



# Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

## Pinecrest Academy of Nevada: Inspirada Campus Site Evaluation Report: March 13, 2025

State Public Charter School Authority

775-687-9174

3427 Goni Rd, suite 103

Carson City, Nevada 89706

702-486-8895

500 E. Warm Springs Rd, suite 116

Las Vegas, Nevada 89119

# Table of Contents

Executive Summary ..... 3

Site Evaluation Findings: Strengths..... 4

Site Evaluation Findings: Challenges ..... 6

Site Evaluation Findings: Recommendations ..... 7

Site Evaluation Findings: Strong Recommendations ..... 8

Site Evaluation Findings: Deficiencies ..... 9

Focus Group Participation Data..... 10

    Focus Group Summary: Governing Board .....11

    Focus Group Summary: Family Members, Parents, and Guardians..... 12

    Focus Group Summary: Faculty and Staff..... 13

    Focus Group Summary: School Leadership ..... 14

    Focus Group Summary: Students ..... 16

Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric ..... 17

Classroom Observations and Additional Comments ..... 20

Operational Compliance Checks..... 23

Appendix A ..... 24

**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.

## **Star ratings in elementary and middle school**

Pinecrest Academy Inspirada has consistently earned five-star ratings for middle school for the last six consecutive rating cycles. Even during the 2020-2021 COVID-19 period, when star ratings were not assigned, the school would have received a 5-star rating if the state had issued them. The elementary boasts a four-star rating. Currently, the elementary school has earned an index score of 74.5 points, while the middle school has a score of 96.6 points, both out of 100 points, according to the latest Nevada School Performance Framework<sup>1</sup> (NSPF) findings.

## **Low chronic absenteeism percentages**

Another strength at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada is the low chronic absenteeism rates in elementary and middle school. In addition to educating families on the benefits of being at school, leaders have implemented incentives for students to attend school regularly. This work has translated into students attending school regularly and very low percentages of chronic absenteeism. The chronic absenteeism percentage in elementary school is five percent, a decrease from nine percent in the 2022-23 school year, and middle school is six percent, compared with the SPCSA average of twenty-one percent.

## **High proficiency rates in middle school science**

Pinecrest Academy Inspirada boasts strong proficiency in middle school science, with 81 percent of the students proficient, compared with the district average of 48 percent proficiency. The rate indicates that students have a solid understanding of key scientific concepts, critical thinking skills, and the ability to apply scientific methods to real-world problems. It also demonstrates that the Pinecrest Academy Inspirada prioritizes STEAM<sup>2</sup> education, preparing students for future careers in science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics.

## **High rigor and student engagement in elementary school**

Pinecrest Academy Inspirada demonstrates a strong academic environment in its elementary school, characterized by highly rigorous lessons and exceptional student engagement. Teachers implement challenging and well-structured lessons that encourages critical thinking and active participation. As observed by SPCSA staff, students consistently demonstrated enthusiasm for learning, engaging deeply with lesson content and classroom activities. This combination of academic rigor and student involvement fosters a dynamic and effective learning experience, contributing to the overall success of the school's elementary program.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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).

<sup>2</sup> STEAM stands for science, technology, engineering, arts, and math.

### **Middle school closing opportunity gaps**

Pinecrest Academy Inspirada's middle school excelled in closing opportunity gaps, earning a perfect 20/20 score on the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) in this section. This achievement reflects the school's commitment to academic growth, particularly among sixth and seventh graders. The Closing Opportunity Gaps Indicator<sup>3</sup> measures the percentage of students who met their annual growth targets after not achieving proficiency in the previous year's state-administered summative criterion-referenced<sup>4</sup> English language arts and mathematics assessments. Pinecrest Academy Inspirada's success in this area highlights its effective instructional strategies and dedication to ensuring all students make meaningful academic progress.

### **Conservatory in middle school**

The middle school conservatory is a standout and unique strength at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada, offering a specialized music program that includes band, choir, and orchestra. This unique initiative concentrates on advancing students' musical skills by focusing on style, articulation, pitch, dynamics, technique, advanced rhythmic patterns, and tonal recognition. As a dedicated arts program, the conservatory provides an intensive environment where young musicians can receive tailored instruction and numerous performance opportunities. This focused approach not only deepens their understanding of music but also equips them with the skills and confidence needed to excel as artists and pursue potential careers in the arts.

