Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

# Discovery Charter School Hillpointe
# Site Evaluation Report: October 22, 2025

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**Links to Resources:**

- Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF)
- SPCSA Academic Performance Framework Results
- SPCSA Organizational Performance Framework Results
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- 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 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.

**Strong start for newly formed leadership team**
One of the strengths at Discovery Charter School Hillpointe is the cohesiveness and dedication of the members of the newly formed leadership team. The team is composed of leaders with a deep knowledge of charter schools, familiarity with SPCSA, and the ability to pull resources from other strong charter networks. According to the staff, family, board, and student focus groups, the newly formed team has begun to establish trust, confidence, and the ability to make strong changes for school-wide improvement and growth.

**Strong instruction in primary grades**
Within the early elementary grades, high levels of teacher clarity, explicit instruction, and purposeful, objective-driven instruction were observed. "Organizing and presenting lessons in a structured and intentional manner helps manage cognitive load, allowing students to absorb information more efficiently" (Paas, 2020).

**Positive response to school in transition**
The school's Executive Director has taken a proactive approach to solving existing challenges at the school. These include addressing Epicenter[1] tasks, writing and receiving grants for extra funding, surveying families to determine communication method preferences, reaching SPCSA with questions, and implementing a new math curriculum within the elementary grade levels.

**Implementation of academic interventions and small group instruction**
At the Discovery Charter School Hillpointe, the school team has developed double English language arts and math classes for all students within the middle school grades. These consist of sixth, seventh and eighth grades. The school is beginning to use i-Ready[2] and analyze standards reports displaying student achievement levels. The school has implemented Study Island[3] to support and test students throughout the school year to better monitor and update levels of student growth.

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[1] Epicenter is a web-based performance management system used by the State Public Charter School Authority to streamline collection of routine state and charter authority documentation for board governance, and school compliance.
[2] i-Ready Learning is a digital instructional resource assessing students with grade-level materials in reading and math.
[3] Study Island is an on-line learning platform from Edmentum that helps K-12 students master academic standards through interactive lessons, practice and assessments.

# 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.

**New leadership team**
One challenge at Discovery Charter School Hillpointe is the establishment of a new leadership team. The Executive Director began his employment in January of 2025. The team is challenged to continue to work as a team, build trust with existing employees, manage resistance to change, and adapt to new responsibilities.

**NSPF rating at the middle school level**
 The middle school earned an index score of 48.5, resulting in a two-star rating. Contributing factors included chronic absenteeism, low English Language Arts proficiency rates, and the lack of a cohesive schoolwide curriculum. According to the 2024–2025 School Performance Framework, Discovery Charter School Hillpointe's middle school Academic Achievement Indicator showed a pooled proficiency rate of 40.5%, compared to the SPCSA district rate of 52%. Math proficiency was 32% (SPCSA district: 43.6%), ELA proficiency was 46.6% (SPCSA district: 60.7%), and science proficiency was 47.6% (SPCSA district: 50.8%).

**High levels of chronic absenteeism**
Chronic absenteeism rates at both the elementary and middle school levels are high and a challenge. The elementary level has been determined to be 18.2% while the middle school is slightly higher at 20.7% Both are above SPCSA averages of 16.4% elementary and 13.7% middle school.

**Financial Notice of Concern**
Discovery Charter School has been issued a financial notice of concern by the SPCSA Governing Board.
Microsoft Power BI
The link above provides the official 2023-2024 Fiscal Year: Financial Performance Framework for Discovery Charter School.

**Increase English Language proficiency levels**
The Nevada Report Card[4] for 2024-25 has measured Discovery Hillpointe Charter School
 with 6.6% of students meeting their English Language Average Growth Percentage at 6.6% as compared to the SPCSA district rate of 28.5%.

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[4] The Nevada Report Card is an on-line resource that provides information on school and district performance, including star ratings based on the Nevada School Performance Framework, (NSPF).

