



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Site Evaluation Report:
Young Women's Leadership Academy
Evaluation Date: 11/1/2022
Initial Draft Report Date: 1/12/2023

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Contents

Introduction and School Background	3
Academic Performance	4
Focus Group Summaries	7
Classroom Observation Totals	12
Organizational Performance.....	16
Site Evaluation Findings	19

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/2019/19062-8-Academic-Performance-Framework-Guidance-Document.pdf>

C: SPCSA Organizational Framework

<http://charterschools.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/CharterSchoolsnvgov/content/News/2019/19062-8-OPF-Att-1-Ratings-Scorecard.pdf>

INTRODUCTION AND SCHOOL BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

This Site Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school evaluation that took place on 11/1/2022 at Young Women’s Leadership Academy (YWLA). 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. Schools identified as having a rating of a two-star or below, and those schools with a Notice of Concern, Notice of Breach, or Notice of Termination, will have a differentiated procedure for their site evaluation. YWLA is in year one of their charter contract thus meeting the criteria for a comprehensive site evaluation.

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

YWLA is located in Las Vegas, Nevada in a facility at 3415 S. Mojave Rd. The school serves 62 students (as of the most recent Validation Day) in 6th and 9th grade. The mission of YWLA is: “The Young Women’s Leadership Academy (YWLA) was established to nurture the intellectual curiosity and creativity of young women and to address their developmental needs. We cultivate dynamic, participatory learning, enabling students to experience great success at many levels, especially in the fields of math, science, and technology. Students are encouraged to achieve their personal best in and out of the classroom. YWLA strives to work with families and instill in the students a sense of community, responsibility, and ethical principles of behavior – characteristics that will help make them become leaders of their generation.”

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Nevada School Performance Framework¹ 2022

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

Middle School

¹ YWLA is in year one of their charter contract therefore there is no prior academic performance data.

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

Middle School

SPCSA Academic Performance Framework
Geographic Comparison Report

Middle School

SPCSA Academic Performance Framework
Diversity Comparison Results

Middle School

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Group	Number of Participants	Duration of Focus Group
Governing Board	2	30 minutes
Parents/Families	5	30 minutes
Students	5	30 minutes
School Leadership	2	30 minutes
Staff	3	30 minutes

Governing Board²:

- The governing board for Young Women’s Leadership Academy (YWLA) consists of five members from the Committee to Form. According to focus group participants, seven members serve on the current board bringing expertise from the fields of education, parenting, law, upper business management, and community engagement and partnership. Board members possess international work and personnel experience as well. Two members of the governing board also serve on the foundation board. Board members shared that the current school charter has board membership set at seven but increasing membership to nine members is a future goal. The board schedules monthly virtual meetings from September through June. During the 2022-2023 academic year, the board will meet 15 times as they convened bi-monthly during the summer months to ensure YWLA’s opening in autumn of 2022. Each board meeting’s agenda, supporting materials, and minutes are provided on the YWLA.org website.
- Focus group participants expressed disappointment regarding current enrollment levels at YWLA, noting that there were likely a number of contributing factors to the school being under-enrolled. Board members stated that looking ahead, they plan to reassess future enrollment targets over the next few months so that appropriate steps can be taken to help ensure that these are met. Board members cited various elements that are going to be examined closely, including ongoing engagement with community stakeholders, reexamining student transportation and possible barriers, and budgeting and staffing constraints. During the focus group session, board members shared they want to connect with other charter school leaders who have encountered similar enrollment concerns and opening challenges. Board members also indicated they are conducting articulation agreement conversations with other schools, for families who would like to enroll their students at YWLA.
- The governing board indicated transportation is one of the top issues to be addressed. The board is aware some families have disenrolled due to transportation challenges. YWLA board members have been in conversation with a charter school in St. Louis, Missouri which has similar transportation experiences. According to board members, the St. Louis school shares similar demographics (single gender), geography, and grades as YWLA, therefore the conversations have been helpful. One board member said, “We have been discussing funding if we chose to create a model where we provide transportation. We have also been speaking to a Las Vegas group who are experts in transportation that might be able to assist in partnering with us so we can directly provide transportation. If neither of

² Two members of the seven-member board participated. Quorum was not met, and Open Meeting Law was not violated.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

these is feasible, we are looking at a 3rd mode- providing bus passes with the Las Vegas transit authority.” The board is gathering more information on each of these options prior to making a formal decision.

