



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Site Evaluation Report
**Nevada State High School
Henderson: Downtown Campus**
Evaluation Date: 04/14/2021
Report Date: 6/18/2021

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Appendices

A: Nevada State Performance Framework

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

B: SPCSA Academic Framework

http://charterschools.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/CharterSchoolsnvgov/content/News/2019/19062_2_8-Academic-Performance-Framework-Guidance-Document.pdf

C: SPCSA Organizational Framework

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

INTRODUCTION AND SCHOOL BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

This Site Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school evaluation that took place on April 14, 2021 at Nevada State High School Henderson Downtown Campus. 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

Nevada State High School is located in Henderson, Nevada in a facility at 303 S Water St, Suite 120. The school serves 100 students (as of the most recent Validation Day) in 11th and 12th grades. The mission of Nevada State High School is: "To support students in a college environment with personal, academic, and social skills."

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Nevada State High School
Nevada School Performance Framework
2019

N/A

Nevada State High School
Math and ELA Results
Nevada School Performance Framework
2019

N/A

SPCSA Academic Performance Framework
Geographic Comparison Report

N/A
High School

SPCSA Academic Performance Framework
Diversity Comparison Results

N/A
High School

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Group	Number of Participants	Duration of Focus Group
Governing Board	2 Representatives of all campuses	30 minutes
Parents/Families	7 All campuses combined	30 minutes
Students	5 Henderson Downtown only	30 minutes
School Leadership	7 All campuses combined	30 minutes
Staff	5 All campuses combined	30 minutes

Governing Board¹:

- The governing board members were asked to describe the school’s key design elements. Board members spoke about the focus on student achievement and the ability for students to take advantage of the opportunity to earn college credits while in high school. One board member stated, “Along with earning credits, the students are becoming college ready so they are able to succeed as they move further into their college career.” Board members said the study skills classes offered through NSHS do a great job in preparing students and give them the tools they need to do well in a college setting.
- Next, the board members were asked about the information they receive about the academic progress of the school. Members said that at each board meeting they are presented with scorecards that detail the results of the campuses. According to board members, these cards show the trends of the students and help the board track where students are in their educational progress. Board members were asked how parents are kept informed of their student’s progress. Board members described the parent pledge as part of a way that the school ensures that parents are kept highly involved in their children’s education.
- The board was asked how they have addressed staff turnover at campuses and how they felt it is being addressed. The board said it has been difficult to find leaders who share the values of the school. Board members went on to say that there had been some turnover at the Meadowood Campus. Board members said that NSHS has very high standards and expect a strong work ethic from staff and sometimes staff members do not match those expectations.
- The board was asked to discuss any changes with the study skill class and the requirement to retake the class if a student had failed, which was noted as student concern during the last site evaluation process and reiterated during this current evaluation. A board member said they didn’t know if there were any changes to the study skills class.
- Board members were then asked to explain the reasons behind the delay in the opening of the ninth campus. Overall, the board members said they did not have a lot of information about the facility delay, saying that they had heard there was uncertainty with the budget and COVID had caused some issues finalizing the facility opening.
- Finally, board members were asked if there was anything else they would like the SPCSA to know about NSHS. Board members said the Hawks have run a great school and have been great to work with.

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

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

Parents/Families:

- Parents were asked why they chose this school. They responded that this is a true college experience, and that they have had to adjust the amount of control/guidance they might offer their student when compared to a traditional high school. According to parents, the education is very student-driven and while this works well for some students, others find it challenging. Other parents said they have had a wonderful experience with NSHS and the school has been quick to respond to any and all questions. The parents expressed a general curiosity if the strength of communication varies from campus to campus. One parent mentioned that the first few months of the program for new students/parents can be very challenging. The parent thought this is because NSHS is not a typical school. Parents said they would appreciate more communication and assistance at the beginning of the year. Multiple families reiterated the difficulty at the beginning of the year in getting registered for classes and other onboarding procedures. They said they would like to see a more formal question and answer session so they can work through those difficulties all at once.
- Parents were asked what type of help they are offered by NSHS. They said they were told that when the student is taking a college course, that is when they would need to take a step back because issues should be discussed between the student and professor. Parents said there appears to be a lot of pressure on students and that pressure can negatively affect certain students. Parents further commented that at some of the campuses there were NSHS staff who really cared and helped their children, but that did not appear to be the case at all of the campuses. One parent commented that a member of the NSHS Senior Leadership told them, "If a child is depressed it is the parents' responsibility to figure that out." This parent went on to ask what services the school had and was told by the same member of the NSHS Senior Leadership team that they [the family] need to hire a counselor. One parent spoke again about the lost 504 plan and they didn't know how to address it with the school.
- Parents were asked about the staff turnover that was reported to and observed by the SPCSA site evaluation team. Parents said that the turnover at the campuses has created a lack of consistency for students. A parent said their child has a 504 plan which has somehow been lost by the school, but school personnel has shared that they don't have it. In this parent's eyes, this is mostly due to the turnover at the campus because the previous administrators at the campus appeared to have lost the documents for her child.
- Parents were asked to share their opinions of students having to retake the study skills class if they fail a college class. One parent said that his child is having to take the study skills class again and it is driving their child crazy. This parent said that they aren't entirely opposed to their child having to retake the study skill class, but it does appear to be busy work, especially when a student has to take the same course for a second time. This parent expressed frustration with how adamant NSHS staff has been about parents not getting involved with their child's education, especially when it is revealed weeks into the semester that their child did not know how to logon to their class. Other parents in the focus group said they felt the school used the study skills class as a deterrent to not fail their college courses and did not see a problem with students repeating the Study Skills class. One parent said that the experience at "NSHS had ruined the desire for their child to go to attend college and this is because the school failed to offer support when the child fell behind." When asked for additional clarity related to the frustration surrounding the study skills class, parents said they would like to see the study skill class change when a student has to repeat it. Parents went on to say that a more relevant curriculum taught during the second time this course is taken would be helpful because it doesn't actually help the students to pass a previously failed college course.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

Students:

- Students were asked what they like about attending NSHS. Students said they like the opportunity to earn college credits and build their own schedules. A student said they work and attending NSHS allows them to do both. Others said they like being able to get ahead because they plan on attending graduate school. Students said it allows them to save a lot of money because classes are paid for through the high school. Students also described what motivated them to attend the NSHS classes. They said that graduation is a motivation because they must finish those classes to graduate. Additionally, students said there are some days where they don't see the benefit of those courses, but other days the classes give them help with their schoolwork and college readiness.
- Students were then asked how they monitor their academic progress and they spoke about using Campus which allows them to track their progress. On the app, Campus, has a to-do list which helps them know what they need to get done.
- Students were then asked about the social and emotional support they receive from NSHS. Students said they don't have any social emotional and support from the school. They said that NSHS just "let's them do their thing." The students said they would like NSHS to have a counselor so they would have someone at the school they could talk to when they needed. A student said that this year has been especially hard and they would have appreciated someone to speak to. Another student said burnout between Fall and Spring semesters was a thing she had experienced and seen and having someone to speak to at NSHS might have helped manage that.
- Students were also asked about the study skills class, specifically, repeating the class if they failed a college course. Students said they are still required to repeat the class if they fail a course, and it feels more like a punishment than a resource. A few students shared that they would like to see some sort of tutoring instead of repeating the same course they took at the beginning of the year. They also said they would like to see the study skills class be more personalized if they had to take it again so they could receive help on the courses they didn't do well with the first time.
- Students asked if they felt respected in their classes, and they indicated that at this campus they feel respected. However, some students shared that they believe this isn't the case at other NSHS campuses, specifically referring to the Henderson campus. Students stated that the Henderson campus had misplaced items that students had submitted. Students went on to say that some leaders at the Henderson campus would blame students when something went missing, even if they absolutely knew the school lost the items. The students were very complimentary of Ms. Williams at the campus and said she provides lots of support when asked. Students shared that she goes the extra mile and supports them with all sorts of issues that may come up during a school year. Other students said that when they submit a help ticket, Ms. Williams is always the first to respond and her response is always the most helpful.
- Students spoke about some of the reasons students might not attend NSHS again for a second year. The students said the volunteer hours and social points are very time consuming and that might be a reason that a student would not come back. Students went on to say that it feels like they have two workloads, one for college, and one for high school. The students explained that because of the heavy workload, that is why they see other students' burnout. Some of the students said the volunteer and social point requirements made them feel like they didn't have enough time to spend with family and friends. Students suggested that forcing interaction via the social points never works very well, but noted that they would not mind if these interactions were encouraged. NSHS students noted that some of the events they have to attend "childish" and don't make sense for a high school student. They said the events are pre-planned and that they do not have a say in what the events will be during a