# Site Evaluation Findings: Recommendations

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

**Improve academic measures at the middle school level within the Achievement Indicator**
It is recommended Discovery Charter School Hillpointe strengthen classroom instruction to provide greater opportunities for students to contribute to their own learning. Continue to build upon and implement strong levels of Tier-1[5],Tier-2[6] and Tier-3[7] instructional levels. According to the Academic Achievement Indicator for school year, 2024-25 within the middle school level a pooled proficiency rate of 40.5% was earned as compared to the SPCSA District rate of 52%. Math Proficiency was 32% compared to 43.6% within the SPCSA District. ELA proficiency was 46.6% as compared to 60.7% within the SPCSA district averages, and Science Proficiency was 47.6% as compared to district average of 50.8%.

**Increase English language proficiency indicator at the middle school level**
The Nevada Report Card for 2024-25 school year has measured Discovery Charter School Hillpointe with 6.6% of students meeting their English Language Average Growth Percentage at as compared to the SPCSA District rate of 28.5%. Considerations include additional strategies to increase student engagement aligned implementation of Kagan[8] structures, increased use of discourse through sentence frames, and increased critical thinking opportunities in groups or partnerships. Consider the implementation of a strategy known as "No Hands Up". This is a classroom questioning strategy in which a teacher asks a question and expects all students to be prepared to answer the question. After allowing time for students to think about the answer, students may be randomly selected to answer or asked to speak with a partner or group and then answers are shared. The strategy has been found to be useful in giving all students a chance to think about and answer questions and may help reverse the effect of the same group of students, (who raise their hands first) from continuously being called upon to provide answers.

**Continue to decrease chronic absenteeism rates**
It is recommended that the school decrease rates of chronic absenteeism. The elementary level has been determined to be at 18.2% while the middle school is slightly higher at 20.7% Both are above SPCSA averages. Continue using incentives, family education, and careful monitoring techniques to realize lower levels of chronic absenteeism for this 2025-26 school year.

**Continue to address the Financial Notice of Concern**
It is recommended that the school improve their financial standing. It is recommended the school review both the framework report and the Technical Guide (revised August 2025). 250915-08282025-FINAL-SPCSA-Financial-Performance-Framework-Technical-Guide.pdf

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[5] Tier 1 instruction is the anchor of all tiered instruction. It is provided to all students every day. During Tier 1 instruction, teachers use scientifically researched programs and evidence-based practices, curricula, and strategies that have been proven effective for most students.
[6] Tier 2 instruction in education refers to supplemental, small-group interventions for students who aren't making sufficient progress in the general classroom
[7] Tier 3 instruction is a system of individualized, intensive and data-driven support for students with severe and persistent academic, social, emotional or behavioral needs who have not made pr0gress with Tier-1 or Tier-2 interventions.
[8] Kagan instructional strategies are designed to promote cooperation and communication in the classroom, boost students' confidence, and retain their interest in classroom interaction

It is recommended the school work with the Executive Director, Discovery Charter School Board Members and members of the SPCSA financial team to monitor and improve the financial standing of the school. It is recommended the team strive to improve standings and raise levels from "Does Not Meet Standard" or "Falls Far Below Standard" to "Meets Standard".

**Strengthen and fine-tune newly implemented operational systems**
Consider fine-tuning several of the newly implemented systems. Consider strong clear communication methods which are shared with stakeholders. Consider repeated discussions regarding modifications to manage and support buy-in for new operational systems. Newly implemented operational systems include new math curriculum at the elementary level, Tier-1,2, and 3 methods of instruction, adherence to newly updated policies, security upgrades and more.

# Site Evaluation Findings: Strong Recommendations

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

There were no Strong Recommendations identified for Discovery Charter School Hillpointe during evaluation.

# Site Evaluation Findings: Deficiencies

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

There were no deficiencies identified for Discovery Charter School Hillpointe during this evaluation.

