Support (MTSS)⁵. There are six tenants of Amplus. Academic instruction is tailored to building academic success and personal responsibility.”

⁵ MTSS-Multiple Tiered Systems of Support is a systematic, continuous improvement framework in which data-based problem solving and decision is practiced

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

- Leaders explained that expectations for student conduct are infused in instruction and displayed within common areas, such as the playground, restrooms, and outside of the school during student drop-off and pick up. One leader said, “When Amplus separated from the EMO a new culture had to be re-created and has been emphasized throughout the school day.” Another school leader added, “When this new culture was rolled out last year, invitations for families to attend and understand implementation of the Amplus Standard went out. We provided professional development on this topic and oriented faculty in the summer. The first few weeks of school, students were taught about the Amplus Standard.”
- Leaders spoke about instructional expectations and a new program. Leaders shared that they expect to see character development within classrooms. For example, one leader explained, “The students should know how to come to a table, have manners, and how to have a conversation.” Leaders expect that the academic content taught is culturally responsive. For example, one leader said, “In a social studies classroom, students should be learning about a world view, not just a national view. There should be a genuine honest relationship between students and teachers.” Leaders reported information about a new Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) 6 program this year with fifty students enrolled.

Staff

- In terms of retaining staff at Amplus, leaders said they have received a grant to support improved teaching through professional learning and have reimbursed educators with \$48,000.00 to this end. School leaders reported that there are five teachers on staff working to become Nationally Board Certified.⁷ In addition, Amplus reimburses teachers who are working to obtain their master’s degrees, teaching licensees, and substitute teaching requirements for licensure. The Federal Covid relief funds received have helped Amplus in ensuring there are paras and specialists available in all classrooms.
- The staff focus group was combined of individuals from both the Durango and Rainbow campuses. They described the difference between the two campuses. One person expressed that there is the obvious difference in one campus being K-5, while the other is K-12. Another staff member shared that both faculties care about students and each other. One teacher said, “The faculty/staff meetings are combined and take place at one campus on an alternative basis.” Another person said, “The Rainbow campus is a little bit more intimate and quieter. There is a difference in energy between the two schools. The Durango campus feels like a city vibe and the Rainbow campus feels like a country vibe.”

⁶ GATE is the acronym for Gifted and Talented Education. This involves a broad group of special practices, procedures, and theories used in the education of children who have been identified as gifted or talented.

⁷ National Board Certification is a national professional certification available in education and provides numerous federal benefits to teachers students and schools. It was designed to develop, retain, and recognize accomplished teachers and to generate ongoing improvement in schools nationwide.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

- Staff spoke about Professional Learning Communities⁸ (PLCs). Staff explained that students are released early on each Wednesday and PLC meetings are held per grade level. The first meeting of the month is designed as a vertical alignment, and grade level teams meet with those at grades above and below their own. The second half of the month is designed for teams to meet in grade level PLC meetings. Teachers across the same grade bands meet and create common assessments and review summative/formative classroom data to strategize and implement teaching strategies to improve learning.
- Teachers described how data analysis and PLC meetings are intertwined. Teachers said they are trained through professional development on evaluating student data. One teacher said, “The school uses 70% as passing and this is considered mastery. Exit tickets are used daily.” Teachers said that grade level teams select the instrument they will use to assess student learning and to examine during the PLC time. One teacher remarked, “We fill out a PLC agenda weekly that we complete. The PLC agenda is very helpful because it maximizes our time and helps to focus our attention.”
- Teachers shared information about the para-pros at Amplus. Staff explained that teachers who have only had one year with a para are still navigating the relationship however, those having worked with a paraprofessional for a longer period have things working very fluidly and productively. One person said, “The paraprofessionals have their own training and they enter the classroom trained to interact with students. However, there is not a checklist or set pf expectations on the teacher/para-pro dynamic and not a school wide program to orient the para-pro/teacher relationship.” On short days, teachers meet with paraprofessionals and prepare for upcoming lessons.
- Members of the staff focus group spoke about several positive changes having recently taken place at both campuses. One person remarked, “The leadership seems to listen to us more and this has helped with morale and efficacy.” The group was impressed that the school leader conducted “stay interviews” last year, in which the leader took time to meet individually with staff. Staff were asked what is important to them, their career, and what makes them want to stay at Amplus. Several members of the group said that the staff feels like family. One person explained, “We feel like a team, and we are encouraged to improve and finish our education or take it to the next level.” Members said they feel they are contributing to meaningful work by teaching at Amplus. Teachers said, “Parents donate, fundraise and are very generous. Staff said that parents trust the teachers so much that teachers find this very touching. One staff member commented, “Parents and families come from all over the valley and the parents are positive.” Several family members contribute with their time and want to help if there is a specific need.”