school year. Students commented that the social events are very awkward and everyone can tell that no one wants to be there, with the exception of prom because people wanted to be there. One student did note that they had heard the social points weren't as bad in pre-COVID times, because students had the chance to meet each other in person at the beginning of the year. The students said they would like to see the total number of points lowered. They went on to say that they already have social interactions with their friends through ways outside of NSHS, and don't understand why they can't use those interactions to gain social points.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

Leadership:

- The leadership team was asked for clarification regarding the study skills class given the comments of both the parent and student focus groups. Specifically, the NSHS leadership team was asked if students are still required to take the study skills class a second time when they have a low grade at one or more of their college level classes or if they are enrolled in a remedial math class². The attending members of the leadership team shared that they were unaware of any policy changes to address this concern of parents and students. The leadership team commented that the current protocol was for students to repeat the study skills class would have to repeat the class as was the case in 2019.
- When asked about the lottery requirements and process changes that have occurred over the past year, leaders said they have had a positive, successful lottery recently. School leaders went on to explain that the lottery opened on February 1st and the lottery was held on March 18th. One leader said, “There were a few sites that did have a waitlist, but waitlists were not at every campus. We notified students of their selection and gave the students about three weeks to decide. If the student declined, they worked their way down the results of the lottery.” School leaders added that they have also implemented a better tracking process after registration to follow students more closely. The biggest difference from previous years was the school would process applications as they came in. One participant said, “It does make the registration process more constraining because there is a delay in registration for the courses.” The leaders were asked to provide a summary of the lottery and said they would be able to provide that to the SPCSA. The school leaders were asked how the enrollment process works for the second semester and how that fits with the school calendar and the college calendar. NSHS leaders responded that the network holds one lottery for new students each year. Once the students are enrolled, they progress normally through the courses.
- The leaders were asked about the fee policy change that had occurred in the 2020-21 school year and to elaborate on the changes. The leaders said students no longer have fees if a student has a correct schedule. School leaders elaborated, noting that the only time students have fees is if they take an extra class, or if they fail a class. When asked if there would be additional changes for the upcoming year, the leaders said they do not foresee any upcoming changes to these limited fees³.
- The leaders were asked about the best practices that had been implemented in relation to Title II funds. The leaders said there had been a focus on study skills classes, which has been challenging in COVID times. NSHS shared that the network was able to digitize the classes, and network leaders explained that the best practices that were used were in an effort to digitize the classes.
- School leaders were asked about the approved deferral to open the ninth NSHS campus in Las Vegas. Participating school leaders said that NSHS Senior Leadership had recently sent in information regarding a proposed facility which is located about 1000 feet outside of the approved zip codes.

² The following recommendation was listed on the NSHS Southwest Campus Report dated September 11, 2019. “Improve messaging regarding lower-level math classes. SPCSA staff suggests that the network work to provide consistent messaging around the study skills course and consider revising the course if students are enrolling for a second time.”

