



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Somerset Academy of Las Vegas: Losee Campus Site Evaluation Report: November 7, 2024

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Links to Resources:

- [Nevada School Performance Framework \(NSPF\)](#)
- [SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Results](#)
- [SPCSA Organizational Performance Framework Results](#)
- [SPCSA Financial Performance Framework Results](#)
- [Best Practices](#)

Executive Summary

This Site Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school evaluation. Pursuant to [NRS 388A.223](#), 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 years of operation. This comprehensive analysis addresses the school's academic and organizational effectiveness.

An analysis of the school's academic and operational success is undertaken by reviewing the most current versions of the Nevada State Performance Framework (NSPF), the SPCSA Academic Performance Framework, and the SPCSA Organizational Performance Framework.

In addition, the Site Evaluation Team conducts classroom observations to assess both the classroom environment and the instructional techniques on the day of the evaluation. The purpose of these observations is to collect evidence using a rubric based on the [Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching](#). All classroom rating outcomes are displayed within this report. The overall numbers provide information about the general nature of instruction at a given school during the day of the site evaluation.

SPCSA staff conducts focus group interviews by speaking with school leaders, governing board members, family members, those employed as staff, and most importantly, students enrolled at the school. The information gained during these focus groups is summarized and included in this report.

The site evaluation is 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 to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations during each year of their charter. Final Site Evaluation Reports are published to the SPCSA website and used in conjunction with other performance information to determine renewal decisions.

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.

School culture

Somerset Academy Losee's strength is its school culture. The focus groups' common theme was the school's positive and welcoming culture. For instance, the family focus group participants highlighted the family-type atmosphere, a key element that fosters a high sense of inclusion and respect on campus. The students echoed the theme, attributing their success to the school's positive culture.

Graduation rate

One of Somerset Academy Losee's Strengths is its graduation rates. According to the 2023-24 Nevada School Performance Framework¹ (NSPF), their graduation rate is above 95 percent, exceeding the district rate of 83 percent. This not only showcases the school's commitment to student success but also its unwavering support for students to graduate, earning the school a maximum of 30 points in the graduation rates section of the NSPF.

English language support

Another strength of Somerset Academy Losee is its support for English language learners. The school has consistently helped these students meet adequate growth percentiles² (AGPs) on the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment³ (WIDA). The NSPF reflects this success, with the elementary school earning seven out of ten points, the middle school earning nine out of ten points, and the high school earning seven out of ten points in the English Language Proficiency Indicator. This means that students who meet their growth targets are on track to become proficient in English and exit English language status in five years, a testament to the school's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Literacy instruction in primary grades

According to SPCSA classroom observations, the primary grade levels demonstrated sound literacy instruction. The teachers used curricular resources with fidelity. Additionally, the school leadership is committed to having their teachers attend Language Essential for Teachers of Reading and Spelling⁴ (LETRS) training, which is a testament to their dedication to improving literacy instruction. Several staff

¹ The Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) is Nevada's public-school rating system designed by Nevadans for Nevada public schools and developed in accordance with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

² Adequate Growth Percentile (AGP) describes the amount of growth a student needs to remain or become proficient on the state assessment in three years.

³ **WIDA**, or the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment, is a consortium of states in the U.S. that are dedicated to the design, and implementation of standards, and opportunities for English language learners.

⁴ LETRS stands for Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling. It is a professional learning course for instructors of reading, spelling, and related language skills which provides educators with in-depth knowledge and tools that they can use with any reading program.

members, who are lead trainers for LETRS, play a crucial role in ensuring the effectiveness of the training. Lastly, according to the NSPF, the school's percentage of third graders who read at grade level is within the district average, which can serve as the basis for increased success for Somerset Academy Losee.

Advanced placement and dual enrollment courses

Somerset Academy Losee offers 14 Advanced Placement (AP) courses, including European history, statistics, computer science, and pre-calculus. The school's dual enrollment options allow high school students to take college courses and earn college credit before graduation, a strength for the school and its stakeholders.