⁸ PLC-an acronym for Professional Learning Communities defined as a group involved in which teachers collaborate to review student data, and improve instructional outcomes.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND INSTRUCTION OBSERVATION RUBRIC

A total of 34 classrooms were observed for approximately 15 minutes on the day of the evaluation.

Classroom Environment					
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
Classroom Learning Environment is Conducive to Learning	Students create and maintain a learning environment where students feel free to share their ideas and take risks in learning. Students take ownership in explaining, modeling, and reinforcing classroom routines.	The teacher creates and maintains a learning environment where students feel free to share their ideas and take risks in learning. Teachers explain, model, and reinforce classroom routines.	The teacher attempts to create and maintain a learning environment where students feel free to share their ideas and take risks in learning. Teachers attempt to explain, model, and reinforce classroom routines.	The teacher does not create and maintain a learning environment where students feel free to share their ideas and take risks in learning. Teachers do not explain, model, and reinforce classroom routines.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Learning experiences guide students to identify their strengths, interests, and needs; problem-solve; ask for support when appropriate; maximizing learning time.	Learning experiences guide students to identify their strengths, interests, and needs; problem-solve; ask for support when appropriate; maximizing learning time.	Learning experiences make an effort to guide students to identify their strengths, interests, and needs; problem-solve; ask for support when appropriate. Learning time is sometimes maximized.	Learning experiences do not guide students to identify their strengths, interests, and needs; problem-solve; ask for support when appropriate. Learning time is seldom maximized.	
	Total: 10	Total: 21	Total: 2	Total: 1	Total: 0
Establishing a Culture for Learning	Students and teachers respond appropriately when conflicts arise and demonstrate respect for and affirm their own and others' differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges.	Teacher responds appropriately when conflicts arise and demonstrate respect for and affirm their own and others' differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges.	Teacher attempts to respond appropriately when conflicts arise and demonstrate respect for and affirm their own and others' differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges.	Teacher does not attempt to respond appropriately when conflicts arise and does not demonstrate respect for and affirm their own and others' differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 10	Total: 20	Total: 1	Total: 1	Total: 2

Classroom Instruction					
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not 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 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 is done skillfully, but other portions are difficult to follow.	The purpose of the lesson and learning activity is unclear. The teacher's explanation of the content is unclear, confusing, or uses inappropriate language.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 8	Total: 23	Total: 2	Total: 1	Total: 0
Students' Cognitive Awareness of Learning Goals/Targets	Students can explain/demonstrate the goals/targets of the lesson, content, unit, or classroom activity during this instructional timeframe.	Most of the students can explain/demonstrate the goals/targets of the lesson, content, unit, or classroom activity during this instructional timeframe.	Some of the students can explain/demonstrate the goals/targets of the lesson, content, unit, or classroom activity during this instructional timeframe.	Students cannot explain/demonstrate the goals/targets of the lesson, content, unit, or classroom activity during this instructional time frame.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 5	Total: 25	Total: 2	Total: 2	Total: 0
Quality and purpose of questions	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: 4	Total: 24	Total: 4	Total: 1	Total: 1
Opportunities for student discourse and student use of academic language	Students use academic language while participating in discourse. Students demonstrate mastery through reasoning and higher-order thinking.	Teachers encourage the use of academic language and provide students opportunities for discourse. Students are encouraged to demonstrate knowledge through reasoning and higher-order thinking.	There is some attempt by the teacher to encourage the use of academic language. Students are provided limited opportunities for discourse. There is some attempt by the teacher to encourage students to demonstrate knowledge through reasoning and higher order thinking.	There is little to no opportunity for student discourse. There is little to no opportunity for students to demonstrate knowledge through reasoning and higher-order thinking.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 5	Total: 23	Total: 5	Total: 0	Total: 1

