



EIAA

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Elko Institute for Academic Achievement Site Evaluation Report: October 7, 2025

State Public Charter School Authority

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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 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 conduct 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.

High academic achievement in elementary and middle school

A strength of the Elko Institute for Academic Achievement (EIAA) is the high levels of student achievement. The high academic achievement rates support the school's vision statement, which emphasizes its challenging academic and innovative curriculum. The school leaders and staff actively strive to be highly effective in matching the curriculum to students' abilities. According to the 2024-25 Nevada School Performance Framework¹ (NSPF) data, the elementary school (74 index points out of 100) was rated as a four-star school for the second consecutive year, and the middle school (91 index points out of 100) was rated as a five-star school for the third consecutive year. Additionally, the school has exceeded standards (80 or more points) in the most recent State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) Academic Performance Framework² (APF), with the elementary school earning 86 points out of 100 and the middle school earning 93 points, reflecting the school's commitment to providing an excellent academic experience for its students.

Data-driven instruction³

EIAA excels at using data-driven instruction to boost student growth and close achievement gaps. Administration and staff collaborate with a data consultant three times a year to refine their use of student performance data. The leadership team and teachers analyze this data within professional learning communities to ensure high-quality, standards-based instruction that maximizes each student's growth. The school's effective data use is evident in its NSPF results. The elementary school earned 28 of 35 possible points on the growth indicator⁴. The middle school earned a perfect 30 out of 30 on growth measures and 20 out of 20 on closing opportunity gaps⁵, showcasing the impact of data-driven strategies.

Strong leadership

A key strength of the EIAA is the principal's strong leadership. Focus groups consistently noted the administrators' high level of professionalism, serving as a foundation for the school's continued success. The United States Department of Education⁶ emphasizes the importance of effective school principals in driving educational outcomes. Strong principals foster collaboration, provide instructional leadership,

¹ NSPF is Nevada's public school rating system, designed by Nevadans and developed in accordance with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) per NRS 385A.600, which classifies schools within a one to five-star performance rating system.

² The Academic Performance Framework uses school year NSPF ratings under the NSPF Index Score indicator, as the NSPF includes key performance measures such as academic achievement and proficiency, academic growth, EL growth, opportunity gaps, graduation rates, and chronic absenteeism measures that address the requirements of NRS 388A.273.

³ Data-driven instruction is an educational approach where teachers use student data from assessments, observations, and other sources to tailor their teaching and improve student learning outcomes.

⁴ To measure growth indicators, Nevada uses the student growth percentile (SGP) to assess student progress. The SGP is a number from 1 to 99, based on at least two consecutive years of state test scores. It shows how much a student has grown in the past year compared to other students in the same group.

⁵ The Closing Opportunity Gaps Indicator specifically focuses on elementary and middle school students who were previously not proficient but are now on track to proficiency.

⁶ The United States Department of Education is the federal agency responsible for establishing policy, administering, and coordinating most federal education assistance.

make strategic decisions, and ensure academic progress. The principal is a major strength at the Elko Institute and deserves recognition for exemplary work and dedication. The assistant principal also contributes to the school's strong leadership and enhances the school's overall operations.

Staff dedication and competence

Staff dedication and competency are strengths of the EIAA. The various focus groups highlighted the staff's ability to positively impact students' lives academically, emotionally, and socially. For instance, the school leader and members of the family focus group shared their accolades for the staff, recognizing their role in the school's and its students' success. Students in the focus group emphasized the importance of the staff's support and encouragement. Competent staff support the school's mission and vision by empowering students to acquire and value knowledge and skills that will support them as lifelong learners and leaders, to contribute to the community, and to practice the school's core values.

High compliance rates on the Organizational Performance Framework

Achieving high compliance under the SPCSA Organizational Performance Framework⁷ (OPF) is a strength for EIAA. The Framework evaluates schools on operational and compliance standards, ensuring they meet legal and ethical requirements. Elko Institute's strong systems enable consistent, effective maintenance of high levels of compliance in operating as an independent entity.

New facility

A strong sense of stability for all stakeholders comes from the school's new facility, which is viewed as a strength. The building strikes visitors as beautiful, inviting, and well-maintained. Members of the board commented on the building's significance, and this stability has created an environment that supports enrollment growth.

