



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Doral Academy of Nevada - Saddle Site Evaluation Report: March 5, 2026

State Public Charter School Authority

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Links to Resources:

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

Executive Summary

This Site Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school evaluation. Pursuant to [NRS 388A.223](#), the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all charters within the portfolio during the first, third, and fifth years of operation. This comprehensive analysis addresses the school's academic and organizational effectiveness.

An analysis of the school's academic and operational success is undertaken by reviewing the most current versions of the Nevada State Performance Framework (NSPF)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.

High academic performance

A foundational strength of Doral Academy Saddle is its consistently strong academic performance. According to the 2024-25 Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF), both the elementary and middle schools earned five-star ratings, reflecting high levels of academic achievement and growth. The elementary school earned 91 out of 100 points, while the middle school earned 94.5 points, securing its second consecutive five-star designation.

This excellent performance is further reflected in the 2024-25 SPCSA Academic Performance Framework² (APF) results. Both schools exceeded the 50-80 points out of 100 possible points “meets standards” range, earning “exceeds standards” ratings. The elementary school earned 95.5 points, and the middle school earned 84.7 points out of 100. In the Student Group Comparison section of the APF, which evaluates growth among students with Individualized Education Programs³ (IEPs), students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch⁴ (FRL), and English language learners⁵ (ELLs), the elementary school earned a perfect 30 out of 30 points. Additionally, in the Zip Code Comparison Indicator⁶, which compares school performance to all public schools within zip code 89147, both the elementary and middle schools earned the maximum 15 points, outperforming neighboring schools by substantial margins. Specifically, elementary school exceeded the area average by 35 points, and middle school by 42 points.

Doral Academy Saddle is commended for its sustained commitment to academic excellence, which closely aligns with the school’s mission to support students in “soaring with determination while delivering meaningful, arts-integrated instruction.” These outcomes reflect a robust instructional foundation and position the school well for continued success.

School systems and processes

A notable strength of Doral Academy Saddle Campus is the intentional development of strong school systems and processes that support both academic achievement and student well-being. The school has established a highly structured professional learning community⁷ (PLC) practice, including weekly dedicated meeting times where staff collaboratively analyze student data, align instructional strategies,

² The State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) Academic Performance Framework (APF) is a standards-based evaluation system that measures charter school performance using the Nevada School Performance Framework, incorporating indicators such as academic achievement, student growth, and closing opportunity gaps to determine school ratings and accountability outcomes.

³ An IEP (Individualized Education Program) is a legally binding, written plan for K-12 students with disabilities, detailing their specific educational needs, goals, services (like therapy, special classes, accommodations), and how progress will be measured, ensuring they receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

⁴ Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL), part of the federally funded National School Lunch Program (NSLP), provides nutritious, low-cost or free meals to students from low-income families in U.S. public schools, with eligibility determined by household size and income relative to the federal poverty level.

⁵ In education, ELL stands for English Language Learner, referring to students whose first language isn't English and who need specialized support to develop English proficiency for academic success, encompassing reading, writing, speaking, and listening, often using their home language as a bridge to learn English.

⁶ The Zip Code Comparison Indicator (15 points) compares SPCSA charter school NSPF performance to that of other public schools within the same zip code.

⁷ A Professional Learning Community (PLC) in education is a collaborative group of educators, teachers, administrators, and staff who meet regularly to share expertise, analyze student data, and work together to improve teaching skills and student outcomes.

and share effective classroom practices to continuously refine teaching and learning. Complementing these academic systems, the school has implemented a high-quality, comprehensive multi-tiered system of supports⁸ (MTSS) framework, formally established in 2022 through participation in the Nevada state tier three cohort, demonstrating a commitment to intensive, targeted student support. This work has been recognized through the Association of Positive Behavior Networks⁹ (APBS), earning a Gold Award in 2023 and Platinum Awards in 2024 and 2025, highlighting the school's highly successful implementation of its MTSS framework and fostering a positive behavior support system for student success. Additional supports, such as universal screening processes, tier three intervention structures, including clearly defined behavior expectations, a positive school climate focus, and incentives such as Dragon Dollars, the school's reward system, reflect a coherent infrastructure designed to promote academic progress, positive behavior, and overall student success.