Classroom Instruction (continued)

	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
Intellectual Engagement in Learning	Students are intellectually engaged throughout the lesson. The pacing and structure of the lesson is differentiated and 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 differentiated and adequate.	Students are partially intellectually engaged throughout the lesson. The pacing and structure of the lesson is somewhat differentiated and inconsistent.	Students are not at all intellectually engaged in significant learning. The pacing and structure of the lesson is not differentiated and inadequate.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 4	Total: 26	Total: 3	Total: 1	Total: 0
Using Formative Assessment in Instruction	The teacher purposefully and consistently provides clear, descriptive feedback in regard to student's understanding of the learning goals/targets. The feedback is timely and is in a reasonable amount.	Most of the time, the teacher, provides clear, descriptive feedback regarding student's understanding of the learning goals/targets. The feedback is timely and is in a reasonable amount.	The teacher provides clear, descriptive feedback inconsistently regarding student's understanding of the learning goals/targets. The feedback is seldom timely and is in a reasonable amount.	The teacher does not provide clear, descriptive feedback regarding student's understanding of the learning goals/targets. The feedback is not timely and is not in a reasonable amount.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 3	Total: 27	Total: 1	Total: 1	Total: 2

Additional information about the classroom observations shared here when applicable

- In one elementary class, students wrote a paragraph about what they liked best about a person and what they liked the least. Students wrote an introductory sentence and three specific details. After students wrote their paragraphs, they shared them with the whole class. Students engaged in a discussion on judging someone and looking for the good in everyone.
- In one high school English language arts class students were beginning a research proposal. The instructor led the students through the grading rubric which contained the components of a research proposal.
- Students rotated through centers in an upper elementary English language arts class. One center was for individual work and another for answering questions in small groups of two to three students. Two centers were targeted work with a teacher and a paraprofessional.
- This middle school math class had two adults in the room. There were 5 groups of students. Some of them were in groups of 4 or 5 with a teacher, others were engaged as they played a game with peers. The teachers use of classroom management was strong and students were comfortable.
- In this elementary school classroom, all students were observed to be on task and engaged with the lesson. Students completing the lesson appeared to understand what to do with additional time, and with a few gentle reminders from the instructor.
- In one middle level math classroom students solved equations related to percentages on their individual white boards.
- In one high school classroom the interactions were highly teacher centered and students followed along watching what the teacher was doing. There were definite opportunities for students to be more engaged and actively participating. There was a clear opportunity for discussion around the math topic to take place but there was little academic discourse. The teacher was doing most of the talking.
- This specials dance class had 14 pairs of young people. They practiced a dance number which involved intricating directions and worked with each other as partners. Dance terms were used throughout such “kick- ball -change”, “stick kick”, and a number of high level turns and flips.
- In a high school class, a group of six students presented information about laws in society. Students asked questions of each other. Some students asked the presenting students questions about the law and how the penalty of a law should be implemented. Some of the students were the judges. Students asked questions like, "If you don't or can't pay the fee for breaking the law, what would happen?" They ask, "What if you witness witchcraft?" When answers are given students watching the presentation ask things like..."Why is that?" There were high levels of student engagement and students were required to think, listen, speak, and analyze/judge the topic at hand.
- In a class, students were confused as to what they were supposed to do in solving an equation. The equation was written on the board. There were side conversations going on with students asking each other, "What are we are supposed to solve?" Some students persisted in seeking verbal attention from the teacher. One asked the instructor to solve the equation for them. The class appeared unfocused and chaotic.

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, visual inspection 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.