³ SPCSA staff believes it is permissible for NSHS to pass along tuition costs to a student enrolled in a dual-credit course after completing and signing a CAP form. In this circumstance, tuition costs passed along to the student may not be excessive or above the actual cost of the individual course. This was noted in the SPCSA site evaluation report of the NSHS-Summerlin campus, dated May 24, 2019.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

Staff:

- Staff members were asked how their experience teaching online has been this year and in what ways they have had to adapt to effectively teach students. NSHS staff members responded by speaking about how the network completed some training ahead of time so they would be ready when the switch to online instruction began.
- NSHS staff was then asked about the way school and network leadership solicits feedback from staff. Staff said they used a formal system of written communication to keep in contact with each other at various campuses and departments. Staff went on to explain that this structure is how information works its way up the chain of command within the NSHS network.
- Staff was asked how data drives instruction at NSHS. Teachers said that students have scorecards where information is inputted. Staff explained that this information helps students understand where they are academically and is used to update the school's data platforms. NSHS teachers also shared that students take surveys, and this information is collected, analyzed over the summer, and then implemented that for the following year. NSHS staff stated that students also complete weekly Student Status Report that help EAC's understand how students are doing in their college courses. Teachers also described their relationships with students, explaining during the focus group the importance of connecting with students and encouraging them through their classes.
- Staff members described how the help ticket system works at NSHS, saying that the help ticket system is a way of separating questions that may not be as immediate and allows staff to track the type of questions they receive. According to NSHS staff, some students use the help tickets to set up meetings with their teachers, discuss classwork, and get help with college courses. In the study skill classes, teachers indicated that they use breakout rooms to allow for private conversations with students when needed.
- Teachers described the study skills class and spoke about how they felt it was supportive of students. Teachers said the curriculum does not take up the full two hours and students have time to do other college assignments as part of that course. Teachers also said that the study skills course was teacher-dependent and, if teachers are able to make a student excited to continue to pursue their degrees, it makes the retaking of the study skills class worthwhile.
- Staff talked about Social and Emotional learning at NSHS and staff responded that the NSHS network had received mental health grants. Staff went on to state that NSHS students have been able to use those services and NSHS is billed for them. The staff was asked to explain how a student who needs help goes about getting help, and they shared that they review a student SSR form to see if a student is having trouble, and if that is the case, they will make a referral for that student. The staff also said students will come in and talk with their study skills teachers about issues they may be having. Another staff member indicated that some students may find it difficult to talk about issues because they wish to keep their personal information confidential if a request must be put in writing. In some cases, students may choose to keep problems to themselves rather than state them in writing on a "help ticket", where it may become knowledge to others. Teachers also shared that the impact of assisting many students who may be overwhelmed is mentally draining.
- Due to a previous pattern of staff turnover at the school, as well as staff data that was self-reported by the school as part of the site evaluation process, the members of the staff focus group were asked about current year retention efforts at NSHS. Staff said that data tracking can be exhausting at times and it takes time from other things they feel like they should be doing such as working with students on an individual basis. The teachers spend most of their time helping students which makes it difficult to complete the deskwork they have at the end of the day.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

One teacher observed that teachers are rarely let go by the school and, a majority of the time, teachers decide to leave the school because they are unable to handle the workload.

- The staff spoke about the turnover they have seen in the leadership positions and suggested the school look to offer promotions to existing staff since they know the systems that the school has in place. They said the school should explore a pipeline for teachers to move up their careers at the school and to actively seek out employees who they think should be promoted instead of teachers having to apply for promotion on their own. They also suggested that NSHS should attempt to work smarter, not harder, by consolidating some of the platforms the school uses which would help teachers be able to manage their work.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TOTALS

The classroom observation outcomes have been combined due to the unique nature of the school. Two SPCSA Evaluators observed one class at each campus. A total of 16 classrooms were observed for approximately 25 minutes each across all eight campuses throughout the month of April 2021.

I. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT					
Areas 1 & 2 Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport Establishing a Culture for Learning	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
	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.
	Total: 3	Total: 13	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: 2	Total: 14	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: 15	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:	Total: 11	Total:	Total:	Total: 5

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:	Total: 14	Total:	Total:	Total: 2
Area 6	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
A Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques	Students formulate and ask high-level questions.	Teacher formulates and asks several high-level questions.	Teacher questioning and discussion techniques are uneven with some high-level questions.	Teacher makes poor use of questioning and discussion techniques, with low level questions, limited student participation and little true discussion.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total:	Total: 10	Total: 1	Total:	Total: 5
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: 8	Total: 4	Total:	Total: 4

II. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION (continued)					
Area 7 A Engaging Students in Learning	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
	Students are highly engaged throughout the lesson. The pacing and structure of the lesson allows high levels of student engagement.	Students appear to be intellectually engaged throughout most of the lesson. The pacing and structure of the lesson is suitable for this group of students.	Students are partially engaged throughout the lesson.	Students are not at all intellectually engaged in significant learning.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 4	Total: 9	Total: 2	Total:	Total: 1
Area 7 B	Students make contributions to the representation of content.	There are appropriate activities and materials and instructive representations of content.	The representation of content or structure/pacing is uneven.	There are inappropriate activities or materials, poor representations of content or lack of lesson structure/pacing.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 4	Total: 12	Total:	Total:	Total:
Area 8 A Using Formative Assessment in Instruction	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
	Students are aware of the learning goals/targets for themselves during this instructional timeframe.	Most of the students are aware of the learning goals/targets for themselves during this instructional timeframe.	Some of the students are aware of the learning goals/targets for themselves during this instructional timeframe.	Students are not aware of the learning goals/learning target during this instructional time frame.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 3	Total: 13	Total:	Total:	Total:
Area 8 B	The teacher purposefully and consistently provides clear, descriptive feedback in regard to student's demonstration/understanding of the learning goal/target. The feedback is timely and is in a reasonable amount.	Much of the time, the teacher, provides clear, descriptive feedback regarding student's understanding/ demonstration of learning goal/target. The feedback is timely and is in a reasonable amount.	At times, the teacher provides clear, descriptive feedback but not in a consistent manner regarding learning goal/target. Observing where the work was meeting and where it was not. The feedback is timely and is in a reasonable amount.	The teacher does not provide clear, descriptive feedback regarding learning goal/target and does not observing where the work is and where it is not meeting. The feedback is not timely and is not in a reasonable amount.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	Total: 4	Total: 11	Total:	Total:	Total: 1

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

Evidence of adapted materials/assessments: Area #5

- Lessons are designed to encourage student curiosity and learning beyond classroom time: 3
- The explanation of the content is imaginative: 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: 4
- Teacher extends the thinking and discussion by encouraging students to say more, restate or summarize: 2
- Teacher purposefully signals to entire group of students to wait/think before volunteering a response: 1
- Teacher provides the opportunity for all students to answer the question (think, pair, share, written response): 1

Evidence of engaging students in learning area: Area #7

- Active learning is taking place (rather than just listening or viewing): 3
- Students are using reasoning and critical thinking: 1
- The lesson is rigorous and includes cognitively complex tasks:
- Students engage in several types of activities during the lesson including:
 - Speaking Writing Reading Listening Discussing Creating Problem Solving
- Cooperative groups: 2
- Student-led classroom:
- Technology is integrated into learning/outcomes: 16
- 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: 2
- Students incorporate the feedback by revising their work:
- Students receive frequent and meaningful feedback regarding their work:
- A wide range of instructional practices that are likely to motivate and engage most students are used during the lesson:

