



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Site Evaluation Report Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Sloan Canyon

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Report Date 10/23/2020

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Appendices

A: Nevada State Performance Framework

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

B: SPCSA Academic Framework

<http://charterschools.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/CharterSchoolsnvgov/content/News/2019/190628-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 9/21/2020 at Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Sloan Canyon. The State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all charters within the portfolio during the 1st, 3rd, and 5th year of operation. This comprehensive analysis addresses the academic success of the school and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization.

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Sloan Canyon located in Henderson, Nevada at 675 E. Dale Avenue (Elementary) and 655 E. Dale Avenue (Secondary). The school serves 1,236 (as of the most recent Validation Day) in Kindergarten – 9th grade but has added 10th grade for the 2020 – 2021 school year. The mission of Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Sloan Canyon is: "Pinecrest Academy of Nevada unites the community to prepare students for college and career."

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Sloan Canyon did not receive NSPF rating or SPCSA Academic Performance rating in 2018-2019 school year.

Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Sloan Canyon served 1,236 students in grades Kindergarten – 9th grade as of October 1, 2019 but has added 10th grade for the 2020 – 2021 school year.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TOTALS

A total of six classrooms were observed for approximately 20 minutes on the day of the evaluation.

I. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT					
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
	Areas 1 & 2 Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport Establishing a Culture for Learning	Classroom interactions are highly respectful and the teacher demonstrates a passionate commitment to the subject.	Classroom interactions reflect general warmth and caring and a genuine culture for learning.	Classroom interactions are generally appropriate and free from conflict with a minimal culture for learning.	Classroom interactions between the teacher and students are negative and do not represent a culture for learning.
Total: 3		Total: 3	Total:	Total:	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: 1		Total: 5	Total:	Total:	Total:
Areas 3 & 4 Managing Classroom Procedures Managing Student Behavior	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
	Classroom routines and procedures appear seamless and student behavior is entirely appropriate.	Classroom routines and procedures have been established and the teacher ensures smooth functioning with little loss of instruction time.	Classroom routines and procedures have been established but function inconsistently, with some loss of instruction time.	Classroom routines and procedures are nonexistent or inefficient, resulting in the loss of much instruction time.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 1	Total: 5	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: 2	Total: 4	Total:	Total:	Total:	

II. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

Area 5					Not
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Observed
Purpose and Explanation of Content, Lesson, Unit or Classroom Activity	The purpose of the lesson or unit is clear and connects with student's real-life experiences. The explanation of content is imaginative, and students contribute to the lesson by participating and/or explaining concepts to their peers.	The purpose for the lesson or learning activity is clear. The teacher's explanation of content is appropriate and connects with students.	The teacher attempts to explain the instructional purpose with limited success. The explanation of the content is uneven. Some explanations are done skillfully, but other portions are difficult to follow.	The purpose for the lesson learning activity is unclear. Teacher's explanation of the content is unclear, confusing or uses inappropriate language.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 2	Total: 4	Total:	Total:	Total:
Area 6	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques	A Students formulate and ask high-level questions.	Teacher formulates and asks several high-level questions.	Teacher questioning and discussion techniques are uneven with some high-level questions.	Teacher makes poor use of questioning and discussion techniques, with low level questions, limited student participation and little true discussion.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	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: 5	Total:	Total:	Total: 1	

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: 1	Total: 5	Total: 1	Total: 1	Total: 1
	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: 2	Total: 4	Total: 1	Total: 1	Total: 1
		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: 2	Total: 4	Total: 1	Total: 1	Total: 1
	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 observe 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: 5	Total: 1	Total: 1	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: 4
- The explanation of the content is imaginative: 2

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: 4
- Teacher allows time for students to answer – 3 seconds or more: 6
- Teacher extends the thinking and discussion by encouraging students to say more, restate or summarize: 3
- Teacher purposefully signals to entire group of students to wait/think before volunteering a response:
- Teacher provides the opportunity for all students to answer the question (think, pair, share, written response): 3

Evidence of engaging students in learning Area 7

- Active learning is taking place (rather than just listening or viewing): 4
- 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: 6
- 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: 3
- Students receive frequent and meaningful feedback regarding their work: 4
- A wide range of instructional practices that are likely to motivate and engage most students are used during the lesson: 4

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

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

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	The Sloan Canyon campus has been successful as a newer charter school. Staff and school leaders have worked collaboratively with families, students, and each other to provide distance learning and continued social support such as the upcoming Halloween parade and weekly Book Worm read aloud.
1b	The school complies with applicable education requirements.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	The Sloan Canyon campus curricular materials in ELA and Math align with NVACS.
1c	The school protects the rights of students with disabilities.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	IEP goals are monitored and there was evidence of additional staff joining the on-line classroom to provide support for students with special needs.

