![Nevada State Public Charter School Authority logo]

Site Evaluation Report: Silver Sands Montessori Charter School
Evaluation Date: 2/12/2024

State Public Charter School Authority
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http://www.doe.nv.gov/Accountability/NSPF/

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http://charterschools.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/CharterSchoolsnvgov/content/News/2019/190628-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 2/12/24 at Silver Sands Montessori Charter School. The State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all charters within the portfolio during the first, third, and fifth year of operation. This comprehensive analysis addresses the academic success of the school and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization.

An analysis of the school's academic and operational success is undertaken by reviewing the most current versions of the Nevada State Performance Framework (Appendix A) and the State Public Charter School Authority Academic Framework (Appendix B) as well as the Organizational Framework (Appendix C).

In addition, the Site Evaluation Team conducts classroom observations within the areas of classroom environment and instruction. The purpose of these observations is to collect evidence using a rubric which has been normed by our team. All classroom rating outcomes will be displayed within this report so that school leaders have an overall idea of what is happening in general, at any time, in any classroom. The overall numbers will provide information about the school outcomes on this one day.

SPCSA staff will track "best practices", using a checklist and a summary of best practices observed, and will be contained within the report. Using information from 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

Silver Sands Montessori Charter School is located in Henderson, Nevada in a facility at 1841 Whitney Mesa Drive. The school serves 242 students (as of the most recent Validation Day) in kindergarten through eighth grade. The mission of Silver Sands Montessori is: "To provide quality Montessori education in an environment that encourages a child's love of learning and respect for self, others, community, and the world."
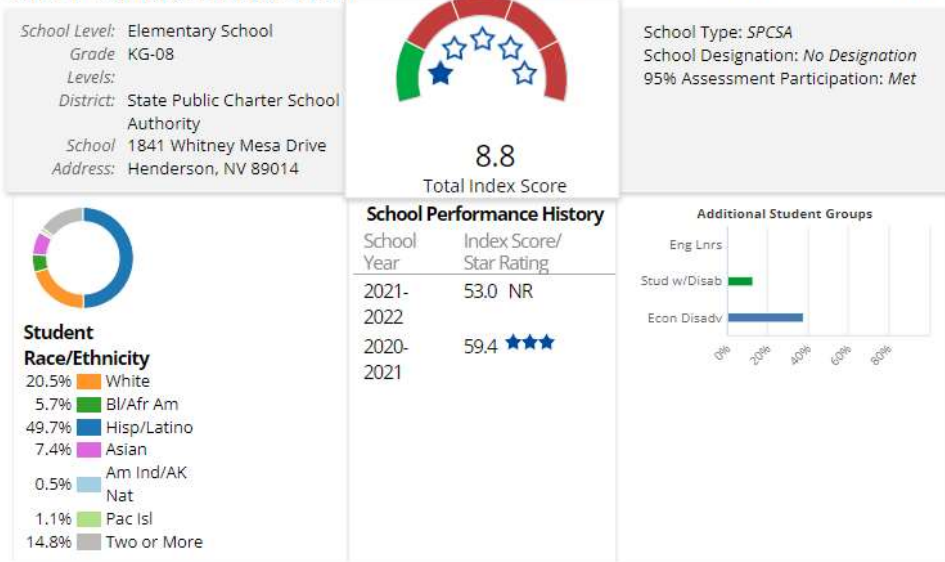
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Nevada School Performance Framework
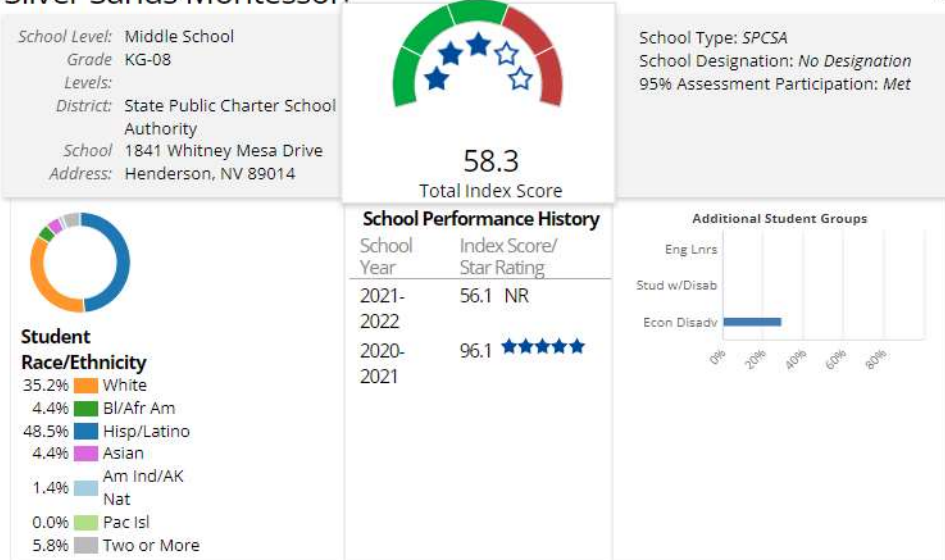## 2023

