



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Nevada Virtual Charter School Site Evaluation Report: January 30, 2025

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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.

Building human capacity

The Executive Director is a human capacity builder, hires the right people, and allocates human capital to allow personnel to fulfill their responsibilities in a professional manner utilizing their skillset and expertise. The SPCSA site evaluation team recognizes this as a strength. Strategically knowing how to leverage strengths and placing people in positions where they can perform best is an innate leadership skill, illustrating creative governance.

Consistent leadership

Nevada Virtual Charter School (NVCS) has maintained consistency with its Executive Director and principal leadership for several years, providing stability and institutional history for the school's stakeholders. This strong foundation provides the school with a foundational understanding of the student population's needs, allowing leadership to quickly create and initiate effective procedures and initiatives. Consistency in leadership allows for developing strong routines and systems, processes, and procedures for day-to-day smooth operations. The site evaluation team observed the leadership team's ability to be well-attuned to the needs of the faculty, staff, families, and students, as evidenced by commentary from each of the focus groups.

Longitudinal board support

NVCS robust board support is exemplified by dedicated board personnel who ensure personalized and consistent communication with school leadership. This long-standing commitment from the board provides the school with tailored resources, guidance, and support that meet the unique needs of the school. The board's active involvement fosters a strong partnership, offering insights and solutions that reflect an understanding of the school's distinct culture and challenges.

Targeted instructional initiatives

NVCS's attention to student academic growth is evident with the initiative of adding 100 minutes of block instruction to the blended classroom experience for the 2024-25 academic year. The site evaluation team observed classroom activities and instruction targeted to remediate and build students' foundational knowledge in math and English language arts (ELA) in middle school grades. The concentrated efforts to increase student gains place students first in their learning, often targeting those two to three grades behind core knowledge. NVCS implemented strategies to include parents as partners in their child's learning through leveraging required parent conferences, creating greater educational outreach opportunities through parental advisory committees, and utilizing social events to communicate crucial education information. NVCS should be commended for these initiatives.

Robust CTE¹ Pathways

The site evaluation team recognizes NVCS's College and Career Readiness Program to be a strength as it continues to improve each year. Leadership reported that all teachers in the CTE department are veteran teachers, which helps with the delivery of instruction. NVCS has created new CTE pathway options, one in aviation that is currently in process of being approved through the Nevada Department of Education (NDE).

School Safety

To gain access to the office of the school, visitors must be granted access by front entrance personnel through a single-entry point. This single point entry automatically locks. Office staff identify who is seeking admittance and their purpose for being on school grounds. Visitors gain access using this highly secure procedure.

¹ Career and Technical Education (CTE) is a type of education that prepares students for careers through hands-on learning and real-world skills. CTE programs can be found in middle and high schools.

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.

Students behind grade level

SPCSA staff appreciate school leadership sharing candidly there is work to do with leadership reporting “a considerable number of students enrolling are behind grade level and sometimes two or more grade levels behind in content areas such as English language arts, math or may be credit deficient.” A concerted effort to address math and ELA deficiencies is an ongoing conversation with leadership, the governing board, and teachers. Faculty are challenged with remediating students and bringing them up to grade level with targeted instruction. This requires faculty professional development, targeted differentiation for the students, and highly effective differentiated instruction for Tier-2 instruction.

Attracting Highly Qualified Teachers

Hiring qualified, licensed teaching staff is a challenge as reported by school leadership. Leadership shared NVCS’s governing board is supportive in providing resources to recruitment and retention. However, continuous increases in students with special needs make hiring qualified licensed special education teachers challenging. Also, as NVCS expands its Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and students continue enrolling in CTE courses, hiring highly qualified staff to teach CTE is challenging.

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.

Increase levels of student voice

SPCSA recommends that Nevada Virtual Charter School consider ways to increase student voice during classroom instruction. There is a need for more student engagement, as observed in some classrooms where teachers were doing more talking, and students were simply supplying one-word answers. Effective questioning, good pacing, and collaborative learning practices were observed in some classroom observations, but not all. Active student engagement and student voice contributes to vibrant, active learning environments, where students are invested in their own learning.

