



# **Nevada State Public Charter School Authority**

Site Evaluation Report:  
**Freedom Classical Academy**  
Evaluation Date: 10/7/2021  
Report Date: 11/12/2021

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# Contents

Introduction and School Background .....	3
Academic Performance .....	4
Focus Group Summaries .....	8
Classroom Observation Totals .....	11
Organizational Performance.....	15
Site Evaluation Findings .....	18

# Appendices

## A: Nevada State Performance Framework

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

## B: SPCSA Academic Framework

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

## C: SPCSA Organizational Framework

<http://charterschools.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/CharterSchoolsnvgov/content/News/2019/190628-OPF-Att-1-Ratings-Scorecard.pdf>

# INTRODUCTION AND SCHOOL BACKGROUND

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## INTRODUCTION

This Site Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school evaluation that took place on October 7, 2021 at Freedom Classical Academy. The State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all charters within the portfolio during the first, third, and fifth year of operation. This comprehensive analysis addresses the academic success of the school and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization.

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 Organizational 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

Freedom Classical Academy is in North Las Vegas, Nevada in a facility at 777 E. Ann Rd. The school serves 1,055 (as of the most recent Validation Day) in Kindergarten through 8th grade. The mission of name of school is: "Freedom Classical Academy's mission is to bring forth future leaders through a fusion of classical education and STEM instruction in an environment that promotes liberty and virtue."

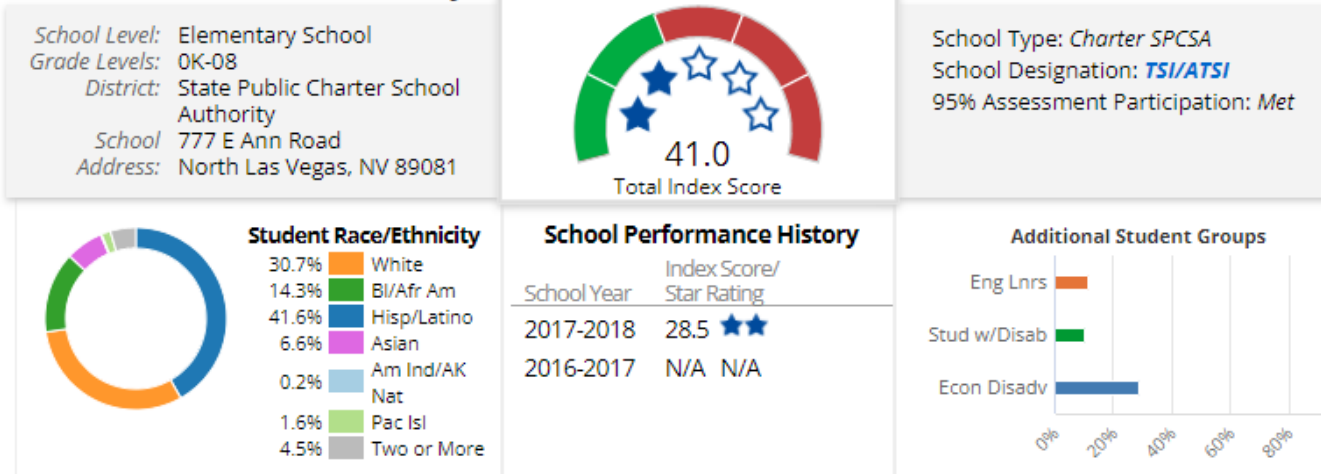
# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## Nevada School Performance Framework 2019

Freedom Classical Academy serves 1,055 students in grades Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

