



# **Nevada State Public Charter School Authority**

## **Site Evaluation Report: Somerset Academy Aliante**

Evaluation Date: 1/17/2023

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# Appendices

## A: Nevada School Performance Framework

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

## B: SPCSA Academic Framework

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

## C: SPCSA Organizational Framework

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

# INTRODUCTION AND SCHOOL BACKGROUND

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## INTRODUCTION

This Site Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school evaluation that took place on 1/17/2023 at Somerset Academy of Las Vegas – Aliante. 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.

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

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

## SCHOOL BACKGROUND

Somerset Academy of Las Vegas – Aliante is located in Las Vegas, Nevada in a facility at 6475 Valley Drive. The school serves 1,188 students (as of the most recent Validation Day) in kindergarten through 8th grade. The mission of name of school is: “We prepare students to excel in academics and attain knowledge through life-long learning by dedicating ourselves to providing equitable, high-quality education for all students. We promote a culture that maximizes student achievement and fosters the development of accountable 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners in a safe and enriching environment.”

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

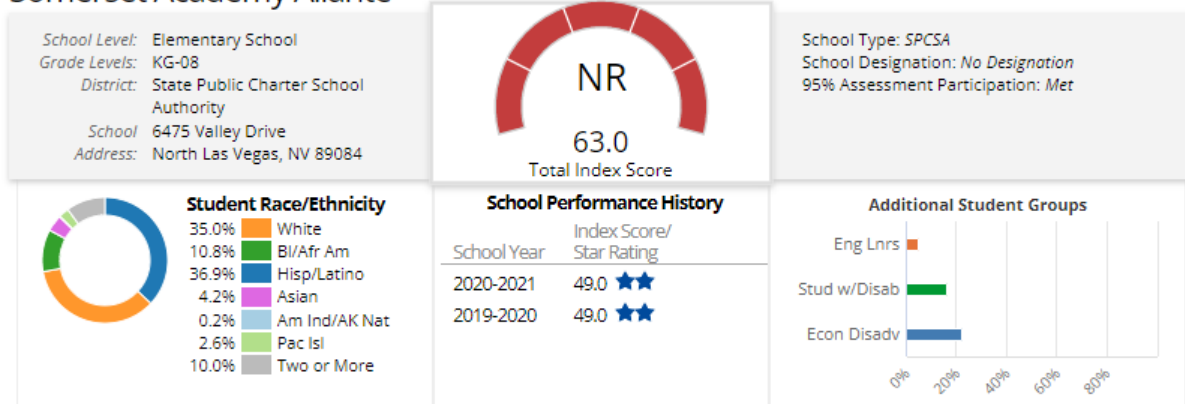
## Nevada School Performance Framework 2022

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

### Elementary School

#### Somerset Academy Aliante

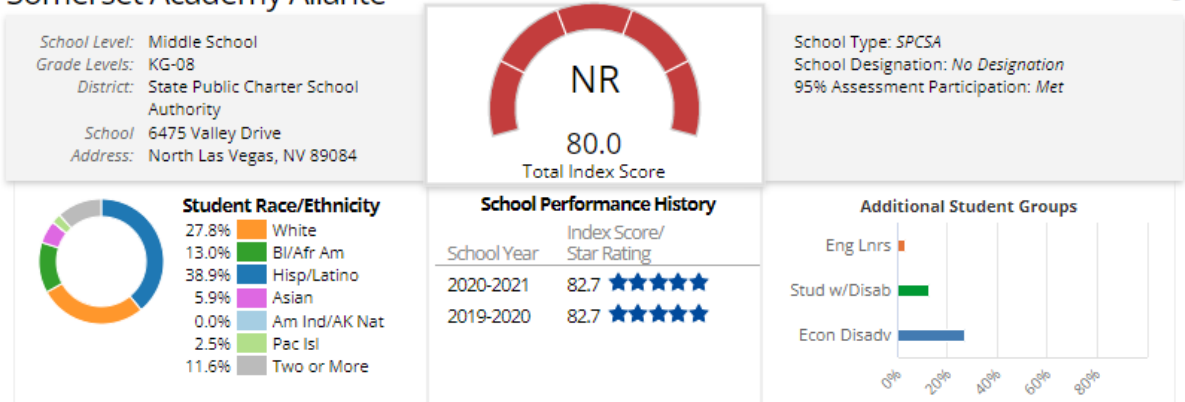
#### School Year 2021-2022 Nevada School Rating



### Middle School

#### Somerset Academy Aliante

#### School Year 2021-2022 Nevada School Rating



# Math and ELA Results

## Nevada School Performance Framework

### 2022

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

#### Proficiency Rates

##### Elementary School

###### Math Proficient

Groups	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP	2021 %	2021 % District	2021 % MIP
All Students	43.1	49.2	51.1			
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	28.5	37.6			
Asian	56.2	72.8	70.4			
Black/African American	28.5	30.3	35.7			
Hispanic/Latino	40.5	37.9	42.7			
Pacific Islander	-	47.2	50.9			
Two or More Races	51.4	55.6	57.5			
White/Caucasian	46.8	60.7	61.3			
Special Education	20.4	26.3	32.1			
English Learners Current + Former	22.8	34.9	39			
English Learners Current	6.2	25.5				
Economically Disadvantaged	35.3	35.6	42			

