



# **Nevada State Public Charter School Authority**

Site Evaluation Report

**Founders Classical Academy of Las Vegas**

Evaluation Date: 1/27/2021

Report Date: 3/18/2021

775-687-9174  
1749 North Stewart Street Suite 40  
Carson City, Nevada 89706  
2080 East Flamingo Road, Suite 230  
Las Vegas, NV 89119

# Contents

Introduction and School Background ..... 3

Academic Performance..... 4

Focus Group Summaries ..... 8

Classroom Observation Totals..... 13

Organizational Performance ..... 18

Site Evaluation Findings ..... 23

# 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](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](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 1/27/2021 at Founders Academy. The State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all charters within the portfolio during the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> 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

Founders Classical Academy of Las Vegas is located in Las Vegas, Nevada in a facility at 5730 W. Alexander Road. The school serves 779 students (as of the most recent Validation Day) in Kindergarten – 12th grade. The mission of Founders Classical Academy of Las Vegas is: "To train the minds and improve the hearts of young people through a rigorous, classical education in the liberal arts and sciences, with instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue."

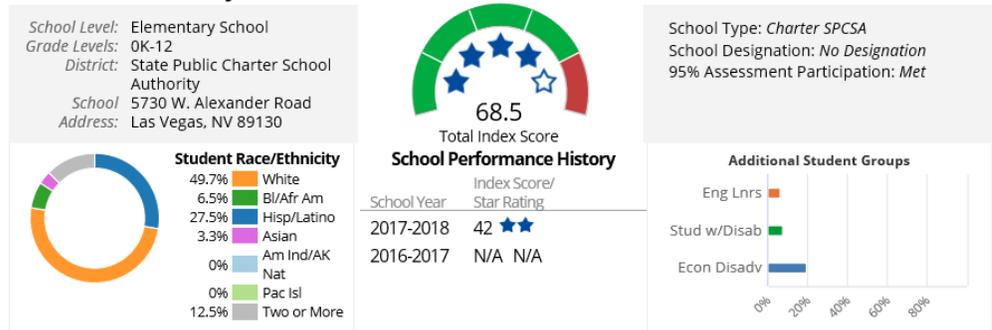
# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## Founders Academy<sup>1</sup> Nevada School Performance Framework 2019

Founders Academy serves 779 students in grades Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> grade

### Elementary School

#### Founders Academy of Nevada



### Middle School

#### Founders Academy of Nevada



### High School

<sup>1</sup> The school formally amended the name of the charter school to Founders Classical Academy of Las Vegas in 2020.

## Founders Academy of Nevada

School Level: High School  
 Grade Levels: 0K-12  
 District: State Public Charter School Authority  
 School Address: 5730 W. Alexander Road Las Vegas, NV 89130



**Student Race/Ethnicity**

46.7%	White
7%	Bl/Afr Am
38.1%	Hisp/Latino
2.1%	Asian
0%	Am Ind/AK
0%	Nat
0%	Pac Isl
5.7%	Two or More



53.1  
Total Index Score

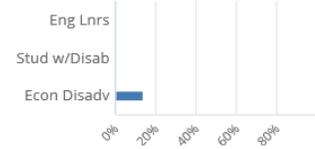
### School Performance History

School Year	Index Score/Star Rating
2017-2018	96.1 ★★★★★
2016-2017	N/A N/A

## School Year 2018-2019 Nevada School Rating

School Type: Charter SPCSA  
 School Designation: No Designation  
 95% Assessment Participation: Met

### Additional Student Groups



# Founders Academy 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	43	54.5	48.5	35	52.8	45.8
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	45.7	34.3	-	44.8	30.9
Asian	-	75.5	68.8	-	75.2	67.2
Black/African American	-	31.3	32.3	7.1	30.6	28.8
Hispanic/Latino	32.3	44.6	39.6	27.2	40.2	36.5
Pacific Islander	-	48.7	48.3	-	48.3	45.6
Two or More Races	50	58.2	55.3	51.7	59	52.9
White/Caucasian	49.3	62.2	59.3	38.8	61.1	57.2
Special Education	15.3	27.3	28.6	15	29.2	24.8
English Learners Current + Former	20	42.2	35.8	16.6	37.4	32.4
English Learners Current	-	32.3	-	0	25.5	-
Economically Disadvantaged	24.1	39.7	39	25	33.1	35.7