Academic state champions

Another strength at Somerset Academy Losee campuses are the high grades of its student-athletes, which, according to school leaders, earned the school the title of Academic State Champions. The school's Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.09 earned them the title in the 4A division and highlighted the school's dedication to ensuring student-athletes remain committed to their academic responsibilities.

Proactive multi-tiered systems of supports team approach

Another strength of Somerset Academy Losee is its proactive team approach to implementing a school-wide Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports⁵ (MTSS) to address student academic, social, and emotional needs. In educational support, the school has licensed staff dedicated to response-to-intervention⁶ (RTI) plans for students needing detailed intervention plans. The staff member creates the plan with a multidisciplinary team and provides services after school, so it does not interfere with the student's schedule. Student progress is monitored regularly. Regarding social and emotional support, the school employs a skillful team of counselors, social workers, and clinical mental health professionals who use trauma-informed practices to support the needs of families and students.

Facility

Somerset Academy Losee's facilities are clean, well-maintained, and welcoming. The school has three full-service kitchens, a track and field facility, and a football stadium.

Robust board support

Robust board support at Somerset Academy Losee is exemplified by a dedicated liaison who ensures personalized attention and consistent communication. This long-standing commitment from the board provides the school with tailored resources, guidance, and support that meet its unique needs. The board's active involvement fosters a strong partnership with school leadership, offering insights and solutions that reflect an understanding of the school's distinct culture and challenges.

⁵ MTSS-Multi-Tiered System of Supports is a framework schools use with a tiered infrastructure that uses data to help match academic and social-emotional behavior and instructional resources to each student.

⁶ Response to Intervention (RTI) is a school-based strategy that helps identify and support students who are struggling academically or behaviorally.

Site Evaluation Findings: Challenges

A summary of challenges as observed through academic achievement indicators, classroom observations, focus group feedback, and portions of the Organizational Performance Framework.

Academic achievement

Academic achievement is a challenge for Somerset Academy Losee. According to the 2023-24 NSPF data, the school's proficiency rates are lower than the district's. For instance, in the elementary school, the pooled proficiency of 38 percent is below the district rate of 48; in the middle school, 28 percent is below the district rate of 47; and the high school rates in math, English, and science are below the districts. The site evaluation team observed lessons that needed more rigorous tasks and opportunities for students to display their reasoning. The school leadership discussed their focus on improving overall instruction at the Losee campus, including Tier-1, 2, and 3 instruction for all students. They also emphasized their commitment to reflective practices, which can support continuous improvement and increase student success.

Chronic absenteeism

Somerset Academy Losee is challenged with chronic absenteeism. An overwhelming body of research demonstrates chronic absenteeism's negative short and long-term consequences on academic achievement. Chronically absent students are missing critical instruction time and are at the most significant risk of falling behind and dropping out. The school's leadership team is actively working to decrease the rates of absent students, especially at the elementary school level, where the rates have increased by more than four percent over the last year, according to the 2023-24 NSPF Report.

Student discourse

According to previous recommendations from the last site evaluation, there is a significant potential for improvement in student discourse at Somerset Academy Losee. The classrooms observed had minimal opportunities for student discussions. Increasing student discourse in classrooms presents an opportunity for growth and development, and the school is committed to making the necessary changes to enhance student discourse.

Site Evaluation Findings: Recommendations

Recommended items are provided so charter schools may increase their school-wide performance and overall success. The Site Evaluation Team will follow up on these recommendations in preparation for the subsequent site evaluation.

Improve Tier-1 instruction

The SPCSA staff recommends Somerset Academy Losee continue developing and refining its comprehensive plan to improve Tier-1 instruction. The school's leadership team, as the driving force behind this initiative, is crucial in considering several essential resources for effective core instruction, including Teach Like a Champion, which is designed to provide educators with techniques, a shared vocabulary, and a practice framework that equips them to achieve dramatic results with their students. Two focus areas for the school to target to improve Tier-1 instruction are ensuring that learning tasks have high cognitive demands for diverse learners and ensuring all students engage in meaning-making through discourse and other strategies. The leadership team may refer to the [Nevada Teacher Instructional Practice Standards and Indicators](#)⁷, specifically standards two and three and its indicators.