###### ELA Proficient

Groups	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP	2021 %	2021 % District	2021 % MIP
All Students	54.1	55.4	59.2			
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	40.8	45.4			
Asian	56.2	74.9	76.7			
Black/African American	45.2	39.8	45.4			
Hispanic/Latino	53.3	45.1	50.8			
Pacific Islander	-	53.7	60			
Two or More Races	60.0	61.5	66.2			
White/Caucasian	54.3	65.5	69			
Special Education	24.3	25.5	33.5			
English Learners Current + Former	32.0	37.4	44.4			
English Learners Current	12.5	24.4				
Economically Disadvantaged	50.0	42.8	49.4			

##### Middle School

###### Math Proficient

Groups	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP	2021 %	2021 % District	2021 % MIP
All Students	29.5	36.5	39.7			
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	36.3	31.9			
Asian	59.0	62.7	60.6			
Black/African American	20.4	18.2	27.3			
Hispanic/Latino	21.2	26.4	32.8			
Pacific Islander	54.5	28.3	40.1			
Two or More Races	39.0	41.8	43.6			
White/Caucasian	32.2	48.1	49.8			
Special Education	<5	9.7	22.7			
English Learners Current + Former	11.2	20.1	24.2			
English Learners Current	<5	7.6				
Economically Disadvantaged	20.2	23.9	32.7			

###### ELA Proficient

Groups	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP	2021 %	2021 % District	2021 % MIP
All Students	58.3	57.3	56.4			
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	53.7	46.3			
Asian	90.9	79.0	77.1			
Black/African American	48.9	41.1	40.9			
Hispanic/Latino	50.0	48.2	47.9			
Pacific Islander	72.7	53.3	55.5			
Two or More Races	70.7	64.6	63.2			
White/Caucasian	60.2	67.2	68			
Special Education	16.2	18.0	25.8			
English Learners Current + Former	33.8	38.8	28.1			
English Learners Current	<5	16.7				
Economically Disadvantaged	51.0	45.9	47.1			

# SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Geographic Comparison Report

## Elementary School

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

**12/25** 0 automatic points in indicator.  
A 4- or 5-star equivalent NSPF score earns 15 or 25 automatic points.

**NSPF SCORE VS. COMPARISON DISTRICT (10 POINTS)**

**6/10** NSPF score difference of 13.9 between school (63 points) and comparison district (49.1 points).

**NSPF SCORE VS. COMPARISON SCHOOL (15 POINTS)**

**6/15** NSPF score difference of 7 between school (63 points) and comparison school (56 points).

## Middle School

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

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

**NSPF SCORE VS. COMPARISON DISTRICT (10 POINTS)**

**10/10** NSPF score difference of 35.3 between school (80 points) and comparison district (44.7 points).

**NSPF SCORE VS. COMPARISON SCHOOL (15 POINTS)**

**15/15** NSPF score difference of 25 between school (80 points) and comparison school (55 points).

# SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Diversity Comparison Results

## Elementary School

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

**8/15** 0 bonus points in indicator.  
One bonus point per group with 25%+ increase over prior year.

**ENROLLMENT RATES VS. COMPARISON DISTRICT (5 POINTS EACH)**

**1/5** School FRL rate of  $\geq 20$  to  $< 30\%$  compared to district GrK-5 FRL rate of  $> 95\%$ .

**5/5** School IEP rate of  $\geq 15$  to  $< 20\%$  compared to district GrK-5 IEP rate of 11.9%.

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

## Middle School

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

**8/15** 0 bonus points in indicator.  
One bonus point per group with 25%+ increase over prior year.

**ENROLLMENT RATES VS. COMPARISON DISTRICT (5 POINTS EACH)**

**1/5** School FRL rate of  $\geq 20$  to  $< 30\%$  compared to district Gr6-8 FRL rate of  $> 95\%$ .

**5/5** School IEP rate of  $\geq 10$  to  $< 15\%$  compared to district Gr6-8 IEP rate of 11.9%.

**2/5** School EL rate of  $< 5\%$  compared to district Gr6-8 EL rate of 13.6%.

# FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

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## FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Group	Number of Participants	Duration of Focus Group
Governing Board	2	45 minutes
Parents/Families	5	30 minutes
Students	11	30 minutes
School Leadership	4	45 minutes
Staff	10	30 minutes