### ELA Proficient

Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	50.6	60.1	57	42.1	58.6	54.7
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	62.5	42.5	-	58.3	39.5
Asian	-	78.5	75.4	-	76.2	74.1
Black/African American	-	40.8	42.6	21.4	40.5	39.6
Hispanic/Latino	48.6	51.1	48.2	36.3	48	45.5
Pacific Islander	-	51.7	57.9	-	52.6	55.7
Two or More Races	35	63.7	64.4	58.6	67.1	62.6
White/Caucasian	55.2	66.7	67.4	43.3	65	65.7
Special Education	15.3	26.6	30	10	29.3	26.3
English Learners Current + Former	40	42.2	41.4	29.1	38.9	38.4
English Learners Current	-	29.3	-	10	22.8	-
Economically Disadvantaged	45.3	45.3	46.8	35.4	40.4	44

## Middle School

**Math Proficient**

Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	34.3	42.6	36.5	34.2	36.8	33.2
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	22.6	28.4	-	26.5	24.6
Asian	-	66.2	58.6	-	64.1	56.4
Black/African American	36.2	24.1	23.5	14.2	17.7	19.5
Hispanic/Latino	18.6	31.8	29.3	25	26.1	25.5
Pacific Islander	-	44.8	36.9	-	34.9	33.6
Two or More Races	35	47.2	40.6	-	41.5	37.5
White/Caucasian	42.6	51.2	47.1	40.9	44.4	44.4
Special Education	-	12	18.6	-	11.5	14.3
English Learners Current + Former	15	26.8	20.2	-	22.2	16
English Learners Current	-	12.5	-	-	8.5	-
Economically Disadvantaged	40.1	29	29.2	11.1	21.7	25.5

**ELA Proficient**

Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	59.7	59.6	54.1	59.6	56.1	51.7
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	61.2	43.4	-	57.1	40.5
Asian	-	78.4	75.9	-	77.3	74.6
Black/African American	45.3	40.1	37.8	42.8	38.4	34.5
Hispanic/Latino	48.7	50.2	45.1	54.1	46.3	42.2
Pacific Islander	-	61.1	53.2	-	53.2	50.7
Two or More Races	56.1	66.7	61.3	-	61	59.2
White/Caucasian	68.2	67.7	66.3	66.6	63.5	64.6
Special Education	-	19.8	21.9	-	20.7	17.8
English Learners Current + Former	30	42.7	24.3	-	34.8	20.3
English Learners Current	-	22	-	-	15.8	-
Economically Disadvantaged	55.1	46.3	44.4	38.8	41.5	41.4

**Founders Academy**  
**Math and ELA Results**  
**Nevada School Performance Framework**  
**2019**

**High School****Math Proficient****Math Proficient Points Earned: 4/10**

Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	25	25.8	32.83	60	23.8	29.29
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	-	23.12	-	16.6	19.07
Asian	-	50	50.27	-	54.7	47.65
Black/African American	-	7.5	18.42	-	6.2	14.12
Hispanic/Latino	-	18.5	22.93	-	17.5	18.87
Pacific Islander	-	16	29.26	-	6.2	25.54
Two or More Races	-	26	36.96	-	26.1	33.64
White/Caucasian	30	32	44.25	-	28.4	41.31
Special Education	-	6	12.38	-	2.2	7.77
English Learners Current + Former	-	5	14.52	-	10.9	10.02
English Learners Current	-	0	-	-	2.4	6.96
Economically Disadvantaged	-	14.5	24	-	13.3	20.01