Enrollment growth

Enrollment growth serves as a strength for the EIAA. The school's leader noted that its high academic achievement rates have attracted students from across the local school district. Board focus group members and the school's leader expressed satisfaction with increased enrollment and high demand for admission. Over the last few years, the school's enrollment has doubled.

Family engagement and the school's communication with families

Family engagement, supported by the school's effective communication systems to involve families, is a strength for EIAA. Members of the family focus group underscored that the school's systems for engaging and communicating with them about the significance of their roles in their child/children's lives have led to high levels of family engagement. Many family members shared attending school events regularly and receiving numerous forms of communication from the school, including phone calls, emails, newsletters, and in-person conversations.

⁷ The Organizational Framework indicators define the operational and compliance standards to which all charter schools are held accountable in terms of meeting minimum legal and ethical requirements.

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.

Enrollment growth

A challenge at the EIAA is the increased enrollment. Although the addition of more students is welcomed, the challenge has been ensuring that new students transition smoothly to the academic demands and the school's rigorous standards, while also providing the social and emotional support needed to help them assimilate into the school's culture. Members of the faculty focus group discussed the challenge of adjusting to increased enrollment and ensuring that new students feel supported and included. The school's leader and board shared that enrollment has increased from 198 to 396 over the last few years.

Chronic absenteeism in the middle school

Chronic absenteeism⁸ in middle school is a challenge for the EIAA. According to the 2024-25 NSPF data, the school's chronic absenteeism rate of 20 percent is higher than the district or SPCSA average of 13 percent. School leaders are actively confronting the problem, and the school board acknowledges it as a critical, ongoing priority. The faculty focus group stressed the serious impact of prolonged absences, warning that students who miss school risk falling dangerously behind in coursework, which threatens both their academic and social development.

Lack of space

A challenge for the EIAA is a lack of space. The school's success has led to increasing enrollment, resulting in more students on campus and limited space. In an ideal scenario, the school would benefit from a multipurpose room or gym to host school-wide events and gatherings. Every focus group cited the need for more space. For instance, several students mentioned the benefit of having a multi-purpose room for school-wide assemblies, while parents shared that during the winter months, a gym would benefit students when the weather is too cold for outdoor recess.

Low science achievement in elementary school

A challenge for the EIAA is the low science achievement among elementary school students. According to the 2024-25 NSPF, the school's science proficiency rate was 15 percent, which was lower than the SPCSA rate of 26 percent. The school leader acknowledged the challenge and has actively implemented action steps to improve alignment between instruction and the summative assessment. The school leader reported that elementary science proficiency, according to the Measure of Academic Progress⁹ (MAP) data, is above 60 percent.

Challenge of adopting a school-wide math curriculum

Finally, another challenge for the EIAA's leaders is the lack of a school-wide math curriculum. Currently, school leaders and teachers create their own curricula, combining various sources to deliver

⁸ Chronic absenteeism is typically defined as missing at least 10 percent of school days.

⁹ MAP stands for Measures of Academic Progress, a computer-adaptive assessment that measures student achievement and growth in subjects such as reading, language arts, and mathematics.

math instruction to their students, with positive results. Instructional decisions are based on student performance data. However, moving forward, the school administration. is open to adopting a school-wide math curriculum that aligns with the school's needs and is backed by scientifically based practices.

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.

Continuing to support student social and emotional needs

The SPCSA recommends that the EIAA continue implementing its social and emotional resources and practices. Additionally, the school may want to consider accessing resources on the Nevada Department of Education website to support students' social-emotional (SEL) needs. Explicit SEL instruction refers to providing consistent opportunities for students to activate, practice, and reflect on social and emotional competencies in developmentally appropriate ways. Focusing on supporting students' social and emotional needs by leveraging existing systems and resources and adding additional tools as needed can have a profoundly positive impact on student outcomes.