- When asked about how the school works with and plans to evaluate the school’s EMO, Academica Nevada, participating board members outlined several of their contractual responsibilities including back-office services and facility-related items. The board noted that services will be evaluated based upon timeliness, overall quality, and customer service. The board also acknowledged that these measures were outlined in the application which was approved by the SPCSA.

Parents/Families:

- Families in the focus group said YWLA emphasizes a culture of community through consistent and frequent communication. The school frequently connects through phone calls, text messages, and emails as well as in the car line. Families reported teachers reach out to discuss ways in which their child can be successful in their academic work. Teachers “will readily communicate if my daughter is missing schoolwork, in need of school supplies, or needs to complete make-up work.” Another parent said YWLA “creates an environment where girls are supportive of each other”. One of the parents in the focus group reported he is a single father, and he appreciates the resources and support he and his daughter have with faculty and leadership at YWLA.
- Several parents in the focus group chose YWLA because of the attention to single-gender education and leadership opportunities. One parent said, “Women are not pitted against women here.” Families appreciate the mentorship program at YWLA indicating it creates a supportive environment through students working together. The big sisters and little sisters meet daily during morning huddle and have time throughout the day to meet up and support each other. One family member in the focus group said her daughter was very reticent to ask for help prior to enrolling in YWLA. “My child has blossomed since coming to YWLA. She is a big sister and is starting to speak up in class and use her voice.” Several parents in the focus group chose YWLA because of the attention to single-gender education. Another parent said, “I was looking for a small school with small class sizes where I would feel comfortable that my special needs daughter would not be bullied; where she could learn some leadership and learn to take care of herself. I couldn’t be happier with YWLA.” A third family member said she has four daughters, and she would like each of them to graduate from YWLA.
- Families reported feeling welcome and comfortable at YWLA. Families said leadership and faculty know the names of all the students and the parents. One parent said, “Leadership is outside greeting folks when students arrive and when they are dismissed. The staff is always available.” Families stated their children feel safe and comfortable at YWLA. Families in the focus group shared administration and faculty are proactive in meeting student needs, quickly rallying to resolve student needs in a positive manner. For example, one family member in the family focus group session said there was a family in need over Thanksgiving. The school provided several baskets of food for the family and family members assisted in transporting the student and the baskets to the family home. Another parent said formal dresses were provided for students in need for a recent formal school event.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

Students:

- Students participating in the focus said they learned of YWLA from a variety of sources that included community events, recruitment at their previous school, their pastor, and flyers. The school's emphasis on whole girl education was a deciding factor for most of the participants in the focus group.
- Students in the focus group described the mentor/mentee structure at YWLA. Ninth grade students are partnered with sixth graders during a school-wide assembly. The "big sisters" in ninth grade offer advice and help with homework during the scheduled 30-minute daily advisory period to their "little sister." Students in the focus group said they really like having the opportunity to mentor and bond with other students at the school. One student explained the PRIDE values, where PRIDE stands for professionalism, responsibility, intelligence, diligence, and enthusiasm. Focus group participants said students take the PRIDE values seriously and it can be seen by how the students and adults treat each other.
- Students reported they were oriented to the culture and expectations of the school at the beginning of the school year. One student said during the first advisory period, students were placed in circles, "and created a contract that listed the negotiables and non-negotiables." Another student explained, "On the first day of school we were told we can be ourselves and be comfortable sharing. Cliques were nipped in the bud; we are to welcome everyone and get along with everyone." Many of the students in the focus group agreed, expressing they felt very safe and welcome at the school. Several commented they feel at ease asking for help from the teachers and peers during class.

Leadership:

- During the leadership presentation, the principal said, "We are focusing on developing strong systems to undergird strong instruction." Leadership and faculty participated in professional development during the summer months "to ensure strong alignment to scaffolding instruction, alignment to standards, and age and grade appropriate assignments and activities." Leadership reported further professional development (PD) sessions on utilizing the Backward Planning Framework³, embedded assessments, and mapping the curriculum horizontally across grade bands for the school year. Leadership stated teachers complete lesson plans two weeks in advance, providing time for teachers to receive feedback from classroom visits and /or PD and implement changes as needed.
- Leadership indicated that YWLA is building a baseline during their inaugural year. The Backward Planning Framework extends beyond classroom instruction and into building capacity and agency in school culture and climate. Leadership explained, "We ask questions such as 'What does a five-star school like?', 'What do we need from the board?', and 'What PD should we focus on this week?'"