**ELA Proficient****ELA Proficient Points Earned: 10/10**

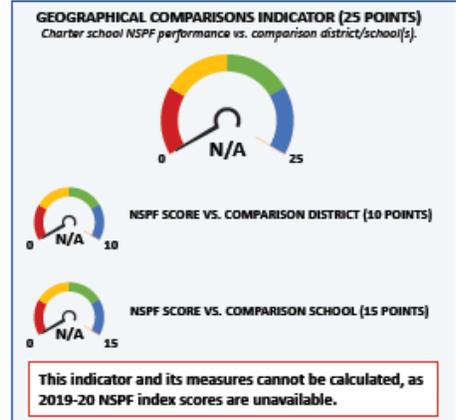
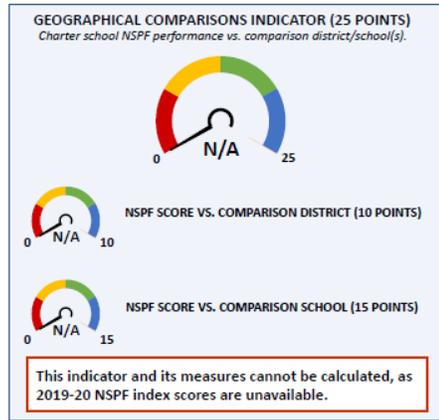
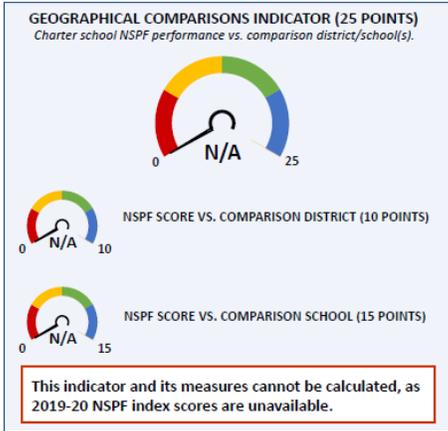
<b>Groups</b>	<b>2019 %</b>	<b>2019 % District</b>	<b>2019 % MIP</b>	<b>2018 %</b>	<b>2018 % District</b>	<b>2018 % MIP</b>
All Students	78.9	53.8	48.54	75	44.5	45.83
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	-	36.76	-	36.3	33.43
Asian	-	71	65.11	-	68.4	63.27
Black/African American	-	32.7	31.39	-	21.6	27.78
Hispanic/Latino	-	47.2	36.5	-	39.5	33.15
Pacific Islander	-	52	48.75	-	37.5	46.05
Two or More Races	-	62.5	58.07	-	46.9	55.86
White/Caucasian	-	59.7	62.25	-	50	60.26
Special Education	-	18.8	15.71	-	9	11.27
English Learners Current + Former	-	18.1	17.52	-	21.8	13.18
English Learners Current	-	10.5	-	-	9.7	6.9
Economically Disadvantaged	-	41.8	37.66	-	31.2	34.37

# SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Geographic Comparison Report

## Elementary School

## Middle School

## High School

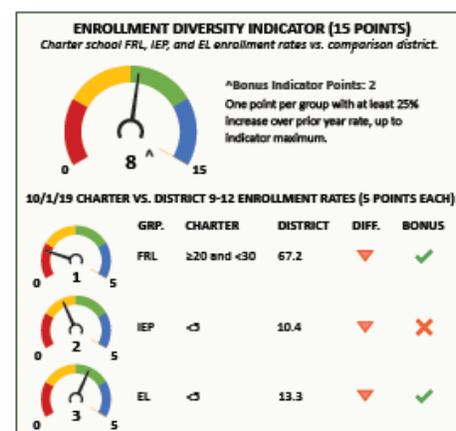
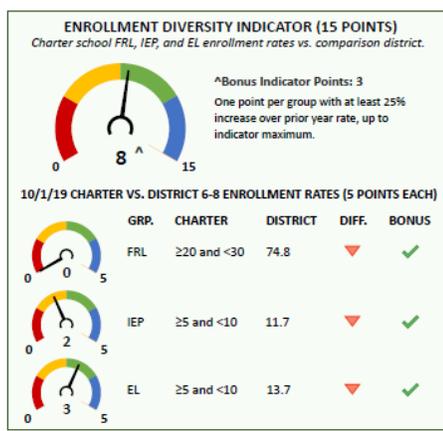
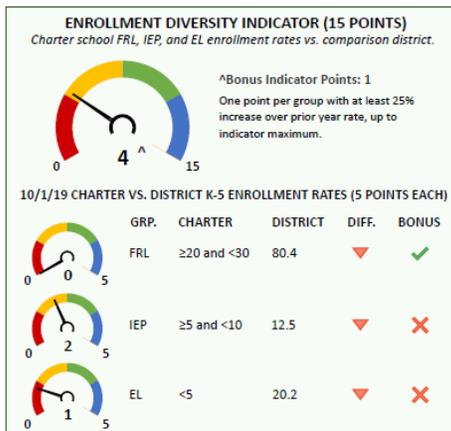


# SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Diversity Comparison Results

## Elementary School

## Middle School

## High School



# FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

---

## FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Group	Number of Participants	Duration of Focus Group
Governing Board <sup>2</sup>	3	30 minutes
Parents/Families	8	30 minutes
Students	10	30 minutes
School Leadership	7	30 minutes
Staff	9	30 minutes