Indicator	Measure Description	Evidence Collected
Indicator 1: Education Program	<p>Measures 1a and 1b: The school implements the material terms of the education program. Ex: SPCSA site evaluations will confirm that the school is staying true to its approved application and programming, as well as review curricular materials and their alignment to Nevada Academic Content Standards.</p> <p>Measures 1c and 1d: The school protects the rights of students with disabilities and EL students. Ex: For example, classroom observations include examples of students with an IEP or those learning English as a language. Student support is provided within small groups or teachers using interventions and supports to provide students with special needs and EL learners with meaningful access to grade-level content and standards.</p>	Amplus Durango is implementing material terms of their educational program. Site evaluators reviewed curricular materials and determined they are aligned to Nevada Academic Content Standards. Observations included evidence of students receiving small group instruction and interventions.
Indicator 3: Governance and Reporting	<p>Measure 3a: The school complies with governance requirements Ex: Board policies and oversight of Education Service Provider</p>	Per Board and Leadership Focus Groups the Amplus Academy Board is following governing board policies.
Indicator 4: Students and Employees	<p>Measure 4a: Student records under lock and key/stored appropriately</p> <p>Measure 4d: Personnel files are under lock and key/stored appropriately</p>	Student and Personnel files were observed to be locked and stored in a secure location.
Indicator 5: School Environment	<p>Measure 5b:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evacuation plans for classrooms are posted The school has fire extinguishers on all floors which are tagged Active permit for food service (if applicable) Nurse requirements are met through visual check of health office, disposal of sharps, cot, refrigeration 	The site evaluation team saw evacuation plans in classrooms, tagged fire extinguishers throughout the building and common areas. The site evaluation team visually checked and located one cot, a refrigerator, and a receptacle for disposing of sharp objects in the nurse's area.

Measures of Progress from Previous Site Evaluations

The extent to which the school has been successful in maintaining areas of strength, removing challenges, and acting upon the recommended items made by the SPCSA during the school's previous evaluation.

<p>Summary of recommendations from most recent site evaluation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for students to contribute more to their own learning and represent classroom content. • Engage students in learning to a greater extent to improve the quality of classroom instruction and student learning, increase the number of higher-level questions and improve discussion techniques throughout lessons to foster learning for all students. Implement new ways of engaging students in the learning process and provide all students with challenging and differentiated instruction. Continue to collaborate and analyze data to inform curricular and instructional decisions. • Pursue Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) with fidelity. • Formalize a plan to increase enrollment of diverse student groups who receive free and reduced lunch, are English learners, and/or learners with individualized education plans. Formalizing a plan may include board and leadership training on diversity efforts, successful recruitment of diverse and historically marginalized populations, and community outreach partnerships. • SPCSA staff recommend Amplus continue to work on efforts to address staffing challenges. Continue to recruit student teachers to fill vacant positions.
<p>School Assessment of progress made against recommendations and evidence provided, or reasons school believes additional time may be necessary to fully address past recommendations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development opportunities have included course offerings in instructional priorities such as higher-level questioning, student engagement, and differentiated instruction methods. • September professional development included analyzing student data, and this will continue in January. Amplus is using time during weekly grade level meetings to understand student data and improve instruction. • Implementation of a clear set of behavior expectations to improve MTSS with fidelity has taken place. • School leaders stated that enrollment diversity continues to grow. • School leaders shared that there is a decrease in teacher and staff turnover at both campuses. The school leader conducted exit and staff remaining interviews with every member of the staff at the end of the 21-22 school year.
<p>SPCSA staff assessment based upon findings during site evaluation</p>	<p>Several forms of evidence are included within the report to indicate progress about previous recommendations. Classroom observations indicate levels of overall classroom environment have improved. According to members of the leadership and staff focus groups, levels of staff turnover have decreased. Professional development has been implemented to increase staff ability to analyze student testing data and create small group instruction. Reteaching and interventions take place in response to data results and groups are flexible. The MTSS Golden Arrow expectations were visible in each classroom. Staffing challenges and recommendations to recruit student teachers have been implemented and some previous student teachers have been hired at the Durango campus. Amplus school leaders/members of the governing body continue to consider a weighted lottery. Improvement in student engagement continues to be a recommendation for improvement.</p>

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 Framework are described within the body of the report and summarized here.