Increase student engagement

SPCSA staff recommend strengthening online and in-person classroom instruction to provide greater opportunities for students to contribute more to their learning. SPCSA evaluators observed several teachers providing teacher-led instruction and receiving limited participation and engagement from students. Teachers were observed to be positive, encouraging, and responsive to student learning, however, greater opportunities for students to lead or reach higher levels of inquiry were missed. A few suggestions that may assist in developing student engagement include:

- Consider posting learning objectives and targets visibly during classes and referring to and/or emphasizing objectives while providing instruction to reinforce lesson goals and objectives. SPCSA evaluators noted these were not always clear nor did some teachers have a prepared list of scaffolded questions to ensure the lesson was reaching all learners. SPCSA staff recommend that the school revisit these practices to help students internalize lesson goals and objectives. When students can articulate what they are learning and why they are learning, they demonstrate ownership of their learning process. (National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 2021). By increasing student voice through peer-to-peer conversations, student presentations, student-lead classroom discussions, and students learning how to ask and respond to high-level questions (Bloom’s taxonomy, Costa’s levels of Questioning) student engagement may further solidify learning intentions (Brookhart, 2007).
- Consider inquiry-based learning (IBL) in which instructional practices “promote skills such as critical thinking, reflection, questioning, collaboration, communication, and research” (Gholam, 2019). IBL taps into students’ innate sense of curiosity and helps them identify and solve a problem, gain research skills, and trade-off capacity (Avsec, Rihtaristic, & Kocijancic, 2014). Further, planning and building strong instruction will assist the interventionists, counselors and teachers frame effective small group and one to one instruction for further student growth.
- Although the competence-based-curriculum (CBC) was present in much of the observed instruction, SPCSA staff noticed there was very little use or reference to the information contained in the CBC before, during, and after instruction. “When we shepherd students through

curriculum without involving them, we miss the opportunity to let them find their own way” (Bruno, 2021).

- Continue building instructional capacity by providing targeted PD. Novice teachers will benefit from the mentoring. Veteran teachers can revisit and hone skills. “When teachers calibrate and plan intentionally to maximize lesson impact, student growth and mastery improves exponentially. When teachers plan and teach intentionally, students have a more coherent learning experience” (Bruno, 2021). Embedded practices that engage teachers and empower students contribute to proficiency gains.

Middle school proficiency rate

Continue to focus on improving the middle school proficiency rate. currently at 33 index points and a 2-star rating per NSPF. According to the 2023-24 Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF), the middle school is a two-star rated school out of a five-star rating system. The middle school's pooled proficiency rate is 23%, below the district rate of 47%. The middle school's math proficiency is 11%, English language arts is 31%, and science is 32%. The middle school earned 34 index points out of 100. NVCS's ELA index scores for ELA are 34 for middle school and 42 for high school grades. Math scores for middle school are 32% and 11% for high school. Focused attention on strengthening classroom instruction may assist in closing achievement gaps and improving proficiency.

Develop a communication trust plan

SPCSA staff recommend NVCS create and formalize a ‘communication trust’ plan (Reina 2006) between school leadership and faculty. Staff were very vocal during the staff and faculty focus group that the feedback loop between leadership and faculty was perceived to be perfunctory. The ability to address faculty needs and student needs in a responsive manner demonstrates effective leadership. Leadership is key in developing school social capital. “High levels of teacher social capital result in positive outcomes of student achievement, teacher quality, and teacher job satisfaction” (Minckler, 2013). Developing a common language for terms such as engagement, discourse, and empathetic listening provides a foundational means to build trust. Some suggestions include:

- Leadership may want to conduct a SWOT² analysis amongst faculty to encourage faculty voice, build agency and buy-in. Teachers are last to have a voice in over 150,000 surveys when asked “at work do my opinions count?” (Lopez 2013). People are rarely motivated when they do not feel they have agency in an organization.
- Allowing teachers to select their professional development topics is one way to establish a positive faculty voice and support teachers’ professional growth.
- Leadership could have a working lunch with faculty of each grade or content area on a different day each week. The topics could be places to build empathetic listening, finding common ground, and connecting with day-to-day concerns.
- Having a school-wide book study beginning with *Better Conversations* (Knight 2016) and completing the exercises at the end of each chapter may be a productive start. *The People Code* (Hartman 2007) or De Bono’s six thinking hats exercise are also powerful tools to use when an institution addresses dynamic changes.

² SWOT is an analysis technique used in strategic planning to help an organization identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

Site Evaluation Findings: Strong Recommendations

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

There were no strong recommendations issued for NVCS during this site evaluation.

Site Evaluation Findings: Deficiencies

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

There were no deficiencies issued for NVCS 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 ³	2
Family Members, Parents, and Guardians	4
Faculty and Staff	13
School Leadership	14
Students	6

³ Quorum was not met, and Open Meeting Law was not violated.

Focus Group Summary: Governing Board

Two of the five governing board members participated in the focus group on the day of the site evaluation. Board members reported that there are currently no open positions on the governing board. Board members have several areas of expertise including those with backgrounds in the fields of education, education administration, teaching, grant writing and aid, politics, and law, as well as board members with family enrolled at Nevada Virtual Charter School and community connections. Many members serving on the board have served for a number of terms providing longevity, institutional history, and stability. Board members participating in the focus group said they visit campus quite often, allowing them to see students and teachers in the classroom setting. This lens provides board members with first-hand awareness of the student learning environment when considering making decisions about the school.

Board members spoke of their role in providing oversight. The board and leadership created a plan of action to support struggling students and raise proficiency scores. Every math teacher attended the board meeting and presented for three minutes on what they were doing differently during the 2024-25 year to assist students. The consensus among math teachers was that they are having more students write more in math and utilizing more SBAC prompts as math assignments. The board is holding the teachers accountable. At the February 2025 board meeting, English language arts teachers will present for three minutes, and in March, counselors will present.

Board members were excited to speak about their commitment to welcoming all types of students to Nevada Virtual Charter School. One board member stated, “Weekly and monthly diversity conversations are routinely part of our conversations.” Another board member stated, “We meet students where they are academically, and our school leaders and staff work diligently to provide students opportunities to help students feel a sense of belonging.” Board members said the governing board routinely hears reports about marketing initiatives and has conversations about which zip codes NVCS fliers and billboards are placed. The board also keeps up to date on which Dual Credit⁴, Jump Start⁵, and CTE⁶ (Career and Technical Education) options are offered and proposed for students.

4 Dual enrollment/credit allows Nevada high school students to take courses in a university setting and earn college credit, preparing students for future careers.

5 Jump Start is a dual enrollment for students in selected Nevada high schools. Students enroll in college courses while earning high school credits.

6 CTE stands for Career and Technical Education which provides an important pathway to success for high school students and offers each student opportunities to personalize his or her education based on their career interests and unique learning needs.

Focus Group Summary: Family Members, Parents, and Guardians

Families were complimentary to the teachers and the manner in which they communicated with students. One parent said, “My child can ask as many questions as he wants in class at NVCS, and the teachers answer. He is not made to feel small. At his previous school, we were told he asked too many questions in class, and we should get him tested. We got him tested. He was fine. He is healthy. He is just inquisitive. Here, he can ask all the questions he wants.” Another parent said, “My children have been at NVCS since middle school. They are happy here. My daughter credits that to the teachers and the learning environment, and that the teachers care. My children express that it is easy to contact the teachers and communicate with them. My children feel very comfortable talking to their teachers and that is important to them and important to me.”