### Governing Board:

- Board members indicated that they believe their role is to understand the core tenants of the school, including the classical model, the focus on literature, and the character development approach, and to ensure that the school upholds that model and continues to progress and improve. The board's academic committee receives regular updates on the academic performance of the school, include assessment results from MAP, SBAC, ACT and Star Ratings, and following review, brings those to the next meeting of the full board. When asked about board member training and orientation, board members indicated that prior to appointment, prospective members are interviewed for qualifications and interest. Once seated, board members get access to training through Hillsdale College, which focuses on supporting classical charter schools. According to board members, trainings are conducted through on-site conferences at Hillsdale College, as well as virtual trainings as needed, and cover a variety of topics from governance and finance to academics. In addition, board members receive training on Nevada-specific topics such as Nevada's Open Meeting Law.
- When asked about evaluating the school leader, a board member described the process. The school leader conducts a self-evaluation, which is reviewed with the board's governance committee. The school uses the rubric provided by the Nevada Educator Performance Framework for this evaluation. The governance committee will provide feedback on the self-evaluation, identify any additional areas for improvement as well as strengths, and then bring this evaluation to the full board for review and approval. In terms of maintaining current policies and procedures, the board shared that they rely on committees and officers to monitor and ensure they are up to date. For example, the Treasurer is responsible for the financial policies and procedures and reviews them with school staff periodically to ensure they are accurate, complete, and sufficient. Likewise, the Risk Management Committee maintains the insurance policy and school safety procedures.
- When asked about communication with parents, the board shared that the school sends an annual report to parents about star ratings. They also shared that Principal Fick has increased communication to parents in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and that the board always receives a copy of those communications. Finally, the board members shared that they have seen recent improvements at the school, including stronger financial position, academic performance, culture, school facilities, and relationship with the SPCSA. The board members expressed that they believe the board is cohesive and maintains good communication with the school leader.

---

<sup>2</sup> 3 members of the 8 member board participated. Quorum was not met, and Open Meeting Law was not violated.



## FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

### Parents/Families:

- Families indicated that they are generally satisfied with communication from the school, even though the pandemic has made it challenging. Specifically, families indicated that everyone at Founders Classical Academy is approachable and that they can always ask questions. Families highlighted the Remind App and email for communication with teachers. In addition, families indicated that the school's website and emails from Principal Fick have been useful in keeping them informed. Finally, parents shared that they believe communication is productive and fruitful. Parents and families went on to say that they are able to get questions answered, see the staff and school as solution-oriented, and also believe that the school staff have their child's best interests at heart.
- When asked about how parents know that their child is learning, parents shared experiences that highlight student learnings. These include students sharing information and facts that they learned at school and being able to help their younger siblings with schoolwork they did several years ago. One parent of a student with disabilities indicated the school communicated regularly about the student's IEP goals. However, parents were not aware of any type of goal setting or tracking system for students.
- When asked about the culture of the school, parents indicated that teachers really know their children. Parents also shared that because the school is relatively small and their child is known across the school, even by teachers other than their own, this is an added benefit to the culture. With regard to behavior expectations, parents and families cited several ways that the school works to establish common expectations including the class syllabi which parents must sign, orientation that occurs at the beginning of the school year, as well as the Founders Code and eight pillars.
- Finally, parents and families were very impressed with how the school has navigated the COVID-19 pandemic. They spoke about how the school has balanced the safety of staff and students while recognizing the importance of in-person learning. In addition, families shared that while the initial transition to distance learning in the spring of 2020 was challenge, the school continues to be very responsive to feedback and has ultimately made significant improvements. Parents shared strong sentiments that despite the pandemic and different learning models, their students are learning and that the school has been highly supportive. In addition, parents shared that the school had put on some celebratory events and activities such as the drive-by graduation for Kindergarten students and the 50's radio show that was recorded in the fall.

## FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

### Students:

- Students shared several things that they like about Founders Classical Academy. First, students shared that they have great teachers who make topics and concepts easier to learn. Students also shared that they like to learn new things and expressed an appreciation that their teachers make learning fun. Students also highlighted some of their favorite classroom activities including science labs. With regard to virtual or hybrid learning, some students indicated that there were aspects that they like, including that it takes less time getting to and from school.
- When asked about how students monitor their own learning, students shared that they take quizzes which help them to determine how they are doing and if they need to go back and relearn something. In addition, some students shared that when they get assignments back from a teacher they will indicate which questions they got wrong and can use this information to study and reflect. In some cases, such as math, students reported that they have the chance to correct their work to earn back points lost. Finally, students shared that they are able to check Infinite Campus to monitor their grades.
- When asked about their teachers, students expressed that they are generally able to talk to their teachers if they need help or have questions. In addition, students indicated that they are able to get additional support and tutoring from teachers after school. Student shared that if they are lost or need help, they usually talk to the teacher and ask them questions or talk to a classmate who may be able to explain the concept.
- When asked about the school climate, students shared that they feel safe at school. Students shared that if they feel unsafe they can call Safe Voice or tell their parents. When asked about suggested changes or improvements to Founders Classical Academy of Las Vegas, students had a few ideas. First, one student suggested consistent use of recycling bins throughout the school. Another student indicated that they would like to do more projects in their classes. One student indicated that they would like to see a change in the dress code. Finally, a few students suggested changes in grading policies. Specifically, one suggested more opportunities for retaking quizzes in order to provide more chances to learn, rather than simply focus on the grade. Finally, one student suggested rebalancing the grading system to have less of an emphasis on homework.

## FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

### Leadership:

- The school leadership described extensive efforts to support students and teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, the leadership team described how the school has invested in a standing station with a video camera for each teacher to enable real-time instruction to both in-person and virtual learners. In the younger grades, teachers' aides provide increased support and monitoring of students according to leadership. Additionally, the leadership team explained that though classical schools focus on teacher-led instruction, the school is working to ensure ongoing formative assessment of students is taking place in each classroom throughout the lesson. Finally, school leadership described the school's efforts to maintain strong parent communication throughout the pandemic to keep students on track, including timely communication regarding absences and/or missed homework.
- Founders Classical Academy of Las Vegas leadership described a variety of ways that data is used to inform instruction. It was shared that typically, MAP and SBAC data is used to inform literacy plans and understand student learning gaps. Additionally, the school uses the Lumos Learning platform in grades 2-8 on a weekly basis to monitor student learning in math and ELA. This data is then regularly used to identify where students are struggling and help develop plans for targeted lessons. At the high school level, school leadership described how teacher planning is aligned to the NVACS, with a focus on content that is important for the End of Course and ACT assessments. Ultimately, the leadership team indicated that due to the pandemic, the school is experiencing some learning loss, but they are also working on plans to catch students up.
- When asked about communication with and retention of teachers, the leadership team described a strong team culture that includes an open-door policy among the administration. The school leadership explained that they aim to uphold the school's eight pillars as the foundation for their work with staff. This includes building strong relationships and maintaining transparency through open conversations. The leadership team emphasized that they see their role as supporting teachers and recognize that happy teachers help to ensure happy students.
- The leadership team described the school's approach to building school culture, which is centered around the school's eight pillars. According to school leaders, in the early grades, the teachers work with students to define and understand the pillars with the aim that they will permeate the school culture and approach to discipline. The leadership team described the approach to discipline as focused on asking questions and helping students to reflect, with the eight pillars functioning as the anchor. The aim of this approach is the address problems before they start.

## FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

### Staff:

- The staff shared that the transition to virtual and hybrid learning has been challenging, but that there have also been some bright spots. For example, one teacher shared that it is helpful to be able to record lessons for students who are absent or need additional support. Teachers shared a variety of ways that they have had to adapt their instruction and relationships with students. For example, one teacher explained that they use the chat feature in Google Meet to enable students to communicate the teacher and classmates. This teacher has also encouraged students to chat with each other, acknowledging that for many, the pandemic has been isolating. Teachers also expressed that they have had to adapt their instruction to be more visual, which has been made easier by the technology equipment that the school purchased for their use.
- When asked about the culture of the school, teachers shared that the workload this year has been a challenge and that as a result they haven't interacted with each other as much as they typically would. However, staff overwhelmingly conveyed an appreciation for the administration and their support. The staff also feel supported by each other and by the Parent Teacher Association.
- Staff shared that they are concerned about their students and the impact of the pandemic. In particular, teachers believe that the transition to distance learning was a challenge not just for teachers, but also for parents and students. One teacher voiced the concern that students are losing opportunities for creativity, imagination, and communication because of the pandemic. Teachers have adopted new strategies for supporting students and parents, such as more frequent communication about assignments and adjusting instruction to include more modeling. Some teachers noted that they have noticed students adapting too. For example, some students who historically were not as outgoing have become more independent and are using email to ask questions and seek support. Finally, teachers identified a need for additional supports and resources related to mental health and wellbeing.
- Finally, teachers spoke proudly of the school's curriculum and the commitment to rigor, despite the challenges faced by the pandemic. Teachers also expressed their appreciation for the freedom and flexibility provided to them as they try new instructional approaches.

# CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TOTALS

A total of 14 classrooms were observed for approximately 25 minutes each on the day of the evaluation.

I. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT					
<b>Areas 1 &amp; 2</b>  Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport  Establishing a Culture for Learning	<b>Distinguished</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
	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.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total: 10</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>	<b>Total:</b>
	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.
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total: 10</b>	<b>Total: 4</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total:</b>
<b>Areas 3 &amp; 4</b>  Managing Classroom Procedures  Managing Student Behavior	<b>Distinguished</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
	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.
	<b>Total: 2</b>	<b>Total: 10</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total:</b>
	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.
	<b>Total: 4</b>	<b>Total: 8</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total:</b>

## 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.	
	<b>Total: 1</b>	<b>Total: 11</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total:</b>	
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>Total: 1</b>	<b>Total: 5</b>	<b>Total: 5</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total: 3</b>
	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.
<b>Total: 1</b>	<b>Total: 6</b>	<b>Total: 4</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>		

## 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.
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total: 9</b>	<b>Total: 5</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total:</b>
	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.
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total: 10</b>	<b>Total: 3</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>	<b>Total:</b>
		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.
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total: 7</b>	<b>Total: 5</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>
	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.
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>Total: 9</b>	<b>Total: 4</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>	<b>Total:</b>

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: 5

**Evidence of questioning and discussion techniques: Area #6**

- Questions are planned ahead of time and tied to learning target(s): 5
- Teacher questions are open ended: 7
- Teacher allows time for students to answer – 3 seconds or more: 5
- Teacher extends the thinking and discussion by encouraging students to say more, restate or summarize 7
- 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): 1

**Evidence of engaging students in learning area: Area #7**

- Active learning is taking place (rather than just listening or viewing): 10
- Students are using reasoning and critical thinking: 6
- The lesson is rigorous and includes cognitively complex tasks: 4
- 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: 1
- Students incorporate the feedback by revising their work:
- Students receive frequent and meaningful feedback regarding their work: 3
- A wide range of instructional practices that are likely to motivate and engage most students are used during the lesson: 3



# 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	Curriculum is from the Barney Charter School Initiative and the Nevada Academic Content Standards are used at each grade level and some areas are from the Core Knowledge Sequence. Teachers integrate the NV Content Standards into their lessons and align them with the standardized tests at their grade level. FCALV uses the Lumos Learning computer program in grades 2-8 in the areas of ELA and math. FCALV uses Dimensions and Primary Mathematics by Singapore Math Inc. They have hired a consultant, Cassy Turner, to be sure FCALV's math program is completely aligned to the Nevada Academic Content Standards. Dimensions is new and FCALV is currently transitioning over to it because it is better aligned to the Nevada Academic State Standards, and it doesn't require supplemental materials to cover all the standards.
1b	The school complies with applicable education requirements.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	FCALV utilizes formative and summative assessments throughout each quarter. Teachers use the backward assessment model. FCALV uses the MAP Growth assessments, Lumos Learning assessments, and/or the SBAC results to address students' areas of need. These areas are addressed through individual student