- The Amplus governing board members have worked collaboratively in the transition away from the previous EMO and have become more representative of their core values. According to members of the governing board, this process has been both challenging and rewarding. It involved intense and insightful discussions as well as a drive to stay focused on defining the school. The outcome has been a realization of focused short-term and long-term goals. The board has been highly reflective and involved in building this foundation. Board members provided oversight to this rebranding and aligned the school's policies and procedures to match the mission and vision of the school. This work was evident throughout the site evaluation.
- At both the Durango and Rainbow campuses, the leadership team has been highly communicative, engaged, and dedicated to working alongside the governing board to align the operations at the school to match the vision and mission. The mission and vision were re-written. Leaders conducted professional development to integrate and inform Amplus staff and family members of the new vision and mission and worked to implement a new set of expectations for student behavior. The expectations were based on the "Amplus Standard" and students were taught about these expectations at the onset of the new 2022-2023 school year. This set of expectations for conduct are displayed in classrooms throughout both the Durango and Rainbow campuses. It is clear that strong levels of communication are present at Amplus.
- At both Amplus Durango and Rainbow campuses, school staff and leaders have taken a proactive and preventative approach to address student behavior and social-emotional concerns by displaying clear school-wide expectations for students throughout the school. For example, expectations were posted in the hallways, classrooms, and bathrooms. The SPCSA site evaluation team observed students following the school-wide expectations throughout the school. Additionally, the SPCSA site evaluation team observed school staff redirecting unwanted behaviors by restating the desired expectation. The SPCSA site evaluation team also observed staff providing positive feedback and rewards to students who demonstrated the school-wide expectations.
- Another strength at both the Durango and Rainbow campuses was the knowledgeable use of data-based decision making. These data driven decisions allow teachers to be more responsive to students. One indicator of this was observed within classrooms and the carefully designed instruction taking place within small group instruction. The scheduled professional development and continuous practice of looking at what students need to know, what they know, and the actions taken when students do not learn are critical component that has been built into the operations at both Amplus campuses. This process has helped create more sophisticated instructional lesson plans. Plans are more relevant and customized to meet the needs of students. The two campuses have weekly PLC meetings which involve a review of student data, the creation of small group instruction, and decisions about re-teaching critical objectives and learning targets.

- Another strength at both campuses is the proactive response to a staffing shortage. Amplus has been successful in retaining high quality individuals and establishing a positive and motivational work environment. As noted in the leadership focus group summary, school leaders used grant funding to support teachers seeking national board certification with five teachers on this path. The school reimbursed teachers to obtain both their master's degrees and their teaching licenses. Additionally, and as noted in the staff focus group summary, staff were impressed that the school leader conducted "stay interviews" last year. The leader took time to meet individually with staff. Staff were asked what is important to them, their career, and what makes them want to stay at Amplus. It is evident that Amplus leaders have been successful in overcoming staffing shortages.
- At the Durango campus, the elementary, middle, and high schools have increased their NSPF index scores significantly. This is evidence of high levels of student achievement. The overall index score at the elementary level was 46.0 for the 20-21 school year as compared to the most recent data indicating a proficiency level of 76.5 for the 21-22 school year. The overall index score at the middle school level was 83 for the 20-21 school year as compared to 87 for the 21-22 school year. The high school index score was 45.0 for the 20-21 school year with an increase to 80.5 for the 21-22 school year. These increases, particularly at the elementary and high school levels are a significant strength.
- The Amplus Durango campus classroom observation results indicate that on the day of the site evaluation, there were several "Distinguished" ratings within both classroom environment sections on the rubric. The first category, "Classroom environment is Conducive to Learning" section had 10 of 34 classrooms rated in the "Distinguished" category. Classrooms rated in this area indicate that students felt free to share their ideas and took risks in learning. In addition, the learning experiences guided students to identify their strengths, interests, problem-solve, and ask for support when appropriate. The second category, "Establishing a Culture for Learning" section had 10 of 34 classrooms rated "Distinguished." This rating indicates that students and teachers responded appropriately when conflicts arose and demonstrated respect for their own and others' differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges.