---

<sup>3</sup> The Closing Opportunity Gaps Indicator determines the percentage of students meeting their annual growth percentile who did not achieve proficiency in the prior year's state-administered criterion-referenced tests in English language arts and mathematics assessments.

<sup>4</sup> A criterion-referenced test (CRT) is a type of assessment that measures a student's performance against a predetermined standard or criteria.

# 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.

## **Teacher shortage and lack of qualification**

One challenge for Pinecrest Academy Inspirada has been losing qualified teachers to other schools with the ability to offer a more attractive salary. The school has also noticed an increase in teachers who receive their credentials from ARL<sup>5</sup> programs. As reported by leadership, these teachers often require more intensive training and coaching due to missing student teaching experience. As a result, the school faces the ongoing challenge of maintaining a stable and experienced teaching staff, which can impact the consistency and quality of education provided to students.

## **Low enrollment of specialized populations**

Pinecrest Academy Inspirada faces challenges in increasing enrollment of specialized populations, specifically English language (EL) learners, students with an individualized education plan (IEP), and students who receive free and reduced lunch (FRL). According to the 2023-24 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework<sup>6</sup>, under the school progress indicator category measuring the enrollment percentage of EL learners, the elementary earned only one out of five points, and the middle school earned two out of five points. Regarding enrollment measures for students who receive free and reduced lunch, the elementary school earned one out five points and the middle school earned zero out of five points. In addition, enrollment measures for students who have an IEP, the elementary earned two out five points and the middle school earned three out of five points.

## **High proficiency but low growth in elementary school**

Another challenge for Pinecrest Academy Inspirada is the elementary school has high proficiency rates for math, English language arts, and Read by Grade Three<sup>7</sup> (RBG3) indicators, 81%, 83% and 83% respectively, but low growth for students. Under the Growth Indicator on the NSPF, the school earned 24.5 points out of a possible 35 points. This indicator is determined with a grade configuration that accommodates at least one prior year score for a student and one current year score. For the Closing Opportunity Gaps<sup>8</sup> indicator on the NSPF, Pinecrest Academy Inspirada earned nine out of twenty points. These scores show that although the school has a high proficiency rate (77%), specific subgroup measures in the Closing Opportunity Gaps Indicator (Prior Non-Proficient Students meeting their math Adequate Growth Target) did not sufficiently grow from 2022-23 school year to the 2023-24 school year.

---

<sup>5</sup> ARL stands for Alternative Route to Licensure. It is a teacher preparation program for individuals who wish to earn an initial teaching license who already have a degree in some other area from a university.

<sup>6</sup> The Academic Performance Framework incorporates corresponding school year NSPF school ratings under the NSPF Index Score indicator. The NSPF includes key performance measures such as academic achievement and proficiency, academic growth, English Learner (EL) growth, opportunity gaps, graduation rates, and chronic absenteeism, which address the requirements of NRS 388A.273.

<sup>7</sup> Nevada's Read by Grade 3 (RBG3) Act establishes a statewide comprehensive system of early reading instruction and intervention to accelerate the reading growth of students reading below grade level in kindergarten through third grade.

<sup>8</sup> The Closing Opportunity Gaps Indicator determines the percentage of students meeting their annual growth percentile who did not achieve proficiency in the prior year's state-administered criterion-referenced tests in English language arts and mathematics assessments.

# 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.

## **High expectations with a balanced workload**

Based on reported concerns by students, staff, and parents of academic pressure at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada, it is recommended that the school and community reassess its workload and performance expectations to better support student mental health. The current environment, with pressures to excel on high-stakes tests like the SBAC<sup>9</sup>, extensive homework assignments that far exceed the guideline of ten minutes per grade level, and little time for family or relaxation have led to students experiencing some emotional breakdowns and overall strain. Implementing a balanced homework policy and providing enhanced mental health resources, such as counseling and stress management programs, can help ensure that students' academic success does not come at the expense of their emotional well-being.

## **Continue to diversify enrollment for special populations in elementary and middle school**

It is recommended that Pinecrest Academy Inspirada continue to monitor and improve overall diversity to be more representative of the local district and the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA). The enrollment diversity indicator in elementary school is four out of fifteen, with low ratings in Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) populations, students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP), and English language learners (EL). In middle school, it is five out of fifteen, with low ratings in FRL and EL.