Parents suggested they would like to have a parent newsletter that contained upcoming test dates, deadlines for application dates, reminders for field trip dates, social events, and a list of names recognizing students for their accomplishments—i.e. the Dean’s List for straight As, perfect attendance, college acceptance, scholarship awards, etc.

Parents indicated that their children received high-quality instruction from their studies at NVCS and that the teachers held students to high standards in their work. One parent said, “There is a lot of accountability; if students were supposed to be in class or meet with an instructor, and they did not, the teacher sends communication immediately to both the parent and the student.” Another parent reported teachers don’t just move on from work when students complete something. “Students have the option to go back and review their work and speak with the teacher about where they misunderstood or went wrong.” Parents shared that they also communicate regularly with the teachers using email and feel very comfortable doing so. Parents said they have access to their child’s learning platform, Canvas, and can check attendance through Infinite Campus⁷. Parents can text and telephone many of the teachers as the teachers use a Google phone number for parents. Likewise, parents said administration was very visible, welcoming and approachable. One parent said, “Administration is at every social event. They are very front and center and available.”

⁷ Infinite Campus is a web-based program providing families the ability to view academic information for their children.

Focus Group Summary: Faculty and Staff

Thirteen staff members participated in the focus group session, which started with a discussion on what specific steps the faculty implemented to increase student achievement at Nevada Virtual Charter School. Responses included using 'math talks' at the beginning of every class to reinforce math concepts and engage students in brief discussions with questions such as: What are your thoughts? What do you see? A few group members shared that Nearpod⁸ is used in everyday classroom activities to promote engagement. One teacher commented that asking open-ended questions is a primary emphasis aimed at students sharing their extended written responses to text-dependent questions. The group discussed the importance of increasing students' reading comprehension and developing their written language skills.

A portion of the session focused on the staff's efforts to prepare students for the rigors of the state's criterion-referenced test and the American College Test (ACT). Many of the focus group members commented that they are actively working on teaching their students to deliver a quality written response to questions and not write "I don't know or IDK."

Student engagement was a focus of the discussion. Several staff members shared the school's learning model and the challenges of the virtual teaching platform in ensuring students are actively engaged throughout the lesson. One staff member explained the school's camera policy, elaborating that "students cannot see each other on camera if the instructor locks it." The group shared mixed opinions on whether or not the school's camera policy helps foster engagement and connectedness.

The group shared their views on the school's leadership and overall culture. A theme that emerged was that several participants felt that sometimes leadership implements plans without thoroughly explaining the "why" or purpose behind certain procedures, initiatives, or policies that are put in place. For instance, one member stated that the transition to the block schedule was implemented without focusing on the reasons and soliciting feedback from the staff. Several staff members resonated with the same sentiment about other school-wide plans that were initiated, especially given the expertise and veteran status of many of the faculty members. A few staff stated that "the intent and vision is there" but conveyed that overall communication or active critical listening to stakeholders' leadership team could be improved.

Regarding school culture, a few faculty discussed that the 2024-2025 year seems more positive than in prior years. One staff member stated, "Last school year, the admin put in more effort to change the culture to make it more positive and that the admin is not afraid to change if something is not working." Another member stated that staff turnover is a challenge. A portion of the group said that staff turnover leads to a lack of continuity and can negatively impact the school culture. Specifically, a challenge is retaining certified special education teachers to ensure compliance requirements are met for students with individualized education plans.

⁸ Nearpod is a digital tool that lets teachers create slide-based learning resources that are interactive. Nearpod can use pre-existing tools, such as Google Slides, Microsoft PowerPoint, and YouTube.

Focus Group Summary: School Leadership

Members of the leadership team were excited to share new initiatives put in place for the 2024-25 academic year. NVCS implemented required parent conferences in the fall, winter, and spring. One member of the leadership said, “We show parents the SBAC⁹ data and discuss how they can support students at home. We explain that SBAC is the one test that counts with the state.” NVCS also initiated in-person blended learning blocks two times per week, increasing instruction and learning to 100 more minutes a week. The block schedule for middle school students focuses on English language arts and math. The increased time provides high school students with more opportunities to earn credits. Members of the leadership team report parents have responded positively to the new initiatives, demonstrating more engagement with school personnel. As one member of the leadership team explained, “We convey to parents they are our partners in their child’s education. These initiatives have already shown a difference. We tell the parents, ‘If you can get the student up and to class, we can do the rest.’”