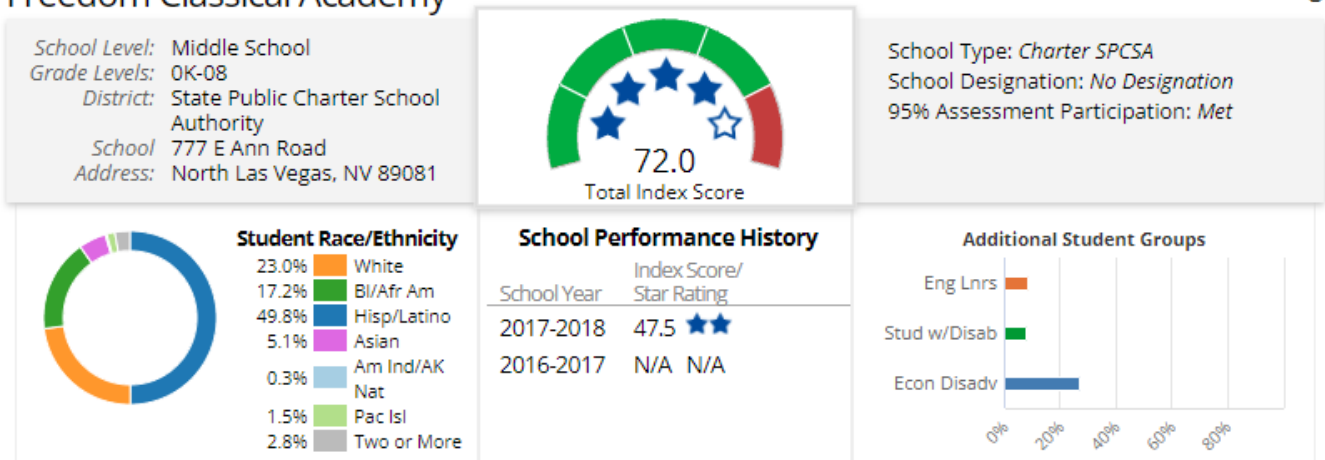
### Elementary School Freedom Classical Academy

School Year 2018-2019 Nevada School Rating



### Middle School Freedom Classical Academy

School Year 2018-2019 Nevada School Rating



Freedom Classical Academy  
Math and ELA Results  
Nevada School Performance Framework  
2019

Proficiency Rates

Elementary School

**Math Proficient**

Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	40.9	54.5	48.5	37.0	52.8	45.8
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	45.8	34.3	-	44.9	30.9
Asian	54.1	75.6	68.8	60.0	75.2	67.2
Black/African American	23.2	31.3	32.3	14.5	30.6	28.8
Hispanic/Latino	34.2	44.6	39.6	30.6	40.2	36.5
Pacific Islander	-	48.7	48.3	-	48.3	45.6
Two or More Races	41.6	58.2	55.3	-	59.0	52.9
White/Caucasian	56.7	62.3	59.3	47.3	61.1	57.2
Special Education	6.5	27.4	28.6	9.0	29.2	24.8
English Learners Current + Former	32.0	42.3	35.8	23.3	37.4	32.4
English Learners Current	19.1	32.4		23.7	25.5	
Economically Disadvantaged	36.8	39.8	39	-	33.1	35.7

Middle School

**Math Proficient**

Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	31.2	42.6	36.5	26.3	36.8	33.2
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	22.7	28.4	-	26.5	24.6
Asian	68.7	66.2	58.6	71.4	64.1	56.4
Black/African American	22.9	24.2	23.5	17.3	17.7	19.5
Hispanic/Latino	27.3	31.9	29.3	20.6	26.1	25.5
Pacific Islander	-	44.9	36.9	-	34.9	33.6
Two or More Races	-	47.3	40.6	-	41.5	37.5
White/Caucasian	36.3	51.3	47.1	32.8	44.4	44.4
Special Education	0.0	12.1	18.6	0.0	11.5	14.3
English Learners Current + Former	26.3	26.9	20.2	8.3	22.2	16
English Learners Current	8.0	12.6		8.3	8.5	
Economically Disadvantaged	17.9	29.0	29.2	-	21.7	25.5

Freedom Classical Academy  
Math and ELA Results  
Nevada School Performance Framework  
2019