---

<sup>9</sup> SBAC standards for Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, Nevada's criterion referenced test, designed to measure student performance against a fixed set of predetermined criteria or learning standards.

# Site Evaluation Findings: Strong Recommendations

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

There were no strong recommendations for Pinecrest Academy Inspirada during this site visit.



# Site Evaluation Findings: Deficiencies

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

There were no deficiencies for Pinecrest Academy Inspirada during this site visit.

# 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 <sup>10</sup>	2
Family Members, Parents, and Guardians	10
Faculty and Staff	8
School Leadership	4
Students	8

---

<sup>10</sup> Quorum was not met, and Open Meeting Law was not violated.

# Focus Group Summary: Governing Board

Two Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Board members participated in the focus group. The board comprises six members, and the group is looking to add another member soon. The board has members with backgrounds that include a retired educator, counselor, school administrator, chancellor for higher education, real estate, finance, and a parent representative. The participants shared that all members had completed the required board training requirements. The board has two subcommittees: the athletics committee, which oversees the sports programs and facilities; and the app and vendor review committee, which evaluates and recommends educational apps and vendors for the schools. The board meets every six weeks, and some members visit the schools regularly.

The members emphasized their support and trust for the leaders of every campus under the Pinecrest Academy of Nevada network, which includes six brick-and-mortar campuses and one virtual program. One member stated, "School leaders work together and embody the mission and vision of the schools," elaborating that one school leader who worked for a Pinecrest network school in Florida moved to Nevada, worked as an assistant principal under the supervision of a Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Leader, earned a promotion, and currently serves as the principal for one of their schools.

A member highlighted the board's commitment to fostering a deep sense of community, attributing that much of the student success at the Pinecrest Academy network of schools in Southern Nevada is due to the collaborative approach of all stakeholders, which the building leaders guide with a high sense of trust and responsibility. The member shared, "We are proud of our families, scholars, staff, and leaders." The group highlighted that the Pinecrest network of schools recently completed a fundraising event that raised over one hundred thousand dollars earmarked for special projects and to foster dual enrollment programs, a testament to the community's support and involvement.

A portion of the focus group delved into the board's proactive approach to managing challenges, including the need to address teacher salaries, and some discrepancies were precisely noted compared to the local school district. A member emphasized the board's proactive strategy to provide holiday bonuses and stipends for staff to promote teacher retention within the Pinecrest network of schools. However, the board member elaborated that these bonuses and stipends are budget-dependent, citing another challenge of adjusting to the uncertainty of the future of federal grant funding opportunities or lack thereof. The members also shared the challenge of finding a location for the Pinecrest Academy of Nevada Springs campus and their action steps to secure a more permanent location or purchase and redevelop the current site, demonstrating the board's proactive and strategic approach to challenges.

The board evaluates the school leaders annually and participates in their self-evaluation. This process involves a comprehensive review of the leader's performance, including their ability to meet academic goals, manage the school's budget, and foster a positive school culture. The members also shared that they work closely with their Educational Management Organization<sup>11</sup> (EMO) to ensure the schools operate efficiently to serve their stakeholders.

---

<sup>11</sup> An Education Management Organization (EMO) is a for-profit entity that manages schools by centralizing support, operations, and oversight.

# Focus Group Summary: Family Members, Parents, and Guardians

On the day of the site evaluation at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada, ten parents participated and provided updates about their children's academic progress. Parents stated they receive updates on their child's academic progress through various methods. At the beginning of each week, teachers provide a forecast of upcoming lessons. Most teachers are diligent about updating grades in Infinite Campus<sup>12</sup>, though some parents noted inconsistencies depending on the teacher. Communication in elementary school is especially strong, with weekly subject updates shared through platforms like Class Dojo<sup>13</sup>, Bloomz<sup>14</sup> and others. One parent shared, "Parent-teacher conferences occur once per year, and report cards include notes on progress as needed. If concerns arise, teachers are quick to address them vocally."

Parents reported that teachers know their students very well and make meaningful connections with them. Many parents agreed that their children feel comfortable with their teachers, who take the time to learn about their interests beyond the classroom. One parent noted, "One of the math teachers even knew where each of my children were planning to attend school after eighth grade."