Improving core instruction aligns with the school's mission, which states, "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 21st Century learners in a safe and enriching environment."

Improve Tier-2 and 3 small group intervention instruction

According to the 2023-24 NSPF report, Somerset Academy Losee Elementary and Middle School measures in both the growth and closing the gap indicators are below the district rates. The SPCSA recommends that the Somerset Academy Losee leadership team continue providing extra support and high-quality, differentiated instruction. This can make a substantial difference for students with learning gaps facing significant academic challenges. Utilizing student performance data to provide concentrated instruction--including one-on-one or small group instruction, peer tutoring, or access to specialized resources like educational software--can outline personalized strategies and goals to help students bridge their learning gaps in the classroom. This collaborative problem-solving and shared decision-making, led by the leadership team, can ensure that students receive the support they require for academic growth. With these strategies, the school can improve the median and adequate growth percentiles in the NSPF, closing achievement gaps for their students.

Decrease chronic absenteeism rates

The SPCSA recommends that Somerset Academy Losee improve the chronic absenteeism rates. The leadership team may find helpful strategies on the Nevada Department of Education website, including

⁷ The Nevada Instructional Practices Standards list rubrics with standards and indicators that guide educators to provide high-quality instruction.

support and engage in community-wide, cross-sector efforts to eliminate chronic absenteeism among students within the community by addressing its underlying causes. Communicate regularly to all staff, students, and their families about the importance of daily attendance and the availability of any support services that can help keep students in school and on track to success. Also, accurate reporting regarding Senate Bill 249⁸ is noteworthy. Accurate reporting ensures that students absent for behavioral health-related reasons are excused from attendance, preventing them from being counted against the school's chronic absenteeism rate.

Evacuation plans in all classrooms

On the day of the site evaluation, a few classrooms did not display the evacuation plan. The SPCSA recommends that Somerset Academy Losee ensure all classrooms have the evacuation plan displayed in clear view near the classroom exit door.

⁸ Senate Bill 249 was signed into law which allow mental and behavioral health professionals to excuse student absences from school and gives every student three mental health days.

Site Evaluation Findings: Strong Recommendations

Strong recommendations identified during this site evaluation are listed here, if applicable.

There are no strong recommendations for Somerset Academy Losee during this site evaluation.

Site Evaluation Findings: Deficiencies

Deficiencies identified during this site evaluation are listed here, if applicable.

There are no deficiencies for Somerset Academy Losee during this site evaluation.

Focus Group Participation Data

Focus groups are conducted on the day of the site evaluation and last for 45 minutes. During an abbreviated site evaluation, focus groups are not conducted.

Name of Focus Group	Number of Participants
Governing Board ⁹	2
Family Members, Parents, and Guardians	6
Faculty and Staff	14
School Leadership	28
Students	13

⁹ Quorum was not met, and Open Meeting Law was not violated.

Focus Group Summary: Governing Board

Two members of the Somerset Academy School Board participated in the session. One member has served for over eight years, and the other recently joined the board six months ago. The participants underscored the school board's unwavering focus on meeting compliance and contractual agreements. A member shared, "We ensure compliance with Open Meeting Laws by providing public notices with detailed minutes." Further, the code of ethics is a cornerstone of the governance board. One board member stated, "It is emphasized through regular training for staff and board members, ensuring all parties understand their obligations to act with integrity."

Evaluating Academics, the charter network's Educational Management Organization¹⁰ (EMO), and school leaders is a board function. The members discussed their process, which consists of evaluation surveys completed by school leaders and board members rating Academics's effectiveness. A member shared that the governance board is pleased with their EMO overall, stating that when there are any concerns, school leaders report that communication is efficient and streamlined. Regarding school leader evaluation, the board examines school data and meets with each campus leader at least once yearly to discuss goals and improvement plans. A board member highlighted that regular evaluations and performance reviews are aligned with the school's goals and contractual agreements.