Elementary School

**ELA Proficient**

Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	41.1	60.1	57	38.9	58.6	54.7
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	62.5	42.5	-	58.3	39.5
Asian	50.0	78.5	75.4	64.0	76.3	74.1
Black/African American	23.2	40.9	42.6	20.0	40.5	39.6
Hispanic/Latino	38.8	51.1	48.2	31.2	48.0	45.5
Pacific Islander	-	51.8	57.9	-	52.6	55.7
Two or More Races	46.1	63.8	64.4	-	67.1	62.6
White/Caucasian	50.5	66.8	67.4	51.1	65.0	65.7
Special Education	3.2	26.7	30	4.5	29.3	26.3
English Learners Current + Former	27.4	42.2	41.4	16.6	38.9	38.4
English Learners Current	19.1	29.4		16.9	22.8	
Economically Disadvantaged	37.8	45.4	46.8	-	40.4	44

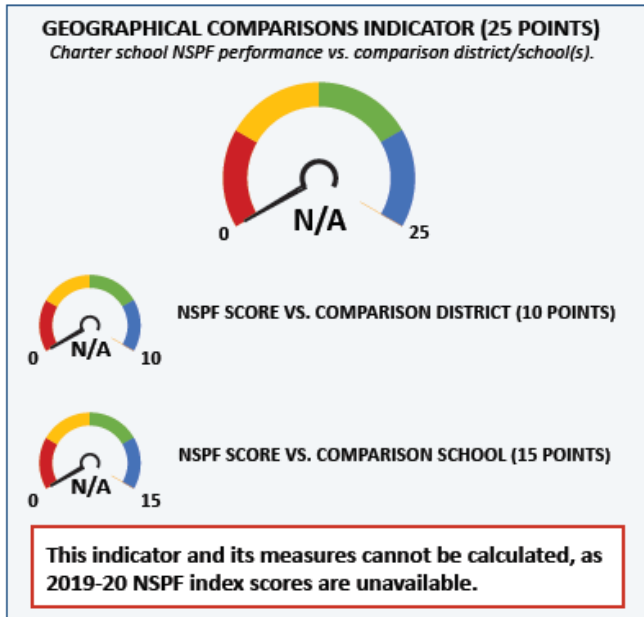
Middle School

**ELA Proficient**

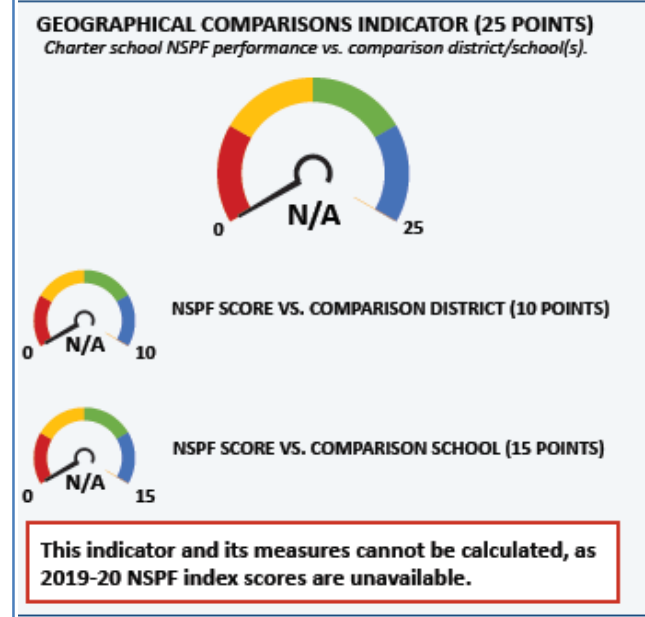
Groups	2019 %	2019 % District	2019 % MIP	2018 %	2018 % District	2018 % MIP
All Students	41.1	60.1	57	38.9	58.6	54.7
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	62.5	42.5	-	58.3	39.5
Asian	50.0	78.5	75.4	64.0	76.3	74.1
Black/African American	23.2	40.9	42.6	20.0	40.5	39.6
Hispanic/Latino	38.8	51.1	48.2	31.2	48.0	45.5
Pacific Islander	-	51.8	57.9	-	52.6	55.7
Two or More Races	46.1	63.8	64.4	-	67.1	62.6
White/Caucasian	50.5	66.8	67.4	51.1	65.0	65.7
Special Education	3.2	26.7	30	4.5	29.3	26.3
English Learners Current + Former	27.4	42.2	41.4	16.6	38.9	38.4
English Learners Current	19.1	29.4		16.9	22.8	
Economically Disadvantaged	37.8	45.4	46.8	-	40.4	44

## SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Geographic Comparison Report

### Elementary School

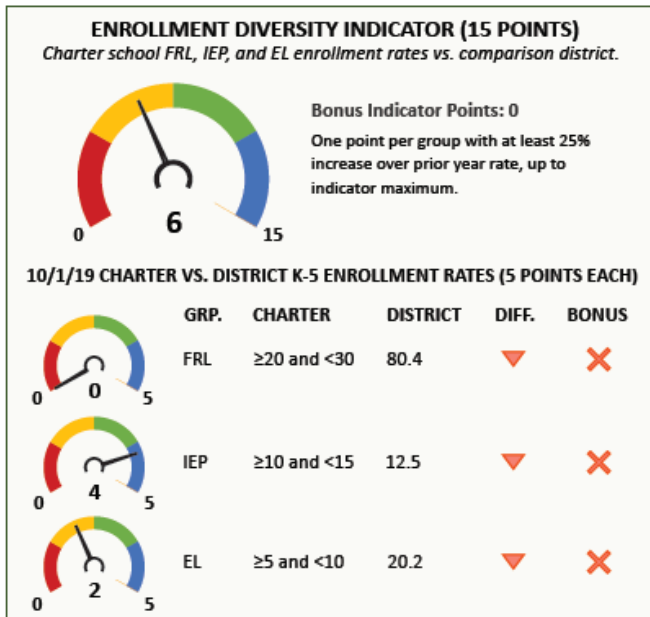


### Middle School

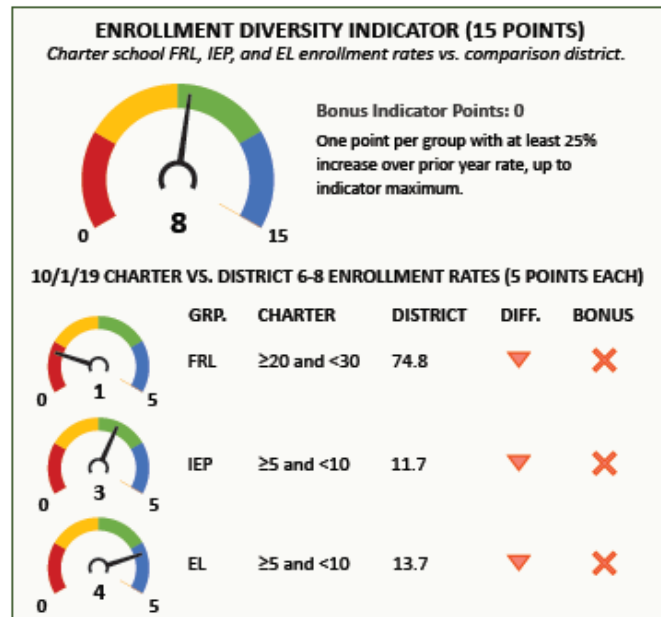


## SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Diversity Comparison Results

### Elementary School



### Middle School



# FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

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## FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Group	Number of Participants	Duration of Focus Group
Governing Board <sup>1</sup>	2	30 minutes
Parents/Families	6	30 minutes
Students	7	30 minutes
School Leadership	4	30 minutes
Staff	8	30 minutes

### Governing Board<sup>1</sup>:

1. The board members in attendance shared that they meet as a board on a regular basis. They are kept up to date with the academics at the school by the school's principal. The board shared that they believe academics at the school are improving and went on to say that the school has had several challenges with distance and hybrid instruction as well as teacher turnover.
2. It was shared that the leader of the school is evaluated by the board each year. The members in attendance have faith in the school leader and appreciate all of his hard work and perseverance. The members of the board said they are fully committed to the success of the school and want to see the school continue to improve.
3. The board is aware of the need for academic improvement at the Elementary school and shared a belief that some of the teacher turn over this year has been unavoidable. The board stated that they believe the school has a plan to help lessen the academic gaps that exist for students and are willing to help in any way possible.