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.

- According to school leaders, the current facility at the Durango campus was designed without a proper lunchroom. School leaders continue to work with their governing board to change the elements in this area of the Durango campus to offer a lunch program to students.
- According to members within the family and student focus groups at the Durango Campus, carpool and traffic during drop off and pick up is a challenge. It is important to note that school leaders have taken several steps to improve and alleviate the current drop-off and pick up procedures and continue to monitor and address this challenge.
- The number of students within special populations of IEP (Individual Education Plan) and ELL (English Language Learners) continues to be comparatively lower than that of the school district. It is important to note that Amplus Durango received bonus points for making at least 25% growth in the area of FRL in the elementary, middle, and high school as well as 1 bonus point for EL growth in the area of middle and high school. More detailed information is provided on pages seven through ten of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- As noted in the challenges portion of this report, Amplus school leaders and governing board members are working collaboratively to implement a school lunch program at both the Durango and Rainbow campuses. The SPCSA recommends this work continue as this will help the school offer more services to students and families. Additionally, this would be an important step in eventually offering the National School Lunch Program which can provide added benefits to students qualifying for free and reduced-price lunch.
- It is recommended the Amplus Durango campus school leaders and board continue their work to alleviate the frustration surrounding the pick-up and drop-off as well as parking communicated to members of the SPCSA evaluation team by both family and student participants within these focus groups. As noted in the challenges portion of the report, school leaders have taken several measures to improve this situation. SPCSA staff has ongoing and regular communication with the Clark County Office of Traffic Safety and would be happy to facilitate any future meetings so that collective action can be taken to help resolve these concerns.
- As was stated on the site evaluation report during the previous site evaluation dated 5-2-2022, there continues to be a gap between the number of students within the special populations of IEP (Individual Education Plan) and ELL (English Language Learners) served by Amplus and the numbers of the school district and the SPCSA. There are many different strategies that Amplus may wish to consider continuing to reduce these gaps included targeted marketing and outreach as well as creating a more positive school culture for these students (see additional recommendation below). SPCSA staff is available to offer support in this area and encourages the school to set benchmarks and targets for the upcoming academic year as the enrollment window approaches. It is important to note that Amplus Durango received bonus points for making at least 25% growth in the area of FRL in the elementary, middle, and high school as well as 1 bonus point for EL growth in the area of middle and high school. More detailed information is provided on pages seven through ten of this report.
- Continue to work on overall improvement in the area of classroom instruction. As noted on pages 14 and 15 of this report, there is considerable room for the levels of classroom instruction to move from the proficient category to the distinguished category. Specifically, engagement and cognitive awareness of the learning objective, the quality, and purpose of both teacher and student questions, intellectual engagement in learning, and using formative assessment measures to check student understanding during the time that instruction is taking place.
- There was some feedback regarding students with special needs not feeling welcome or accommodated in both the student focus group and the family focus groups. Family and student focus group members mentioned that they have observed families leave the school in the past due to feelings about a less than welcoming environment for their child. In addition SPCSA site evaluators observed one classroom that was not warm and welcoming, and appeared to negatively impact at least one student. Because the Amplus governing board and school leaders have worked to re-brand the mission and vision of the school and because the school has taken important steps in including all students in learning, it is important that these be addressed. It is difficult to determine if such narratives are referring to a few person's perceptions of events or not. For this reason, the SPCSA is

recommending that school leaders be aware that this perception is among some family members as well as some students. Consider a free training offered by the Council for Exceptional Children called, “Effective and High Leverage Practices for Paraeducators.” <https://exceptionalchildren.org/improving-your-practice/high-leverage-practices-paraeducators>.

In addition, the SPCSA is recommending that school leaders work closely with the staff to discuss and conduct training on ways to improve the consistency of inclusive classrooms school wide. It is important to note that the classroom observational data relating to the classroom environment had several proficient and distinguished levels as noted as a strength on page 20 of the report.

STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS

There were no strong recommendations identified for Amplus Durango campus during this site evaluation.

DEFICIENCIES

There were no deficiencies identified for Amplus Durango campus during this site evaluation.