Improve chronic absenteeism in middle school

SPCSA staff recommend that the EIAA continue implementing specific actions to address chronic absenteeism in middle school. These steps should include calling families and providing family workshops that explain chronic absenteeism and the importance of consistent school attendance. According to NSPF data in the Student Engagement Indicator¹⁰, the chronic absenteeism rate in middle school is 20 percent, which is 7 percent higher than the SPCSA average. By following these steps, the school can help reduce chronic absenteeism, thereby improving access to instruction and positively impacting student achievement and engagement. The school's leadership team may want to reference the SPCSA Best Practices resources (See Best Practices - <https://spsa.instructure.com/courses/72>)

Continue to search for a school-wide math curriculum

The SPCSA recommends that the EIAA leadership team and the school board continue to search and then select a school-wide math curriculum. The leaders may want to consider referencing EdReports,¹¹ which empowers school districts with a free review of K-12 instructional materials. Selecting a school-wide evidence-based math curriculum can enhance the school's student achievement outcomes.

Continue to work on science achievement in elementary school

The SPCSA recommends that the EIAA continue to work to improve science achievement in elementary school. As educators implement science standards in their classrooms, one of the most important decisions they face is selecting the best instructional materials to support student learning. The school's

¹⁰ In Nevada, the Student Engagement Indicator is a measure in the state's accountability system that assesses students' involvement in their education. It includes measures like chronic absenteeism (missing 10% or more of school days) and, for high schools, credit sufficiency whether 9th graders earn at least five credits in their first year).

¹¹ EdReports is an independent, non-profit organization that provides free reviews of K-12 instructional materials to help educators choose high-quality, standards-aligned curriculum.

leadership team and staff may find it useful to reference the Next Generation Science Standards¹² and Assessment website. ([Instruction and Assessment | Next Generation Science Standards](#))

¹² The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) are K–12 science content standards that outline what students should know and be able to do by the end of their science education.

Site Evaluation Findings: Strong Recommendations

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

No strong recommendations were noted during this site evaluation.

Site Evaluation Findings: Deficiencies

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

No deficiencies were identified 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 ¹³	2
Family Members, Parents, and Guardians	11
Faculty and Staff	10
School Leadership	1
Students	11

¹³ Quorum was not met, and Open Meeting Law was not violated.

Focus Group Summary: Governing Board

Two Elko Institute for Academic Achievement board members participated in the focus group. They conveyed that the recent increase in enrollment reflects the school's journey to provide a high-quality school choice option for Elko's residents and the credibility and trust the school has earned. In recent years, the school has doubled enrollment, and many families in town have opted to enroll their children there. With the increase in enrollment, the board members proudly recognized the school's success but realized that, with more students, the board and the school's leaders must remain strategic and proactive in supporting students' academic, social, and emotional needs. One member stated the board's proactive support for the school's leadership team, noting, "We're trying to pay attention to what the administration needs," emphasizing the school's focus on supporting students' holistic needs as the school population grows. They took a few moments to discuss the need to address students' learning gaps and emotional needs, and to emphasize maintaining the high standards the school has set. In terms of future growth—possibly adding more grade levels or expanding their buildings—the members stressed the importance of planning and reiterated the need for high-quality sharing: "We want to add and maintain the all-around experience for our kids."

The members shared their accolades for the school's leader and the staff. One board member said, "We are excited about all the things going on around here," adding, "The administrator and the teachers are fantastic, and you need strong leadership to have a strong school." The members shared their insights into the school's journey and ascension, noting the leader's instrumental role in the school's high student achievement. Comments were made on the school leaders' high expectations as foundational to support student learning. One participant noted, "You see the results—kids will learn if you give them the opportunity." In terms of the staff, the members held high esteem for their work and a high level of instructional practices to positively impact student outcomes. One cited reason is the school's consistency over the years and its supportive leadership team; recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers has benefited the school's ability to maintain high standards.

A portion of the session focused on the board's recent initiatives, focus areas, board strengths, and reflective practices as the school enters its charter contract renewal year. Central to the members' response was maintaining the school's high ratings (4 and 5 stars) on the NSPF and enhancing students' overall experience. A focus area is to increase student participation in activities such as robotics, soccer, and track, to name a few. Also, finding a bus driver and creatively addressing space limitations have been challenges, and both remain a priority. Regarding the board's self-assessment and reflective practices, although the board does not currently use a formal self-assessment tool, participants stated that it engages in productive discourse, including active listening and collaboration. One member added that the board does not take a "rubber stamp" approach but rather discusses critical topics with the intention of maintaining a comprehensive mindset and focusing on all the details and their implementation for the school and its students. Lastly, the members recognized the families as integral to the school's current and future success.