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<sup>1</sup> 2 members of the 7-member board participated. Quorum was not met, and Open Meeting Law was not violated.



# FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

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## FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

### Parents/Families:

1. Family members said that their children enjoy attending Freedom Classical and look forward to coming to school each day. They said that the previous school year was challenging, especially for those with several children at home. One parent said that his child is so happy to be back in school that he can see a difference in the levels of daily satisfaction with life.
2. Parents explained that they feel welcome at the school. Two of the members of the focus group are classroom volunteers. One of them said that she sees a great need for other parents to volunteer as well. She said that, at this time, teachers have so many responsibilities that an extra set of hands is needed. This parent went on to say that she wants to volunteer each day but admitted that she is unable to do so and feels guilty when she is not there to help.
3. Parents were asked if they believe their children are sufficiently challenged at school. One parent said that her children are given high expectations at the school and the homework she sees is both challenging and consistently a large quantity.

# FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

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## FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

### **Students:**

1. Students said they are excited to be back at school full time, that they generally like their teachers and classmates and want to learn as much as possible. Students emphasized that they believe that the learning conditions at the school are far better than at other schools.
2. When asked to describe the classrooms in which they learn, students had a variety of responses. One young lady said her classroom is interesting and her teacher and the students have unexpected outbursts at times. She said this is not a negative, but rather keeps her interested in what is happening within the classroom. She feels her teacher is very good at helping all students learn. Another younger child said that his classroom is perfect, and that the teacher is a little bit strict, but he knows she will help him understand the content if he needs it.
3. Students mentioned that they love the big gym at the school and enjoy taking part in movement activities whenever possible. Students track their learning and progress in several ways including graded papers returned with comments, conversations with their teacher, and some of the students use Infinite Campus to determine their current grade status.

# FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

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## FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

### **Leadership:**

1. The school leader shared that there are many strengths at the school including a strong school culture. The school has changed the Special Education program to include both push-in and pull-out services based on the needs of the student. The school leader said that they have also increased staffing in this area.
2. One of the changes the school has implemented is incorporating new ways to support students according to school leadership, who added that staff can support struggling learners by offering differentiated support. Freedom Classical has also increased the after-school tutoring program. The program now provides more opportunities for students to receive individualized support from teachers as well as online programs such as Khan Academy and Fast for Word to provide more specific support.
3. The school leader shared that the Board has added another member. The high levels of teacher turnover have caused a great deal of concern for the entire school community. This makes it difficult for the leadership staff to observe teachers routinely and to offer ideas to improve instruction. The leader said that another challenge at the school is engaging students in learning.

### **Staff:**

1. The staff at Freedom Classical said they are challenged with the return to school this year. Some of the challenges include behavior management, learning gaps, and class sizes. Teachers said they wished the school would stop enrolling new students because the teacher class ratio is so high. With so many students, and one teacher, the expectations to teach have become more difficult.
2. When asked what they like about the school, teachers said they like the students and families. They went on to explain that they have known some of the families for a long time and really enjoy having a relationship with students and to be a part of the student's success.
3. One teacher explained that they are committed to students, saying, "Working together to help students is just a part of what we do." Another person said that without the other teachers she would be completely lost. Teachers help each other by sharing ideas for learning, engagement, and ways to navigate the Freedom Classical concepts.

# CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TOTALS

A total of 22 were observed for approximately 15 minutes on the day of the evaluation.