Elementary School

Silver Sands Montessori

School Level: Elementary School
Grade Levels: KG-08
District: State Public Charter School Authority
School Address: 1841 Whitney Mesa Drive Henderson, NV 89014

School Year 2022-2023 Nevada School Rating

8.8
Total Index Score

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

Student Race/Ethnicity
20.5% White
5.7% Bl/Afr Am
49.7% Hisp/Latino
7.4% Asian
0.5% Am Ind/AK Nat
1.1% Pac Isl
14.8% Two or More

School Performance History

School Year	Index Score/ Star Rating
2021-2022	53.0 NR
2020-2021	59.4 ★★★

Additional Student Groups

Eng Lnrs
Stud w/Disab
Econ Disadv

Middle School

Silver Sands Montessori

School Level: Middle School
Grade Levels: KG-08
District: State Public Charter School Authority
School Address: 1841 Whitney Mesa Drive Henderson, NV 89014

School Year 2022-2023 Nevada School Rating

58.3
Total Index Score

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

Student Race/Ethnicity
35.2% White
4.4% Bl/Afr Am
48.5% Hisp/Latino
4.4% Asian
1.4% Am Ind/AK Nat
0.0% Pac Isl
5.8% Two or More

School Performance History

School Year	Index Score/ Star Rating
2021-2022	56.1 NR
2020-2021	96.1 ★★★★★

Additional Student Groups

Eng Lnrs
Stud w/Disab
Econ Disadv

Math and ELA Results
Nevada School Performance Framework
2023

Elementary School Proficiency Rates

Math Proficient

Groups	2023 %	2023 % District	2023 % MIP	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP
All Students	15.0	52.0	53.5	23.5	49.2	51.1
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	35.7	40.7	-	28.5	37.6
Asian	-	74.5	71.9	-	72.8	70.4
Black/African American	-	31.4	38.9	-	30.3	35.7
Hispanic/Latino	5.4	42.2	45.5	20.0	37.9	42.7
Pacific Islander	-	49.0	53.4	-	47.2	50.9
Two or More Races	-	57.8	59.6	33.3	55.6	57.5
White/Caucasian	27.7	63.7	63.3	29.0	60.7	61.3
Special Education	<5	29.1	35.5	<5	26.3	32.1
English Learners Current + Former	-	38.1	42	-	34.9	39
English Learners Current	-	27.6		-	25.5	
Economically Disadvantaged	7.6	39.0	44.9	9.3	35.6	42

ELA Proficient

Groups	2023 %	2023 % District	2023 % MIP	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP
All Students	30.1	54.6	61.2	43.8	55.4	59.2
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	48.2	48.1	-	40.8	45.4
Asian	-	74.1	77.8	-	74.9	76.7
Black/African American	-	37.5	48.2	-	39.8	45.4
Hispanic/Latino	24.3	45.9	53.2	45.7	45.1	50.8
Pacific Islander	-	49.0	62	-	53.7	60
Two or More Races	-	60.7	67.9	50.0	61.5	66.2
White/Caucasian	38.8	64.4	70.6	41.9	65.5	69
Special Education	<5	27.4	36.8	8.3	25.5	33.5
English Learners Current + Former	-	37.6	47.2	-	37.4	44.4
English Learners Current	-	24.1		-	24.4	
Economically Disadvantaged	11.5	42.0	51.9	25.0	42.8	49.4