On the day of the site evaluation, during the leadership focus group, various school leaders representing expertise areas in curriculum, teacher development, and student support systems shared how the school's established structures and processes are intentionally designed to support students' holistic development. Leaders described coordinated practices that align academic programming, social-emotional support, behavioral expectations, and enrichment opportunities to ensure that students are supported not only in their academic growth but also in their overall well-being and engagement in school. Collectively, these leaders articulated a shared understanding of the school's structures and demonstrated how cross-functional collaboration among instructional leadership, intervention teams, and student support personnel contributes to a cohesive approach that promotes both high academic expectations and the development of well-rounded learners. Lastly, members of the faculty focus group noted that these systems enable them to more effectively respond to students' academic and social-emotional needs and provide a supportive framework that strengthens instructional practice and enhances their ability to maximize student learning.

High-quality professional development

A clear strength of Doral Academy Saddle is its comprehensive and strategically aligned professional development for staff. The school provides sustained training that supports the effective implementation of its curriculum across content areas, ensuring consistency and rigor in instructional practice. Professional development is practical, differentiated to meet staff needs, and job-embedded, allowing teachers and support staff to immediately apply strategies within their classrooms. Clear systems for follow-up, including collaborative structures and ongoing coaching support, ensure accountability and reinforce implementation, demonstrating a strong commitment to instructional coherence, professional growth, and continuous improvement.

Faculty members who participated in the focus group emphasized that the school's professional development opportunities have been highly impactful in strengthening their instructional practice. Teachers noted that ongoing training has increased their confidence and self-efficacy while also enhancing their ability to collaborate with colleagues and engage in meaningful analysis of student data to inform instruction. Collectively, staff shared that these professional learning structures support continuous professional growth.

⁸ Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a proactive academic and behavioral framework. The MTSS framework provides schools and teachers with onboarding and ongoing training and resources for tiered interventions and supports.

⁹ The Association for Positive Behavior Support (APBS) is a nonprofit, multidisciplinary organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities through evidence-based, proactive strategies.

Quality supports for English language learners

Another key strength of Doral Academy Saddle is its effective support for English Language Learners (ELLs). The school implements intentional, research-based instructional strategies, including lesson scaffolding, differentiated instruction, use of visual support, encouragement of home language use, deliberate building of background knowledge, and systematic attention to all four language domains, consisting of speaking, listening, reading, and writing across content areas. As reflected in the 2024-25 NSPF, both the elementary and middle schools earned the maximum 10 out of 10 points on the English Language Proficiency Indicator, which measures the percentage of ELL students who meet their growth targets towards English language proficiency based on the annual World Class Instructional Design and Assessment¹⁰ (WIDA). Both the elementary and middle schools surpassed the SPCSA district averages. Notably, 80 percent of elementary ELL students met their annual growth targets toward English proficiency, significantly exceeding the SPCSA district average of 55 percent and demonstrating the effectiveness of the school's ELL supports.

Low chronic absenteeism in elementary school

The elementary school demonstrates strong student engagement, earning a maximum of 10 points on the Student Engagement indicator of the 2024-25 NSPF. The chronic absenteeism¹¹ rate was below five percent, substantially lower than the SPCSA district average of 16 percent, indicating that a high percentage of students consistently attend school. During focus groups, leadership, faculty, and parents emphasized the importance of regular attendance. To support this, school leaders have implemented a communication system to monitor and follow up with students and families at risk of missing more than 10 percent of instructional days.

High-quality executive and building leadership that fosters academic achievement and arts integration

A key strength of the Doral Academy network of schools is its high-performing, academically focused executive leadership and school leadership teams, which establish clear expectations for instructional rigor and student performance across grade levels. Executive and campus leaders maintain a consistent emphasis on standards alignment, data-informed decision-making, and accountability for measurable outcomes, fostering a culture in which academic achievement remains a central priority. Through clear systems, ongoing monitoring of student progress, and collaborative leadership practices, school leaders help ensure that instructional programs remain focused, coherent, and responsive to student learning needs.

