



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Western Youth Leadership, Engagement, and
Empowerment Middle School (WYLEES)
Site Evaluation and Risk Based Monitoring
Report: January 27, 2026

State Public Charter School Authority

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Links to Resources

Links to Site Evaluation Resources:

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

Links to Risk Based Monitoring Resources:

- [Risk Based Monitoring Canvas](#)
- [Resource- Updated Policy Checklist: FY2025-2026 Policy and Procedure Checklist Fillable](#)
- [Grants Administration Canvas](#)
- [SPCSA Risk Based Monitoring Training Modules](#)

Summary of School

Location 3634 Maryland Parkway, Suite 300, Las Vegas,
Nevada 89169

Date of Monitoring Tuesday, January 27, 2026

Date of Report Tuesday, March 9, 2026

- Total Number of Students: 203
- Grade Levels: 6 - 8

Part 1

Western Youth Leadership, Engagement, and Empowerment Middle School (WYLEES)

Site Evaluation Report

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)¹, [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.

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 and classifies schools within a five-star performance rating system.

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.

Leadership team

The leadership team has developed strong routines and systems that have allowed the processes and procedures to operate smoothly. Leadership routinely strategizes ways to build and model a clear and transparent culture of communication amongst school stakeholders. The family, student, and staff focus groups provided anecdotes of consistent school communication. School leaders are knowledgeable, highly capable, and passionate. They effectively analyze information to initiate real-time change within the school and take steps to implement necessary improvements. Leadership is keenly aware of students' academic and social-emotional needs (SEL) and teachers' needs. Leadership, front-office staff, and teachers are visibly present in the hallways before and after school as well, as when students are transitioning from one class to another. The leadership team works collegially and employs a reflective and innovative approach to creating and implementing systems that are well-attuned to the needs of the students, as evidenced by the commentary in each of the focus groups. Each focus group echoed that students are seen and heard as individuals. Each focus group said the faculty and staff at Western Youth Leadership, Engagement, and Empowerment Middle School (WYLEES) pay particular attention to meeting student needs.

Governing board

WYLEES governing board demonstrates strong board retention with four of the eight current members being a part of the Committee to Form. The governing board has a strong partnership with leadership, with both the governing board focus group and the leadership focus group providing examples of effective and frequent communication between the two groups. The board's stability and transparency are evident through monthly meetings, financial report reviews, consistent governance, and financial accountability.

Project-Based Learning (PBL model)

Members of the student and parent focus group participants stated they enrolled at WYLEES because of the PBL instructional model. WYLEES describes the school's PBL focus on its webpage²: *“WYLEES incorporates student-centered Project-Based Learning to develop rigorous, relevant, real-world learning experiences to both facilitate students’ mastery of grade-level academic content and to help them acquire the skills needed to be competitive in our rapidly changing world.”* WYLEES is the only school in the SPCSA portfolio that strives to embed PBL across grades and throughout the curriculum. Many parents said their children were thriving at WYLEES, excited to speak about their learning, and enjoyed sharing the things they developed through PBL. Students said they appreciated being able to participate in designing, creating, and finalizing a project.

² https://www.wylees.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=559852&type=d

Hydroponics³ learning experience

WYLEES hydroponics learning experience is a strength, showcasing how project-based learning (PBL) works and culminates in a product. Leadership attributes the efforts of the PBL and personal learning coordinators, as providing learning experiences for students, “which has both served as a framework for future projects and has helped us to engage with community experts who are excited to help us expand and build this offering.”

Diverse teaching faculty and student body

WYLEES has an ethnically diverse teaching staff reflecting the demographics of the community in which the school is physically located. A diverse staff provides students with an opportunity to learn from those with different backgrounds and experiences from their own. “Education within a diverse setting prepares students to become good citizens in an increasingly complex, pluralistic society: it fosters mutual respect and teamwork, and it helps build communities whose members are judged by the quality of their character and their contributions” (American Council of Education, 2021). Validation Day information indicates 72.4 percent of currently enrolled students qualify for Free or Reduced-Price lunch (FRL). WYLEES has a population comprised of 27.5 percent Black/African American students, 39.4 percent Hispanic students, and 10.8 percent of students who receive Individualized Education Plans⁴. SPCSA staff strive to recognize diverse student demographics as a strength when identifying, understanding, and responding to the needs of the school’s population.

Campus location and facility

WYLEES is geographically located centrally in the Las Vegas Valley. The school facility is located in a prior department store within a former shopping mall, providing extensive parking. The building resides on a major street with frequent RTC⁵ buses arriving and departing close to the school facility. Hallways are wide, allowing students to pass from class to class comfortably. Classrooms are large with room for students to move easily. There are numerous windows throughout the building and classrooms. The physical environment is maintained in a clean and well-ordered manner.

³ Hydroponics is a soilless cultivation method that grows plants in water-based, nutrient-rich solutions, often supported by inert media like perlite or coconut coir. It enables up to 95% less water usage than traditional gardening or farming, faster growth, and year-round production in controlled environments.

⁴ Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is a plan that outlines the specialized instruction and support services a child with a disability will receive in school.

⁵ RTC stands for the [Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada](#). It is the transit authority responsible for operating the public bus system, which includes fixed routes, the Deuce on the Strip, and express services throughout the Las Vegas Valley

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.