Parents shared mixed experiences regarding the workload and rigor at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada. Some noted that missing school, even for a short period, led to a significant drop in grades for their children, with some teachers being supportive while others were not. One parent shared, "In middle school, my son often feels overwhelmed by the workload, with some of his friends describing a single missed day as equivalent to a month's worth of homework." While parents appreciate the academic rigor and believe it prepares students for high school and college, many feel the workload is excessive, especially for younger students in kindergarten and first grade. Some expressed concerns about the lack of school and life balance, as heavy homework loads limit time for extracurricular activities and play. Others believe the rigorous curriculum has helped their children succeed and stay out of trouble. Parents also noted that transitioning to this school model can be challenging, with students having little downtime and feeling constant academic pressure. "The stress is especially high leading up to SBAC testing, with months of preparation contributing to student anxiety," a parent stated. While many value the challenging curriculum, they also hope for a better balance between academic demands and overall well-being.

Parents at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada had suggestions for improvement, particularly regarding communication. Many found the Pioneer Weekly<sup>15</sup> emails unorganized and repetitive, often containing the same information week after week. They suggested having another set of eyes to review the emails for accuracy and outdated content. Some parents also felt that breaking the information down by grade level would make it easier to find relevant details. Another common request was for more advance notice on events, such as award ceremonies, as some feel last-minute, making it difficult for families to plan accordingly.

---

<sup>12</sup> Infinite Campus is a K12 information technology platform that provides web-based student data management systems to school districts.

<sup>13</sup> Class Dojo is a communication platform for schools and families.

<sup>14</sup> Bloomz is a tool for administrators and teachers to securely communicate with families by sharing engaging classroom and schoolwide updates.

<sup>15</sup> Pioneer Weekly are emails that Pinecrest Academy Inspirada administrators send.

# Focus Group Summary: Faculty and Staff

Staff members at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada reported positive morale within the school community. Professional development days are well-structured, bringing staff together in multi-purpose sessions that foster collaboration. The school encourages middle school and elementary school teachers to connect, helping to build strong relationships across grade levels. One staff member said, “We feel comfortable with our teams, colleagues, and administrators, which creates a welcoming and supportive environment.” New teachers are made to feel included and supported, with many staff members echoing these sentiments. Overall, the school maintains a positive and comfortable atmosphere for its educators.

At Pinecrest Academy Inspirada, teachers shared the approach to closing opportunity gaps is both proactive and data-driven. “We have implemented targeted interventions, such as a dedicated ‘Power Hour’ for students across all groups for students to get the targeted instruction they need, while also providing extension opportunities for those students needing additional challenges,” one teacher said. Power Hour groups are adjusted based on current data rather than waiting until the next quarter, ensuring timely support. Staff members shared they use quadrant data from i-Ready<sup>16</sup> assessments and overall performance metrics to create comprehensive plans tailored to every student's growth. Additionally, cross-curricular instruction is emphasized, particularly in middle school, to benefit all students in closing these gaps.

Staff members shared they incorporate a social-emotional component into their lessons through various creative strategies. One shared that they use a “big book of feelings” that lists emotions along with their definitions and introduce a “feeling of the day” to spark brief, two-minute conversations that help build vocabulary and offer new ways for students to express their emotions. Additionally, the dedicated SEL<sup>17</sup> teacher collaborates with students to create anchor charts and selects songs used within individual classrooms to reinforce these concepts. Beyond these activities, teachers organically weave social-emotional learning into subjects like social studies by leading critical discussions on empathy, using topics such as pollution, history, and wellness coping strategies. Educators are also attentive to signs of test anxiety and stress, particularly noting the pressures students feel about achieving straight A’s and the daunting nature of standardized testing in third grade and beyond. To promote a healthy school-life balance, adjustments like reduced homework for students involved in sports are implemented.

School leaders, instructional coaches, and other educators at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada work collaboratively to enhance teaching practices, as reported by staff members. Instructional coaches review lesson plans for new teachers, model effective strategies, and provide creative tools, such as a menu of choices of strategies to work on, to help tailor lessons to various learning styles. A teacher shared, “Administrators ensure that we have the necessary resources, and post-observation conferences help me think more about my teaching practice.” A formal mentorship program pairs less experienced educators with veterans on campus, with provisions like substitute coverage, facilitating cross-campus collaboration.

---

<sup>16</sup> i-Ready is a computer- adaptive program for English language arts and math with personalized learning pathways.

<sup>17</sup> SEL stands for social-emotional learning.