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

- The board of directors for Somerset Academy of Las Vegas hold meetings once every other month and as often as needed to execute<sup>2</sup> their role. Board members reported their responsibilities include:
  - Setting the strategic direction for Somerset Academy of Las Vegas
  - Ensuring compliance with applicable laws, bylaws, and the charter,
  - Approving and overseeing the annual budget,
  - Approving management, operational, and service contracts,
  - Ensuring the financial health of the school through careful monitoring and proactive action,
  - Hiring an independent auditor,
  - Hiring, setting compensation for, and evaluating the principal of each Somerset Charter school,
  - Evaluating the support and services of any educational service providers through regular correspondence and annual review of their performance
- According to governing board focus group participants, addressing chronic absenteeism is a topic at each board meeting. The board and school leadership continually discuss ways in which to manage attendance challenges along with each school's ability to self-govern. The board is current on each school's initiatives. One board member said, "Some schools have designated personnel who contact parents, some schools have personnel that will email home, others have created incentives at school." Another board member indicated one approach the board has taken. "We have strategically moved certain dates, like instead of a data day being on a Thursday, we moved it to Friday."
- Governing board members said there are no open seats on their seven-member board. Governing board focus group participants explained they have a finance sub-committee. The finance sub-committee meets a week prior to the general board meeting. The governing board receives an income statement, overall balance sheets, the projected and day-to-day data, as well as the daily attendance of each Somerset school. The board also reviews cash on hand.

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

<sup>2</sup> The Somerset Governing Board of Directors oversees seven schools within the Somerset Academy of Las Vegas system: Somerset Academy of Las Vegas- Aliante, Somerset Academy of Las Vegas – Lone Mountain, Somerset Academy of Las Vegas – Losee, Somerset Academy of Las Vegas- Lone Mountain, Somerset Academy of Las Vegas – North Las Vegas, Somerset Academy of Las Vegas – Skye Canyon, Somerset Academy of Las Vegas Sky Pointe, and Somerset Academy of Las Vegas – Stephanie.

## FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

- Board members reported how their Educational Management Organization (EMO), Academica Nevada, is evaluated yearly. “The lead principal for Somerset Academy of Las Vegas develops survey questions alongside his team. The survey is then distributed to all Somerset schools.” The lead principal and his team obtain the results, compile the results, and present the results in a report. “The governing board receives the report, and we examine the data. We then inform the EMO of our evaluation.”

### Parents/Families:

- Members of the parent and family focus group reported changes taking place during this school year. Some family members said they appreciated the school and are pleased with communication and overall operations. A few parents were disappointed in the number of staff leaving the campus to work elsewhere. One parent commented, “There was high teacher turnover especially in third through fifth grade levels.” One family member was not pleased with the quality and look of the bathrooms. A third parent said, “The paint is peeling off and it is a plain brown color. There has been some destruction of bathroom facilities at the middle school level according to focus group participants. This has been handled by school leaders through a ‘blanket punishment’ for all middle school students which includes limited access to use the bathroom.”
- Several family members said they appreciate the safety measures which have been implemented at the school. One person remarked, “I feel very positive here and I know my child is safe. This is important especially after the Texas shooting. The teachers here are of high quality.” One parent explained her appreciation of the communication with regard to her children. She said, “Both my kids have special needs and both receive highly individualized support. My son for example, is allowed to pick what he is working on academically and socially and we sign progress reports on a regular basis. I am very active with my other child’s teacher and we work together to hold him accountable. Both the classroom teacher and the school leaders work closely with our family when my son has behavior issues, we work it out.”
- According to several members of the focus group, parent teacher conferences were held either in person or by Zoom, depending on the preference of the family. Families said they spoke with teachers about their child’s MAP<sup>3</sup> scores. One family member appreciated the teacher’s suggestions on how to assist her child with reading comprehension at home. Another family member explained, “The classroom teacher helped me understand how my son is developing both socially and academically and I appreciated that.”
- Family members shared suggestions for improvement at Somerset Aliante. One person suggested that at the middle school level, conferences should be offered with all content area teachers. Another parent would like to be invited to positive award ceremony assemblies. A few parents would like to see the school leadership team as more approachable at the middle school level and have direct access to the school leader in certain circumstances. One family member felt that a serious behavior situation could have been taken care of at the school with more communication for the parents and students involved in a situation. Another family member was unhappy about the way the middle school is at times, negative toward students as a group rather than pointing out the students who are following rules and working toward academic achievement. This family member stated that she did not like group punishment, and singling out students who have broken a rule, such as straying from the dress

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<sup>3</sup> MAP is an acronym for Measures of Academic Progress, which is a normed computerized adaptive test administered to participants about three times per year. It is a tool which helps pinpoint strengths and weaknesses to help educators understand and respond to student achievement.



code. She suggested positive reinforcement and celebrating the many middle school students who are working to be leaders each day.