The board members reiterated their unwavering commitment to ensuring all Somerset schools receive the necessary support for continuous improvement. One member emphasized that the ultimate goal is for every school to achieve a five-star rating, as per the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF). Another member stressed the importance of providing all school leaders with the necessary support to reach this goal. Each board member is assigned to be the lead liaison for a particular school, often visiting and communicating with its leaders to ensure each school is supported.

The discussion then shifted to the significance of expanding and developing school programs on each campus, particularly enhancing high school and middle school sports and extracurricular programs. A member emphasized increasing student sports and extracurricular activities as a testament to their board's commitment to providing a holistic learning experience for Somerset Academy students, eliminating the need for them to commute to the neighboring local district schools to participate.

The backgrounds of the governing board members include finance, law, education, business, school administration, and parents as explained by the focus group members. One member conveyed that this diverse range of expertise ensures the board is well-equipped to make well-informed decisions that benefit the schools and their students. The board also has a finance committee and a committee to evaluate school leaders. When a particular project arises, the board forms committees to oversee these endeavors.

¹⁰ An Education Management Organization (EMO) is a term of art describing a for-profit entity that manages schools.

Focus Group Summary: Family Members, Parents, and Guardians

The family focus group members expressed appreciation for the administration and staff's efforts to create a positive school culture. The group shared their value of the sense of community and family, highlighting prior schools that their children attended; they did not have that, mainly because of the overcrowding and high enrollment. One member added, "I feel welcomed here, and the teachers care." Another stated that he often volunteers, and the school's value of inclusion is evident in the diverse student body and the sense of belonging it fosters.

The discussion also included the group's value for their children's academic progress. A participant stated, "I see a huge increase in her knowledge. Learning is enjoyable. It makes the kids want to participate." Another parent shared his value for the honors and Advanced Placement courses the school offers, which all his children participate in. In addition to academics, a parent discussed the school's support for the student's social and emotional needs, sharing her deep gratitude for the school's therapeutic and mental health professionals.

The group was asked to discuss the school's communication with parents, and they agreed that the school communicates effectively with them through emails and phone calls. In the area of attendance, a parent stated that if their child is absent, they receive a phone call. Another parent said, "You receive a call if your child misses a class." The group also stated that when they have concerns, the school communicates with them promptly and is available to problem-solve issues.

The focus group members were asked to share suggestions the school could consider. The group highlighted that arrival and dismissal are hectic, compounded by the school's location on a busy street. Specifically, students are walking to and from school with minimal adult supervision. The group acknowledged that the school's leaders have been proactive and taken steps, including working with local law enforcement officials to support student safety and working with the city to add crossing guards.

Focus Group Summary: Faculty and Staff

Fourteen staff members from varying roles participated in the focus group. When discussing recent school success, a group member highlighted the recent addition of an Advanced Placement precalculus course and the increase in students passing advanced-level classes. Staff members also emphasized the positive behaviors displayed by their students and their appreciation for the overall student behavior on campus, which they saw as a clear sign of a positive and healthy school culture. Several staff members attributed having a kindergarten to 12-grade campus to supporting students' feelings of long-term connectedness.

Participants discussed the school's focus areas for improvement and their framework for professional learning communities¹¹ (PLCs). For school improvement, members mentioned the importance of promoting attendance with incentives and communicating with families. Additional topics included prioritizing LETRS training and improving students' overall reading skills, the school's response to intervention (RTI) meetings to address student needs, and a focus on improving writing skills and math achievement. Regarding PLCs, the group stressed the importance of regular meetings, where teams meet every other week to review data and instructional strategies, underscoring the urgency and commitment to these meetings. One member emphasized the importance of collaborating effectively with colleagues to ensure students learn the content.