At the same time, leadership supports the strategic integration of creative arts strategies to enhance student engagement and deepen conceptual understanding across subject areas. These approaches are embedded within academic instruction, allowing artistic modalities to reinforce core academic standards while promoting creativity, critical thinking, and deeper student participation in learning.

The strength of this leadership approach is further reflected in the accomplishments of the network's executive leadership. The Executive Director has been recognized by the Nevada Association of School

¹⁰World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) is a consortium of U.S. states and territories that develops standards, assessments, and instructional resources to support students who are learning English as an additional language. WIDA provides the English Language Development (ELD) Standards Framework and administers the ACCESS for ELLs assessment, which measures English language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing to help schools monitor progress and guide instruction for English Learner (EL) students.

¹¹Chronic absenteeism is defined as the unduplicated number of students absent 10% or more school days during the school year.

Administrators¹² (NASA) as the Nevada Central Office Administrator of the Year. This recognition highlights the innovative leadership and commitment to advancing high-quality educational opportunities that foster academic excellence. Collectively, the work of the executive and building leadership teams has contributed to developing a school environment that values rigorous academics, thoughtful innovation, and a well-rounded educational experience for students.

¹² The Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA) is a professional, non-union organization representing school leaders across the state.

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.

Traffic and safety concerns

A notable challenge at Doral Academy Saddle Campus is managing traffic during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal. School leaders shared that the facility was not originally designed to function as a school, and the surrounding roadway configuration further contributes to congestion during peak arrival and dismissal times. These structural and environmental factors create ongoing traffic flow and safety considerations for students, staff, and families. To address these challenges, the school has maintained a proactive approach by extending the morning drop-off window and increasing the number of vehicles able to enter the car loop simultaneously. Despite these adjustments, traffic congestion remains a challenge during peak hours. As a result, continued monitoring and strategic planning will remain important to support safe, efficient vehicle flow and to minimize potential safety risks during arrival and dismissal.

New student enrollment

Another challenge at Doral Academy Saddle is supporting students who enroll mid-year. Some new students struggle to understand the school's behavior expectations and the 3Rs framework of respect, relationships, and responsibility when they first arrive. These students are often the most challenging, requiring additional guidance, monitoring, and support to adjust to both academic routines and school culture. Members of the parent and faculty focus group mentioned the challenges new students face in forming friend groups. The faculty and leadership teams mitigate the challenge by building trust with new students and helping them find friends within the school. Additionally, the school personnel provide targeted onboarding strategies and ongoing support to help new students integrate successfully while maintaining a positive, consistent learning environment for all.

Science proficiency in elementary school

A challenge for Doral Academy Saddle Elementary School is to improve student proficiency in science. According to the 2024-25 NSPF, the school's science proficiency rate of 20 percent falls below the SPCSA district average of 26 percent. School leadership has acknowledged this area for growth and has invested time and resources in targeted professional development and in enhancing collaborative PLC structures to support instructional advancement in science and increase student achievement in this content area. As part of these efforts, science teams also meet at the network level to review data, discuss instructional practices, and align strategies to support improvement.

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.

Continue to foster high academic achievement and promote the arts integration philosophy

Doral Academy Saddle is commended for its strong academic achievement and for implementing arts-integration learning opportunities that support student engagement and deeper learning. As the school continues to build on these strengths, it is encouraged to intentionally leverage its arts-integration philosophy to deepen student engagement and meaning-making across content areas. The school has established a learning environment that values rigorous academic expectations alongside creative instructional approaches that support conceptual understanding. By continuing to embed arts integration within core academic instruction, teachers can provide students with meaningful opportunities to explore, interpret, and demonstrate learning through multiple modalities. Sustaining this approach can reinforce student engagement, strengthen critical thinking, and support diverse learners in accessing complex academic content. Continued attention to collaborative planning, curriculum alignment, and professional learning can ensure that arts integration remains purposeful, academically rigorous, and aligned with the school's commitment to strong student outcomes.