### **Students:**

- Students said they like coming to school. One student said, “I like to come to school and there are many cool things such as clubs and activities.” Another student shared, “I like to talk to my friends, socialize, and learn more. I want good grades and I want to go to college.” Several students indicated they like their teachers. One student commented, “My teacher is creative and helps make learning fun.” Another student said, “My teacher puts us in groups and I don’t feel ashamed if I don’t understand something.” Students said that should they get confused during class time, teachers ask for thumbs up for understanding and thumbs down if more instruction or explanation would help.
- Students reported not only do students like their teachers, but they also appreciate the way teachers at the school get to know the students and develop relationships. Several students commented that their teachers can tell when a student is having difficulty. A student commented, “My teacher can tell if I am confused about something just by looking at my face and she offers me help to understand right away. I like this.” Another student said, “I have a strong bond with a sixth-grade teacher and know I can talk to her if I get upset.” One student said, “If I want some help understanding something, I know I can go to the teacher’s desk and get support without hesitation.”
- Students had suggestions for improving the school. One student said, “I would change the actions of some of the students here. Some other students make fun of me because of my teeth.” Another student suggested, “I would like more special classes such as physical education, music, Spanish, and technology.” A middle school student suggested the leaders at the school refrain from singling out students who have broken the dress code because it is embarrassing to all students. Another middle school student felt the dress code was too strict.

### **Leadership:**

- School leaders spoke about the increase in the index rating at the elementary school level from 49 to 63. The school leader said, “The continuity at the school in terms of leadership has been helpful. In addition, I looked for things that didn’t support our team and eliminated them. For example, it used to be required for bulletin boards to be changed each month. Now I let teachers know that this is not necessary because it doesn’t directly support teachers and students.” She said that lesson planning has improved. “We have tried to help facilitate strong lesson plans. We hired instructional aides to support students and teachers. We have focused on bringing back strong forms of differentiated instruction and changed our math curriculum.”
- The school leader said she believes that staff feel supported. She commented, “I think staff have a better understanding of the i-Ready<sup>4</sup> data which makes planning easier. We have one on one meetings with the staff and teachers are able to understand and talk about the relevance of the i-Ready achievement data. In the past, students with special needs were placed in one of the grade level classrooms. Now students are spread out and resource teachers and instructional aides provide strong support. It is ownership by all.”
- Leaders spoke about improvements. Leaders have created a place where parents and families can go to privately get assistance filling out the FRL (Free and Reduced Lunch) paperwork. Grades three through five are using a simplified writing program for the second year. The use of a single math

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<sup>4</sup> i-Ready is an on-line learning system allowing students to work and progress at their individual level.

curriculum in grades kindergarten through seventh grade was reported. Leaders said they believe this helps align the curriculum and learning targets more effectively than in the past. A walk to read model has been implemented in grades k-5 and operates much like a power hour, allowing both remediation and accelerated learning to take place at students' independent level.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

- Leaders said that all middle school staff are highly qualified within their specific subject area. Aliante school leaders have hired an in-house substitute teacher and all instructional aides are encouraged to obtain their substitute teaching licenses.
- One of the highlights having taken place during this school year include the continuation of Math 360. Leaders explained, "This is a method of teaching math where classroom white boards contain math problems and students go and solve the mathematical problems. Then students explain their problem solving to peers." Another highlight shared by school leaders is the way that parent meetings are held. They are now held on line and recorded so that families can go and view the meeting later. School leaders were excited to say, "There has been an increase in multi-cultural events. For example, we had a Mariachi band performance, and students from the Losee campus performing African dances."

#### **Staff:**

- Staff at the Aliante campus said they have noticed a great deal of improvement in student behavior this school year compared to the previous year. In addition, several staff members said students are more capable of working collaboratively and there is less tension within classrooms. One teacher commented, "This year is so much better than last. The school structures, and participation levels of students are much better." Another staff member shared, "I like that I'm noticing higher levels of students with positive self-esteem and greater confidence."
- Staff reported they are working together to improve overall student achievement. One staff member commented, "We are working hard on this. Our school leader goes over the student testing outcomes. Afterwards, we meet together to figure out how to re-teach, provide small group instruction, and design instruction focused on a needed skill for a group of students." Teachers said they have several ways to help students focus on learning. One person said, "We activate prior knowledge so students know about the topic before we begin." Another person added, "We ask review questions before we move on to a new concept." One teacher said, "We go over the objective and state that this is what we are learning. It helps to explain to students why we should learn a given skill. For example, learning about how to tell time and exchange money is needed for success in life."
- Members of the staff focus group said that during the last professional development session they learned more about how to use i-Ready. Several members said they are implementing the new information in their classrooms. Other teachers commented that Somerset network offers yearlong math training. One teacher explained, "We were shown new ways to start the math lesson and shared creative ideas for teaching math. We meet for fifth grade math across all Somerset campuses." One teacher said, "I'm in year two of letters training. We have bi-weekly meetings and these are geared toward certain grade levels."
- The staff shared that they are appreciative of the instructional coaches at the school. Several members of the staff noted that coaches provide helpful feedback and insight. One person said that the coach leaves notes after observing. A teacher commented, "Our coach is positive and I appreciate discussing ideas and ways to improve." Another staff member shared, "We have a coach who is really good with power hour and helps us use our small group instructional time effectively."

# CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND INSTRUCTION OBSERVATION RUBRIC

A total of 27 classrooms were observed for approximately 15 minutes on the day of the evaluation.

Classroom Environment					
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
<b>Classroom Learning Environment is Conducive to Learning</b>	Students create and maintain a learning environment where students feel free to share their ideas and take risks in learning. Students take ownership in explaining, modeling, and reinforcing classroom routines.  Learning experiences guide students to identify their strengths, interests, and needs; problem-solve; ask for support when appropriate; maximizing learning time.	The teacher creates and maintains a learning environment where students feel free to share their ideas and take risks in learning. Teachers explain, model, and reinforce classroom routines.  Learning experiences guide students to identify their strengths, interests, and needs; problem-solve; ask for support when appropriate; maximizing learning time.	The teacher attempts to create and maintain a learning environment where students feel free to share their ideas and take risks in learning. Teachers attempt to explain, model, and reinforce classroom routines.  Learning experiences make an effort to guide students to identify their strengths, interests, and needs; problem-solve; ask for support when appropriate. Learning time is sometimes maximized.	The teacher does not create and maintain a learning environment where students feel free to share their ideas and take risks in learning. Teachers do not explain, model, and reinforce classroom routines.  Learning experiences do not guide students to identify their strengths, interests, and needs; problem-solve; ask for support when appropriate. Learning time is seldom maximized.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	<b>Total: 10</b>	<b>Total: 16</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>
<b>Establishing a Culture for Learning</b>	Students and teachers respond appropriately when conflicts arise and demonstrate respect for and affirm their own and others' differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges.	Teacher responds appropriately when conflicts arise and demonstrate respect for and affirm their own and others' differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges.	Teacher attempts to respond appropriately when conflicts arise and demonstrate respect for and affirm their own and others' differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges.	Teacher does not attempt to respond appropriately when conflicts arise and does not demonstrate respect for and affirm their own and others' differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	<b>Total: 11</b>	<b>Total: 16</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>

Classroom Instruction					
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
<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 life experiences. The explanation of content is imaginative, and students contribute to the lesson by participating and/or explaining concepts to their peers.	The purpose for the lesson or learning activity is clear. The teacher's explanation of content is appropriate, and connects with students.	The teacher attempts to explain the instructional purpose, with limited success. The explanation of the content is uneven; some is done skillfully, but other portions are difficult to follow.	The purpose of the lesson and learning activity is unclear. The teacher's explanation of the content is unclear, confusing, or uses inappropriate language.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	<b>Total: 12</b>	<b>Total: 15</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>
<b>Students' Cognitive Awareness of Learning Goals/Targets</b>	Students can explain/demonstrate the goals/targets of the lesson, content, unit, or classroom activity during this instructional timeframe.	Most of the students can explain/demonstrate the goals/targets of the lesson, content, unit, or classroom activity during this instructional timeframe.	Some of the students can explain/demonstrate the goals/targets of the lesson, content, unit, or classroom activity during this instructional timeframe.	Students cannot explain/demonstrate the goals/targets of the lesson, content, unit, or classroom activity during this instructional time frame.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	<b>Total: 13</b>	<b>Total: 13</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>
<b>Quality and purpose of questions</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: 3</b>	<b>Total: 22</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 2</b>
<b>Opportunities for student discourse and student use of academic language</b>	Students use academic language while participating in discourse. Students demonstrate mastery through reasoning and higher-order thinking.	Teachers encourage the use of academic language and provide students opportunities for discourse. Students are encouraged to demonstrate knowledge through reasoning and higher-order thinking.	There is some attempt by the teacher to encourage the use of academic language. Students are provided limited opportunities for discourse. There is some attempt by the teacher to encourage students to demonstrate knowledge through reasoning and higher order thinking.	There is little to no opportunity for student discourse. There is little to no opportunity for students to demonstrate knowledge through reasoning and higher-order thinking.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	<b>Total: 8</b>	<b>Total: 17</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>

Classroom Instruction (continued)					
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
<b>Intellectual Engagement in Learning</b>	Students are intellectually engaged throughout the lesson. The pacing and structure of the lesson is differentiated and allows high levels of student engagement.	Students appear to be intellectually engaged throughout most of the lesson. The pacing and structure of the lesson is differentiated and adequate.	Students are partially intellectually engaged throughout the lesson. The pacing and structure of the lesson is somewhat differentiated and inconsistent.	Students are not at all intellectually engaged in significant learning. The pacing and structure of the lesson is not differentiated and inadequate.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	<b>Total: 12</b>	<b>Total: 14</b>	<b>Total: 1</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>
<b>Using Formative Assessment in Instruction</b>	The teacher purposefully and consistently provides clear, descriptive feedback in regard to student's understanding of the learning goals/targets. The feedback is timely and is in a reasonable amount.	Most of the time, the teacher, provides clear, descriptive feedback regarding student's understanding of the learning goals/targets. The feedback is timely and is in a reasonable amount.	The teacher provides clear, descriptive feedback inconsistently regarding student's understanding of the learning goals/targets. The feedback is seldom timely and is in a reasonable amount.	The teacher does not provide clear, descriptive feedback regarding student's understanding of the learning goals/targets. The feedback is not timely and is not in a reasonable amount.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	<b>Total: 3</b>	<b>Total: 24</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>	<b>Total: 0</b>

Additional information about the classroom observations shared here when applicable.