Chronic absenteeism

School leadership acknowledged chronic absenteeism is a challenge during this opening year. Attendance information from the most recent school reported data indicates chronic absenteeism at around 11 percent daily. Members of the leadership team said chronic absenteeism is an ongoing discussion amongst stakeholders of the school. Members of the leadership reported reaching out to schools within the SPCSA portfolio who were successful in reducing chronic absenteeism.

Student behaviors, establishing a positive student culture

Participants in the leadership and student focus groups reported challenges regarding unwanted student behaviors on the part of some students that result in disruption of student learning and the ability of teachers to teach content. During the leadership presentation, one member of the team said, “As a first-year school, our biggest challenge has been developing and implementing systems and consistent routines for students and staff. Though this is improving, it remains a priority.”

Enrollment

Lower than anticipated enrollment has challenged WYLEES during the 2025-2026 academic year. Lower than anticipated enrollment impacted state received monies for in-pupil funding and consequently impacted resource support. Leadership reported adjusting the staffing model to meet their actual enrollment in order to ensure fiscal responsibility. However, the consequences are larger strains on staff and resources.

Staffing

Due to consecutive substitutes teaching physical education (PE), there are limited opportunities for students to have a true PE experience and/or physical activity on a regular basis. Students and family members expressed concerns over this during their respective focus groups.

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.

Differentiating professional development

SPCSA staff recommend WYLEES offer differentiated PD based on teachers' experience and content areas. Veteran teachers can revisit and hone skills, and novice teachers will benefit from mentoring. "When teachers calibrate and plan intentionally to maximize lesson impact, student growth and mastery improve exponentially. When teachers plan and teach intentionally, students have a more coherent learning experience" (Bruno, 2021). Embedded practices that engage teachers and empower students contribute to proficiency gains. PD strategically designed for individualized teaching needs may deepen teaching and enrich student learning. PD should be developed intentionally, with forethought, reflection, and a deep dive into student achievement. One resource that may be of help is *Interactions: Collaboration Skills for School Professionals*, 9th ed (Friend, 2020).

MTSS framework

SPCSA staff recommend WYLEES implement a structured school-wide Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)⁶ with fidelity. MTSS opportunities have the potential to improve the social-emotional well-being of students. Additionally, improvements within the area of consistent behavioral expectations. Members of the leadership team, as well as students in the student focus group, mentioned there were several student learning challenges due to undesirable behaviors. Members of the site evaluation team also observed several instances of behavior disrupting classroom learning. Continued work toward a school-wide consistent set of policies and procedures about behavior management, rules, and expectations has the potential to provide staff resources and training to address these challenges. "MTSS appears to be a systematic, dynamic way for improving student outcomes through focused core instruction, preventative and proactive support, and intensive interventions regarding academics, social-emotional learning, and behavior" (Buffum et al., 2018). Training for staff and school-wide SEL⁷ support through MTSS opportunities has the potential to provide staff access to Tier-1⁸, Tier-2⁹, and Tier-3¹⁰ resources to address these challenges.

Adhere to the handbook cellphone policy

SPCSA staff recommend WYLEES adhere to the cellphone policy as written in the *Student and Family Handbook*, which states, "No cell phone or multimedia device usage is allowed during the school day unless directed by the teacher." Several observed classrooms contained students who were on their phones and/or having altercations with teachers. The learning environment was disrupted, and students

⁶ Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a proactive academic and behavioral framework. The MTSS framework provides schools and teachers onboarding and ongoing training and resources of tiered interventions and supports.

⁷ SEL stands for social and emotional learning, an integral part of human development in which students learn to develop healthy identities, manage emotions, and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

⁸ 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.

⁹ Tier-2 instruction in education refers to supplemental, small-group interventions for students who aren't making sufficient progress in the general classroom.

¹⁰ Tier-3 intervention provides a high level of intensity, time, and support for children who fail to respond to Tier-1 and Tier-2 instruction and for those eligible for special education and related services.

were disengaged from the learning.

Establish a culture and environment conducive to learning

SPCSA staff recommend WYLEES establish and cultivate a culture of learning in order to increase student engagement. Approaches that foster a culture of learning and create overall cohesiveness of classroom management include Total Physical Response (TPR)¹¹ strategies (Ferlazzo, 2021, Heflin, 2020), SEL, and Response to Intervention (RTI)¹² (Vollmer, Gettinger, Begeny, 2019). SPCSA staff observed many students eager to learn, talk, and share their knowledge and excitement for learning, but limited opportunities to do so. Several of these limited opportunities were due to student misbehaviors that disrupted the learning environment and necessitated the teachers continually redirecting poor behavior. Faculty can implement routines that foster students' engagement by:

- Posting a clear objective where every student can reference what they are learning and why they are learning it.
- Establishing clear learning targets and criteria for success in each lesson.
- Improving the use and frequency of academic feedback to students.
- Fostering student goal setting as an integral part of classroom practice.

Targeted PD focusing on best practices in differentiation for cultural and developmental differences of students or connecting to students' individual lived experiences may assist in improving student engagement and learning levels. "Successful learning experiences that focus on high-order competencies are critically important for students to improve their academic performance and thus narrow the achievement gap" (Yang, Y., van Aalst, J., & Chan, C. K. K., 2020).