Leadership recognizes the attention to remediation is showing early signs of improvement and i-Ready¹⁰ scores are trending upwards. One assistant principal at NVCS reported early data in the weekly PLCs¹¹ have focused on the sense of urgency, and attention to rigor in the classroom is encouraging. As one assistant principal said, “We needed to give our students stamina in these tests. We noticed students were just clicking through the test quickly and not paying attention to it. So now we focus on giving them stamina on reading and taking things in steps, and not just getting frustrated quickly and shutting down. Now their focus is greater. Their attention span is longer.”

Members of the leadership team explained the process of orienting families to NVCS, the construct of the online schooling environment, and the expectation for families. One member of the leadership team said the process of building relationships with families starts at orientation. Each grade level is assigned a counselor, a principal, an academic advisor, a social worker, and teachers. Leadership explained that the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings are multi-faceted and encompass many topics. The meetings are recorded for families who cannot attend in person. Topics include SBAC scoring, purposes for in-person blended learning, i-Ready¹² practice, and test-taking skills.

A family engagement team, headed by a family engagement specialist who travels between the Reno/Carson City area and the Las Vegas Valley area, creates initiatives for student good behaviors, student of the month, and motivation. The family engagement team receives donations from the community for awards and prizes. NVCS has participated in such community events as the turkey trot for Thanksgiving, an escape room, a night out at local restaurants, and a holiday game night.

⁹ The Smarter Balanced assessments (SBAC) measure student progress in grades three through eight towards college and career success and are aligned with the Nevada Academic Content Standards in English language arts and mathematics. Results from the SBAC are included on the Nevada Report Card.

¹⁰ *i-Ready Learning* is a digital instructional resource assessing students with grade-level materials in reading and math.

¹¹ A professional learning community (PLC) is a team of educators who share ideas to enhance their teaching practice and create a learning environment where all students can reach their fullest potential. PLCs can be organized by grade level, content area or an entire teaching staff.

¹² *i-Ready Learning* is a digital instructional resource assessing students with grade-level materials in reading and math.

Focus Group Summary: Students

Students in the focus group indicated that teachers often use breakout rooms during virtual class sessions, but breakout activities were not designed for students to explain their thinking to a peer or teach a peer a concept. When asked if students completed cooperative learning tasks during breakout sessions, students answered in the negative, stating that each group generally had a distant task separate from the other groups, and they usually completed it quietly and then came back to the whole group. One student said she really did not remember ever interacting with her peers in any of her online classes. She explained, “We have a social hour and may do that during that time.” Another student in the focus group said she is in a group on social media, and she and her group help each other with their homework on their own time. “If someone needs help, we just ask each other. It doesn’t happen in class. I don’t recall ever being asked in class to explain my thinking in class or a teacher asking how we solved something.”

Students were asked to share something in which they learned that surprised them about themselves. One student said she was in a jump start program to earn her associate’s degree at high school graduation and she took two math classes in 10th grade and thought she was going to really struggle. She said, “At first, it was really difficult. I found I really liked Algebra 2; and I did really well! I received an A.” Another student said, “I always thought I would go to college at some point, but also thought I may not want to go on with school. The fact that I could get college courses paid for and earn my high school diploma was a bonus to enrolling at Nevada Virtual Charter School.” A third student said, “I came to Nevada Virtual Charter School as a failing student. I never thought I would make good grades or have enough credits to even think about graduating high school. Now I am making good grades, and I have credits.”