1. In one elementary classroom, the teacher pulled a small group of students and provided targeted interventions on phonemic awareness.
2. In several lower elementary classrooms, students participated in reading intervention time. In each lower elementary classroom observed, two teachers pulled small groups and provided targeted intervention on phonemic awareness and phonics.
3. Students in middle school were observed working in groups of four to create an example of a natural disaster diagram. Students were discussing and getting ready to present, and the teacher was completely ready with directions and what students will do. Students not presenting were asked to write down two things they learned from presenters.
4. A middle school classroom teacher was lecturing and included students. One student explained photosynthesis from last year, very well. The students appeared comfortable and the teacher was passionate about the topic.
5. Site evaluators observed Somerset Aliante to have strong grade-level alignment. For example, one grade level was working on math strategies. In this classroom, as in several other classrooms in this grade level, students shared math strategies. The teacher led discussion on math strategies for given problems. Students came to the board and shared their thinking.
6. Students in this classroom were given directions to go to a center. Students knew where to go and then the teacher worked with a small group of students in classroom on math.
7. Students in one class were highly engaged in the math lesson. The teacher was highly effective in engaging the students and encouraging academic language.
8. In an ELA class, the teacher had the students do the reading out loud and were asked to explain. Students called on who will be the next to read. Students appeared to pay attention. The teacher asked, "What is the main idea about?" Then students added on to each other's ideas and the teacher restated what students said.
9. During observations, there were four students and one teacher in a pull-out resource room setting. Three students worked independently and were productive. The teacher worked one on one with a student and they worked on sounding out the "sh" sound. The teacher had the student practice different sounds with letters. This was a calm positive teacher. She offered a great deal of feedback to the one student.
10. In this classroom students were highly engaged and learned about Martin Luther King Junior. They talked about the "I Have a Dream" speech. The teacher used talking and watching a short video to engage students and to introduce the topic.
11. In one resource elementary classroom, students worked in groups to create sentences.
12. In a middle school science classroom, students presented their group projects. Other students took notes and the teacher explained there would be a gallery walk and discussion afterwards.
13. The teacher led a discussion about math equations in this middle school math class. Students stood to answer questions and to explain their answer and thinking.
14. In an early elementary classroom, students were asked to turn and talk to each other to explain their answers and to qualify it with why or why not. All students were participating and highly engaged.

# ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The SPCSA uses the Organizational Performance Framework to collect evidence of performance and evaluate schools, at least annually, to monitor schools throughout their charter terms, to report to schools and the public annually, to intervene in schools that do not meet expectations and to make high-stakes decisions, including renewal, non-renewal, possible revocation, expansion, or replication. Most of this work is done through routine submissions by the school to the SPCSA.

A limited number of measures within the organizational performance framework may be at least partially evaluated during the site evaluation process. Measures are partially evaluated based upon evidence from school focus groups, school observations, documents reviewed, visual inspection and information from the school presentation portion of the evaluation. SPCSA staff will note the evidence provided by the school and also outline any questions or potential concerns.