# Focus Group Participation Data

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

| Name of Focus Group | Number of Participants |
|---|---|
| Governing Board[9] | 3 |
| Family Members, Parents, and Guardians | 7 |
| Faculty and Staff | 12 |
| School Leadership | 3 |
| Students | 9 |

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

# Focus Group Summary: Governing Board

Three members of the Discovery Charter School board participated in the focus group on the day of the site evaluation. Board members commented about strengths at the Discovery Charter School Hillpointe campus. One board member said, "Both of my children attend school at the Hillpointe campus, and I believe they receive high levels of personalized learning. There is a strong sense of community." Board members explained that the Discovery Charter School Hillpointe campus has a family feel and one person remarked, "Parents are integrated into the fabric of the school and highly invested in the success of all students." Another board member explained, "My child has attended this campus since kindergarten. I value relationships my child has with his teachers from previous school years and grade levels. This campus has a leadership program, and students learn to be leaders and represent the school."

Board members were asked to comment on self-reported limitations of the current facility and the struggle with infrastructure needs. Participants said that every effort to bring the facility up to acceptable levels is being made. One board member explained, "Based on the available funds within our budget, everything has been addressed." Another board member added, "As a parent, I know this building used to be a pre-school. We have made the best use of the space we have. We must improve aspects of the building as they come to our attention and take care of what needs to be fixed or improved as we become aware."

The participants spoke candidly about finances at Discovery Charter School Hillpointe. They said they have a person with financial expertise on the board, and the board has spoken with a financial advisor. One person said, "I understand there are some specific changes to how our policies take place, for example, how we handle cash on hand." Board members remarked that they believe they are in a good position to catch up on financial obligations. Board members communicated that they will be back in good standing over time and will monitor and address finances for the school during each board meeting.

Board members said they have not yet evaluated the school's Executive Director. Members explained that there used to be a process for this type of evaluation, and it included feedback from both the board and parents. Board members said that the new Executive Director has been transparent and open to suggestions. One board member commented, "I like what I see so far. The new Executive Director has strong plans and a clear vision. He has already implemented many strategies and changes."

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

There were seven family members who took part in the focus group on the day of the site evaluation. Families shared information about their experiences at Discovery Charter School Hillpointe. One family had their children attending Discovery Charter School Hillpointe for several years. A family member commented, "I had been conducting home schooling with my two children since the COVID epidemic. I did not want to go back to a normal public school. I am thrilled to have found this school." Another parent described her experience as a newcomer to the school. She said, "My kids just started here about one week ago. The first thing the leaders said to me was, 'this is going to be your child's last stop; he will not want to leave, and we will make sure you are happy here.'"

Family members spoke about their perspectives regarding teachers and the leadership team. Families agreed that the small number of attendees at the school seems to translate into everyone knowing each other. For example, one parent commented, "The teachers and the administrative staff know our family and each one of our children." Another person added, "My son's first grade teacher realized my child was not engaged. The teacher made a point of making assignments more challenging and this was helpful because now my son participates in class often." A different parent said her son had some trouble when school began as a new kindergarten student. She said, "All of the administrative team were so welcoming to my son. The teacher did a great job of communicating with us daily through ClassDojo"[10].

In terms of Response to Intervention, (RTI)[11], parents were appreciative of the proactive measures made by the school staff. One family member said her son is currently in the RTI program due to some difficulty with reading. This family member remarked, "Now my son is motivated to complete his work packet, and I believe my son's teacher has been involved in helping him to feel successful. The teacher was proactive and noticed the issue with my son early in the year and for this I am so thankful."

Suggestions for improvement were included in the discussion with family members. One suggestion was to make sure that parents could get help with signing up to Infinite Campus[12]. Another family member suggested students get more time outside each school day. Other ideas included additional sports and a turf playing field. Family members suggested that specials classes should be held in separate rooms instead of the classrooms.

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[10] ClassDojo is an online communication application which connects primary school teachers, students and families through communication features, such as a feed for photos and videos from the school day.