1d	The school protects the rights of ELL students.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	The Sloan Canyon campus staff conducts WIDA testing at the beginning of each school year. This helps staff to analyze the needs of second language learners be it writing, reading, listening, or speaking.
3a	The school complies with governance requirements.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	School leadership ensures that the student handbook is updated to reflect changes on a yearly basis.
3b	The school holds management accountable.	School Presentation Epicenter Submission	All school leaders are evaluated on a yearly basis.
4a	The school protects the rights of all students.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	Classrooms had a set of norms regarding respectful use of virtual setting. Campus staff make a point of protecting the rights of all individuals as reflected in Special Education and ELL policies.
5b	The school complies with health and safety requirements.	School Presentation	The Sloan Canyon campus has made special efforts to create a safe and healthy environment. They have inserted clear barriers in select areas to lessen the odds of the spread of germs.

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. The SPCSA would like to acknowledge the laudable efforts of educators at the Pinecrest Campuses, who during a pandemic used existing knowledge to create meaningful learning opportunities for students. Pinecrest staffs did not miss a beat, stepping up to make sure students continued to learn.
2. The Pinecrest schools elected to administer the MAP, i-ready, at the end of the 19-20 school year as well as the beginning of the 20-21 school year. It is commendable to see this level of diagnostic analysis of student achievement conducted during a world-wide pandemic and is a sign that the network places a strong emphasis on data-driven instruction.
3. Pinecrest Sloan Canyon continues to gain momentum as a newer charter school campus. In response to the immediate and on-going transition to distance learning, the campus holds classes in separate break out rooms for those students requiring additional support. They have elected to invite the most “in-need” students to attend in person which appears to be meeting the needs of all students.
4. Other improvements include the implementation of Restorative Justice and using new Title II funds, to hold a series of Professional Learning sessions on Social/Racial Justice. A complete on-line virtual professional learning series has been developed and has been shared with the Pinecrest and Mater schools in Florida. These schools plan to develop something similar and use the Pinecrest Nevada series as a model.
5. Other areas of strength include a planned car Halloween parade, a virtual (weekly) book worm read aloud time, and recent preparations such as washing stations, and glass partitions, to be fully prepared to return to in-person learning when it is safe to do so.

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.

The SPCSA did not conduct focus groups during this cycle for Pinecrest schools. The Academic/ Classroom portion of the evaluation was brief and consisted of 6 classrooms, with 20 minutes in each. All classrooms were rated Proficient or Distinguished and there were no signs of poor quality. With the transition to virtual learning, it has become more important than ever to stay up to date on “best practices” as they relate to optimizing learning and achievement in virtual settings.

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. We recommend that the Pinecrest network of schools continue to take steps to increase the number of English Language Learners, Free and Reduced Lunch, and Students with Individual Education Plans. Consider adding some of the information on the website in English and Spanish, producing flyers/advertisements in Spanish, and implementing a weighted lottery.
2. The SPCSA recommends taking time to build upon the variety of distance learning practices to become even more skilled, purposeful and intentional with this platform. We suggest using what has been learned in both face-to-face and distance learning environments to leverage what works best to impact student achievement. In both settings, research has shown (*Fisher, Frey & Hattie, 2020*) that the following best practices apply to both settings:
 - Fostering student self-regulation is crucial for moving learning to deep and transfer levels.
 - Learning accelerates when the student, not the teacher, is taught to be in control of learning.
 - There needs to be a diversity of instructional approaches (not just some direct instruction and then some off-line independent work).
 - Well-designed peer learning impacts understanding.
 - Feedback in a high-trust environment must be integrated into the learning cycle.

(Fisher et al.,2020)

3. Consider launching professional development in response to best practices and lessons learned during the distance learning time frames. Continue to work collaboratively to best meet the needs of all students at this time of distance learning and as the school eventually transitions to more face to face instructional formats.

DEFICIENCIES

There were no deficiencies identified for the Pinecrest Academy – Sloan Canyon campus during this evaluation.