Middle School Proficiency Rates

Math Proficient

Groups	2023 %	2023 % District	2023 % MIP	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP
All Students	24.2	38.5	42.7	22.3	36.5	39.7
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	35.0	35.3	-	36.3	31.9
Asian	-	62.5	62.6	-	62.7	60.6
Black/African American	-	19.4	31	-	18.2	27.3
Hispanic/Latino	18.1	28.3	36.2	13.7	26.4	32.8
Pacific Islander	-	37.9	43.1	-	28.3	40.1
Two or More Races	-	44.5	46.4	-	41.8	43.6
White/Caucasian	22.7	51.4	52.3	29.1	48.1	49.8
Special Education	-	11.5	26.5	-	9.7	22.7
English Learners Current + Former	-	21.5	28	-	20.1	24.2
English Learners Current	-	6.5		-	7.6	
Economically Disadvantaged	15.0	24.9	36.1	13.0	23.9	32.7

ELA Proficient

Groups	2023 %	2023 % District	2023 % MIP	2022 %	2022 % District	2022 % MIP
All Students	43.9	53.4	58.6	47.7	57.3	56.4
American Indian/Alaska Native	-	45.6	49	-	53.7	46.3
Asian	-	74.7	78.2	-	79.0	77.1
Black/African American	-	37.4	43.9	-	41.1	40.9
Hispanic/Latino	36.3	44.8	50.5	34.4	48.2	47.9
Pacific Islander	-	47.2	57.8	-	53.3	55.5
Two or More Races	-	60.0	65	-	64.6	63.2
White/Caucasian	50.0	64.0	69.6	58.3	67.2	68
Special Education	-	17.4	29.6	-	18.0	25.8
English Learners Current + Former	-	34.0	31.7	-	38.8	28.1
English Learners Current	-	12.0		-	16.7	
Economically Disadvantaged	35.0	40.8	49.8	47.8	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).

0/25 — 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)

0/10 — NSPF score difference of -30.1 between school (8.8 points) and comparison district (38.9 points).

NSPF SCORE VS. COMPARISON SCHOOL (15 POINTS)

0/15 — NSPF score difference of -48.2 between school (8.8 points) and comparison school (57 points).

Middle School

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

22/25 — 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)

7/10 — NSPF score difference of 17.8 between school (58.3 points) and comparison district (40.5 points).

NSPF SCORE VS. COMPARISON SCHOOL (15 POINTS)

15/15 — NSPF score difference of 41.3 between school (58.3 points) and comparison school (17 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)

2/5 — School FRL rate of ≥30 to <40% compared to district GrK-5 FRL rate of >95.0%.

4/5 — School IEP rate of ≥10 to <15% compared to district GrK-5 IEP rate of 13.1%.

2/5 — School EL rate of ≥5 to <10% compared to district GrK-5 EL rate of 18.5%.

Middle School

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

9/15 — Indicator bonus points for: IEP.
One bonus point per group with 25%+ increase over prior year.

ENROLLMENT RATES VS. COMPARISON DISTRICT (5 POINTS EACH)

2/5 — School FRL rate of ≥20 to <30% compared to district Gr6-8 FRL rate of >95.0%.

3/5 — School IEP rate of ≥5 to <10% compared to district Gr6-8 IEP rate of 12.6%.

3/5 — School EL rate of <5% compared to district Gr6-8 EL rate of 13.8%.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Group	Number of Participants	Duration of Focus Group
Governing Board[1]	2	30 minutes
Parents/Families	4	30 minutes
Students	7	30 minutes
School Leadership	5	30 minutes
Staff	7	30 minutes

Governing Board[1]:

- Governing board focus group participants reported that the board convenes between eight to 12 times a year, holding monthly meetings and additional sessions as needed for urgent matters. Currently, there are two board positions available, with one position already filled. Working groups are established to research specific issues and bring recommendations to the board, such as lease agreements. Committees include finance, academic excellence, and governance, each contributing expertise to different aspects of school operations. The board comprises members with diverse backgrounds, including technology, business administration, finance, legal, education, and special education. This blend of expertise ensures comprehensive oversight and decision-making aligned with the school's needs and goals.

- With a seven-member board, members are appointed through a voting process and must meet specific qualifications outlined in governing documents. Board officers, including a vice-chair who officiates meetings, oversee key responsibilities such as hiring administrative staff and approving teaching staff. The board emphasizes a multilayered approach to conflict resolution, encouraging stakeholders to address concerns at the appropriate level before escalating to the board.