I. Classroom Environment					
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
<b>Areas 1 &amp; 2</b>  <b>Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport</b>  <b>Establishing a Culture for Learning</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: 2</b>	<b>Total: 17</b>	<b>Total: 3</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</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: 2</b>	<b>Total: 17</b>	<b>Total: 3</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
<b>Areas 3 &amp; 4</b>  <b>Managing Classroom Procedures</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: 0</b>	<b>Total: 20</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>
<b>Managing Student Behavior</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. 1111
	<b>Total: 1</b>	<b>Total: 20</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>

# CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TOTALS

II. Classroom Instruction					
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
<b>Area 5</b>  <b>Purpose and Explanation of Content, Lesson, Unit or Classroom Activity</b>	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 is 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: 21</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
<b>Area 6</b>  <b>A</b>  <b>Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques</b>	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: 0</b>	<b>Total: 11</b>	<b>Total: 5</b>	<b>Total: 5</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>
<b>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: 0</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>	<b>Total: 10</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>	<b>Total: 8</b>

# CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TOTALS

II. Classroom Instruction (continued)					
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
<b>Area 7</b>  <b>A</b>  <b>Engaging Students in Learning</b>	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: 1</b>	<b>Total: 5</b>	<b>Total: 8</b>	<b>Total: 8</b>	<b>Total: 0</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: 1</b>	<b>Total: 7</b>	<b>Total: 7</b>	<b>Total: 5</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
<b>Area 8</b>  <b>A</b>	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: 1</b>	<b>Total: 9</b>	<b>Total: 5</b>	<b>Total: 6</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>
<b>Using Formative Assessment in Instruction</b>  <b>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 observe where the work is and where it is not meeting. The feedback is not timely and is not in a reasonable amount.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	<b>Total: 2</b>	<b>Total: 7</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>	<b>Total: 6</b>	<b>Total: 5</b>

# 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
1a	<p>The school implements material terms of the education program. Examples of evidence: The scope and sequence of curricular materials have been vetted to align with the Nevada Academic Content Standards and a plan has been mapped by date to ensure the completion of each standard within the grade or content area.</p> <p>The educational program offered by the school is consistent with the program proposed within the charter application. Ex: math science focus, extended day, arts integrated.</p>	<p>The school leader reports that teachers have worked to vet the school's curricular materials to the NVACS. A copy of the scope and sequence was provided. MATERIAL TERMS: Socratic Seminar, Classroom instruction, MS Humanities, Jr. Great books, Steam Special, Technology, MS STEM Curriculum.</p>
1b	<p>The school complies with applicable education requirements. Examples: Completing the submission of required items to epicenter in a complete and timely manner. (Licensing of staff, Special Education and ELL Handbook and all others) Assessments/Data requirements</p>	<p>The school recruits using Indeed and Frontline Education. Assessments include MAP, formative, curriculum, Dibbles, Khan Academy, Brigrance, WIDA screener SBAC, NAA and NAEP.</p>
1c	<p>The school protects the rights of students with disabilities. Examples: A narrative of processes in place to ensure decisions made by the IEP Team are communicated to all staff who work with the student. A narrative of how the school/campus documents the delivery of service and progress toward achieving the IEP goals.</p>	<p>IEP Documents are available in Infinite Campus, and applicable teachers included in IEP mtg IEP at-a-glance Case Manager Visit, Service Logs, Progress Reports.</p>
1d	<p>The school protects the rights of ELL students. Examples: A narrative explaining how content teachers are trained in specific methodologies to provide EL students with meaningful access to content.  A description of how EL students are acquiring English language skills in all four domains (e.g. listening, speaking, reading, and writing)  A description of how EL student progress within the four domains is monitored.</p>	<p>Structured English Immersion Methodology Explicit Instruction: Elements of Effective Lessons Explicit &amp; Contextual Vocabulary Instruction Activate Prior Knowledge and Draw from Cultural Background Scaffold Learning, Explicit Phonics Instruction Explicit Grammar Instruction</p>

# ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Measure	Description	Evidence Collected
3a	<p>The school complies with governance requirements.</p> <p>Examples:            Board policies, including those related to oversight of an Education Service Provider, state open meeting law, code of ethics, conflicts of interest, board composition, routine meetings.</p>	<p>Freedom Classical has 5 members while recruiting additional members.            School has Conflict of Interest Policy / Code of Ethics            Follows OML / Obtained training in 2020. The school does not have an EMO.</p>
4a	<p>The school protects the rights of all students.</p> <p>Examples:            Admissions, waiting lists, fair and open recruitment, enrollment, due process protections, conduct of discipline- (discipline hearings, suspension and expulsion policies and practices, protects student information.</p>	<p>Open Enrollment from 1st Mon in Nov till Last Fri in Jan.            No expulsions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significantly reduced suspensions</li> <li>• Training provided in restorative practices</li> <li>• Board policy on hearings pending</li> </ul>
5b	<p>The school complies with health and safety requirements.</p> <p>Examples:            Timely and accurate submission of epicenter documents: (Crisis/Emergency Response Plan            Emergency Operation Plan            Certificate of Occupancy)            Appropriate nursing services and dispensing of pharmaceuticals, food service, and other health and safety services.</p>	<p>The school has their own custodial crew that perform sanitation services from 6am till 8pm each day. Drills are performed monthly; training is provided annually to staff on emergency response. Safe Voice information was included on the back of student IDs. Students have access to on-site Social Worker.</p>



## Measures of Progress from Previous Site Evaluations

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

<p>School staff ability to address previous recommendations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Differentiated Support</li> <li>2. After-school tutoring program</li> <li>3. Board of Directors changes</li> </ol>
<p>Evidence the school can provide to support the implementation of previous recommendations.</p>	<p>PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The school changed Special Education program to include both push-in and pull-out services based on student needs; increased staffing.</li> <li>2. The school increased after-school tutoring program to provide more opportunities for students to receive individualized support. Additionally, leveraged online programs such as Khan Academy and Fast Forward to provide individualized instruction that is adapted to the needs of the student.</li> <li>3. Board of Directors: The school found additional Board Member to increase number of members to five.</li> </ol>
<p>Reasons school will require additional time to fully address the recommended items.</p>	<p>Yes, unexpected staff turnover has left us with many novice teachers that require coaching.</p>

# SITE EVALUATION FINDINGS

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## STRENGTHS

Summary of strengths: Academic, Classroom, Focus Groups, and Organizational Performance Evidence.

1. Students and staff at the school are widely diversified and about 90% attend school and live within three miles of the school in the North Las Vegas community. Special populations at the school are represented including English Language Learners, Students with Special Needs and students qualifying for Title I services.
2. Beginning this school year, Freedom Classical offers free lunch to all students and has high hopes of qualifying as a Title I school during the upcoming school year. This was a definite challenge to achieve, and the leadership team is pleased with the outcomes.
3. The Middle School has strong academic ratings. SPCSA staff observed levels of solid instruction. A unique model includes middle school students taught by two teachers each day and eliminates the need for students to pass from middle school class to class as other middle school students usually do. This setup not only saves instructional time but helps foster relationships between teachers and students. Subjects at the middle school are taught in a cross-curricular manner by combining some subjects such as History and Literature.
4. The Freedom Classical team has implemented several positive changes at the school. Recent changes include a flexible push-in and pull-out model for students with special needs, an increase in after school tutoring, the addition of Jr. Great Books and a full library in each classroom. The team believes this will emphasize reading to learn. Other positive changes include STEM/STEAM training and implementation, and a new writing curriculum called *Writing by Design*.
5. During the last school year, when in-person learning had to be limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff at the school created an extra three hours per day for all ELL students. They offered this extra time and practice with the curriculum to make a point of supporting each learner during the pandemic. This was not a simple undertaking and required staff to find extra space and instructional support so that this group of students would be able to receive this important extra support.