[11] RTI Response to Intervention is an educational framework that uses a multi-tiered system to identify students who are struggling academically or behaviorally, and provides them with increasingly intensive interventions based on their needs

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

# Focus Group Summary: Faculty and Staff

Twelve faculty and staff members attended the focus group. Staff were asked to describe the culture at Discovery Charter School Hillpointe. Some staff reported that the culture seems "apprehensive" while others said the school team is working through many changes. One staff member commented, "It seems like the changes keep coming, and it feels very heavy." Other participants pointed out that most people are uncomfortable with change. The faculty reported they appreciate the school leader's decision to delegate duties for dismissal procedures. Staff commented that this school year, it seems there are more systems in place than in previous years. One staff member said, "I feel more heard this year, and I see good things happening at the school."

Members of the focus group spoke about some of the positive experiences during this, 2025-26 school year. One teacher shared, "I had a kindergartener begin school and he was very emotional and highly concerned with how quickly he could accomplish tasks. I let him know that it is okay to ask for help, and now he is doing very well." Other teachers commented on positive relationships with students. These included one student thanking his teacher for making him read the novel, *The Giver*. The student said he enjoyed the book, and it was the first one he had read in three years. Teachers noted they have observed students volunteering to support and assist other students when their peers are struggling to understand a concept. One teacher shared that she was touched when a kindergarten student came into the classroom one day and remarked, "This class really feels like it belongs to all of us."

Math was a topic of discussion during the focus group. Elementary staff reported using Everyday Math[13]. Some staff suggested the Everyday Math program requires students to engage in reading, yet it seems to lack allowing students to practice math skills. Other teachers commented that the program includes a daily review and assignments in lessons require students to complete "math boxes" which are designed to review math concepts. Several teachers requested additional training on the program. One teacher at the middle school level commented that she was uncomfortable with the overall math score outcomes last school year. This teacher reported that this year, the administrative team is allowing her to make changes for improvement in math practices. The school is including i-Ready for middle school math support this school year.

Staff offered several suggestions to improve Discovery Charter School Hillpointe. One staff member suggested the school implement higher levels of accountability for student school attendance. Another person suggested the school support them in determining lesson focus. She said, "I would like some support in knowing what I should teach that is important and what is not as essential." Other suggestions included finding ways to help students gain stronger levels of growth and academic gains. Teachers would like to see special classes held in separate rooms, yet space remains a concern at the campus.

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[13] Everyday Math is a research-based curriculum for Pre-K through 6th grade developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project. The program uses real-word examples, games, and a spiral approach to help students understand and master math concepts over time.

# Focus Group Summary: School Leadership

Three Discovery Charter School Hillpointe leaders participated in the focus group on the day of the evaluation. The school's new Executive Director said he began his position in January 2025 and there were some "red flags" and alarming issues. One challenge was outdated procedures and policies. The new leader reported he is working to bring these up to standard and is pulling information from another highly effective charter schools in Nevada. The new school leader said Nevada Department of Education, PERS[14], and SPCSA Epicenter items had not been completed. A meeting with the Director of SPCSA as well as communication with agencies for support has resulted in improvements in this area. The new leader commented, "I have been able to turn around the status, and we are now one hundred percent on time. I'm thankful for the support of the SPCSA in this matter." Another concern was the school's instructional model at both campuses. An instructional model with curriculum such as Wonders[15] has been adopted and is used with fidelity across the elementary grade levels for English Language arts. Everyday Math has been implemented in elementary classrooms.

The Executive Director spoke about high expectations at both Discovery Charter School campuses. He commented, "Both campuses will be five-star, and we are working to provide the structures to make this happen." School culture including parent participation and satisfaction is a goal. The leader sent out a survey to families and received a list of suggestions. Since that time, weekly communication is sent to family members by email. Other reported issues continue to be a focus of the leadership staff. The team applied for, and received, a security grant to install improved lighting, and stronger access for entering the building. Another goal is improving student attendance including late arrivals and early dismissals. One leader explained, "Our new policy will not allow students to attend extra events if a student has more than ten absences. We only have 145 instructional days and missing 14 days makes a student chronically absent. We now require parent meetings to explain the importance of good attendance and the relationship between attendance and student academic outcomes."