# Focus Group Summary: School Leadership

Four school leaders at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada shared a range of strategies designed to reduce chronic absenteeism. In middle school, attendance is integrated into achievement checks where each student is met individually with an administration member, ensuring that attendance data is regularly reviewed. The school also incentivizes attendance by offering quarterly picnics and uses community service requirements, allowing students to earn hours either in school or outside to promote engagement. Additionally, fun events are planned on key days across the school to keep students engaged and motivated to attend school consistently.

Leaders at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada explained that professional development focuses on training teachers and instructional aides to support small-group instruction and use Depths of Knowledge<sup>18</sup> (DOK) questioning techniques, enabling them to create lessons at various DOK levels. A leader shared, “The training helps teachers recognize when to pivot during lessons and encourages productive struggle, highlighting that effective planning and lessons aid in classroom management.” Leaders also said student engagement is intentionally integrated into instruction. This was also evidenced in elementary school classrooms by SPCSA staff, as seen on page 19, with 29 out of 36 classrooms rated as highly proficient or distinguished under the “engaging students in learning” indicator on the Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric. Administrators also use an evaluation tool to ensure practices like student discourse and Kagan<sup>19</sup> strategies at higher DOK levels are in place. Leaders emphasize a “ten to two rule” during lessons, which is ten minutes of lecture followed by two minutes of planned student engagement, where students sometimes present the learning objectives. Feedback conversations consistently reinforce the importance of these strategies for enhancing teaching effectiveness.

During the focus group, leaders outlined strategies designed to meet diverse student needs. They explained that differentiated instruction during the kindergarten through fifth grade “power hour” helps close achievement gaps. At the same time, middle school students benefit from accelerated pathways, including opportunities to earn high school credit in math courses such as algebra and geometry through fluid groupings. Leaders reported that math instruction in fourth and fifth grades is carefully differentiated to meet each student’s specific needs. They utilize a range of curricula, including Voyager Math<sup>20</sup>, which emphasizes extensive front-loading of concepts to build a strong foundational understanding. One leader shared, “Professional development in math is a top priority, with dedicated coaches assigned to each grade level to analyze math data and support instructional improvements.” Additionally, Pinecrest Academy of Inspirada offers after-school tutoring for students preparing for the SBAC.

---

<sup>18</sup> Depth of Knowledge (DOK) is a framework developed by Normal Webb in 1997. This system organizes prompts, situations, and tasks into four distinct levels of rigor. As students progress from one to the next, they face challenges that demand them to apply their cognitive thinking skills more deeply.

<sup>19</sup> Kagan strategies refer to a set of cooperative learning techniques designed to promote student engagement, interaction, and collaboration in the classroom., developed by Dr. Spencer Kagan

<sup>20</sup> Voyager Math is an engaging math practice platform and curriculum for middle school students that transforms mistakes into learning opportunities.

Leaders also highlighted the strength of their STEAM<sup>21</sup> program, which feeds directly into CTE<sup>22</sup> pathways. They pointed out that initiatives like the flight program and band conservatory are nationally recognized, with students participating in state competitions, international events in Canada, and even on national stages.

Leaders at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada emphasized their commitment to making recruitment and enrollment more representative of the community. There is a waitlist of 1,875 students, reflecting strong demand for enrollment. To reach a diverse population, the school has distributed multilingual flyers and ensured that its website can be translated into 30 different languages. Additionally, the implementation of a weighted lottery system is underway, though it will take time to make this change.

---

<sup>21</sup> STEAM stands for science, technology, engineering, arts, and math.

<sup>22</sup> Career-focused experiential learning programs, sometimes called Career and Technical Education (CTE), provide students with opportunities to explore careers and gain marketable skills while still in high school.

# Focus Group Summary: Students

Students at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada provided insights into their classroom experiences. When asked about their favorite class of the day, responses varied widely, from electives and student aide to courses in persuasion and propaganda, as well as science and math. Students said they appreciated hands-on experiments. Some students also enjoyed unique offerings like orchestra classes and mock trials. In terms of student engagement opportunities, many students noted that opportunities to engage with peers were good, though these varied depending on the class, with some incorporating debates. Additionally, students shared recent learning experiences, such as mastering the solving of polynomials, grasping concepts of surface and lateral area through extra tutoring, and writing paragraphs. A student commented, "I found that learning measurement conversions became much easier with the memorable storytelling techniques my teachers shared with me."