¹¹ Total Physical Response (TPR) is a method of teaching language or vocabulary concepts by using physical movement to react to verbal input.

¹² 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

Site Evaluation Findings: Strong Recommendations

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

There were no strong recommendations identified for WYLEES during this site evaluation.

Site Evaluation Findings: Deficiencies

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

There were no deficiencies identified for WYLEES 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	3
Family Members, Parents, and Guardians	5
Faculty and Staff	8
School Leadership	3
Students	6

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

Focus Group Summary: Governing Board

WYLEES has eight governing board members with no open seats. Four of the eight current members were part of the Committee to Form. Members of the governing board have expertise in business, accounting, human resources, fundraising, board governance, and education. Board members with an educational background include those who are licensed and experienced in education administration, teacher education, special education, and classroom teaching. The board meets monthly, with no current sub-committees or special committees.

Board members indicated that a few parents have attended board meetings on occasion. Board members said they would like to see more parental involvement as the school grows. One board member described the development of the CAT (Community Action Team) for family members. The CAT was created to provide family members with a platform to discuss any concerns they might have, including things that were working well and those items on which the board may need to provide input. Originally, the meetings were scheduled in the evenings and had low attendance. The CAT meetings were changed to after school and have since garnered higher parent participation.

Board members described the ability to successfully recruit staff positions and obtain successful enrollment as a school strength. Financial status was a second point of strength, with one board member reporting, “Managing costs well and meeting the needs of our students and not being behind is great.” Board members were proud of being on time with compliance items and aware of upcoming due dates. One board member reported that adjusting the staffing model to meet enrollment needs alongside balancing fiscal responsibility was one challenge the board met successfully. Moving forward, the governing board would like to focus on retaining staff and developing a pool of applicants to reference as needed.

Board members indicated communication between the governing board and school leadership was strong, with fluid communication with some board members occurring a few times per week. According to board members, Leadership is thoughtful and proactive and looks ahead to anticipate needs and strategizes ways in which to consider solutions. One board member said, “The leadership team is thoughtful about students and student needs. There is fidelity to the school model, and it is being implemented.”

Monthly standing board agenda items include compliance, financials, academics, and the facility. Academically, the board is gathering and examining student winter MAP¹⁴ data. One board member said, “Because we are a new school, we have no prior student data. With academics, the first semester was figuring out where students were. Now we will use that data to leverage setting focused goals, enrollment goals, and at-risk support.” Board members shared they had also not anticipated the high student SPED¹⁵ needs or the various and numerous behavioral needs of the student population. Board members said they are developing processes and policies while addressing things as they emerge. One board member said, “We look at student data and ask, how are they succeeding? What are their needs? How can we support them?” When a student leaves, we speak with school leadership and inquire why they left and consider what we can do differently.”

¹⁴ Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is a computer-adaptive assessment utilized to monitor student growth to inform and personalize instruction. MAP was officially adopted by the State Board of Education to assess Nevada students as a part of the Read by Grade Three (RBG3) program.

¹⁵ Special education (also known as special-needs education, aided education, alternative provision, exceptional student education, special ed., SDC, and SPED) is the practice of educating students in a way that accommodates their individual differences, disabilities, and special needs.

Focus Group Summary: Family Members, Parents, and Guardians

Parents shared choosing to enroll their child(ren) in WYLEES for a variety of reasons. Several family members said they disliked the school choices in their neighborhoods. Others cited prior bullying of their child(ren) at prior schools as a factor for selecting WYLEES. A parent said her child was easily bored in class at his previous school; “Here he is learning and enjoys it. He tells me about his day, whereas before I would just hear ‘school was okay.’” Parents appreciate the four-day school week. Several family members stated their child(ren) look forward to going to school. There is no struggle in the morning as their child(ren) get ready without complaint. Several parents shared that their child(ren) are excited to talk about their learning and what is happening during the school day. Several family members reported that the hydroponics learning experience is talked about frequently at home. Other parents mentioned students eager to share what they are reading and writing about in English language arts class and in social science class. Several parents said their child(ren) eagerly share what they are learning at school, whereas they did not when they attended other schools. One parent said, “This tells me the instruction at WYLEES is quality.”

Parents were complimentary to the teachers. Several parents said they thought their child(ren) was learning things at WYLEES that their child(ren) would not be learning at the schools in their neighborhood. One parent said, “The teachers seem to listen and talk to my children nicely. My kids are excited when they come home and are excited to come to school. They tell me what they are learning and say they are learning a lot.” Another parent provided an example of her child forgetting some work at home. The parent was on the way to the school to deliver the work when she received a telephone call notifying her that the teachers helped the child recreate the work in practice, so the parent did not need to bring the work to the school. The parent said, “I am happy that my child was supported. The teachers are very helpful.” Other parents echoed this sentiment, stating that the faculty and staff listen to the students and do not dismiss their thoughts or feelings. One parent said, “My child has blossomed socially and academically at WYLEES. I like that they are here for the whole child.”

Parents suggested that leadership consider adding a nutritional snack break in the afternoon, as the time from lunch to the close of school is lengthy. Students are dismissed around four in the afternoon, and lunch is at 11:30 a.m. Parents shared that when they pick up their child(ren), their child(ren) requests food as they are ravenous. One parent said, “My child is ‘hangry’¹⁶ and I end up finding something at a nearby fast-food restaurant. Which is something that is not really nutritious.” Several parents agreed, stating their children need to eat as soon as school concluded. A few parents said they do send snacks to the school with their child(ren), but there is no time between classes to actually eat the snacks packed for the afternoon. Parents thoughtfully recommended that having a snack break around two in the afternoon would be optimal.