			<p>literacy plans and/or tutoring. These assessment results and literacy plans are reviewed with parents.</p> <p>FCALV also uses quarterly assessments from Access Literacy/Riggs to monitor students' progress within school's literacy program. SBAC, PSAT, EOC, and ACT results are reviewed to better understand academic trends.</p>
1c	The school protects the rights of students with disabilities.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	<p>FCALV meets the needs of each Special Education Student: related services, such as Speech or Occupational Therapy, IEPs are reviewed with every regular education teacher and accommodations are implemented.</p> <p>Middle School and High School students are given extra support during Lunch and Learn from either the Special Education teachers or Regular Education teacher. High School students are invited to participate in the States Career Training Program offered through CTE. This year FCALV developed a self-contained Autism classroom for a new student.</p> <p>FCALV follows and implements all policies regarding identification, evaluation, placement, and discipline as outlined through FAPE, IDEA, FCALV and SPCSA SPED Manual, and AB168. Parents are given a copy of Procedural Safeguards at least once a year.</p> <p>FCALV's procedure for identifying possible Special Education Students begins with the RTI process. FCALV's RTI committee is composed of teachers and meets monthly. Special education teachers monitor their caseload and revise IEP goals as needed.</p>
1d	The school protects the rights of ELL students.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	<p>FCALVs teachers are trained to meet the needs of ELL students by providing multi-sensory, direct, and Socratic instruction in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency and writing skills. FCALV policy for identifying ELL students is through the Home Language Survey completed at registration. According to the students' W-APT screener they receive additional</p>

		<p>supports to enhance their English language proficiency.</p> <p>Parents are notified (in English and home language) annually of their student(s) WIDA scores and status in the ELL program. FCALV monitors all ELL (both active and exited) student's academic performance throughout the year. Monitoring is completed with quarterly teacher input progress monitoring forms, parent communication, attendance record, statewide assessments, and ACCESS for ELL.</p>
--	--	---

Measure	Description	Evidence Collected Through	Takeaways
3a	The school complies with governance requirements.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	FCALV complies with the governance requirements as stated in its charter application, meeting no less than ten times per year and in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. The charter board complies with its Conflicts of Interest policy as well as actively monitoring the school's academic, financial, and organizational frameworks as imperatives to the Superintendent-Principal's annual assessment. The charter board has three standing committees – Governance, Audit, and Risk Managements – to better comply with its governance requirements. The charter board members attend a multi-day board governance training provided by BCSI on the campus of Hillsdale College to better understand roles and requirements of charter boards and their focus on policy and governance.
3b	The school holds management accountable.	School Presentation	FCALV's contracts with Charter School Management Corporation (CSMC), which provides budget, accounting, and payroll functions. The school's administration provides an annual evaluation of CSMC, and monthly meetings are scheduled to assess communication and work-stream collaboration. FCALV utilizes the Nevada Educators Performance Framework (NEPF) for annual evaluations of teachers, counselors, and administrators. FCALV utilizes an evaluation form similar in format to the CCSD annual evaluations of support staff.

4a	The school protects the rights of all students.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	<p>FCALV’s culturally responsive practices are partially seen in the mission statement, “8 Pillars”, “T.H.I.N.K” protocol and the Founders Code. Discipline with students and staff are always first addressed here before they move to other levels of correction. These timeless ethics and virtues are an integral part of all cultures and are relatable to everyone.</p> <p>FCALV has a vibrant and effective PTO, Student Leadership, and numerous committees who create a variety of educational and social events, field trips and travel (during “normal” years) as well as continuously improve school aesthetics and facilities.</p> <p>FCALV’s PDP is currently being integrated into the MTSS program sponsored by the SPCSA.</p>
5b	The school complies with health and safety requirements.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	<p>Staff receives annual training in OSHA, FERPA and HIPAA guidelines, 65% of staff is trained in Bloodborne Pathogens, CPR and AED. They have a School Safety Committee that meets quarterly and perform the 10 required fire drills and 6 specialized safety drills each year.</p> <p>For safety systems FCALV has RAPTOR, 30 Cameras with playback, Valcom Intercom/PA, a Campus Security Monitor, and each staff has a two-way radio.</p> <p>FCALV’s Health Office works closely with the SNHD when COVID reporting and tracing. We keep daily logs and have instituted COVID cleaning and disinfecting protocols on campus. We also participate in T.I.E.S.</p> <p>FCALV has converted its PDP to meet the requirements of AB168 and are on the First Tier of the MTSS program sponsored by the SPCSA.</p> <p>SEL / SEAD Four FCALV faculty are currently taking the 4 SEAD graduate courses as part of a grant.</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 Evidence are found within the body of the report and summarized here.