Focus Group Summary: Family Members, Parents, and Guardians

Members of the family focus group commended the school for its inclusiveness, teamwork, and proactive communication. Regarding the school's inclusive environment, family members discussed the staff's ability to make their child feel welcomed and included in school. One parent added, "My son is doing well and feels safe, and he feels he belongs." Another added, "I never feel any negativity, and I am always greeted with a smile," while another family member noted, "The staff are kind." In terms of teamwork, many participants shared their experience of seeing the school staff work together to support their child. One member said, "Each class is a unit and the teachers work together," adding that he has seen it on numerous occasions. Others stressed their appreciation for the staff's proactive communication, with one parent stating, "Communication is excellent," and another adding that it leads to high parent involvement because they are well informed of all school-related functions. Forms of communication noted were emails, text messages, ClassDojo¹⁴, newsletters, phone calls, and in-person.

Many participants took the time to express their appreciation for the staff and school leaders, citing their knowledge and expertise as instrumental to the school and children's success. Several shared personal stories of their child's success because of the staff's and leaders' skill in impacting their child's learning. A member commented, "Educationally, the school does well, and my kids have grown exponentially here," highlighting the staff and school leaders' positive impact.

The group discussed the skills, topics, and subjects their child was currently learning, eliciting varied responses. One member stated that her child is learning about "Solar systems, stars, space, and the sun." Another shared that their child was learning about the brain and preparing a presentation on its function. Other responses included learning math and vowel sounds, reading comprehension, writing poems, and studying colonies, among others. This dialogue concluded with a parent stating, "No matter what my child is learning, he loves class and excels here".

The session concluded with a request for respondents to share recommendations for the school to consider. One family member stated the need for more advanced learning opportunities for high-achieving students. Another requested to have more rewards or school-wide events for students who do well on tests. A few prefer to start the school year a few weeks later, and others stressed the importance of hiring a bus driver so the school bus can be used to pick up students who need transportation.

¹⁴ ClassDojo is an online classroom management platform where teachers can record and track student behavior, facilitate classroom activities, curate student portfolios, and engage in school-to-home communication in over 35 languages through photos and videos, and direct messaging to parents and students.

Focus Group Summary: Faculty and Staff

Staff members who took part in the focus group cited data-driven instruction and effective collaboration as major levers for the school's success in achieving high student achievement rates. One respondent simply stated, "Data collection, data dives –it really drives the lesson and supports student achievement." Many members shared the same sentiment and stressed the importance of examining and using data to plan high-quality lessons that impact student engagement and learning. A member expounded on the topic, adding, "We include the student in the data," further clarifying that when they engage in collaborative data sessions with their team members, they consider their students' unique needs and personalities. Another faculty member noted that central to understanding student achievement data is understanding how students learn and which teaching strategies will have the greatest impact. For instance, using project-based lessons is essential, while other times a written response may serve as a high-impact assignment.

The group stated the premium value of having a highly effective school leadership team. Many emphasized the principal's commitment to a student-centered learning environment with high expectations. A few cited the school leadership team's positive nature in nurturing staff to improve, and, because of this stewardship, a member stated, "teachers' willingness to learn and grow." Another shared a straightforward comment, "We have the support of the admin," which, to the group, held high value. Another shared that the support from the administration sustains their relationship with other colleagues, reflecting, "We are there for each other, and that comes from the top down. The group also valued the clear lines of communication with their school leaders, who often check in on them, asking questions such as "How can we make things better?" which was observed as fostering a growth mindset for the entire school community.

As enrollment and the school's growth increase, the focus is on refining the school's multi-tiered systems of support to address students' social and emotional needs. The group discussed strategies to support students' development, including frequent check-ins to assess how individual students or groups are feeling and whether they need support. One added that teaching students' self-advocacy skills is a primary focus, and another mentioned that supporting students' ability to persevere through difficult tasks is also essential to their overall development.

The conversation turned to challenges that the group was currently addressing. A few noted that adjusting to the enrollment increase has been their focus, emphasizing the need to ensure that all students feel included and valued. Additionally, class sizes have steadily increased, which has been highlighted as an ongoing challenge, along with growing caseloads for teachers who serve students with special needs. Also, a few discussed the space limitations and the need to consider building expansion. Despite these challenges, the group remained optimistic about the work they had done and the journey ahead and shared a few recommendations, including more support staff to assist classrooms, a dedicated room for specials like music, and hiring a qualified bus driver to support families who need transportation services.