Continue to strengthen elementary science proficiency

The SPCSA staff recommend that Doral Academy Saddle continue to strengthen science proficiency in the elementary grades by further implementing its intentional, standards-aligned approach to science instruction. This could include integrating hands-on, inquiry-based learning experiences that allow students to actively explore scientific concepts and apply critical thinking skills. Embedding cross-disciplinary connections, such as linking science to literacy, math, and the arts, can deepen understanding and engagement while reinforcing key content knowledge. Additionally, continuing to provide targeted professional development for teachers on effective science instruction, formative assessment, and strategies to differentiate learning can help ensure that all students build strong foundational science skills and achieve higher levels of proficiency.

Continuing proactive traffic and safety measures

The SPCSA acknowledges Doral Academy Saddle's leadership for maintaining a proactive approach to traffic and parking safety and encourages the continuation of these efforts. Clear traffic flow patterns, designated drop-off and pick-up zones, and consistent staff supervision can help reduce congestion and enhance the safety of students, staff, and families. The school is also encouraged to maintain ongoing communication with families about arrival and dismissal practices, regularly review traffic procedures, and collaborate with local authorities or safety experts. Sustaining these strategies can ensure a safe, efficient parking environment that supports the school community's daily operations.

Continuing to strengthen the three R's: respect, relationships, and responsibility

Doral Academy Saddle may continue to enhance its focus on the school's Three R's: respect, relationships, and responsibility by consistently reinforcing expectations and maintaining strong supervision across campus. A visible adult presence in hallways and restrooms during class time and passing periods may further support safe and efficient transitions, particularly given the relatively

narrow hallways and potential congestion between classes. On a few occasions during the site evaluation, SPCSA team members observed a few students accessing restrooms during class time and occasionally lingering in hallways, suggesting an opportunity to further reinforce expectations for timely movement and responsible use of common areas. Similarly, maintaining consistent supervision in shared spaces can continue to reinforce respectful behavior, support positive relationships, and promote responsible decision-making, which supports the school's strong accountability systems and culture of high expectations.

Site Evaluation Findings: Strong Recommendations

Strong recommendations identified during this site evaluation are listed here, if applicable.
No strong recommendations were noted during this site evaluation.

Site Evaluation Findings: Deficiencies

Deficiencies identified during this site evaluation are listed here, if applicable.
No deficiencies were identified during this site evaluation.

Focus Group Participation Data

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

Name of Focus Group	Number of Participants
Governing Board ¹³	3
Family Members, Parents, and Guardians	11
Faculty and Staff	10
School Leadership	11
Students	12

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

Focus Group Summary: Governing Board

The Doral Academy of Nevada Network Governing Board includes members with diverse professional backgrounds in law, finance, education, parent leadership, and communication, representing multiple campuses across the network. Three board members participated in the focus group and emphasized that their breadth of expertise strengthens governance and decision-making by incorporating varied professional and community perspectives. Board members expressed a shared commitment to advancing the network’s mission through strong oversight, fostering a positive organizational culture that emphasizes staff development, and prioritizing student safety, wellness, academic success, human capital, and meaningful engagement with families and the broader community.

Board members identified several key strengths of the Doral Academy network. They highlighted the network’s commitment to providing a well-rounded educational experience that integrates the arts, career and technical education opportunities, and strong academic programming from kindergarten through high school. Members emphasized that the schools foster a love of learning while preparing students for postsecondary success. The board also noted the strong relationships between schools and families, as well as a culture of accountability and collaboration among board members, administrators, staff, and students. Board members described the school environment as safe, inclusive, and supportive, which they believe contributes to strong academic achievement and student engagement.

Participants also discussed recent successes across the network. Board members celebrated that 13 schools earned five-star ratings, with several campuses improving their performance ratings in recent years. They attributed these outcomes to strong leadership, collaboration between the board and school administration, and a willingness to address challenges directly when they arise. Additional school/campus accomplishments included recognition in the community, such as being named to the “Best of Las Vegas¹⁴,” and the executive director being recognized as the Central Office Administrator of the Year by the Nevada Association for School Administrators (NASA). Continued enrollment growth is driven by the network’s strong reputation. Board members also referenced a recent land purchase that will support future expansion, noting that the favorable opportunity reflected the organization’s positive standing within the broader community.