³ Backward planning is also known as backward design or backward mapping. The model is based on the text *Understanding by Design* by Wiggins and McTighe. The framework operates by instructors setting goals and then creating assignments and lessons that align with those goals.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

Leadership stated YWLA is at tier one with MTSS⁴. The leadership and student success team strategize what is needed for small group instruction at MTSS level one. The Student Support Team consists of four members from the leadership team. Morning Huddle occurs every morning with faculty and leadership. Then, after breakfast, students join faculty and leadership for Morning Huddle. The principal said leadership and faculty use normed language across campus. “We collaborate with data analysis to conduct the SWOT⁵ process with teachers on a regular basis.”

- The principal at YWLA reported interacting with the governing board chair weekly. “We look at budgets every week as the board chair has financial expertise. This expertise assists me learn how to manage finances, so we are not caught by surprise.” During the leadership presentation, the principal said the weekly collaborative process “ensures the board and leadership have the same set of information consistently.”

Staff:

- Teachers described how they foster academic talk in the classroom by consistently talking about setting goals. “It’s part of our school culture, setting goals as a community and as an individual,” one teacher said. Another teacher explained further, “If students don’t meet their goals, we ask why, and follow up by asking, ‘What would you adjust to meet target next time?’” Teachers said they also listen to student conversations to ensure academic vocabulary is being used when students speak with each other. Teachers said they model appropriate vocabulary during lessons. The math teacher described how he “is big on speaking math correctly. Students are not allowed to say ‘borrow’ in math. We say ‘group’. We do not say ‘and’, we say ‘decimal’. I correct them, and I model proper vocabulary for them. I want them to know you have to speak the correct language. It is needed as you move up in grades.”
- Teachers reported administrators visit classrooms approximately every two weeks. After a classroom visit, the teacher and the principal meet and discuss the principal’s notes. Sometimes the communication comes via email. Notes usually inform professional development or discusses how the lesson aligned with recent professional development. One teacher in the focus group said feedback was “supportive and helpful.” Another agreed adding, “administrators look at what is occurring in the classroom. They visit and stay for a while. Friday professional development sessions are often focused on the walkthroughs and always geared toward improving instruction and instructional strategies.”
- Teachers said staff members work together to meet the needs of students. One teacher said, “Because we are so small, we are in constant contact with each other, helping each other. We can easily go to another teacher and say, ‘student did x in my class...please watch for this in their next class.’” The other teachers in the focus group agreed, reporting teachers are in continual communication with each other throughout the day. “We talk all the time. We talk about academic needs and goals as well as resource needs for students. We discuss some homelife situations including food, housing, and clothing.” One teacher said teachers and leadership utilize Microsoft

⁴ Multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) is a school model that uses data-driven problem-solving and incorporates system-level change to address both the academic and non-academic needs of all students. The MTSS model provides a comprehensive framework for how and when to administer student support.

⁵ SWOT is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A SWOT analysis technique analyzes what an institution does best and devises a strategy for the future.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

Teams to chat with each other along with other YWLA school through the leadership network. Teachers in the focus group explained they are partnered with two other YWLA teachers in a mentorship. Discussions on best practice, student culture, training, as well as differences in the YWLA student population in Las Vegas, Nevada and the YWLA population in Queens, New York are frequent conversations.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND INSTRUCTION OBSERVATION RUBRIC

A total of 7 classrooms were observed for approximately 15 minutes on the day of the evaluation.

Classroom Environment					
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
Classroom Learning Environment is Conducive to Learning	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.
	Total: 4	Total: 3	Total: 0	Total: 0	Total: 0
Establishing a Culture for Learning	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.
	Total: 3	Total: 3	Total: 1	Total: 0	Total: 0

Classroom Instruction					
	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not 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 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.
	Total: 1	Total: 6	Total: 0	Total: 0	Total: 0
Students' Cognitive Awareness of Learning Goals/Targets	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.
	Total: 0	Total: 6	Total: 0	Total: 0	Total: 1
Quality and purpose of questions	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: 1	Total: 3	Total: 1	Total: 0	Total: 2
Opportunities for student discourse and student use of academic language	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.
	Total: 0	Total: 5	Total: 1	Total: 0	Total: 1