- The board engages with stakeholders through various channels, including board meetings, community events, and school visits. Financial stability is a priority, with regular review of financial documents, quarterly statements, and enrollment tracking. Board members with financial expertise contribute to prudent financial management, ensuring alignment between financial goals and the school's current financial standing. Silver Sands Charter School's governance structure reflects a commitment to transparency, stakeholder engagement, and financial sustainability. According to governing board members, the board's diverse expertise and proactive approach to governance contribute to effective decision-making and support the school's mission and objectives.

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[1] 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

Parents/Families:
- During the parent/family focus group at Silver Sands Montessori School, participants expressed positive experiences with the school, highlighting its welcoming environment, accommodating nature, and effective communication channels. Parents conveyed satisfaction with Silver Sands, citing factors such as the school's responsiveness to individual needs, effective communication regarding academics and families' personal concerns, and a focus on students' emotional well-being. They appreciated the school's small class sizes and its emphasis on accommodating students with special needs, such as allergies or behavioral challenges.

- Parents said they were drawn to Silver Sands due to its Montessori methodology, which caters to students' individual learning styles and levels of learning. The school's status as a public Montessori institution, along with a desire for a charter or private school experience, also influenced enrollment decisions.

- Parents shared specific instances of how Silver Sands supported their children's academic and personal growth. This included providing assistance to students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and behavioral challenges, offering tools for managing emotions and academic tasks, and facilitating integration and communication for non-verbal students with autism. The feedback from the family/parent focus group underscores Silver Sands Montessori School's commitment to creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment. The school's dedication to individualized instruction, effective communication, and holistic student support contributes to positive academic and personal growth experiences for students and families alike.

Students:
- In the student focus group at Silver Sands Montessori School, participants shared insights into their learning experiences and the support they receive from teachers, as well as the school's approach to addressing conflicts and bullying. Students highlighted various activities that left a lasting impression, including engaging in dodgeball during physical education classes, celebrating achievements with parties, and exploring different learning methods through coloring. Middle school students also appreciated designated study hall sessions on Wednesdays to catch up on tasks with teacher support.

- Students expressed confidence in the support they receive from teachers when facing learning difficulties. They described a comfortable environment where they can freely seek help from teachers or classmates when encountering challenges. Students said that teachers are readily available to assist individual students or provide explanations to the entire class when needed.

- Students indicated feeling supported by the school in addressing issues like bullying and conflicts. They acknowledged the swift response of school leadership in handling such

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

situations, ensuring problems are addressed effectively. However, some middle school students suggested that the handling of bullying and conflicts may vary compared to the lower grades, indicating room for improvement in consistency across grade levels. Overall, the feedback from the student focus group reflects a positive learning environment at Silver Sands Montessori School, where students feel supported by teachers and school leadership in navigating challenges and conflicts. While the school demonstrates effectiveness in addressing issues, there may be opportunities for further consistency in handling conflicts, particularly in the middle school grades.

Leadership:

- During the focus group with Silver Sands Charter School's leadership, several key insights emerged regarding the school's unique approach and ongoing efforts to address academic challenges while fostering parental engagement. Silver Sands Charter School distinguishes itself as the only public Montessori Charter school in Southern Nevada. While maintaining Montessori principles, the middle school has shifted towards a more traditional setting, emphasizing project-based learning to prepare students for high school. Notably, the majority of staff members hold Montessori certification, ensuring a cohesive educational approach.

- Despite facing challenges like under-enrollment, the school demonstrates financial resilience through strategic resource management. Leadership explained that emergency relief funds acquired during the pandemic, along with prudent budgeting practices, including setting aside funds for emergencies, have bolstered the school's financial stability. Grants such as ESSER[2] funds and Special Education (SPED) funds further contribute to effective financial management.

- Leadership reported that Silver Sands Charter School employs various academic support, including MAP[3] assessments for specific grade levels and participation in the WIDA[4] assessment for English language learners. Additionally, the school prioritizes intervention groups and small group instruction to address learning gaps. These efforts are complemented by a focus on meeting students' individual needs and leveraging their interests to enhance engagement in the learning process.

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[2] ESSER funds stand for Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds. These are federal funds allocated to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on elementary and secondary schools in the United States. The ESSER funds are part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and subsequent relief packages. The purpose of ESSER funds is to provide financial assistance to schools to support a variety of needs, including ensuring the health and safety of students and staff, addressing learning loss, purchasing educational technology, and implementing other strategies to support the continuity of learning during and after the pandemic. Each state receives a share of ESSER funds, and local educational agencies distribute the funds to eligible schools based on specific criteria and needs.