¹⁶ Hangry is a word derived from the words hungry and angry. It is defined as being ill-tempered or irritable as a result of hunger.

Focus Group Summary: Faculty and Staff

Teachers reported a strong sense of community rooted in a "foundation of collaboration" between the faculty, staff, and leadership. Several faculty members said the positivity and collaboration began on day one with intensive summer PBL planning sessions. The free-flow exchange of ideas continues to be supported throughout the year during weekly coaching sessions. Members of the leadership team are coaches. Faculty in the focus group shared that at the beginning of the year, leadership initially used formal surveys to gather staff input. This communication has evolved into a more organic, ongoing conversation between leadership and staff. Teachers described the environment as emotionally safe and highly supportive, noting that staff and students feel comfortable asking questions and seeking help.

Teachers said WYLEES utilizes "WIN Time" (What I Need) for both academic intervention and enrichment extensions. Support for struggling students ranges from after-school math tutoring to a specialized hydroponics lab that serves as a sensory-friendly space for students with special needs to feel they are overly stimulated. Currently, teachers are the ones to recommend that students may need to spend time in the hydroponics lab, but teachers are actively moving toward a self-advocacy model, encouraging students to recognize when they need a break or extra help. Staff also use real-time communication, such as group chats, to coordinate immediate support for students who may be overwhelmed or in need of a reset. WYLEES has an individualized learning coordinator who meets with students in small group settings for SEL enhancement.

Faculty members were asked if they had any accomplishments they were working toward that week. One teacher shared working toward more student-led initiatives, including students proposing, researching, developing, and opening a student-run store. Another teacher said she was focused on adding more student engagement practices within small groups. Several teachers said they had been actively coaching students on leading the upcoming student-led parent conferences.

When asked if PD aligned with faculty needs, teachers had mixed responses. Overall faculty said summer workshops on PBL were productive and led to building strong communication amongst staff. Teacher indicated that the PD session on student-led parent conferences was valuable. Many would like to see differentiated PD based on content area as well as veteran teaching status. Several teachers said they would like focused PD on how to use learning software platforms such as i-Ready¹⁷ and Prodigy math¹⁸ in meaningful ways and be able to ask questions of the PD facilitator(s). They would also like to have PD in the learning management software and reporting systems, such as Infinite Campus¹⁹ and Class Dojo²⁰.

Faculty identified potential suggestions for improvement. There is a desire for more concise administrative communication and a schedule more conducive to PBL. Staff suggested that departments need a stronger voice in decision-making to ensure that the workload is shared equitably.

¹⁷ i-Ready Learning is a digital instructional resource assessing students with grade-level materials in reading and math.

¹⁸ Prodigy is a free and for-paid for premium content software platform that uses a game-based platform to teach students mathematical skills.

¹⁹ Infinite Campus is a web-based program providing families the ability to view academic information for their children.

²⁰ 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 directly to parents and students.

Focus Group Summary: School Leadership

Leadership reported significant academic gaps and trauma-related behavioral challenges with incoming enrolled students. This was compounded early on by staffing vacancies in the content areas of math and science. The WYLEES school counselor has deep trauma-informed expertise that leadership leveraged to create a school-wide accountability program centered on "The WYLEES Way," focusing on reflective writing and community-building for high-needs students. WYLEES also employs "reverse suspension," where students work one-on-one with administration and counselors to take ownership of their actions rather than being sent home. According to leadership, these measures have assisted in building trust with students who enrolled with defensive postures and mistrust due to past adverse experiences. The accountability system and reverse suspension have shifted from the initial small focus group to a school-wide framework in the second semester of the year, emphasizing positive behaviors over prohibitions. One member of the leadership team said parents have been integral in the process, showing high engagement levels both in person and virtually.

Leadership indicated summer PD centered on intensive PBL with facilitators from PBL Works²¹. Faculty developed a complete PBL within individual departments. One specific project that culminated from the summer PD is the hydroponics learning experience. The hydroponics space serves as a learning experience for students, as well as showcasing a successful PBL concluding project. Members of the leadership team said the hydroponics learning experience has also provided a framework for future PBL projects and assisted WYLEES in engaging with community experts, excited to help the school expand its hydroponics offerings.

The leadership team described staffing challenges in this inaugural year of WYLEES. From vacancies in the content areas of math and science to special education and PE, staffing has been a major focus. Despite early turnover in special education, the department has stabilized with a veteran teacher and two instructional assistants. One of the instructional assistants is completing her teaching degree and will be a licensed teacher shortly. WYLEES has also partnered with specialized speech partners in the community for services. The PE teaching position remains open and is currently filled with substitute teachers. Leadership is keenly aware of the impact and is actively pursuing applicants.

WYLEES leadership team stated recruitment efforts have been extensive and ongoing. The school leaders said WYLEES has partnered with Nevada Rise, a kindergarten through fifth-grade charter school within the SPCSA portfolio that is relatively geographically close. Leadership noted that Nevada Rise students who have enrolled at WYLEES acclimated well. They are familiar with the four-day school week and understand the curriculum.