Focus Group Summary: School Leadership

Fiscal stability was a key topic during the leadership focus group. The school leader noted that the academy is financially sound and has increased enrollment. These factors enabled the purchase of three additional acres. Rising enrollment reflects strong community support for EIAA. However, more students also present the challenge of helping newcomers acclimate to the school's culture and academic expectations. The school addresses this by emphasizing social and emotional strategies to support all students and build their perseverance, social, and leadership skills.

Additionally, the session delved into the school's academic success and the factors that support the consistent four and five-star ratings on the NSPF. The leader commended the staff for their dedication and professionalism in developing and maintaining effective instructional practices to impact students' academic development. The school's systems for data analysis and instructional planning enable competent staff to make data-driven decisions that efficiently address students' needs. The data is utilized to monitor student performance and provide teachers with essential planning information. The school leader stressed the importance of professional development to support the staff's continuous growth mindset. For instance, teachers meet with a private consultant who specializes in data analysis and instructional planning at least three times a year to accurately determine the individualized support students need to maintain or accelerate their learning growth trajectory and to ensure that struggling students receive adequate support to thrive. Once data is analyzed and plans are created, the school leadership reinforces the school's high expectations by expecting students to meet the rigorous demands in the classroom.

Furthermore, the leader noted several assets of the school, including recognizing the value of a skilled staff and the addition of an assistant principal. Regarding the high quality of staff members, the leader emphasized their importance and impact on student achievement. Further elaboration: "They work well together and over the years, this has led to high levels of consistency with little staff turnover". The addition of another administrator has enhanced the team's ability to meet the day-to-day demands of school operation and support the growing student population.

Promoting family engagement is important to the school's leader, who stated, "We have family nights at least once a month". Additionally, events such as parent night, fall festival, and carnivals are planned to foster a sense of connectedness. Also, parents and guardians are given numerous opportunities to meet with teachers throughout the year to better understand their child's learning progress. The leader added the importance of ongoing communication with families to foster relationships and transparency.

Lastly, the focus was on the school's action steps to address chronic absenteeism. The leader emphasized the need to continue and proactively reach out to families about the importance of attending school regularly and the negative effects on their child's learning, specifically missing critical assignments and in-person instruction.

Focus Group Summary: Students

Eleven students participated in the focus group session. They shared that they were currently learning a variety of skills and focusing on various subject areas. Responses included addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division; percentages; coordinates and grids; ratios in math and spelling; reading fluency; and comprehension in English language arts classes. One student shared his enjoyment of being assigned projects and group work, while another mentioned advanced biology as her favorite subject.

In terms of teacher-to-student feedback, students reported that teachers provided feedback and assistance on assignments through one-on-one discussions, additional reviews with examples, notes, and additional practice opportunities. Other students stated that their teachers also provide additional tutoring to help them catch up on assignments.

The students shared that their teachers communicate regularly with their parents via email, phone, newsletters, Class, and parent-teacher conferences. A few noted that the staff encourages parents to get involved, and several shared their appreciation for the school's mindset of involving and engaging parents. A student added, "They even text my parents," and one shared that his teacher regularly checked in with his parents when he was working on a class project. Another student stated that they liked the number of parent-teacher conferences the school holds each year.

All participants shared that they have a trusted adult they can approach should they have a problem. Also, most stated they feel safe at school and noted that bullying was not a big problem for them. One student added, "The kids are nice, and the teachers help you when you are struggling." Another shared, "The teachers are respectful, and they support you." A few discussed the differences from their previous schools, noting they generally feel much safer at EIAA. Several other students shared the same sentiment. One student discussed the recent transition to the school and noted that upon arrival, the teachers constantly checked in on her to ensure she felt comfortable in all her classes.

A segment of the session focused on the students' recommendations for the school leaders and the board. Responses focused on adding more student activities. A few students expressed gratitude for the school's expanded activities but would appreciate more options in the future. A few students commented on the need for more play space, noting that recess feels a bit crowded. Another mentioned considering more field trips, while another added more play equipment. Lastly, a student emphasized the need to pay the teacher more, stating, "They work so hard and deserve to get paid more." Several students nodded in agreement.