Students said they feel very comfortable speaking with their teachers. One said, “I can privately message any of my teachers and they don’t make me feel dumb if they have to repeat something or if I ask a question.” Another student said, “I haven’t had a bad encounter with a teacher at Nevada Charter.” A third student said, “Teachers ask students if we understand a concept all the time and spend a lot of checking for understanding and assisting us a lot. The teachers here actually care.” A few of the students laughed and said the high school math teacher “makes sure we are eating the information. He is very engaging.”

Classroom Environment and Instruction

Observation Rubric

A total of 12 middle and 10 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>	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 17	TOTAL: 5	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>	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 16	TOTAL: 6	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0

Classroom Environment and Instruction

Observation Rubric

A total of 12 middle and 10 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	If asked, students can explain what they are learning and where it fits into the larger curriculum context.	The teacher states clearly, at some point during the lesson, what the students will be learning.	The teacher provides little elaboration or explanation about what students will be learning.	At no time during the lesson does the teacher convey to students what they will be learning.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	The teacher explains content clearly and imaginatively. The teacher invites students to explain the content to their classmates. Students use academic language correctly.	The teacher's explanation of content is clear and invites student participation and thinking. The teacher makes no content errors. Students engage with the learning task, indicating that they understand what they are to do.	The teacher's explanation of the content consists of a monologue, with minimal participation or intellectual engagement by students. The teacher may make minor content errors. The teacher must clarify the learning task.	Students indicate through body language or questions that they don't understand the content being presented. Students indicate through their questions that they are confused about the learning task.	
	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 15	TOTAL: 6	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 1
Using Questioning and Discussion Strategies	Students initiate higher-order questions.	The teacher uses open-ended questions, inviting students to think and/or offer multiple possible answers.	The teacher frames some questions designed to promote student thinking, but many have a single correct answer.	Questions are rapid-fire and convergent with a single correct answer.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	The teacher builds on and uses student responses to questions to deepen student understanding. Students extend the discussion, enriching it. Virtually all students are engaged.	Discussions enable students to talk to one another without ongoing mediation by the teacher. Many students actively engage in the discussion.	The teacher invites students to respond directly to one another's ideas, but few students respond. The teacher calls on many students, but only a small number participate.	The teacher does not ask students to explain their thinking. Only a few students dominate the discussion.	
	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 13	TOTAL: 7	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 2

Classroom Environment and Instruction

Observation Rubric

A total of 12 middle and 10 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: 0	TOTAL: 11	TOTAL: 10	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 1
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: 9	TOTAL: 12	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 1

Classroom Observations and Additional Comments

In a middle school English class, students worked in groups to solve a vocabulary question within a paragraph. One student read the question aloud to approximately thirty students each time. Engagement could have been enhanced by providing printed passages and organizing students into smaller groups. The available responses were limited to multiple-choice options. While such questions have their place in assessing knowledge, there was an opportunity to encourage deeper critical thinking by exploring the text's deeper meaning.

In an in-person middle school science class, students learned about heredity traits. Two teachers led the lesson to approximately 26 students using a Jeopardy game format. The students were asked questions and were required to write their responses on their whiteboards, followed by short discussions on their responses. The students were engaged, and the teachers consistently checked student progress.

In one blended middle school class, one teacher and two assistants walked the room assisting and encouraging students to share and explain their thinking with a partner in writing a mathematical formula from a written prompt. Once students had crafted their formula, the instructor asked the class how many agreed with their partner by a show of hands. Then, a student volunteer shared how she created her formula and stated her answer. The teacher verified the answer as correct. As a class, the teacher then walked the students through plotting the response on a graph. The teacher and the assistants were upbeat in tone; students were somewhat reluctant and timid to speak with a shoulder partner, and it took a bit of prompting and encouragement for students to begin to talk to one another.

The teacher checked to ensure each student could access a video in an online classroom. She asked, "Who do you think Nike was trying to reach with this campaign?" prompting student responses through the chat feature and the interactive whiteboard, where names were attached to their answers. One student responded, "People who doubt their own abilities." Five of the thirteen students in the class participated in the discussion.