[3] The MAP assessment, or Measures of Academic Progress, is a computer-adaptive test used by schools to measure students' academic growth and proficiency in subjects such as math, reading, and language arts. It dynamically adjusts the difficulty of questions based on students' responses, providing detailed insights into their learning progress.

[4] The WIDA assessment, short for "World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment," is a standardized test designed to measure the English language proficiency of English language learners (ELLs) in the United States. It assesses students' abilities to understand and use English language skills in academic contexts across listening, speaking, reading, and writing domains.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY continued

- The leadership team acknowledged academic challenges, including the disparity in star ratings between elementary and middle school levels, and was actively working to address them. The leadership team responded by acknowledging efforts to improve the star ratings, noting challenges inherent in aligning Montessori methodology with standard-based assessments. Leadership emphasized the use of assessment scores to identify instructional gaps and strengthen teaching strategies through professional development initiatives. Leadership mentioned that factors contributing to the rating discrepancy included student mobility, chronic absenteeism, and the impact of COVID-related learning loss. They highlighted interventions and focused instruction as strategies to address these challenges. Additionally, they mentioned student attrition due to families moving out of the area or transitioning to high school, despite efforts to maintain continuous enrollment.

Staff:
- The staff focus group at Silver Sands Montessori School provided insights into the school's culture, curriculum, instructional programs, professional development opportunities, and support for differentiated instruction. Staff members described a collaborative and supportive environment where teachers help each other navigate processes and share tips for implementing the Montessori methodology. They highlighted the dedication of families to Montessori education and the joy of witnessing students' academic growth over time.

- The Montessori method, characterized by student-centric learning and intrinsic motivation, was identified as a significant strength by staff, distinguishing Silver Sands as the only public Montessori school in the Las Vegas Valley. However, challenges arise when students enroll without prior Montessori experience, particularly in upper elementary grades. Leadership noted that incoming students frequently exhibit academic disparities. Alongside efforts to address these gaps, they face the task of familiarizing these students with Montessori standards and expectations.

- While experiences with professional development opportunities were not explicitly shared, staff members recognized the importance of ongoing training to enhance their Montessori skills and align instructional practices with state standards. Staff shared ways the school supports differentiated instruction through small group settings, collaborative teaching approaches, and peer-assisted learning across grade levels. Progress monitoring and benchmark assessments inform instructional decisions, allowing teachers to tailor instruction to meet the diverse needs of students effectively.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT
AND INSTRUCTION OBSERVATION RUBRIC

A total of 15 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: 9	Total: 1	Total: 0	Total: 1
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: 7	Total: 8	Total: 0	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: 3	Total: 10	Total: 0	Total: 0	Total: 2
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: 8	Total: 7	Total: 0	Total: 0	Total: 0
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: 0	Total: 7	Total: 0	Total: 0	Total: 8
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: 2	Total: 11	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: 1	**Total:** 12	**Total:** 2	**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: 2	**Total:** 12	**Total:** 1	**Total:** 0	**Total:** 0

Additional information about the classroom observations shared here when applicable

1. Students were asked to rate how they were feeling that day on a scale from one to ten while sitting in a class circle. The teacher allowed the students to talk without providing commentary or feedback, and she called on students by name.
2. In one early elementary classroom, the instructor explained the work to be completed for the day to the whole class. Students were to work in small groups, with each group assigned a specific task. Tasks included counting in math, reading a map for geography, identifying plants and animals in science, learning about respect, practicing cleaning up as a practical life skill and writing complete sentences.
3. Students completed tasks in small groups in upper elementary grades. Each group had a task to complete, and students engaged in conversation about the work and their weekend while completing their tasks. They remained focused and engaged, with one teacher working with a small group and another circulating the room to provide feedback and answer questions as needed.
4. In one middle school classroom, students practiced math skills aligned with the upcoming SBAC testing. The teacher completed equations on the board and asked for student input on next steps, academic language, and problem-solving strategies.
5. Students completed book report projects in one middle school ELA class. They created three questions to answer as they read through their chosen texts and were instructed to write their responses after reading. Throughout the reading process, students met with the instructor for one-on-one conferences to discuss their progress.
6. In one middle school classroom, two co-teachers pulled small groups and provided interventions, while other students worked independently on various tasks around the room. Strong classroom management was evident as students followed expectations and procedures.
7. In another middle school classroom, co-teachers pulled a small group of students for interventions. They asked students to explain their answers and conducted quick formative assessments throughout the lesson.
8. In one middle school classroom, students worked independently on presentations focusing on matching the mood and tone of given texts. The teacher reviewed the lesson's purpose and outcomes and provided support as needed while circulating the room.