Indicator	Measure Description	Evidence Collected
<b>Indicator 1:</b> Education Program	<p><b>Measures 1a and 1b:</b> The school implements the material terms of the education program. Ex: SPCSA site evaluations will confirm that the school is staying true to its approved application and programming, as well as review curricular materials and their alignment to Nevada Academic Content Standards.</p> <p><b>Measures 1c and 1d:</b> The school protects the rights of students with disabilities and EL students. Ex: For example, classroom observations include examples of students with an IEP or those learning English as a language. Student support is provided within small groups or teachers using interventions and supports to provide students with special needs and EL learners with meaningful access to grade-level content and standards.</p>	<p>As presented during the leadership presentation, Somerset Aliante implements the material terms of the education program. Curricular materials align to Nevada Content Standards (NVACS). Classroom observations indicated students with an IEP or learning English as a new language have supports.</p>
<b>Indicator 3:</b> Governance and Reporting	<p><b>Measure 3a:</b> The school complies with governance requirements Ex: Board policies and oversight of Education Service Provider</p>	<p>The Somerset board complies with applicable laws, bylaws, and the charter. Board members have undergone training and open meeting law requirements met.</p>
<b>Indicator 4:</b> Students and Employees	<p><b>Measure 4a:</b> Student records under lock and key/stored appropriately <b>Measure 4d:</b> Personnel files are under lock and key/stored appropriately</p>	<p>Staff and student records are stored in a secure location.</p>
<b>Indicator 5:</b> School Environment	<p><b>Measure 5b:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evacuation plans for classrooms are posted</li> <li>• The school has fire extinguishers on all floors which are tagged</li> <li>• Active permit for food service (if applicable)</li> <li>• Nurse requirements are met through visual check of health office, disposal of sharps, cot, refrigeration</li> </ul>	<p>The site evaluation team saw evacuation plans in classrooms, tagged fire extinguishers throughout the building and common areas, as well as an active food service permit. The site evaluation team visually checked and located one cot, a refrigerator, and a receptacle for disposing of sharp objects in the nurse's office.</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>Summary of recommendations from most recent site evaluation</p>	<p>The previous site evaluation conducted by the SPCSA was on April 27, 2022.</p> <p>The recommendations provided at the last site evaluation were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to increase the number of students enrolled and considered a member of the special population category as Free and Reduced Lunch.</li> <li>2. Include a goal setting process with regard to what it is the student is trying to learn or achieve on a daily basis.</li> <li>3. Review several aspects of math instruction and outcomes.</li> <li>4. The Somerset board should examine their method of evaluating their EMO.</li> </ol>
<p>School Assessment of progress made against recommendations and evidence provided, or reasons school believes additional time may be necessary to fully address past recommendations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Somerset Academy has reviewed and has implemented a weighted lottery, which gives priority to the students identified as a member of the special population category as Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL).</li> <li>2. Somerset includes student goal setting regarding lesson objectives.</li> <li>3. Math instruction has been strengthened.</li> <li>4. The Somerset board has modified their method of evaluation the EMO, and the board has voted and approved this more thorough evaluation process.</li> </ol>
<p>SPCSA staff assessment based upon findings during site evaluation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Somerset Aliante board has reviewed a weighted lottery to give priority to students identified as a member of a special population such as Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL).</li> <li>2. Somerset Aliante has increased the emphasis of student goal setting within the context of lesson objectives as observed during classroom observations and as indicated on the classroom rubric portion of this report. (Pages 11-13)</li> <li>3. Math instruction has improved greatly. A comprehensive K-7 math curriculum has been implemented. Math 360, (a unique method of student centered math) is on-going, and several math classrooms were rated, "Distinguished" per the classroom rubric on pages 11-13 of this report.</li> <li>4. The Somerset board has modified their method of evaluating their EMO, Academica Nevada, and this process is currently being implemented at all Somerset Academy of Las Vegas schools.</li> </ol>



# SITE EVALUATION FINDINGS

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## STRENGTHS

A summary of strengths as observed through academic achievement indicators, classroom observations, focus group feedback and portions of the Organizational Performance Framework are described within the body of the report and summarized here.

- It is important to acknowledge the academic success of Somerset Aliante as a major strength. In grades k-5, the academic outcomes of students as measured by the Nevada School Performance (NSPF) have risen significantly. Though star ratings were not awarded this year, the index score was calculated at 63, which is an increase of 14 index points. Within grades 6-8, the middle school's index score was calculated at 80. Both the elementary and the middle school index scores are calculated and set on a state-wide rating system of 1-100 index points. It is clear that student academic growth and achievement have become a focus at Somerset Aliante. The regular education and special education staff collaborate regularly. Student progress and additional instructional needs are discussed routinely. The school leaders and instructional coaches push into professional learning community meetings (PLCs) with each grade level and middle school content teachers once a month. Staff is provided support to implement best teaching practices. Individual student data is analyzed. Each teacher at Aliante meets one on one with Principal Manning twice a year to analyze their i-Ready data and discuss the performance of their students. This increase within the elementary school is a major strength at the Somerset Aliante campus.
- Somerset Aliante has a strong instructional program. An indicator of this is found on page 12 of this report within the *Instructional* portion of the classroom rubric. Of 27 classrooms observed, 12 were determined to be "Distinguished" in the area of lesson purpose. The Distinguished rating indicates that 12 classrooms had lessons which connected with student's life experiences and were imaginative. Evaluators noted that students' were contributing to lessons, and explaining concepts to peers which leads to high levels of intellectually engaged students. Another indicator of an improved instructional program is found within the school-wide process of grade level and departmentalized planning. Classroom environments have, overall become more inviting, welcoming, and positive thus allowing students to engage in higher levels of learning within classrooms.
- The Special Education set of procedures, services, and instructional methods have improved since the last site evaluation. A full time school leader has been employed to oversee and monitor all services within this area. Family and staff members commented on improved one to one instruction, and individualized support for students with special needs. School leaders have implemented a more robust internal process for identifying, tracking, and monitoring the accommodations and progress of students with special needs. The Aliante Campus held a training workshop on dyslexia in October 2022. The school literacy specialist has provided support with understanding the characteristics of proficient readers versus readers with dyslexia. The school teams work collaboratively to review changes to the initial, revision, annual or 3-year evaluations of those students with an IEP.