Students reported feeling physically safe at school and after school. One student mentioned, "Physical altercations are rare, and the school isn't known for fights." However, some students expressed concerns about mental or emotional harm through hurtful texts or emails, noting that such incidents can leave them feeling uncomfortable. The school actively addresses these issues through strict policies and regularly practices safety drills, which helps reinforce students' overall sense of security. When faced with a serious problem at school, students reported that they typically turn to their teachers or the safe school specialist. This specialist is specifically available to address issues such as bullying, interpersonal drama, and conflicts, providing a trusted resource for students in challenging situations.

Students shared that their teachers make a genuine effort to connect personally. One student mentioned that almost all of their teachers take the time to get to know them, saying, "My teachers even recall personal details like the fact that I have an older brother or what college I plan on attending." Overall, every student agreed that their teachers consistently work to build meaningful relationships with them.

Students at Pinecrest Academy Inspirada offered two practical suggestions for school improvement. One idea was to enhance the playground by repainting the area and enlarging the slide to create a more engaging and safer environment for outdoor play. One student shared, "When choosing a ninth-grade school, I think I should select the institution that provides the best educational opportunities. I want help from my parents and school leaders in doing that."



# Classroom Environment and Instruction

## Observation Rubric

A total of 26 elementary and 10 middle 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
<b>Classroom Learning Environment is Conducive to Learning</b>	<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>
	<b>TOTAL: 6</b>	<b>TOTAL: 24</b>	<b>TOTAL: 5</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 1</b>
<b>Establishing a Culture for Learning</b>	<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>
	<b>TOTAL: 4</b>	<b>TOTAL: 24</b>	<b>TOTAL: 7</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 1</b>

# Classroom Environment and Instruction

## Observation Rubric

A total of 26 elementary and 10 middle 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's explanation of content is clear and invites student participation and thinking.	The teacher's explanation of the content consists of a monologue, with minimal participation or intellectual engagement by students.	Students indicate through body language or questions that they don't understand the content being presented.	
	The teacher invites students to explain the content to their classmates.	The teacher makes no content errors.	The teacher may make minor content errors.	Students indicate through their questions that they are confused about the learning task.	
	Students use academic language correctly.	Students engage with the learning task, indicating that they understand what they are to do.	The teacher must clarify the learning task.		
	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 26</b>	<b>TOTAL: 7</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 3</b>
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.	Discussions enable students to talk to one another without ongoing mediation by the teacher.	The teacher invites students to respond directly to one another's ideas, but few students respond.	The teacher does not ask students to explain their thinking.	
	Students extend the discussion, enriching it.	Many students actively engage in the discussion.	The teacher calls on many students, but only a small number participate.	Only a few students dominate the discussion.	
	Virtually all students are engaged.				
	<b>TOTAL: 1</b>	<b>TOTAL: 24</b>	<b>TOTAL: 7</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 4</b>

# Classroom Environment and Instruction

## Observation Rubric

A total of 26 elementary and 10 middle 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
<b>Engaging Students in Learning</b>	<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>
	<b>TOTAL: 6</b>	<b>TOTAL: 23</b>	<b>TOTAL: 6</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 1</b>
<b>Using Assessment in Instruction</b>	<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>	
	<b>TOTAL: 2</b>	<b>TOTAL: 25</b>	<b>TOTAL: 7</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 2</b>

# Classroom Observations and Additional Comments

In one upper elementary class, students analyzed sources by taking detailed notes to create an opinion. Students were encouraged to pay close attention to using appropriate vocabulary words to demonstrate content understanding and vocabulary mastery. After gathering their sources and notes, students wrote a five-paragraph draft incorporating the task, purpose, key details, summary, and audience awareness.

Several minutes passed before class began in one middle school class as students gathered their materials and prepared for class. Students chatted with their peers and were slow to get their laptops out, and the teacher called out to them a few times to settle down. The teacher told the students to begin a Kahoot<sup>23</sup> several times before they did. The teacher sat at his/her desk and told the students to get onto the site. Over five minutes passed before the teacher gave the students the Kahoot code. There was a loss of learning time. It was unclear what the students would be doing during the class or what the objective for the day would be.

Students solved mathematical equations individually and then explained how they completed the problems with a peer. The teacher asked the students, "Why do we explain how we solved the problem to our neighbor?" The students said, "Because that's how we remember better." Then, students solved a math word problem with a peer. Students created a poster showing the written equation and how they solved the equation on the poster. Afterward, students presented their poster to the class, read the word problem, and taught the formula for the equation, the steps needed to solve the problem, and the solution on the poster.