Classroom Environment and Instruction

Observation Rubric

A total of 10 elementary, and 5 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
Classroom Learning Environment is Conducive to Learning	The teacher demonstrates knowledge and caring about individual students' lives beyond the class and school. When necessary, students respectfully correct one another. Students participate without fear of put-downs or ridicule from either the teacher or other students. The teacher respects and encourages students' efforts.	Talk between the teacher and students and among students is uniformly respectful. The teacher successfully responds to disrespectful behavior among students. Students participate willingly but may be somewhat hesitant to offer their ideas in front of classmates. The teacher makes general connections with individual students.	The quality of interactions between teachers and students, or among students, is uneven, with occasional disrespect or insensitivity. The teacher attempts to respond to disrespectful behavior among students with uneven results. The teacher attempts to make connections with individual students, but student reactions indicate that these attempts are not entirely successful.	The teacher is disrespectful toward or insensitive to students' ages, cultural backgrounds, and developmental levels. Students' body language indicates feelings of hurt, discomfort, or insecurity. The teacher displays no familiarity with, or care about, individual students.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	TOTAL: 2	TOTAL: 13	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0
Establishing a Culture for Learning	The teacher communicates passion for the subject. Students indicate through their questions and comments a desire to understand content. Students assist their classmates in understanding the content.	The teacher communicates the importance of the content and the conviction that with hard work all students can master the material. The teacher conveys an expectation of high levels of student effort. Students expend good effort to complete work of high quality.	The teachers' energy for the work is neutral. The teacher conveys high expectations for only some students. Students exhibit a limited commitment to completing the work on their own. The teacher's primary concern appears to be to complete the task at hand.	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. The teacher conveys to at least some students that the work is too challenging for them. Students exhibit little or no pride in their work.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	TOTAL: 2	TOTAL: 13	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0

Classroom Environment and Instruction

Observation Rubric

A total of 10 elementary, and 5 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.		
	TOTAL: 2	TOTAL: 13	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0
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.				
	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 15	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0

Classroom Environment and Instruction

Observation Rubric

A total of 10 elementary, and 5 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
Engaging Students in Learning	Virtually all students are engaged in the lesson. Lesson activities require high-level student thinking and explanations of their thinking. Students have an opportunity for reflection and closure on the lesson to consolidate their understanding.	Most students are intellectually engaged in the lesson. Most learning tasks have multiple correct responses or approaches and/or encourage higher-order thinking. Students are invited to explain their thinking as part of completing tasks. The pacing of the lesson provides students with the time needed to be intellectually engaged.	Some students are intellectually engaged in the lesson. Learning tasks are a mix of those requiring thinking and those requiring recall. Student engagement with the content is largely passive. The pacing of the lesson is uneven—suitable in parts but rushed or dragging in others.	Few students are intellectually engaged in the lesson. Learning tasks, activities, and materials require only recall or have a single correct response. The lesson drags on or is rushed.	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	TOTAL: 1	TOTAL: 13	TOTAL: 1	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0
Using Assessment in Instruction	Students indicate they clearly understand the characteristics of high-quality work. The teacher uses multiple strategies to monitor student understanding. Students monitor their own understanding. Feedback comes from many sources.	The teacher makes the standards of high-quality work clear to students. The teacher elicits evidence of student understanding. Students are invited to assess their own work and make improvements. Feedback includes specific and timely guidance.	There is little evidence that the students understand how the work is evaluated. The teacher monitors understanding through a single method, without eliciting evidence of understanding from students. Feedback to students is vague.	The teacher does not indicate what quality work looks like. The teacher makes no effort to determine whether students understand the lesson. Students receive no feedback, or feedback is global or directed to one student.	
	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 15	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0

Classroom Observations and Additional Comments

Lower elementary students learned about The Star-Spangled Banner. First, the students sat on the carpet while the teacher reviewed the lyrics, displaying a visual organizer¹⁵ with pictures and lyrics of the song on the smart board. Next, the teacher and students sang together. Afterward, the teacher transitioned to teach the students about the seasons, specifically fall and autumn.

In a middle school social studies classroom, nineteen students worked on slide presentations about topics such as Maryland, influential leaders, and the Southern Colonies. All were engaged while the teacher checked the progress of a few students. A few students who had finished their assignment helped other students.