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	NSHS leaders meet quarterly to identify and ensure that objectives for the upcoming quarter are aligned with the school mission. All employees identify quarterly objectives to ensure that operations support the school's mission and V/TO goals
1b	The school complies with applicable education requirements.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	Assessments: placement tests, ACT prep and ACT test, WIDA. SPCSA staff notes that the current lottery procedures, as observed through documentation provided by the school, do not appear to be compliant with NRS 388A.453.
1c	The school protects the rights of students with disabilities.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	Students receive assistance on how to request IEP accommodations with colleges and how to advocate for themselves with their college instructors. Students are aided on how to access the college tutoring centers and receive tutoring in addition to direct services outlined in their IEP. It is important to note that a parent frustrated that her student's 504 plan had been misplaced by staff and the plan has yet to be located
1d	The school protects the rights of ELL students.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	Student progress is monitored continuously throughout the school year, using the student situation reports parent progress reports and periodic ELL check-ins.

Measure	Description	Evidence Collected Through	Takeaways
3a	The school complies with governance requirements.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	<p>NSHS complies with attendance, graduation rates, student assessments and data as stated in their charter application.</p> <p>SPCSA staff notes that the current composition of the NSHS Board, specifically as it relates to the Meadowwood campus, does not comply NAC 388A.525.</p>
3b	The school holds management accountable.	School Presentation	All employees at NSHS are evaluated annually following a comprehensive rubric and set of data points that includes attendance, people analyzer core values and a measurement based upon the Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS) – GWC which stands for “Get it”, “Want it”, and Capacity to do it”.
4a	The school protects the rights of all students.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	NSHS has self-reported that they continue to make efforts to ensure diversity of candidates hired for positions.
5b	The school complies with health and safety requirements.	School Presentation Classroom Observations	Facilities are kept clean and hazard free. Fire drills, lockdown drills are conducted monthly. School Counselors are available for students to discuss academic, career, and social emotional needs.

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. Nevada State High School is committed to their mission and vision which is to support students in a college environment and to ensure students become college ready. The eight campuses are designed and operate in such a way that students in 11th and 12th grade attend classes at both the high school and college campus classes and allow students to earn college credit.
2. The classes students attend at the individual high school campuses have been created to successfully transition students to their new college environment. Even before classes at the college begin, students are required to take an Introduction to College class.
3. Students attend Study Skills classes in which the curriculum is designed to teach students how to register for college, schedule classes, research colleges for post-high school attendance, and develop financial plans. These classes are designed to support students both during the present college classes and to prepare them for future success.

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. Some of the challenges school leaders commented on include:
 - Due to COVID circumstances, in-person options for college classes were not always available for the students who may need this.
 - There was difficulty in collecting documents from students virtually while maintaining quality.
 - Due to COVID and in-person restrictions, there were fewer opportunities for students to volunteer and subsequently earn social points.
2. The SPCSA site evaluation team observed and recorded the following challenges during the course of the evaluation of the eight NSHS campuses during the month of April:

NSHS has seen a high rate of staff and leadership turnover. According to the school's self-reported data from April 2021 that was provided to the SPCSA as part of the site evaluation process, all eight NSHS campuses have had turnover at the leadership level in the past year. As this site evaluation process was underway, both the leaders at the Southwest Campus and the Sunrise Campus left their leadership positions and NSHS. communication, and procedural implementation for themselves and their dually enrolled high school students.

CHALLENGES continued

One parent was deeply disappointed that a 504 plan had been lost by the school. This is particularly concerning from an operational standpoint as family members spoke during the Family Focus group about the turnover at the campuses which they felt has created a lack of consistency for group voiced that this seemed unusual and may be due to high levels of school leader turnover year after year. In addition, several parents voiced concerns about the operations of NSHS. Specific concerns included varying levels of communication from campus to campus, difficulty completing the course registration and student onboarding process at the beginning of the year and the inability of parents to be as actively involved in their student's education when compared to a traditional high school experience.

The chart below outlines the turnover status for this school year.