During the discussion, the participants shared their suggestions for the school. One member proposed that more elective choices for students could be beneficial. Another suggested a stronger emphasis on elementary and middle school sports programs, which could benefit the entire school community. A special education staff member highlighted the challenge of servicing students in shared classrooms, underscoring the need for additional learning spaces.

¹¹ Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are a group of educators who meet regularly to share ideas and improve their teaching practices.

Focus Group Summary: School Leadership

The leadership team provided a detailed overview of the school's improvement plan, with multiple school leaders representing diverse backgrounds in curriculum, educational leadership, and mental health. The school's improvement efforts include adding intervention groups to address learning gaps and additional staff with curricular expertise to provide guidance and leadership. The principal shared that a dedicated math strategist is designated to train instructional assistants, and the school also added extra literacy instructional assistants in the middle school.

The team also highlighted the school's efforts to increase the staff capacity to improve literacy instruction by having over ten staff members trained in Language Essential for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS), which is aligned with the science of reading and develops teaching practices proven to be effective in preventing and remediating reading difficulties for students of every age, including special education, English language learners, and students needing focused interventions.

The team, which included professionals with expertise in mental health, highlighted the school's Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for students with social and emotional needs. Team members shared the school's framework and their use of trauma-informed practices, social-emotional learning groups, and restorative practices, often referring to Adverse Childhood experiences¹² (ACEs) as a tool to ensure students' needs are met. A focus group member emphasized the school's philosophy of restorative practices to ensure students understand the consequences of their choices and their negative impacts versus punitive measures that lead to further alienation.

Other topics discussed were chronic absenteeism and the school's efforts, which positively impacted middle and high school but not elementary school. A member emphasized the ongoing communication with parents, stressing the importance of attendance. The team also shared the school's challenge in transitioning new students to middle school, mainly supporting their assimilation with peer groups. The principal shared, "The staff provides extra attention to new students to ensure they are included."

¹² Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that can occur during a child's life, from 0 to 17 years old.

Focus Group Summary: Students

Thirteen students participated in the student focus group on the day of the site evaluation, ranging in grades three through twelve. When asked what they would tell a friend interested in attending Somerset Academy Losee, many students said everyone on campus is friendly and welcoming. One student said, “When I saw a new student come here, he came in with a bad attitude. I noticed that within one week, his attitude had turned around.” Another stated, “I think highly of this school because the teachers and administration are so kind and supportive. Just because the school is K-12 doesn’t mean that it is not still fun.”

Some of the high school students at Somerset Academy Losee acknowledged that dual enrollment classes help them plan and prepare for their future. One student echoed more positives about the program: “Dual enrollment classes fit in perfectly with my schedule. I am currently taking two classes at CSN¹³, and if I pass, I will get my college credits.” The student said she wanted to be a nurse. “Somerset Losee has prepared me for what happens after school. I get to learn a lot about the human body, and teachers and leaders talk with me about what college will fit me best.”

Football players reported that the football program is doing well and that coaches support them in all areas of life. This support includes academic and career guidance. It was agreed upon that students at Somerset Losee are succeeding in sports that they may have failed in some public schools. One student effused, “The school has expanded so much since we were younger. The football field is one of the additions.” Another student shared that the school is the Academic State Champions in the 4A Division, with a grade point average of 3.09. A student said, “The coaches will not let you play if your grades are not good.”

The students were asked to share what they were learning in their classes. Responses included learning about majority and electoral votes, human anatomy and body functions, math concepts, and writing projects.

The entire student focus group shared the thought that the environment at Somerset Losee is calmer than other schools they came from. They said the school feels welcoming and treats people well at this charter school. One student commented, “The academics are the best thing about Somerset Losee.” Another student shared that the school has a great counseling team, stressing that they are always open to talking, listening, and finding multiple solutions to help students.