## 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. The elementary school is currently under a Notice of Breach per their charter contract. This is particularly difficult considering that the previous school year, 2020-21, was the year the school had hoped to bring the star rating to at least a 3-star status. With COVID, and the many unforeseen mitigation measures, the school experienced several challenges. Many of these included, poor pupil attendance, loss of learning time, students and staff becoming sick on and off throughout the year, and low levels of social emotional mental health, in general, as the social aspect of school was not possible in several circumstances.
2. The return to school and in-person instruction this year has been challenging. The availability of quality teachers at this time of teacher shortage remains difficult. In addition, many students returning to the classroom are behind academically and teachers feel a great deal of pressure to address the learning loss. Many students have not experienced a normal school day in 18 months and for the kindergarten and first grade students, the school experience is brand new. This has resulted in a longer than normal time to normalize school for some students in terms of classroom rules and school-wide procedures. This, in turn, leads to a slower than normal start to in-depth learning.
3. The levels of teacher turnover have been a large challenge at the school. This turnover occurred both at the end of the previous school year and has continued since this academic year began, which has resulted in difficult situations for students starting with one teacher and then another during the first few months of the school year. Parents expressed their concerns over this but made it clear that they understand the school leaders are not responsible for changes that happen such as a family move or a family circumstance which changes a teacher's ability to remain at the school. For longer term teachers, this is very difficult because they feel the pressure of their grade level to work and plan together and to bring others up to date on how things are done at this campus. This is on top of managing student behavior, as students get used to being in the classroom all day, and pressure to diminish learning gaps from the previous year.
4. A very real challenge at the Elementary level is a combination of student engagement and student learning. During this time of transition back to the classroom, the levels of evidence of student learning in grades K-5 were extremely limited. Along those lines, students were observed to be unengaged and there were several instances of teachers were working on student behavior rather than helping students to learn academically.

## STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS

Strongly recommended items are provided so charters may increase their school-wide ratings as well as their overall success. Authorizing Team members will follow up on each listed recommendation. Each of these recommendations are both crucial and intended to improve the effectiveness of the school quality and consistency of teaching. The recommendations are to be followed up with a complete plan to address each recommendation including timeframes and steps toward completion.

A **Site Evaluation Response plan template** will be provided. This plan, as developed by Freedom Classical School Leader(s) and approved by the SPCSA, will ensure that each recommended item has been addressed in a timely manner.

1. Develop a plan to improve current levels of student engagement, relevancy, and student voices in instructional settings. Assist educators to create more interesting, relevant, and diverse learning activities that link to students' interests. It is important that students contribute to the lessons by explaining concepts to their peers as opposed to teachers doing the majority of the talking in the classrooms. Possibilities include using group projects, individual projects, additional Socratic Seminar, and student reflection learning logs.
2. Because the teaching staff is currently saddled with increasingly complex and overwhelming responsibilities, including challenging students, and addressing learning gaps, many are exhausted and have high levels of stress as shared during focus groups. It is recommended that the leadership team, board members, and families support the staff to be healthier and have more well-balanced positive energy. Support can come in many forms and may include eating healthy foods, opportunities to get some light exercise, and the use of mindfulness and or calming techniques. A positive sense of belonging is fundamental for teachers, and it is important that staff have conversations to build positive connections. Leadership should prioritize inspiring teachers by highlighting some of the best practices that have been tried and have been found to work with student engagement and boosting learning levels. The school leader may consider removing less important things from the duties of a teacher. In addition, consider operational ways to support the large class sizes at the school by seeking out parent volunteers, hiring additional teachers or teacher assistants and by having members of the leadership team be willing to provide time out breaks for teachers when they become overwhelmed.
3. Develop a plan to continue the shift from teaching according to a scripted teacher publisher curriculum manual to a more standards-based instructional program. Include the following in your plan. How will teachers at Freedom Classical:
  - A. Access student learning with accuracy including knowing where the students are currently learning.
  - B. Identify appropriate learning targets?
  - C. Link standards to the current curriculum and lesson plans?
  - D. Sequence learning standards across grades and in alignment with academic progress?
  - E. Eliminate any curriculum that is not based on the NVACS?
4. Create solid core instruction which include the following elements:
  - A. Shared Learning Targets
  - B. Feedback to students
  - C. Student goal setting for learning
  - D. Strategic teacher questioning
  - E. Increased numbers of students having self-efficacy

## DEFICIENCIES

There were no deficiencies identified for Freedom Classical Academy during this evaluation.