CAMPUS	NAME OF SCHOOL LEADER	EMPLOYED/CURRENT STATUS
NSHS Summerlin/Northwest	Danielle Jones	7/16/2019 No longer employed
NSHS Sunrise/Downtown	Deb Whitmoyer	7/1/2019 No longer employed
NSHS Meadowwood	Sara Coombes	11/1/2020 New Hire
NSHS Henderson/Downtown Henderson	Jesse Welsh (Acting)	1/16/2021 New Hire
NSHS Southwest	Wendi Hawk (Acting)	7/1/2004 Long time employee

- The requirement for students to re-take Study Skills classes under certain circumstances was another concern that arose through multiple conversations during the site evaluation process with families, students, board members, staff, and the NSHS leadership team. It should be noted that the previous NSHS site evaluation reported, dated September 11, 2019, included the following recommendation:

Improve messaging regarding lower-level math classes. SPCSA staff suggests that the network provide consistent messaging around the study skills course and consider revising the course if students are enrolling for a second time.

When board members were asked about this prior recommendation during their focus group, participating members stated that they didn't know if there were any changes made to the study skills class in response to previous concerns. Additionally, attending members of the leadership team seemed unaware of any policy changes that had occurred. Family members participating in the parent focus group voiced many concerns and questions about this specific course, and these were also echoed in the student focus group. Students said they would like to see a revised class format provided to students that may need to retake a version of this course rather than repeat the same study skill class.

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. As was recommended in 2019, NSHS should consider revising the Study Skills class for students that may need to retake this course. As noted throughout this report, SPCSA staff gathered significant evidence from multiple sources which suggests that this course is not adequately addressing the needs of students who may be required to take this class multiple times. NSHS is urged to develop a modified Study Skills course that is more responsive to student needs and addresses some of the concerns voiced by various stakeholders during the last two site evaluations. NSHS may want to consider making changes to accommodate those students involved in sports at their zoned high school by either holding the study skills class earlier in the day or allowing students to participate by watching a recording and completing assignments afterwards within a given time period.
2. NSHS currently has a number of parent and student resources available on its website. Due to feedback during the Family Focus Group, NSHS should consider enhancing these resources so as to be more responsive to common student and parent questions. Examples of suggested additional questions include:

- “How to apply for CSN, GBC, TMCC”
- “How to register for classes”
- “How to fill out CAP form“ (and all other forms)
- “How to print course proofs”
- “How to fill out a class appeal”

Note: the above examples came directly from parents participating in the Family Focus Group.

3. Due to a pattern of student focus group responses across all eight NSHS campuses (Flagship and Meadowwood), NSHS should consider overall student engagement and retention of the material taught in the study skills and the transition classes by making the following changes:
 - Create more opportunity for students to have meaningful peer to peer interactions. This might include creating peer mentors between seniors and juniors and on-going study groups (social points) so that students have the opportunity to develop relationships with other students and study together in a meaningful way.
 - Slightly alter the social and volunteer hours to accommodate the individual needs of students.

Note: the above examples came directly from students participating in the Student Focus Group.

4. Continue to ensure that all special education and 504 paperwork are compliant and maintained appropriately. With high turnover rates at the school, a system for maintaining and documenting all required student paperwork must be managed effectively and at no time should a parent be distressed because an IEP or 504 form may have been misplaced.
5. As self-reported by the NSHS network and outlined in the Challenges section of this report, the current levels of staff turnover are not new to the NSHS system and have not improved since the last site evaluation. Family focus group and staff focus group members all reported that communication and day to day procedures have lacked continuity at NSHS campuses. The SPCSA evaluation team noted very high levels of turnover as well as a lack of consistent messaging within focus groups as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS continued

SPCSA staff urges NSHS to examine its current structure and organizational structure and consider defining leadership in a way that empowers school leaders and teaching staff to want to remain at the school on a long-term basis. An increased sense of stakeholder engagement and satisfaction are possible by developing a greater number of relationships that foster a culture of collaboration between upper leadership and leaders working at each school. This means that individual school leaders both meet high standards of practice and are supported and respected as they continue to develop. It is important that all school leaders understand that effective communication is a critical component of school success, and work collaboratively to build solid, trusting relationships. This will better serve the entire community including family members and individual students.