- The Somerset Aliante campus staff and school leaders meet on a regular basis to discuss the status of safety on campus. During this time, suggestions have been made to increase and improve measures. The school leader was responsive and acted based on this discussion. During this school year a blank lock has been installed on classroom doors, allowing teachers to lock classrooms more quickly and efficiently should this become necessary. An emergency buzzer has been installed and doors are all locked and provide a single point of entry into the campus, a more secure and safe measure. A film has been placed on the front windows of the school allowing increased safety. A new red fence was installed around the perimeter of the playground which provides a more private and secure playground area for students. These added safety measures are indicative of a school with an awareness of the importance of student and staff safety and the school leader is to be commended for her ability to be proactive where safety is concerned.
- One of the recommendations from Somerset Aliante's most recent site evaluation in April of 2022 was to place a greater emphasis on math instruction. Although all subject matter content was impacted by the COVID pandemic, math was one of the most difficult to teach in a virtual setting. The Aliante campus has improved math instruction significantly. Rather than several forms of math curricula, the school leaders and staff implemented i-Ready Math, a research-based curriculum. This program has provided differentiated instruction to students and has empowered teachers to meet the needs of students more effectively. In addition, the staff at the school have implemented Math 360, which is a teaching strategy designed to support transparent learning and intellectual engagement in math. As indicated on the classroom comment page 14, regarding additional information observed within Somerset Aliante classrooms there were instances of teachers using Math 360 to engage and provide a platform for students to solve math problems and share their thinking and learning with others.

## 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.

- A focus on sustained academic growth in the area of proficiency is a challenge. The school has made great strides in improving the overall index score to 63; however, proficiency remains a challenge.
- The need for Somerset Aliante to fully implement restorative justice practices remains. Although Aliante has made initial efforts to fully implement restorative justice practices, the program still requires a stronger result. Additional time may be needed to strengthen positive adult and student relationships, particularly within the middle school.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- Continue to build “communal” social capital and “relational trust” for students in the middle school setting. This bonding of youth to classroom teachers, peers, and school leaders through trusting and sustained relationships provides protective factors to students from academic failure and may add to improved chronic absenteeism rates. Continue to research ways to build upon and implement Somerset Aliante’s school-wide behavior management efforts. Be intentional about middle school feedback from students and parents, and work to celebrate the students who are the role models within these grades. Build upon the positive culture at all grade levels at the Somerset Aliante campus.
- Consider the development of a parent focus group at the Aliante Campus. Enlist middle school parents in sharing feedback with regard to student progress, student emotional well-being, and ideas for positive reinforcement of model behavior. This may support school leaders in explaining the differences between elementary and middle school as well as provide parental perspective on topics of importance such as discipline, communication, parent-teacher conferences, understanding MAP data, and the importance of school attendance.
- Page six of this reports provides an analysis of the SPCSA Academic Performance Framework. The Diversity Comparison Results indicate that the Aliante Somerset elementary and middle schools received an 8 out of 15 possible points. Further analysis reveals that both the elementary and middle school have 1 of 5 points within the number of FRL, Free and Reduced Lunch students enrolled as compared to the numbers at the local school district. Within the EL or English Language Learner analysis, a 2 of 5 possible points are indicated and have potential for improvement. It is important to note that in both elementary and middle school levels, a full 5 of 5 points in the area of number of students within the number of students with an IEP Individual Education Plan enrolled as compared to the local school district. This portion of the analysis, the number of IEP students enrolled is excellent. It is recommended that the school leaders and members of the board continue to review the school’s recruitment and enrollment plan and to reflect on this work. It may help to discover ways to bolster the two above mentioned categories of enrolled students through marketing efforts and through the possible implementation of a weighted lottery. The SPCSA understands this will not change quickly, however the SPCSA hopes to see improvement in these numbers over time. It is important to note that Somerset Academy has created and implanted a Recruitment and Enrollment plan and will be asked to share updates with the SPCSA on the results of this plan later this year.
- With strong and rapid growth in the areas of math instructional and math index scores, it is recommended school leaders, staff, students, and parents, place a focus on sustainability of these improvements. The math instructional outcomes may be due to initial actions taken in response to a purposeful plan which includes the 360 math <sup>5</sup>instructional model, the new math curriculum, and the focus on a strong monitoring of daily instructional best practices and outcomes. To sustain the vast improvements in the area of overall student math achievement it is recommended that the school team employ an on-going emphasis on operational aspects including routine PLC meetings, data monitoring discussions, continued support from school leaders, educational consultant, and instructional coaches. It is recommended that future professional development continue to be well

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<sup>5</sup> 360 math is a math teaching strategy where math problems are written on white boards around the classroom (360) and students go to the white board and solve problems.

planned to best meet the needs of instructional staff and to provide instructional staff with a means to experience even greater growth as classroom and content teachers and experts in math instruction.

## **STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS**

There were no strong recommendations identified for Somerset Academy of Las Vegas – Aliante during this site evaluation.

## **DEFICIENCIES**

There were no deficiencies identified for Somerset Academy of Las Vegas – Aliante during this site evaluation.