Despite these successes, board members acknowledged several challenges and areas that require continued attention. They discussed the importance of maintaining innovation and avoiding complacency as the network continues to grow. Safety and student well-being were identified as ongoing priorities, including addressing and supporting students’ mental health, and ensuring that appropriate expectations for behavior are clearly communicated to both students and families. Board members also noted emerging issues, including the impact of artificial intelligence on academic accountability. Additional concerns included logistical challenges associated with expansion and the need to remain responsive to evolving educational and societal trends.

Looking ahead, board members emphasized the importance of data-informed decision-making and responsible governance practices. They reported regularly reviewing academic performance data, enrollment trends, financial reports, and climate indicators to guide strategic planning. The board also

¹⁴ The Best of Las Vegas awards, primarily presented by the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* and Las Vegas, are a premier annual reader-choice recognition program honoring top local businesses, entertainers, restaurants, and attractions.

highlighted its commitment to financial discipline, investment in facilities and programs, and a strong focus on human capital, including recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers. While the network offers a supportive, well-resourced environment, members acknowledged that teacher compensation remains a challenge due to statewide funding constraints. The board described ongoing efforts to strengthen communication with families, continued support for professional development, and ensuring the Doral brand of excellence as the foundation for continuous improvement and accountability across the organization.

Focus Group Summary: Family Members, Parents, and Guardians

Parents and guardians participating in the family focus group described a variety of academic experiences their children are currently engaged in across grade levels. Examples included learning about composting and environmental science, computer science in upper grades, biography writing in elementary school, and opinion writing. Families also referenced instruction in theater and Shakespeare studies, as well as in mathematics, including double-digit subtraction, division, fractions, and multiplication. Several families noted that their children participate in after-school tutoring opportunities to receive additional academic support. Overall, parents reported that teachers communicate regularly about student progress and provide support when students need additional assistance.

Families consistently identified the school's strong sense of community and personalized environment as a major strength. Group members emphasized that the smaller school setting allows staff members to know students by name and build meaningful relationships with families. Respondents also noted that school leadership is highly visible and engaged, and that teachers make time to support students both academically and personally. Parents shared that volunteering opportunities are readily available and that school events encourage family participation. Families of students with special education needs also spoke positively about the support services provided, including the resource room and individualized assistance for students with learning differences such as dyslexia.¹⁵

Members of the focus group generally described the school culture and climate as welcoming, safe, and supportive. Several participants commented that the positive atmosphere is evident from the moment families arrive on campus, noting that staff members and crossing guards greet students and families each morning. Parents also appreciated that staff members make an effort to attend student activities outside of school, which contributes to a strong sense of connection between the school and its families. Arts programming and extracurricular opportunities were also highlighted as valuable aspects of the student experience. Families noted that their children enjoy music, drama, and instrumental programs such as violin, as well as opportunities to participate in performances, plays, and school events.

Communication between the school and families was described as generally strong. Parents reported receiving regular updates via the Dragon Digest school newsletter, school applications communication platforms such as ClassDojo¹⁶ messages, and text reminders. School events, Parent-Teacher-Student Organization (PTSO) activities, and calendars are also communicated through multiple channels. Some parents noted that communication at the middle school level can occasionally lag behind the elementary level, but overall, participants indicated that the school provides frequent updates and reminders that help families stay informed about events and student learning.

While parents expressed high overall satisfaction with the school, several areas for improvement were discussed. The most frequently cited challenges involved limited campus space and traffic concerns,

¹⁵Dyslexia is a common, lifelong neurobiological learning disorder that causes significant difficulty with reading, spelling, and writing, despite normal intelligence.