²¹PBL Works is a leading resource for ProjectBased Learning (PBL), providing educators with tools, strategies, and frameworks to implement effective PBL in their classrooms.

Focus Group Summary: Students

Students spoke about the strengths of attending WYLEES. Students said they enjoyed the things they were learning in science, math, and Explorations²². Students particularly mentioned enjoying the hydroponics learning experience, being able to select the topic of projects, and completing projects. One student said their academics have improved since enrolling at WYLEES, and math in particular was an area in which they had previously struggled. A few said they liked the physical environment, including being comfortable in the classroom, school, and classroom decorations, and the lighting. Students indicated they felt seen and heard by teachers for the most part. Students said they feel physically safe, and most students in the focus group indicated that if they had a serious problem, there was at least one adult at WYLEES whom they could confide. One student said, “I like coming to school. I wake up and want to come to school; that was not how I felt at my other school.” Several students agreed.

Students also spoke about challenges at the school. Many students said there were some students who misbehaved in class, and this impeded their learning. A few students provided examples of instances in which privileges were lost because of the actions of a few. One student said, “Some students who act out remain in the classroom and distract from the learning.” A few others shared that even when the students who choose to behave badly leave the classroom, upon return, the behavior does not change. Students said they would like to learn and not have so much time spent on redirecting behavior. Several students said they would like more rigor and high expectations, in their learning.

Several students indicated they enrolled at WYLEES because the school advertises being a Leadership school. However, thus far, there have been not enough leadership classes or activities. This is something students would very much like to see implemented. Students said they would also like leadership to consider rotating students within the classes, so they did not have to be with the same students in every class of the day. One student said, “It would be nice to see different students throughout the day and work with different people.” The third area for improvement that students would like to see is the physical education (PE) class. Many students said PE has been taught by successive substitutes. One student said, “We don’t do anything but run or walk. We don’t really work out our bodies.” A second student said, “We had a packet once on how to make a game. We wrote it on paper. It was about eight pages long. We didn’t get to try the game out.” Several students said this was disappointing, as they really wanted to play the games they developed.

²² Explorations is a blended English language arts and social sciences course that is co-planned and co-taught. Students attend English language arts and social science successively in their school day.

Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 21 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	<p>The teacher demonstrates knowledge and caring about individual students' lives beyond the class and school.</p> <p>When necessary, students respectfully correct one another.</p> <p>Students participate without fear of put-downs or ridicule from either the teacher or other students.</p> <p>The teacher respects and encourages students' efforts.</p>	<p>Talk between the teacher and students and among students is uniformly respectful.</p> <p>The teacher successfully responds to disrespectful behavior among students.</p> <p>Students participate willingly but may be somewhat hesitant to offer their ideas in front of classmates.</p> <p>The teacher makes general connections with individual students.</p>	<p>The quality of interactions between teachers and students, or among students, is uneven, with occasional disrespect or insensitivity.</p> <p>The teacher attempts to respond to disrespectful behavior among students with uneven results.</p> <p>The teacher attempts to make connections with individual students, but student reactions indicate that these attempts are not entirely successful.</p>	<p>The teacher is disrespectful toward or insensitive to students' ages, cultural backgrounds, and developmental levels.</p> <p>Students' body language indicates feelings of hurt, discomfort, or insecurity.</p> <p>The teacher displays no familiarity with, or care about, individual students.</p>	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 17	TOTAL: 4	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0
Establishing a Culture for Learning	<p>The teacher communicates passion for the subject.</p> <p>Students indicate through their questions and comments a desire to understand content.</p> <p>Students assist their classmates in understanding the content.</p>	<p>The teacher communicates the importance of the content and the conviction that with hard work all students can master the material.</p> <p>The teacher conveys an expectation of high levels of student effort.</p> <p>Students expend good effort to complete work of high quality.</p>	<p>The teachers' energy for the work is neutral.</p> <p>The teacher conveys high expectations for only some students.</p> <p>Students exhibit a limited commitment to completing the work on their own.</p> <p>The teacher's primary concern appears to be to complete the task at hand.</p>	<p>The teacher conveys that there is little or no purpose for the work, or that the reasons for doing it are due to external factors.</p> <p>The teacher conveys to at least some students that the work is too challenging for them.</p> <p>Students exhibit little or no pride in their work.</p>	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 13	TOTAL: 8	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0

Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 21 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	<p>If asked, students can explain what they are learning and where it fits into the larger curriculum context.</p> <p>The teacher explains content clearly and imaginatively.</p> <p>The teacher invites students to explain the content to their classmates.</p> <p>Students use academic language correctly.</p>	<p>The teacher states clearly, at some point during the lesson, what the students will be learning.</p> <p>The teacher's explanation of content is clear and invites student participation and thinking.</p> <p>The teacher makes no content errors.</p> <p>Students engage with the learning task, indicating that they understand what they are to do.</p>	<p>The teacher provides little elaboration or explanation about what students will be learning.</p> <p>The teacher's explanation of the content consists of a monologue, with minimal participation or intellectual engagement by students.</p> <p>The teacher may make minor content errors.</p> <p>The teacher must clarify the learning task.</p>	<p>At no time during the lesson does the teacher convey to students what they will be learning.</p> <p>Students indicate through body language or questions that they don't understand the content being presented.</p> <p>Students indicate through their questions that they are confused about the learning task.</p>	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 15	TOTAL: 6	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0
Using Questioning and Discussion Strategies	<p>Students initiate higher-order questions.</p> <p>The teacher builds on and uses student responses to questions to deepen student understanding.</p> <p>Students extend the discussion, enriching it.</p> <p>Virtually all students are engaged.</p>	<p>The teacher uses open-ended questions, inviting students to think and/or offer multiple possible answers.</p> <p>Discussions enable students to talk to one another without ongoing mediation by the teacher.</p> <p>Many students actively engage in the discussion.</p>	<p>The teacher frames some questions designed to promote student thinking, but many have a single correct answer.</p> <p>The teacher invites students to respond directly to one another's ideas, but few students respond.</p> <p>The teacher calls on many students, but only a small number participate.</p>	<p>Questions are rapid-fire and convergent with a single correct answer.</p> <p>The teacher does not ask students to explain their thinking.</p> <p>Only a few students dominate the discussion.</p>	This criterion was not observed or rated.
	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 14	TOTAL: 4	TOTAL: 1	TOTAL: 2

Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 21 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	<p>Virtually all students are engaged in the lesson.</p> <p>Lesson activities require high-level student thinking and explanations of their thinking.</p> <p>Students have an opportunity for reflection and closure on the lesson to consolidate their understanding.</p>	<p>Most students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.</p> <p>Most learning tasks have multiple correct responses or approaches and/or encourage higher-order thinking.</p> <p>Students are invited to explain their thinking as part of completing tasks.</p> <p>The pacing of the lesson provides students with the time needed to be intellectually engaged.</p>	<p>Some students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.</p> <p>Learning tasks are a mix of those requiring thinking and those requiring recall.</p> <p>Student engagement with the content is largely passive.</p> <p>The pacing of the lesson is uneven—suitable in parts but rushed or dragging in others.</p>	<p>Few students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.</p> <p>Learning tasks, activities, and materials require only recall or have a single correct response.</p> <p>The lesson drags on or is rushed.</p>	<p>This criterion was not observed or rated.</p>
	TOTAL: 1	TOTAL: 10	TOTAL: 9	TOTAL: 1	TOTAL: 0
Using Assessment in Instruction	<p>Students indicate they clearly understand the characteristics of high-quality work.</p> <p>The teacher uses multiple strategies to monitor student understanding.</p> <p>Students monitor their own understanding.</p> <p>Feedback comes from many sources.</p>	<p>The teacher makes the standards of high-quality work clear to students.</p> <p>The teacher elicits evidence of student understanding.</p> <p>Students are invited to assess their own work and make improvements.</p> <p>Feedback includes specific and timely guidance.</p>	<p>There is little evidence that the students understand how the work is evaluated.</p> <p>The teacher monitors understanding through a single method, without eliciting evidence of understanding from students.</p> <p>Feedback to students is vague.</p>	<p>The teacher does not indicate what quality work looks like.</p> <p>The teacher makes no effort to determine whether students understand the lesson.</p> <p>Students receive no feedback, or feedback is global or directed to one student.</p>	<p>This criterion was not observed or rated.</p>
	TOTAL: 1	TOTAL: 10	TOTAL: 7	TOTAL: 1	TOTAL: 2

Classroom Observations and Additional Comments

The teacher used an “iceberg” metaphor to explain that culture includes both visible and invisible elements. He asked students to classify examples (*e.g.*, foods pictured) as belonging to the top or bottom of the iceberg. At first, students responded to questions in a somewhat disrespectful tone. The teacher paused the lesson, provided a silent moment for students to think, and reaffirmed that he would not lower his expectations for disrespectful behavior toward him and one another. After this reset, students’ responses became more respectful, and they showed increased interest and engagement in learning.

Students in an English Language Arts classroom worked collaboratively in small groups to complete a worksheet focused on Claudette Colvin, a notable pioneer of the civil rights movement. Students were assigned defined roles, displayed on-screen to promote structure and accountability. Two teachers were present and actively circulated throughout the classroom to monitor group progress and provide targeted support. While most students were on task and participating in the group work, overall engagement was moderate and could be strengthened through additional strategies to more consistently involve all learners and foster a more equitable learning environment. Students were focused when the teacher was in close proximity. Groups that were farther away from the teacher would often become disengaged and off task by chatting with a neighboring student or play with their phone.

The teacher supported students in determining what change they would make to a specific population by modeling the steps for identifying the independent and dependent variables. She then offered students a choice: work independently on additional questions or continue following along with her. Some students worked quietly on their own, while others remained with the teacher’s guided instruction. The teacher asked, “What will happen if we increase the food?” but few students volunteered to respond. Overall, students appeared somewhat disengaged during the lesson. A few students were using their cell phones under the table.

In one English language arts class, students sat within jigsaw groups sharing their responses to an article. The prompt on the board asked students to summarize the article for their peers, explain how the article applies to world change, and state what they personally learned from the experience. Students were engaged and participated with prompts from the teacher.

Students in a math classroom worked both independently and in small groups on assigned tasks while the teacher circulated to check in and discuss what they still needed to do to be successful. Throughout the period, the teacher strengthened relationships through purposeful questioning and supportive comments that also served as informal emotional check-ins.