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	**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. **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.	Evidence gathered during focus groups indicates the school is implementing the material terms of their educational program as stated in the charter. Students with an Individual Education Plan received individualized instruction.
Indicator 3: Governance and Reporting	**Measure 3a:** The school complies with governance requirements Ex: Board policies and oversight of Education Service Provider	Leadership reports timely notice of Governing Board Meetings. Each board meeting contains an agenda item for public comment for stakeholders to ask questions and provide comments or concerns pertaining to the school. Meeting agendas and minutes are publicly accessible via the school's website. Per the governing board and leadership focus group sessions, the governing board follows governing board policies. The board composition is aligned with Nevada state requirements.
Indicator 4: Students and	**Measure 4a:** Student records under lock and key/stored appropriately	Student and faculty records are stored under lock and key in a secure room

Employees		designated just for records.
	Measure 4d: Personnel files are under lock and key/stored appropriately	
Indicator 5: School Environment	**Measure 5b:** 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	The site evaluation team saw evacuation plans in classrooms, tagged fire extinguishers throughout the building and common areas, an active food service permit, and an elevator permit. The site evaluation team visually checked and located a cot, a refrigerator, and a receptacle for disposing of sharp objects in the nurse's area.

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.

Prior recommendations by SPCSA staff	• Continue to develop higher order questions among teaching staff and promote student discourse and higher-level thinking. • Pursue solutions to address lower than anticipated enrollment so that enrollment levels return to normal beginning in the 22–23 school year. • Begin to develop and maintain a prospective board member pool, specifically those with a financial background. • Due to the increase of behavior referrals and students lacking appropriate social skills since returning to in-person learning, SPCSA staff recommends that Silver Sands Montessori pursue Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) opportunities through the SPCSA. • Ensure daily learning goals are clearly communicated for students. Students mentioned that they are posted on white boards but, in observed classrooms, the targets for the day and subject were not clear or visible. • Ensure staff meet regularly for Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings[5]. Teachers reported that planning periods are not used effectively. • Silver Sands Montessori should continue to identify ways to avoid high levels of staff turnover.
School Assessment of progress made against recommendations and evidence provided, or reasons school believes additional time may be necessary to fully address past recommendations	• **Developing Higher Order Questions:** Teachers at Silver Sands Montessori are actively discussing Depth of Knowledge (DOK) questions during Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings to ensure the promotion of higher-level thinking among students. Additionally, professional development sessions have been conducted to ensure teachers have a thorough understanding of DOK and its implementation in small group settings. • **Enrollment Solutions:** The school has been actively participating in events such as the School Choice Fair and distributing flyers to local apartment complexes to increase enrollment. Efforts are underway to pursue solutions for addressing lower than anticipated enrollment, including exploring articulation agreements with other local charter schools and reaching out to early childhood centers to attract prospective students. • **Prospective Board Member Pool:** Silver Sands Montessori has made progress in this area by filling one out of the two available board positions. Efforts are ongoing to develop and maintain a pool of prospective board members, particularly those with a financial background, to ensure smooth transitions and mitigate the impact of future turnover on the governing board. • **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS):** The school has implemented MTSS opportunities through the SPCSA to address the increase in behavior referrals and students lacking appropriate social skills since returning to in-person learning. Leadership has acknowledged the challenges resulting from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and is actively seeking resources and training to support staff in addressing these challenges effectively. • **Clear Communication of Daily Learning Goals:** Silver Sands Montessori is reviewing how daily goals and objectives are communicated with students to ensure clarity and visibility. Efforts are underway to ensure that daily learning goals are communicated to students,

	potentially through improved signage or communication methods within the classroom.
	• Regular Professional Learning Community (PLC) Meetings: Staff at Silver Sands Montessori meet weekly after school for PLC meetings, where they discuss student data, academic concerns, learning strategies, and lesson development. Additionally, administrative staff attend these meetings to provide support and guidance in addressing the individual needs of students and aligning lesson plans with academic standards.
	• Addressing Staff Turnover: The school has utilized funds from the ARP ESSER III grant to offer retention bonuses to current staff and incentive bonuses to new or returning staff members. Additionally, a summer program has been implemented to provide targeted support to students based on their individual needs, which has contributed to staff retention efforts and minimized the impact of turnover on students and teachers alike.
SPCSA staff assessment based upon findings during site evaluation	• The school will require time to implement the previous recommendations (see more within the Strong Recommendation section of this report).