1. Founders Classical Academy of Las Vegas has been committed to increasing the number of students enrolled within special populations. Over the last three school years, FCALV has gone from 3% to 5% EL students and 18% to 27% FRL populations. In addition, Founders Classical Academy, has become more ethnically diverse as their African American and Latino student populations have increased. As a result, the school has become a better reflection of the community in which they are located and conveyed a commitment during the site evaluation process to continuing these efforts.
2. The K-12 curriculum is aligned both horizontally and vertically, and it supports the implementation of the school's mission and core values. This is a strength because it assists in creating a well-rounded culturally literate student who can read, write, and speak well. Being a K-12 school, teachers have the ability to collaborate with each other over all grade levels. Because the school is K-12 parents are provided a system-wide and constant communication with teachers without having to transfer to a new school level at any point in the Elementary, Middle, and High Schools. This allows families to better understand their students' strengths and weaknesses. With the wider range of vertical alignment, teachers can fill in the gaps, as necessary.
3. Founders Classical Academy is a mission-aligned school that promotes a strong sense of community. Staff and families spoke to the support they receive from one another. The staff was praised for their willingness to be flexible and to use trial and error until the best possible classroom scenario is identified during this time of distance learning. In addition, the administration is viewed as dependable, communicative by the school staff and the families. They were commended by those in the focus groups for their strong efforts to collaborate and sustain a viable education for all students and staff during this challenging time in education.
4. Founders Classical Academy has strong levels of student achievement in the Elementary and Middle schools as indicated on page 4 of this report. The NSPF rated the Elementary School as a 4-star school during the 2018-19 school year. The Middle School was rated as a 5-star Middle School. While the High School was rated as 3-star, the school has communicated their on-going efforts to improve this rating by adding CTE classes and providing improvements at the High School levels.

## 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. Staff at Founders Classical Academy have been challenged during the COVID pandemic in several ways. Because the staff is deeply committed to supporting the social and mental health of students, they recognize the significant challenges that the pandemic has created. In particular they identified the challenge that the school has had in providing on-going support to lessen academic gaps and encouraging creativity.
2. The size of the school presents another challenge. With a smaller student body, there is limited revenue from the state. With limited finances the school must be extremely conservative when hiring. Teachers and support staff must therefore perform many different duties within the building. This is necessary to maintain financial viability, but, at times, has a negative impact as teachers often prep multiple classes at different grade levels, and other staff members must learn many new and different jobs as well. With a limited teaching staff, teacher and fatigue can become an issue. Salaries are restricted which makes it difficult to recruit, support, and retain high-quality teachers.
3. Because FCALV is a single site charter, the principal is also the superintendent. Having the principal be the superintendent allows him/her control of the financial framework which can be good; however, it takes away time to do some of the more traditional duties of a principal. To offset this situation, FCALV has a strong administrative team which works well together to accomplish all the necessary administrative duties.

## 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. It is recommended that Founders Classical Academy improve current levels of student engagement to an even higher level than exists at this time. As stated during the staff focus group, teachers are concerned that students are losing opportunities for creativity and imagination because of the pandemic. As teachers continue to adopt new strategies for supporting students it is recommended that the school include diverse learning activities and assignments that link directly to students' interests whenever possible. It is believed that this can be accomplished and at the same time, maintain Founders classical model. Please see the list of strategies and methods to take under consideration:
  - Peer review of writing
  - Group projects
  - Collaboration Boards
  - Multiple break out rooms via virtual instruction with discussion and or projects
  - Using an on-line platform for distance and in person learning games
  - Exit Tickets

- Formative Assessments
  - Having planned high level questions prepared and used during instruction
2. There was limited evidence of students contributing to lessons by participating and or explaining concepts to their peers. For example, in some cases, the group of students were asked a question, and just one student was called upon to respond. SPCSA staff suggests that the school continue to use what has been learned in both face-to-face and distance learning environments and consider adding the following to leverage best practices. Research has shown that (*Fisher, Frey & Hattie, 2020*) the following best practices will likely lead to higher levels of sustained student learning.
- Fostering student self-regulation and having students set learning goals in order to increase the possibility of students moving learning to deep and transfer levels.
  - Adding even more instructional approaches to diversify the learning. These might include direct instruction paired with a Socratic seminar, or on-line discussion facilitated via a chat room.
  - A well-designed system for peer learning impacts understanding and achievement outcomes.
3. It is recommended that Founders Classical Academy continue their current efforts to develop and expand the availability of college preparation and high-quality career pathways. By combining rigorous academics including CTE, AP, Honors and Dual Credit options with an applied curriculum and work-based learning opportunities, the high school experience for students, as well as the outcomes from their education may be greatly enhanced.

## DEFICIENCIES

There were no deficiencies identified for Founders Classical Academy of Las Vegas during this site evaluation.