¹³ College of Southern Nevada (CSN) is a public institution in Las Vegas, Nevada. The school utilizes a semester-based academic year. The student-faculty ratio is 21-to-1. The highest degree offered at College of Southern Nevada is an associate degree.

Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 15 elementary, 6 middle school, and 9 high school classrooms were observed for approximately 15 minutes on the day of the site evaluation.

Classroom Environment					
	Distinguished	Highly Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
Classroom Learning Environment is Conducive to Learning	<p>The teacher demonstrates knowledge and caring about individual students' lives beyond the class and school.</p> <p>When necessary, students respectfully correct one another.</p> <p>Students participate without fear of put-downs or ridicule from either the teacher or other students.</p> <p>The teacher respects and encourages students' efforts.</p>	<p>Talk between the teacher and students and among students is uniformly respectful.</p> <p>The teacher successfully responds to disrespectful behavior among students.</p> <p>Students participate willingly but may be somewhat hesitant to offer their ideas in front of classmates.</p> <p>The teacher makes general connections with individual students.</p>	<p>The quality of interactions between teachers and students, or among students, is uneven, with occasional disrespect or insensitivity.</p> <p>The teacher attempts to respond to disrespectful behavior among students with uneven results.</p> <p>The teacher attempts to make connections with individual students, but student reactions indicate that these attempts are not entirely successful.</p>	<p>The teacher is disrespectful toward or insensitive to students' ages, cultural backgrounds, and developmental levels.</p> <p>Students' body language indicates feelings of hurt, discomfort, or insecurity.</p> <p>The teacher displays no familiarity with, or care about, individual students.</p>	<p>This criterion was not observed or rated.</p>
	TOTAL: 4	TOTAL: 22	TOTAL: 4	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0
Establishing a Culture for Learning	<p>The teacher communicates passion for the subject.</p> <p>Students indicate through their questions and comments a desire to understand content.</p> <p>Students assist their classmates in understanding the content.</p>	<p>The teacher communicates the importance of the content and the conviction that with hard work all students can master the material.</p> <p>The teacher conveys an expectation of high levels of student effort.</p> <p>Students expend good effort to complete work of high quality.</p>	<p>The teachers' energy for the work is neutral.</p> <p>The teacher conveys high expectations for only some students.</p> <p>Students exhibit a limited commitment to completing the work on their own.</p> <p>The teacher's primary concern appears to be to complete the task at hand.</p>	<p>The teacher conveys that there is little or no purpose for the work, or that the reasons for doing it are due to external factors.</p> <p>The teacher conveys to at least some students that the work is too challenging for them.</p> <p>Students exhibit little or no pride in their work.</p>	<p>This criterion was not observed or rated.</p>
	TOTAL: 1	TOTAL: 22	TOTAL: 6	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 1

Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 15 elementary, 6 middle school, and 9 high school classrooms were observed for approximately 15 minutes on the day of the site evaluation.

Classroom Instruction					
	Distinguished	Highly Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
Communicating with Students	<p>If asked, students can explain what they are learning and where it fits into the larger curriculum context.</p> <p>The teacher explains content clearly and imaginatively.</p> <p>The teacher invites students to explain the content to their classmates.</p> <p>Students use academic language correctly.</p>	<p>The teacher states clearly, at some point during the lesson, what the students will be learning.</p> <p>The teacher's explanation of content is clear and invites student participation and thinking.</p> <p>The teacher makes no content errors.</p> <p>Students engage with the learning task, indicating that they understand what they are to do.</p>	<p>The teacher provides little elaboration or explanation about what students will be learning.</p> <p>The teacher's explanation of the content consists of a monologue, with minimal participation or intellectual engagement by students.</p> <p>The teacher may make minor content errors.</p> <p>The teacher must clarify the learning task.</p>	<p>At no time during the lesson does the teacher convey to students what they will be learning.</p> <p>Students indicate through body language or questions that they don't understand the content being presented.</p> <p>Students indicate through their questions that they are confused about the learning task.</p>	<p>This criterion was not observed or rated.</p>
	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 21	TOTAL: 7	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 2
Using Questioning and Discussion Strategies	<p>Students initiate higher-order questions.</p> <p>The teacher builds on and uses student responses to questions to deepen student understanding.</p> <p>Students extend the discussion, enriching it.</p> <p>Virtually all students are engaged.</p>	<p>The teacher uses open-ended questions, inviting students to think and/or offer multiple possible answers.</p> <p>Discussions enable students to talk to one another without ongoing mediation by the teacher.</p> <p>Many students actively engage in the discussion.</p>	<p>The teacher frames some questions designed to promote student thinking, but many have a single correct answer.</p> <p>The teacher invites students to respond directly to one another's ideas, but few students respond.</p> <p>The teacher calls on many students, but only a small number participate.</p>	<p>Questions are rapid-fire and convergent with a single correct answer.</p> <p>The teacher does not ask students to explain their thinking.</p> <p>Only a few students dominate the discussion.</p>	<p>This criterion was not observed or rated.</p>
	TOTAL: 1	TOTAL: 10	TOTAL: 11	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 8

Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 15 elementary, 6 middle school, and 9 high school classrooms were observed for approximately 15 minutes on the day of the site evaluation.

Classroom Instruction					
	Distinguished	Highly Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
Engaging Students in Learning	<p>Virtually all students are engaged in the lesson.</p> <p>Lesson activities require high-level student thinking and explanations of their thinking.</p> <p>Students have an opportunity for reflection and closure on the lesson to consolidate their understanding.</p>	<p>Most students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.</p> <p>Most learning tasks have multiple correct responses or approaches and/or encourage higher-order thinking.</p> <p>Students are invited to explain their thinking as part of completing tasks.</p> <p>The pacing of the lesson provides students with the time needed to be intellectually engaged.</p>	<p>Some students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.</p> <p>Learning tasks are a mix of those requiring thinking and those requiring recall.</p> <p>Student engagement with the content is largely passive.</p> <p>The pacing of the lesson is uneven—suitable in parts but rushed or dragging in others.</p>	<p>Few students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.</p> <p>Learning tasks, activities, and materials require only recall or have a single correct response.</p> <p>The lesson drags on or is rushed.</p>	<p>This criterion was not observed or rated.</p>
	TOTAL: 3	TOTAL: 18	TOTAL: 9	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0
Using Assessment in Instruction	<p>Students indicate they clearly understand the characteristics of high-quality work.</p> <p>The teacher uses multiple strategies to monitor student understanding.</p> <p>Students monitor their own understanding.</p> <p>Feedback comes from many sources.</p>	<p>The teacher makes the standards of high-quality work clear to students.</p> <p>The teacher elicits evidence of student understanding.</p> <p>Students are invited to assess their own work and make improvements.</p> <p>Feedback includes specific and timely guidance.</p>	<p>There is little evidence that the students understand how the work is evaluated.</p> <p>The teacher monitors understanding through a single method, without eliciting evidence of understanding from students.</p> <p>Feedback to students is vague.</p>	<p>The teacher does not indicate what quality work looks like.</p> <p>The teacher makes no effort to determine whether students understand the lesson.</p> <p>Students receive no feedback, or feedback is global or directed to one student.</p>	
	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 18	TOTAL: 8	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 4

Classroom Observations and Additional Comments

In a high school ELA classroom, the teacher discussed narrative plot structure, conflict, and resolution as the students took notes. The teacher did not check for student understanding and asked probing questions without engaging student responses.

In a middle school ELA classroom, the students independently worked on chapter comprehension checks on their desks. The students seemed to be working to complete the tasks; however, the teacher did not actively monitor the student's progress or status on the quality of their work.

In a high school social studies classroom, the teacher lectured about the Persian Wars and referenced slides presented on the screen. The students sat and listened but were not asked any questions to demonstrate their thinking.