In an elementary classroom, students engaged in partnerships to ask and answer questions about various quadrilaterals. The teacher provided clear directions, ensuring students understood the lesson's expectations.

In a lower elementary classroom, students practiced adding two and one-digit numbers with regrouping, such as sixty-three plus eight. They used the strategy of making a ten before adding the ones. After solving the equations independently on whiteboards, they explained their process to a partner. The discussions remained focused on the task, and the classroom demonstrated high rigor, accuracy, and urgency.

In a primary classroom, students engaged in a CVC word hunt, searching for words posted around the room and recording them under the appropriate word family category using clipboards. The atmosphere was energetic, with students actively discussing different words. Meanwhile, the teacher provided guidance, helping them sort words correctly.

The teacher led primary-aged students through the steps of their procedural writing on How to Catch a Leprechaun. As students sounded out words to spell, the teacher moved around the room, providing individualized support. Students also used a rubric to proofread and refine their writing.

---

<sup>23</sup> Kahoot is a game- based learning platform designed to make learning fun.

In an intermediate elementary classroom, students used Play-Doh to explore the concept of volume by shaping large and small cubes and rectangles. They responded to the question, "How many ways can you show volume with your Play-Doh?" The teacher walked around the room with an iPad, projecting students' creations onto the board to display their work. However, while this provided a visual learning opportunity, students missed the chance to explain their thinking, as the teacher did all the talking and explaining.

In a resource room, three students took a break by playing computer games while the teacher provided one-on-one support to a student working on math measurement questions. The teacher encouraged the student to persist, offering guidance and prompting him to try again. An anchor chart with helpful information was available as a reference. Meanwhile, one student sat on a bouncy ball as an alternative seating option.

In an intermediate elementary classroom, students took a summative reading test that required them to compare two texts, *Air Works for Me* and *The Layers of Earth's Atmosphere*. One question asked, "Which information about the atmosphere is in both texts and a diagram?" Students worked independently, entering their answers into a Google Classroom<sup>24</sup> assignment. The assessment was rigorous and aligned with the Nevada Academic Content Standards<sup>25</sup>.

In an art classroom, primary-aged students created pictures while exploring color concepts. The board displayed the questions "What does monochromatic mean?" and "How can we color our sections?" alongside an example of a completed project. As they worked, students quietly conferred with the teacher and moved freely to select colors for their artwork. The learning objectives were posted, guiding their creative process.

In an elementary classroom, the students engaged in an English language arts lesson focusing on a language review activity. The students followed along on their worksheets as the teacher reviewed each question, stressing the importance of the noun matching the correct verb form. The students displayed high levels of commitment to focus and follow along with the teacher's instruction. The lesson was well-paced, and the teacher frequently checked for student understanding.

---

<sup>24</sup> Google Classroom is a blended learning platform for educational institutions that simplifies creating, distributing, and grading assignments.

<sup>25</sup> The Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS) are a set of clearly defined learning targets for each grade level in grades K-12.

# 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
SPCSA staff recommend that Pinecrest Inspirada continues to work on increasing student proficiency rates in math and science.	The math proficiency rate in elementary school is 81%, and for science, it is 46% for the 2023-24 school year. In middle school, the math proficiency rate is 82%, and for science, it is 81%.	Proficiency rates have increased. However, the SPCSA still recommends Pinecrest Inspirada increase the science proficiency rate for elementary school.
SPCSA staff recommends that Pinecrest Inspirada continue working on its recruitment and enrollment plan. Recruitment and enrollment plans contain specific strategies to serve a student population representative of the school's local community, particularly those qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch.	The Pinecrest Academy Inspirada school website has a translating tool to translate information into 30 different languages, the recruiting flyer is produced in both English and Spanish, and a weighted lottery has been implemented.	The SPCSA staff recommends that the school continue to monitor and improve overall diversity to be more representative of the local district and the SPCSA.
SPCSA staff recommend that Pinecrest Inspirada create and implement a plan to manage the upcoming change in leadership.	The change in leadership has been smooth, as the new leader is the lead principal in the Pinecrest network. Feedback from staff, family, and student focus groups all supported the smooth transition.	The SPCSA staff finds this recommendation has been met.

# 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 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.