Classroom Instruction (continued)

	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
Intellectual Engagement in Learning	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.
	Total: 0	Total: 7	Total: 0	Total: 0	Total: 0
Using Formative Assessment in Instruction	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.
	Total: 0	Total: 7	Total: 0	Total: 0	Total: 0

Additional information about the classroom observations shared here when applicable

- In one high school classroom, students were observed listening to the teacher describe the decline of feudalism and taking notes. All but one student appeared to be actively engaged.
- In one English language arts class students formatted paragraphs. Students had the class period to write the paragraph. Many students completed the task quickly and took the time to read independently. Several students struggled to even start.
- Science students worked in small groups to create and act out a skit highlighting a stressor. The overarching unit focused on understanding stress, including perceptions of stress, identifying stress receptors, and healthy ways in which to respond.
- In one classroom, students took turns reading a text aloud. The teacher led a discussion about England's King Edward and the bubonic plague.
- Students appeared to be working hard on the in-class assessment in one high school classroom. The teacher was aware of student actions while engaging with a small group in the back of the room to provide additional support.

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
Indicator 1: Education Program	<p>Measures 1a and 1b: 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>Measures 1c and 1d: 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>The school implements the material terms of the education program. Curricular materials align to Nevada Academic Content Standards. A review of curricular materials was completed as part of the site evaluation. The SPCSA team observed differentiated instruction that incorporates student voice. Special Education Support (SES) is partnered out. YWLA has a special education teachers on staff. Co-planning and amending lesson plans for students with special needs is a routine practice. The principal currently serves as the English as a new language coordinator.</p>
Indicator 3: Governance and Reporting	<p>Measure 3a: The school complies with governance requirements Ex: Board policies and oversight of Education Service Provider</p>	<p>YWLA complies with governance requirements with applicable laws, bylaws, and the charter. The board has a process in place in which school leadership is evaluated on an annual basis.</p>
Indicator 4: Students and Employees	<p>Measure 4a: Student records under lock and key/stored appropriately</p> <p>Measure 4d: Personnel files are under lock and key/stored appropriately</p>	<p>Student and faculty records are stored under lock and key in secured offices.</p>
Indicator 5: School Environment	<p>Measure 5b:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evacuation plans for classrooms are posted • The school has fire extinguishers on all floors which are tagged • Active permit for food service (if applicable) • Nurse requirements are met through visual check of health office, disposal of sharps, cot, refrigeration 	<p>The site evaluation team saw evacuation plans in classrooms, tagged fire extinguishers throughout the building and common areas, and appropriate health permitting for food has been provided. The site evaluation team visually checked and located two cots and a receptacle for disposing of</p>

		<p>sharp objects in the nurse's area. A refrigerator was also available for student medication but located outside of the nurse's office. Please see the <i>Recommendations</i> section for next steps to ensure this is readily available in the nurse's office and can be locked as may be necessary.</p>
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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.

Summary of recommendations from most recent Site Evaluation	This is not applicable to Young Women's Leadership Academy for the 2022-2023 site evaluation as YWLA is in year one of their charter.
School Assessment of progress made against recommendations and evidence provided, or reasons school believes additional time may be necessary to fully address past recommendations	This is not applicable to Young Women's Leadership Academy for the 2022-2023 site evaluation as YWLA is in year one of their charter.
SPCSA staff assessment based upon findings during site evaluation	This is not applicable to Young Women's Leadership Academy for the 2022-2023 site evaluation as YWLA is in year one of their charter.

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 Framework are described within the body of the report and summarized here.