In one high school English language class, the teacher spoke most of the time. The teacher used many "ums", "likes", "okays", that were distracting to the lecture. Much of the information in the lecture could have been provided in a pre-recorded PowerPoint video as a homework assignment that students completed prior to class, and then class time could be spent with students using their own voice speaking about their own thoughts and ideas. Students sat passively most of the time. When students made comments, the instructor was the sole voice verifying or negating them.

In an online classroom, students worked on filling academic vocabulary words into a paragraph. They were shown the paragraph along with a list of words and were each assigned a number. As students struggled to complete the task, the teacher reviewed the words and their definitions, incorporating student input to support understanding.

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In a middle school, in-person English language (EL) support classroom consisting of ten students and one teacher, the students learned about inferencing. The teacher read the text out loud and asked students to use their inferencing skills when referring to the text. The lesson also included a listen-wise activity using devices that required students to listen to an audio presentation about the Maya pyramids. The lesson was well-paced, and the students were engaged.

In one high school class, students were placed in a breakout room to complete tasks after the instructor walked through the process with the whole class. Students were encouraged to talk with each other and explain their work. The instructor times the breakout rooms, went into each room, and used affirmations such as "good," "thank you," "keep going," and "I like what I am seeing." After three minutes, the students came back together as a whole class.

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In a middle school math class, students worked on graphing by answering math questions to create a graph. Three adults were in the room assisting approximately 27 students. The teacher reviewed the term slope (the slope of the line) while reviewing the short word problem and the relationship between the number of tickets, the cost, and variables. The students were highly engaged, and the teacher asked probing questions to encourage them to think critically.

In a high school English class, students listened to a portion of a novel for over five minutes. Afterward, the teacher asked them to discuss what had happened while working in groups. Although students were encouraged to share their thoughts using the microphone, no one volunteered. There was a missed opportunity for increased student engagement, as the teacher carried the heavy lifting of the learning by unpacking the text for students.

Middle school students attended an in-person English language arts class focusing on context clues. The teacher greeted the students as they entered the classroom, took attendance, and introduced the lesson. The teacher displayed and referred to the slide presentation to review the learning objectives. The students were also presented with a short video to review context clues. Student engagement was mixed during the video, with some students being intellectually engaged in the lesson. Also, the learning tasks were a mix of those requiring thinking and recall.

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
Continue to monitor the new curriculum.	NVCS continues to work with our curriculum provider to procure state standards-based curriculum, provide professional development for teachers to effectively implement, and support families in navigating the curriculum and platform. iReady allows the team to monitor students’ grasp of standards and support with additional lessons when needed.	SPCSA staff agree that school leadership team continues to address the needs of students by providing timely professional development (PD) and curricular support for teachers to supplement teaching.
Continue to focus on improving the middle school proficiency rate, currently at 33 index points and a 2-star rating per the NSPF.	NVCS continues to work on this recommendation. While Nevada Virtual Charter School gained 1 point on the NSPF, NVCS is still 2 stars in MS. We have put a plan in place to improve student SBAC outcomes.	SPCSA recommends NVCS continue to work on SBAC outcomes and increase the proficiency rate.
Secure zoning and obtain a certificate of occupancy to offer students blended learning opportunities at the Las Vegas facility	NVCS has obtained its certificate of occupancy and is holding Blended instruction in-person unless students live outside of a 50-mile radius of the school’s Northern or Southern NV campus.	This recommendation has been addressed by NVCS leaders.
Focus on increasing student enrollment numbers	NVCS will be asking the SPCSA Board for an amendment to reduce enrollment for the duration of our charter contract, as well as serving students in Clark County only in order to better serve our students and improve student outcomes. NVCS will continue to market and recruit students via social media and our website, TV and radio ads, banners at Malls, and local community events.	SPCSA recommends NVCS continue to work on serving and improving student outcomes.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Food Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" 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.