In an upper elementary science class, students sat and listened to the teacher explain the assignment. They began the assignment which involved cutting out informational cards and creating a food web. After explaining the assignment, the teacher stopped and asked, "Why are we doing this?" One student said, "To understand which animals eat which and to find out what happened to the dinosaurs."

Students in a small intervention group were reading decodable sentences from an explicit phonics program. The teacher gave students a chance to read it quietly on their own first, give a thumbs-up, and then read it as a group. They discussed the punctuation at the end of the sentence and any changes in voice caused by the punctuation.

Students encoded sentences in small groups. The students were given an opportunity to write the sentence themselves first, then they wrote it again with the teacher, decoding together as they went. The students were highly engaged. The teacher had excellent pacing to decode and encode but did not go too slow to keep their attention the whole time.

In a high school math class, the students reviewed math equations. The teacher displayed the math problems on the screen and provided explicit instructions on solving the equations. The students were engaged and actively participated by asking questions and following along on their worksheets. The teacher consistently checked for student understanding.

The teacher assessed one student using nonsense words to check for decoding. Other students were working on i-Ready¹⁴ on computers or writing narrative stories in their notebooks while looking at a mentor text. All students were highly engaged in their work.

¹⁴ i-Ready provides individualized interactive lessons that address the learning needs of each student.

Measures of Progress from Previous Site Evaluation

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 Site Evaluation Team during the school’s previous site evaluation.

Prior Recommendation by Site Evaluation Team	School Assessment of Progress	SPCSA Staff Assessment of Progress
<p>SPCSA staff recommends Somerset Academy Losee develops a plan to improve chronic absenteeism at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.</p>	<p>As noted in their leadership presentation slides, the leadership team recognizes the need to decrease chronic absenteeism. The school actively engages parents on the importance of daily attendance and the negative impacts of missing school. Efforts have led to reduced rates at the middle and high school levels. However, rates have not decreased in elementary school.</p>	<p>The SPCSA staff recognizes the concentrated effort by the school's leadership to decrease chronic absenteeism at the middle and high school levels, which is lower than the district average. However, the elementary rate of 12.7 from the previous year increased to 17.2, according to the most recent NSPF data. Moving forward, it is essential that the school's leadership leverage effective strategies that were used to decrease absent rates at the middle and high school levels to impact the elementary level. Reducing the rates of chronically absent students can directly affect the school's goal of increasing academic achievement and improve the school’s star rating.</p>
<p>SPCSA staff recommends that Somerset Academy Losee create a robust plan to increase student proficiency rates.</p>	<p>The leadership team shared the details of the school's plan to improve student proficiency rates, which included a dedicated math strategist in the elementary school and ELA double-blocked intervention groups in the middle school. The team acknowledges the significance of improving proficiency rates.</p>	<p>Somerset Academy Losee's leadership team devised an improvement plan presented at a board meeting. This plan, which focuses on specific grade levels, staff, service minutes, and programs, underscores the school's commitment to improving academic proficiency. The SPCSA staff recognizes the vital work needed for improvement. The detailed plan may serve as a building block to increase student academic proficiency if executed at a high level and embedding the necessary academic rigor.</p>

<p>SPCSA staff recommends that Somerset Academy Losee develop a plan to increase student voice in the classroom.</p>	<p>The school leadership team reports that they understand the importance of increasing classroom student discourse and know the benefits of more classroom discussion.</p>	<p>The SPCSA staff recognizes the essence of increasing student discourse in the classroom, which fosters a more inclusive learning environment and encourages students to practice their oral language skills. The SPCSA continues to recommend that the school improve its approach to increasing student discourse opportunities.</p>
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Operational Compliance Checks

Fire Extinguisher	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Nurse's Station	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Evacuation Plan in Classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
Food Permit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Elevator Permit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

Appendix A

The school may choose to submit a response to the SPCSA Site Evaluation Team’s findings. This response will be included with the report in the public domain. The final report is submitted to the school’s leadership and governing board, the SPCSA board, and into the public record via the SPCSA’s website.