Lower elementary students engaged in identifying beginning and ending sounds. The students sat on the carpet, and the teacher led the activity, emphasizing the process of breaking words down by changing their initial and final sounds. The students were highly engaged, and the teacher incorporated a multisensory learning approach by having kids use their bodies.

In an elementary special education resource room, five students worked independently on their assignments with the assistance of two adults. One student worked on math facts while another student worked on writing. The classroom environment was highly structured, and the students were focused and committed to completing their assignments. The teachers provided clear and concise feedback.

Students in a middle school math classroom focused on the number system. The teacher used the smartboard to present a lesson on integers and number lines, referencing an IXL¹⁶ worksheet. The lesson progressed smoothly, with students remaining engaged and responding to questions. Emphasis was placed on distinguishing positive and negative numbers. Meanwhile, a group of advanced students worked independently on math assignments.

Lower elementary students learned to use number bonds to solve story problems through a teacher-led demonstration on the smartboard, followed by guided practice and then independent work at their desks. The teacher provided support and encouraged students to draw to aid their problem-solving skills or to use their number lines. All students were engaged and demonstrated a high level of commitment to completing the tasks.

In a secondary elementary grade, students learned irregular verbs in English Language Arts. They completed a notebook activity highlighting how verb forms change with tense. Students worked independently as the teacher gave feedback. The environment fostered accountability and self-direction.

¹⁵ A visual organizer is a graphic tool, such as a chart, diagram, or map, that displays information, concepts, and their relationships in a clear, visual format, helping simplify complex ideas, enhance comprehension and retention, and facilitate brainstorming, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

¹⁶ IXL is a comprehensive online learning program offering personalized practice and immediate feedback in math, language arts, science, social studies, and Spanish for K-12 students.

Middle school students learned about integers on a number line. After entering the room and taking their seats, the teacher welcomed them and announced the start of a new math unit on integers, ensuring everyone received the math packet. To introduce the topic, the teacher projected an image of an integer and a number line on the screen and explained them to the students. Then, the teacher reviewed examples, prompting some students to recall their familiarity with the concepts. Throughout the lesson, the students were highly engaged. The lesson moved at an effective pace, with frequent checks for understanding.

In a middle school English Language Arts classroom, students completed a character chart as they participated in a novel study of *Esperanza Rising*¹⁷. Approximately twenty-two students worked on the assignment at their desks, independently, while the teacher monitored their progress by circulating around the classroom. Students read the novel and filled out the character chart worksheet. The students demonstrated a high level of commitment, fostering a classroom environment highly conducive to learning.

¹⁷ *Esperanza Rising* is a young adult historical fiction novel written by Mexican American author Pam Muñoz Ryan.

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 collaborate, have high expectations, and have a strong and dedicated staff to maintain the five-star status in both elementary and middle school. With the continued growth of school enrollment and the expansion of the number of students in grades five through eight, the number of students coming from outside the school setting increases. The high levels of both student growth and proficiency may be challenging. As the school anticipates the growth process indicators to be low, since most students are currently below grade level, it continues to look at student growth and uses collaborative practices and student-centered decisions, knowing that the number of new students and those below grade level entering students will stabilize and be more consistent soon.	The school's leader reported that the staff meet three times a year for deep data dives with a private data consulting company. During these dives, teams examine data from a school-wide perspective down to the individual student level. Also, the staff reported using proactive measures and collaborating regularly to support new students' social and emotional needs as they transition to the school.	The SPCSA staff recognizes the school's efforts, and the school's high student academic achievement rates support the school's dedication to fostering a collaborative, data-driven culture.
Consider efforts to increase advertising in the Elko area to boost overall enrollment rates of English Language Learners at Elko Institute for Academic Achievement. It is hoped that this will improve.	The school leader shared that they advertise open enrollment in multiple languages and promote their school through the Chamber of Commerce, newspapers, radio, and by posting flyers all around town.	The SPCSA staff acknowledges the school leader and the board's commitment to advertising to enroll students in special population groups.

Operational Compliance Checks

Fire Extinguisher	☒ YES	☐ NO	
Nurse's Station	☒ YES	☐ NO	
Evacuation Plan in Classrooms	☒ YES	☐ NO	
Food Permit	☒ YES	☐ NO	☐ N/A
Elevator Permit	☒ YES	☐ NO	☐ 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.