A recent article published by NSBA (National School Boards Association) 4-1-2018 narrowed down essential elements of successful schools with a coalition of 12 major education organizations.⁴ Research and best practices were combined to identify six critical elements that help policymakers, school leaders, and the public to understand why and how some schools succeed. All six impact several aspects of school success. Of the six, Family and Community Engagement, Distributed Leadership, Relationship-Oriented School Climate, and Strong Supported Teaching Force and Staff were listed. All of these are difficult to attain with high levels of turnover in both the leadership and teaching positions at the school.

Action Item:

SPCSA staff recommends that NSHS develop a plan to proactively address the high staff and leadership turnover rates currently present at NSHS. The plan should outline specific steps the NSHS network will take in the coming academic year to lower staff and leadership turnover, and how the implementation of the plan will be monitored by the senior leadership team and the NSHS board.

6. Evidence of the student lottery for the 2021 – 22 school year that was provided by NSHS leadership upon request raises questions about compliance with NRS 388A.453. As noted in the review of the Organizational Performance section of this report, it is not clear that the school has appropriate protocols in place to ensure compliance with student lottery requirements. In cases where more eligible pupils apply for enrollment than available seats., NSHS must determine which applicants to enroll pursuant to a lottery, not in the order in which applications are received, as noted in statute.

Action Item:

SPCSA staff is ready and willing to assist NSHS in modifying processes for the 2022 – 23 lottery to ensure compliance and offers training specific to this topic. SPCSA staff is requiring NSHS to modify its current lottery process and protocols before the start of the 2021 – 2022 school year.

⁴ <https://www.nsba.org/ASBJ/Past-Issues/april/elements-successful-schools>

7. Evidence gathered throughout the site evaluation process, both from focus groups as well as supplemental documentation provided by the school and available on the NSHS website, raises some questions about compliance with NRS 388A.366. Specifically, NSHS may only charge fees that are also charged by the local school district. As noted in the SPCSA site evaluation report dated May 24, 2019, SPCSA staff believes it is permissible for NSHS to pass along tuition costs to a student enrolled in a dual-credit course after completing and signing a CAP form. In this circumstance, tuition costs passed along to the student may not be excessive or above the actual cost of the individual course. However, the current version of the NSHS handbook should be enhanced to clarify that the school complies with the above statute and does not charge fees or tuition (similar to CSNHS within CCSD). This function is reserved for the college or university to handle directly with students and families.

Action Item:

SPCSA staff remains committed to student access to high-quality public schools. It is not permissible for NSHS to charge tuition or fees for students who may fail a course, but colleges or universities may do so directly with the student or family. SPCSA staff is requiring that NSHS modify the current Student and Parent handbook to expressly clarify that when a student fails a college course, they should expect to be charged by the applicable college or university directly. References to collections agencies must be removed from the current iteration as the college or university collects the course fee, not NSHS. This revisions to the Student and Parent Handbook must be made prior to the start of the 2021 – 22 school year.

8. As noted in the review of the Organizational Performance section of this report, NSHS has a nine-member governing board, with only two members residing in Washoe County. This structure does not meet the residency requirements under NAC 388A.525 for the Meadowwood contract.

SPCSA staff has been in communication with NSHS leadership regarding this compliance issue and possible resolutions. NSHS has committed to resolving this concern.

Action Item:

SPCSA staff remains committed to solving this governance issue and is happy to continue to work with NSHS leadership and board in a timely manner. SPCSA staff expect this issue to be resolved by August 31, 2022.

DEFICIENCIES

There were no deficiencies identified for Nevada State High School-Henderson Downtown campus during this site evaluation.