- YWLA has transitioned from a temporary building shared with the Boys & Girls Club to their long-term facility smoothly, with minimal disruption to the learning. Faculty, student, and family focus group participants mentioned how impressed they were with the move to the physical building with little to no disruption to the school routine.
- YWLA has a strong mentor program. Currently, ninth grade students are partnered with sixth graders and serve as “big sisters” for the academic year. Mentors offer advice and help with homework daily during a designated scheduled time. Students in the focus group indicated the opportunity to mentor and bond with other students at the school was a strong positive way to build relationships and help feel good about being at school. Participants in the family focus group reported the mentor program is supportive for young women in finding their voice and creating an environment in which young women support each other. Overall, this program appears to have left a strong, positive impression on students and families.
- Strong leadership is evident from the leadership team and faculty as reported from the governing board, staff, student, and family focus groups. Leadership and faculty are aware of the state of student academics, student needs, and the behavioral and emotional state of the student body. There is a shared and agreed vision and set of goals in which the school stakeholders share and work toward. Additionally, the school leader has frequent conversations with the board chair so that issues and problems can be resolved in a collaborative manner. A deep sense of community is apparent and modeled from leadership and staff down to the student body on a day-to-day basis. Leadership presence is strong in the hallways and during the car line. School communication with families and students is consistent and clear. Administration and faculty are proactive to student needs and quickly resolve student needs in a positive manner. For example, one family member in the family focus group session said there was a family in need over Thanksgiving. The school provided several baskets of food for the family and family members assisted in transporting the student and the baskets to the family home. Students in the student focus group mentioned how formal dresses were provided for students in need for a recent formal school event.
- SPCSA staff observed a sense of community at YWLA. The staff, student, and family focus groups spoke highly of the support they receive from leadership and one another in building and maintaining school culture centered around the school’s mission and vision. Expectations for academics and behavior were evident in classroom observations through student engagement, small group conversations, and students being on-task, engaged in their learning and using academic vocabulary. Students also demonstrated accountable talk when speaking with peers and adults. The student population is representative of the community in which the school serves.

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.

- Responsiveness to completing SPCSA requests for materials in a timely manner is a concern. It is important YWLA demonstrate it can meet deadlines consistently and place a priority on submitting requested materials. The leadership team should work together to cultivate and delegate responsibilities that are operationally important. There is room to grow in this regard and the YWLA leadership team should smooth these processes as the school continues to grow beyond the inaugural year. YWLA should strive to appear well prepared and timely with internal and external communications.
- Transportation challenges were mentioned by the student, family, leadership, and governing board focus groups. Families have indicated they have disenrolled from YWLA due to difficulties with transportation to and from YWLA. The governing board and leadership have on-going conversations to assist with transportation complications.
- YWLA has lower than anticipated enrollment during the 2022-2023 academic year. Leadership indicated the delay in moving into their permanent facility resulted in many families seeking a different school prior to the beginning of the school year. Small class sizes and student absences can correlate adversely to overall reports YWLA's lower enrollment can impact testing data and a smaller "n" size for overall data reporting. Lower student enrollment impacts the number of specialized populations, those who receive free and reduced lunch (FRL), are English learners (EL), and/or learners with individualized education plans (IEP).

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.

- SPCSA staff recommend YWLA pursue solutions to address lower than anticipated enrollment. SPCSA staff encourage YWLA leadership develop a school-wide plan to increase student applications, acceptance, and enrollment to optimize the new building and bolster low enrollment. Taking an asset-based approach to enrollment can optimize governing board support and expertise. YWLA should consider highlighting their unique mission and vision in their marketing materials, specifically emphasizing the YWLA individualized approach to the academic success of young women. YWLA may want to consider including community outreach, on-site tours of the school facilities, and virtual presentations of school offerings as part of their marketing efforts. YWLA is encouraged to work with current families to include student success stories as an avenue to increase communication with feeder schools and prospective students.
- SPCSA staff recommend YWLA formalize a plan to address student transportation challenges. Although leadership indicated documents for subsidized assistance through the Las Vegas Regional Transit Commission (RTC) have been submitted, YWLA should consider connecting with other charter schools within the SPCSA who have had success in obtaining RTC subsidized access passes. YWLA may also want to pursue Opportunity 180 initiatives for transportation. SPCSA staff recommend YWLA also consider informing parents of strategic options for transportation. SPCSA staff is happy to be a resource on this recommendation should additional assistance be requested.

- SPCSA staff recommend YWLA obtain a locked refrigerator inside the nurse's office for housing student medication as needed for medical purposes within 30 days to be compliant with Nevada State Law NAC 444.56842. A refrigerator was also available for student medication but located outside of the nurse's office. "Any medications that are stored in a health room must be accessible only to authorized members of the staff of the school" (NRS 439.200, 444.335).

STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS

There were no strong recommendations identified for YWLA during this site evaluation.

DEFICIENCIES

There were no deficiencies identified for YWLA during this site evaluation.