Students researched three sources for their projects focused on mental health and stress management. Working independently, students explored a variety of materials to gather credible information and identify key themes related to coping strategies, emotional well-being, and self-care practices. The teacher circulated throughout the room to monitor progress, provide guidance as needed, and ensure

students remained on task. Overall, students worked productively and demonstrated engagement in the research process as they prepared to synthesize their findings into their final projects.

Students used Post-it notes to write one “Glow” (something the presenting group did well) and one “Grow” (an area for improvement). Student groups then delivered abbreviated versions of their presentations on health-related topics. After presenting, groups collected the Glow and Grow feedback and planned to use it to revise and strengthen their final presentations.

In one class, students were very disrespectful to each other, the teacher, and the classroom environment. Students shouted across the classroom, cursed, hit each other, sang, and talked over the teacher, screamed, and threw things across their tables or the room. During the observation time, students never did focus on the learning. Students exhibited behaviors that detracted from a positive classroom environment. Although the teacher attempted to redirect these behaviors, the strategies used were not fully effective, and the overall learning environment remained less conducive to productive instruction.

During WIN (What I Need) time, students worked independently on individualized math learning activities using their devices. Two adults were present in the room to monitor progress and provide support as needed. All students were actively engaged and on task throughout the session.

Students participated in a variety of learning activities, including i-Ready math or reading, Prodigy math²³, classwork, and independent reading. Students were engaged and appropriately following the expected learning tasks while the teacher circulated throughout the room to monitor progress and support learning.

Students in an English Language Arts class worked independently on a written response summarizing their assigned article, explaining how it connects to the concept of world change, and reflecting on what they learned. Students were actively engaged in the task, demonstrating focus and effort. Two adults were present in the classroom, monitoring student progress and providing support as needed to maintain a productive learning environment.

Students worked independently on their computers to complete i-Ready math lessons while a timer ran. When the timer sounded after three minutes, the teacher transitioned students to a whole-group activity focused on geography, introducing Google Earth as a new tool for the subject. The teacher clearly explained how students could earn points for participation. Students remained respectful throughout the lesson and readily volunteered answers when prompted.

Several observed classrooms did not align with the school’s no-cell phone or multimedia device usage policy, and in certain instances, teacher redirection did not effectively address the situation, leading to disputes that could have been avoided if the policy had been followed.

²³ Prodigy is a free and paid-for- premium content software platform that uses a game-based platform to teach students mathematical skills.

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.

WYLEES is in its inaugural year. Thus, there are no previous recommendations.

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	
McKinney-Vento Poster	<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

Part 2

Western Youth Leadership, Engagement, and Empowerment Middle School (WYLEES) Risk Based Monitoring Report

Executive Summary

As a pass-through entity of federal funds, the SPCSA is required to conduct risk assessments of subrecipients in accordance with 2 C.F.R. §200.332(c). These assessments evaluate compliance with program and fiscal requirements but do not measure the quality or determine future eligibility.

Risk Based Monitoring: Visit Objectives

The purpose of the monitoring visit was to assess the capacity, performance, and compliance of a subrecipient charter school. Specific objectives included addressing high-risk issues requiring immediate attention, evaluating the fidelity of program delivery, and ensuring that any subaward of federal funds was used for authorized purposes in compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the subaward. Additionally, the visit aimed to confirm that subaward performance goals were being met. The review identified areas of strength, recommendations, and issues based on the school's preparation of supporting documentation and presentation of information.

These findings are not exhaustive, and additional concerns may exist beyond those observed. It remains the responsibility of the school to maintain ongoing internal oversight of grants and grant management processes to ensure full compliance with all applicable federal and local statutes, regulations, and policy requirements. As areas for improvement have been identified, a School Support Plan is required to address these concerns.

Risk Based Monitoring: School Overview

Grants with Active Subawards

- **FY26 Title I, Part A**

Grants with Allocations (subaward pending)

- **FY26 Title II, Part A**
- **FY26 Title II, Part A (Off Set – State)**
- **FY26 Title III English Learner**
- **FY26 Transportation Funding**

Total Federal Funds Expended (FY25)

- **N/A** — new to SPCSA portfolio

Single Audit Required

- **N/A** — new to SPCSA portfolio

Current Risk Level / Prior Risk Level

- **High / N/A** (new to SPCSA portfolio)

Risk Based Monitoring: Scope of Review/Methodology

Fiscal administrative requirements reviewed: internal controls; allowability of costs; financial management & accounting system; procurement; audit resolution; inventory management; records retention; and appropriate use of funds.

Program review:

- **Special Education** (IEP development/meetings/records; implementation; progress monitoring; parent engagement; file review)
- **Title I, Part A** (needs assessment; community outreach; alignment to SPP; fidelity of implementation; parent/community involvement; data monitoring; CSI/TSI progress as applicable)
- **Additional Areas: McKinney-Vento; Foster Care**

Risk Based Monitoring: Areas of Strength

Fiscal

- Leadership and fiscal team exhibited a **professional, transparent, responsive** approach; policies and procedures were **well-organized, compliant, and audit-ready** upon initial review—commendable for a new charter holder; work is ongoing to refine business processes; commitment to **leveraging funds for student achievement** and **willingness to revise** practices to align with federal requirements.