Low levels of closing opportunity gaps in both the elementary and middle school were discussed. Leaders reported that they are offering more differentiated instruction including Study Island for standards-based Tier-2 instructional groups. Leaders reported this is happening at all grade levels across the school and leaders are looking to hire an additional interventionist. The English Language Proficiency within both the elementary and middle school levels vary drastically. The middle school had a one out of ten while the elementary had ten out of ten. Leaders commented that they have provided English Language Learner training from RPDP[16] which staff has reported as being very helpful.

While school leaders commented on operational and organization changes, they did point out that some progress has been made. Leaders have noticed that teachers want to raise student academic goals and the mindset of high expectations has taken hold. With feedback from the community, parents are being taught how to use Infinite Campus, safety measures have improved, and there are stronger levels of employee and parent satisfaction.

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[14] PERS stands for Public Employees' Retirement System of Nevada
[15] Wonders is an evidence-based K-6 literacy curriculum by McGraw Hill.
[16] RPDP is the Regional Professional Development Program

# Focus Group Summary: Students

Nine students met on the day of the evaluation to speak about their experiences attending Discovery Charter School Hillpointe. Students shared several positive aspects of the school. These included having no school on Fridays, the teachers making learning fun, no uniforms, an entire hour for science, and recess time with friends.

Students were asked to describe whether they feel safe, both emotionally and physically, while attending school. Overall, students said they did feel safe. Most students reported they believe they can talk with at least one adult on campus should they have a home or school issue.

Academic goals were discussed. Students confirmed they had a good understanding of their own academic achievement levels. One student commented, "I look over my academic goals and consider what I might improve upon. I give myself a reward for accomplishing my goals, and this helps me work harder on getting all my assignments completed." Students explained they set goals using i-Ready and ST Math[17]. Goals are set with the support of individual teachers. Yearly goals are set by looking back at the previous year's growth and accomplishments.

When students were asked to describe if anything seemed to get in the way of their learning, some obstacles were described. One student said that when some students don't pay attention, the teacher is required to redirect the whole class. Another student said he noticed that some teachers must repeat directions or instructions when students are not listening the first time. One student shared, "I find that math is hard, and the way the teacher says something does not make sense to me." Students spoke about methods used to provide feedback between the teachers and themselves. One student said, "After we take a quiz, we review it as a class. Some teachers will talk to students individually if there is something the student wants to improve." Students described instances of working with other students in the classroom to increase understanding. One student said, "In reading class, I work with my classmates to complete tasks. Each student in our group has a different role, and this helps us complete the assignment more quickly."

Students reported that their families congregate at the school and enjoy attending events. Some of the events mentioned were classroom presentations, teacher conferences, the science fair, and teacher meetings. Students shared suggestions for improving their experiences at Discovery Charter School Hillpointe. These included having larger spaces within the school, allowing extra time for middle school classes to take place daily, and supporting some teachers to have the ability to better explain math.

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[17] ST Math is a game based instructional program that leverages the brain's ability to visualize and manipulate objects in space and time to teach mathematical concepts.

# Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 13 elementary and 8 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.<br><br>When necessary, students respectfully correct one another.<br><br>Students participate without fear of put-downs or ridicule from either the teacher or other students.<br><br>The teacher respects and encourages students' efforts. | Talk between the teacher and students and among students is uniformly respectful.<br><br>The teacher successfully responds to disrespectful behavior among students.<br><br>Students participate willingly but may be somewhat hesitant to offer their ideas in front of classmates.<br><br>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.<br><br>The teacher attempts to respond to disrespectful behavior among students with uneven results.<br><br>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.<br><br>Students' body language indicates feelings of hurt, discomfort, or insecurity.<br><br>The teacher displays no familiarity with, or care about, individual students. | This criterion was not observed or rated. |
| | TOTAL: 2 | TOTAL: 18 | TOTAL: 1 | TOTAL: 0 | TOTAL: 0 |
| **Establishing a Culture for Learning** | The teacher communicates passion for the subject.<br><br>Students indicate through their questions and comments a desire to understand content.<br><br>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.<br><br>The teacher conveys an expectation of high levels of student effort.<br><br>Students expend good effort to complete work of high quality. | The teachers' energy for the work is neutral.<br><br>The teacher conveys high expectations for only some students.<br><br>Students exhibit a limited commitment to completing the work on their own.<br><br>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.<br><br>The teacher conveys to at least some students that the work is too challenging for them.<br><br>Students exhibit little or no pride in their work. | This criterion was not observed or rated. |
| | TOTAL: 2 | TOTAL: 14 | TOTAL: 5 | TOTAL: 0 | TOTAL: 0 |

# Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 13 elementary and 8 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.<br><br>The teacher explains content clearly and imaginatively.<br><br>The teacher invites students to explain the content to their classmates.<br><br>Students use academic language correctly. | The teacher states clearly, at some point during the lesson, what the students will be learning.<br><br>The teacher's explanation of content is clear and invites student participation and thinking.<br><br>The teacher makes no content errors.<br><br>Students engage with the learning task, indicating that they understand what they are to do. | The teacher provides little elaboration or explanation about what students will be learning.<br><br>The teacher's explanation of the content consists of a monologue, with minimal participation or intellectual engagement by students.<br><br>The teacher may make minor content errors.<br><br>The teacher must clarify the learning task. | At no time during the lesson does the teacher convey to students what they will be learning.<br><br>Students indicate through body language or questions that they don't understand the content being presented.<br><br>Students indicate through their questions that they are confused about the learning task. | This criterion was not observed or rated. |
| | TOTAL: 1 | TOTAL: 13 | TOTAL: 6 | TOTAL: 0 | TOTAL: 1 |
| **Using Questioning and Discussion Strategies** | Students initiate higher-order questions.<br><br>The teacher builds on and uses student responses to questions to deepen student understanding.<br><br>Students extend the discussion, enriching it.<br><br>Virtually all students are engaged. | The teacher uses open-ended questions, inviting students to think and/or offer multiple possible answers.<br><br>Discussions enable students to talk to one another without ongoing mediation by the teacher.<br><br>Many students actively engage in the discussion. | The teacher frames some questions designed to promote student thinking, but many have a single correct answer.<br><br>The teacher invites students to respond directly to one another's ideas, but few students respond.<br><br>The teacher calls on many students, but only a small number participate. | Questions are rapid-fire and convergent with a single correct answer.<br><br>The teacher does not ask students to explain their thinking.<br><br>Only a few students dominate the discussion. | This criterion was not observed or rated. |
| | TOTAL: 0 | TOTAL: 10 | TOTAL: 7 | TOTAL: 0 | TOTAL: 4 |

# Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 13 elementary and 8 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.<br><br>Lesson activities require high-level student thinking and explanations of their thinking.<br><br>Students have an opportunity for reflection and closure on the lesson to consolidate their understanding. | Most students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.<br><br>Most learning tasks have multiple correct responses or approaches and/or encourage higher-order thinking.<br><br>Students are invited to explain their thinking as part of completing tasks.<br><br>The pacing of the lesson provides students with the time needed to be intellectually engaged. | Some students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.<br><br>Learning tasks are a mix of those requiring thinking and those requiring recall.<br><br>Student engagement with the content is largely passive.<br><br>The pacing of the lesson is uneven—suitable in parts but rushed or dragging in others. | Few students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.<br><br>Learning tasks, activities, and materials require only recall or have a single correct response.<br><br>The lesson drags on or is rushed. | This criterion was not observed or rated. |
| | TOTAL: 1 | TOTAL: 7 | TOTAL: 13 | TOTAL: 0 | TOTAL: 0 |
| **Using Assessment in Instruction** | Students indicate they clearly understand the characteristics of high-quality work.<br><br>The teacher uses multiple strategies to monitor student understanding.<br><br>Students monitor their own understanding.<br><br>Feedback comes from many sources. | The teacher makes the standards of high-quality work clear to students.<br><br>The teacher elicits evidence of student understanding.<br><br>Students are invited to assess their own work and make improvements.<br><br>Feedback includes specific and timely guidance. | There is little evidence that the students understand how the work is evaluated.<br><br>The teacher monitors understanding through a single method, without eliciting evidence of understanding from students.<br><br>Feedback to students is vague. | The teacher does not indicate what quality work looks like.<br><br>The teacher makes no effort to determine whether students understand the lesson.<br><br>Students receive no feedback, or feedback is global or directed to one student. | |
| | TOTAL: 0 | TOTAL: 12 | TOTAL: 7 | TOTAL: 0 | TOTAL: 2 |

# Classroom Observations and Additional Comments

There were 19 students and one teacher in an elementary school class, reading a story from Wonders. The teacher had students discuss the story with a neighbor and then asked several high-level questions of students, and students engaged in completing a worksheet that contained questions and required students to cite text in the answer.

Students in a primary classroom were engaged in writing focused on expressing their personal preferences. The teacher displayed several examples on the board and efficiently guided students through how to use those models in their own writing. Students were attentive and eager to apply what they had learned.

In a middle school math class, there was one teacher and 17 students. Students seemed comfortable, and some worked independently while others worked in pairs. One group of students was talking with others. This is one of the double-period math classes for 7th grade. The teacher teaches Tier-1 during first session and then Tier-2 during second, which gives her the opportunity to work one-on-one with some while others work on technology.

Students in an upper elementary classroom were engaged in an activity sorting and cutting words that were verbs into categories of past, present, and future tense. Although the task promoted understanding of verb tenses, students were instructed to remain silent throughout, which limited opportunities for collaboration.

Students were solving math problems on their individual whiteboards, working quietly and diligently. To ensure equitable participation, she used popsicle sticks labeled with student names to cold call individuals to share their answers and explain their reasoning. Students listened attentively to one another's responses before moving on to a new problem, repeating the process with consistency.

The teacher in this classroom had several distinguished ratings. The teacher asked students to work with a peer to solve a problem, leaned in and supported student groups requiring help, re-phrased what students said, provided what students should do when finished, and modeled to students how to use math resources (such as a multiplication table) as the teacher monitored the room, she corrected misconceptions as needed. Students were having in-depth conversations about math.

Students were taking turns reading a text about when they encountered two unfamiliar vocabulary words: chlorophyll and chloroplasts. The teacher encouraged them to refer to their notes to determine the meanings of the terms. Most students began searching, but some became discouraged when they could not immediately locate the information. The teacher continued to prompt and support them. allowing time for productive struggle and perseverance.

# 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 |
|---|---|---|
| Professional Development | Professional development takes place once per month. Sessions are focused on improving academics. Time for collaboration across multiple campuses is built into the schedule. Topics include curriculum training, data collection, and instructional planning. | The status of the previous recommendation is in progress and has not yet been met. Although SPCSA staff agree with the school assessment of progress, more time is needed for full levels of professional development to be impactful and sustained. |
| Academic Improvement Plans | Teachers are receiving extensive training about how to develop and provide Tier-2 instruction within the classroom setting. | The status of the previous recommendation is in progress and has not yet been met. Continued training in the new curriculum (Tier-1), implementation of (Tier-2) small groups, and ongoing support to improve all over proficiency rates in math, English Language Arts, and Science. The emphasis on second language learner development at the middle school is still a work in progress. |

# 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.