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5 PLCs can have multiple definitions and structures. Should Silver Sands with to explore PLCs further, please contact SPCSA staff.

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.

- **Community Engagement:**
  Silver Sands Montessori School fosters a strong sense of community, evidenced by the presence of legacy families who return to visit the school even after their children have graduated. This enduring connection reflects the school's positive impact and lasting relationships with its stakeholders.

- **Montessori Methodology:**
  As the only public Montessori Charter school in Southern Nevada, Silver Sands offers a unique educational approach that emphasizes personalized learning and student-centered instruction. This specialized method provides students with a holistic educational experience tailored to their individual needs.

- **Differentiated Instruction:**
  Classroom observations revealed consistent implementation of differentiated instruction strategies across various classrooms. This approach ensures that students receive instruction tailored to their learning styles, abilities, and interests, promoting academic growth and engagement. Strong tier-two instruction was observed throughout the school, indicating effective support systems in place to address the diverse needs of students. This targeted intervention enhances academic outcomes and supports student success.

CHALLENGES

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

- **Learning Loss:**
  Silver Sands faces challenges related to learning loss, necessitating proactive measures to address gaps in student learning. Strategies should focus on meeting students at their current academic levels and leveraging their interests to enhance the learning process.

- **Enrollment:**
  Despite having an enrollment cap of 260 students, Silver Sands is currently under-enrolled. Increasing enrollment numbers is essential for maximizing the school's resources and fulfilling its educational mission. Silver Sands Montessori currently has 242 students enrolled.

SITE EVALUATION FINDINGS

CHALLENGES Continued

- **Chronic Absenteeism:**
  Silver Sands faces a significant challenge due to high rates of chronic absenteeism, particularly at the elementary level, necessitating targeted interventions and collaborative efforts to promote consistent student attendance and engagement. Chronic absenteeism stands at 28.8 percent at the elementary level and 19.1 percent at the middle school level.

- **NSPF Index Score:**
  Silver Sands' NSPF index score reflects a challenge, with the elementary level rated at 1 star and the middle school level at 3 stars. Improving this score is crucial for enhancing overall school performance and accountability.

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.

- **Enrollment Increase:**
  The SPCSA site evaluation team recommends that Silver Sands continue efforts to increase enrollment numbers through targeted marketing strategies, community outreach, and enrollment events. Maximizing enrollment capacity will ensure optimal resource utilization and sustainability.

- **Board Seat Filling:**
  The SPCSA site evaluation team recommends that Silver Sands' governing board expedite the process of filling the vacant board seat by June 1st. The new board member should undergo governance board training to effectively fulfill their responsibilities and contribute to the school's governance.

- **Chronic Absenteeism Reduction:**
  The SPCSA site evaluation team recommends that Silver Sands institute comprehensive measures to alleviate chronic absenteeism. This may include implementing truancy programs, bolstering parent engagement initiatives, and offering support services for at-risk students. Addressing this issue is crucial, particularly with chronic absenteeism at 28.8 percent at the elementary level and 19.1 percent at the middle school level.

STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS

In accordance with the Site Evaluation Handbook (pg. 6) the school will be required to create a Site Evaluation Response Plan, which must be approved by the SPCSA, to address any strong recommendations. The SPCSA and school will work together to review and monitor the plan until the strong recommendation requirement has been fully implemented and sufficient evidence has been provided.

- **NSPF Index Score Improvement:**
  Given the 1-star rating at the elementary level, it is imperative for Silver Sands Montessori School to implement a comprehensive improvement plan focused on academic enhancement, student engagement, and community involvement. The school should prioritize strategies to address the identified challenges, such as chronic absenteeism and learning loss, through targeted interventions, robust professional development for teachers, and enhanced family engagement initiatives. Additionally, Silver Sands should leverage data-driven decision-making processes to identify areas for improvement and monitor progress effectively. Collaborating with the SPCSA and other educational partners can provide valuable support and resources to facilitate the school's journey toward academic excellence and a higher star rating. By implementing these recommendations with dedication and diligence, Silver Sands can work towards achieving a higher rating and ensuring the success and well-being of all its students.

DEFICIENCIES

There were no deficiencies identified for Silver Sands Montessori during this site evaluation.