Program – Special Education

- Staff promptly provided required documents and context; the team was **receptive to feedback** and committed to **continuous improvement** of services.

Program – Title I, Part A

- Funds support student achievement via **after-school tutoring, PBL strategies**, and targeted instructional resources (e.g., **ELAD Book**).

Program – Title II / Title III / Title IV

- **Funds not received** at time of visit.

Additional Areas: McKinney-Vento & Foster Care

- **Bus passes** effectively removed transportation barriers; Foster Care supports leverage internal systems and staff to maintain stability and access per guidance.

Risk Based Monitoring: Areas of Improvements/Recommendations

Fiscal

- **Expand policy detail:** clearly document **how, who, when**; tie procedures to policies; annual review to close process gaps.
- **Embed GSA per diem link** in travel templates: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>.
- **Develop “Standards of Conduct / Conflict of Interest” forms** with certification/signature fields for staff/vendors.
- **Create internal investigation form for lost/stolen equipment** aligned to inventory/disposition procedures.
- **Monitor & submit spend-down in GMS;** ensure alignment to approved subaward and avoid returning funds.
- **Submit grant compliance reports in Epicenter** by deadlines (see SPCSA’s Fiscal Epicenter Reporting Requirements repository).
- **Draft FY27 policies under Allowability of Costs (F2): Health & Welfare and Fringe Benefits**—use SPCSA sample policies (Canvas links referenced).
- **Annual Uniform Guidance PD** for grant staff (e.g., **Brustein & Manasevit, NAFEPA, NGMA**).

Program – Special Education

- **Records Access List** posted at confidential folder storage; **file access logs** in all folders.
- Replace generic PLAAFP Effects statements; clearly state **impact/no impact** and **support needs**.
- **Offer & document interpreter services** for LEP parents; log **accept/decline**.
- For EL students in SPED: include **latest WIDA scores**; mark **Special Factors #3 = Yes**; ensure **Supplementary Aids/Services** address language development; list relevant **assessment accommodations**.
- Include SDI/Related Services areas in **Intent to Implement**; provide first **PWN ~10 days** prior; write **measurable goals** (e.g., *80% accuracy in 4/5 trials*).
- Use **compliant service logs** (SPCSA memo **9/9/2024**); file or upload to **Infinite Campus**.

- Discuss **transition services** for **age 14+**; strengthen staff training, manual access, and **timeline tracking** for evaluations/IEPs/reports per **IDEA, NAC, SPCSA**.

Program – Title I, Part A

- **No recommendations** at this time.

Program – Title II / Title III / Title IV

- **No recommendations** at this time (funds not received).

Risk Based Monitoring: New School Support Plan

Missing Prior Written Notice (Intent to Implement) for IEP

- **Criteria:** NAC 388.300; 34 CFR 300.503.
- **Cause:** Unknown. **Effect:** No evidence parents were formally informed; limits transparency and meaningful participation; risks noncompliance.
- **Improvement:** Issue/document PWN for each IEP action; submit next/revised IEP (signed) with compliant PWN, plus staff acknowledgment of training.
- **SPCSA Support:** schoolsupport@spsca.nv.gov.

2) Missing IEP Meeting Notice

- **Criteria:** NAC 388.281; 34 CFR 300.322(a).
- **Cause:** Unknown.
- **Effect:** Cannot show parent notice sufficient to attend; risks noncompliance.
- **Improvement:** Retain notices for every IEP; submit next/revised notice; staff acknowledgment of training.
- **SPCSA Support:** schoolsupport@spsca.nv.gov.

3) Interpreter Services Not Offered/Documented

- **Criteria:** NAC 388.281; 34 CFR 300.322(e).
- **Cause:** Unknown.
- **Effect:** Limits parent understanding and involvement; risks noncompliance.
- **Improvement:** Document offer/provision or formal decline; submit next/revised IEP showing documentation; staff acknowledgment; reference SPCSA PIE resources.

4) PLAAFP Effects Statements Missing/Generic

- **Criteria:** NAC 388.284; 34 CFR 300.320(a)(1)(i).
- **Cause:** Unknown.
- **Effect:** No clear basis for supports/goals/placement.
- **Improvement:** Correct IEP to include individualized Effects statements for each area; submit corrected IEP; staff acknowledgment; use SPCSA PIE guidance.

5) EL Special Factors (#3) Incorrectly Marked

- **Criteria:** NAC 388.284.
- **Cause:** Unknown.
- **Effect:** Misidentification of supports/services.
- **Improvement:** Mark **Yes** for students with EL status; align PLAAFP WIDA info, Special Factors, Supplementary Aids/Services, and accommodations; submit revised IEP; staff acknowledgment.

6) Parent Copy Provision Not Documented

- **Criteria:** NAC 388.281(6)(h); 34 CFR 300.322(f).
- **Cause:** Unknown.
- **Effect:** IEP record incomplete.
- **Improvement:** Complete required IEP fields; submit revised IEP; staff acknowledgment.
- **SPCSA Support:** schoolsupport@spsca.nv.gov.

Part 3
Western Youth Leadership, Engagement, and
Empowerment Middle School (WYLEES)
School Response

School Response to Site Evaluation Team Findings

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.

School Response to Risk Based Monitoring Team Findings

The school may choose to submit a response to the SPCSA Risk Based Monitoring 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.