¹⁶ClassDojo is a popular, free education app and website designed for teachers, parents, and students to foster classroom community, manage behavior, and improve communication.

including parking constraints, the absence of covered waiting areas for students, and congestion during arrival and dismissal. Parents also suggested that additional outdoor space, expanded athletic facilities, and more crossing guards could improve safety and student experience. Some parents noted concerns related to classroom distractions from cell phones in upper grades and suggested clearer separation between elementary and middle school students in certain areas. Despite these challenges, families expressed strong overall satisfaction with the school, noting minimal teacher turnover and a supportive environment that enhances their children's educational experience.

Focus Group Summary: Faculty and Staff

Faculty members participating in the focus group represented a range of grade levels and subject areas. Focus group members described a variety of instructional initiatives currently occurring in classrooms, including project-based learning activities on recycling and artificial intelligence in the primary grades, climate change instruction in science, solar system studies in eighth-grade science, and data analysis and integer operations in middle school mathematics. Participants emphasized that instruction is aligned to standards and supported through collaboration with colleagues during weekly PLC meetings held each Tuesday, which allow teachers to unpack or analyze standards, evaluate pacing guides, and share instructional strategies that help students work toward mastery of key learning targets. Furthermore, PLC meetings were described as extremely beneficial and integral for increased self-efficacy.

Teachers generally reported that the current curriculum and pacing guides are effective in supporting student learning and alignment with grade-level standards. Mathematics teachers highlighted strong support from the network's math leadership and noted that programs such as i-Ready¹⁷ provide valuable instructional lessons and data insights. Science teachers indicated that the middle school science curriculum was recently updated and that teachers supplement materials when needed to support deeper understanding.

Participants described a range of assessment strategies used to monitor student progress and inform instruction. In addition to curriculum-based formative assessments, teachers use creative approaches, such as sketchnoting¹⁸ in science, to determine whether students can explain and demonstrate conceptual understanding. Mathematics teachers noted that double-block scheduling provides additional opportunities to assess student understanding and provide targeted support. Special education staff described using progress monitoring, reteaching plans, and small-group instruction within the school's support systems and response-to-intervention¹⁹ (RTI) framework. Teachers indicated that student data are regularly reviewed with the RTI team, which meets quarterly to evaluate progress and adjust interventions.

Faculty members also spoke positively about professional development opportunities and collaborative structures within the school. Teachers cited a variety of learning experiences, including mathematics curriculum training, MTSS training presented at the Nevada conference in Reno, national conferences for performing arts staff, and an upcoming All-Star professional learning conference,²⁰ where educators from multiple Doral campuses gather to share strategies. Participants noted that these opportunities are valuable because they provide practical strategies and allow teachers to collaborate with colleagues across the Doral network.

Teachers described the school culture as highly supportive, collaborative, and student-centered. Several participants emphasized that the school feels like a close-knit community where staff members support

¹⁷ I-Ready is a comprehensive online diagnostic and personalized instruction program for K-8 reading and mathematics.

¹⁸ Sketchnoting in education is a visual note-taking strategy that combines handwriting, drawings, typography, and shapes to capture and process information, moving beyond traditional text-only notes.

¹⁹ Response-to-Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tier, data-driven framework in education that provides high-quality, research-based instruction and behavioral supports to all students.

²⁰ The all-star professional learning conference is hosted by Doral Network and features professional development sessions with local and national presenters, including Doral staff.

one another, and administrators are visible, accessible, and engaged with both teachers and students. Faculty members also noted strong family participation in school events, including concerts, plays, and seasonal celebrations. At the same time, group members acknowledged some logistical challenges related to facilities and campus space, including a limited outdoor field area, tight hallway space, and ongoing traffic concerns during arrival and dismissal. Despite these operational challenges, faculty members expressed strong satisfaction with the school environment and reported feeling supported in their efforts to promote student success.

Focus Group Summary: School Leadership

Doral Academy Saddle’s leadership team presented a comprehensive overview of the systems and practices that support the school’s academic success and operational effectiveness. Through the leadership focus group presentation and discussion, supported by evidence from academic achievement indicators, focus group discussions, and classroom observations, several strengths emerged. The school has demonstrated excellent academic performance, with both elementary and middle school earning five-star ratings on the NSPF. Leadership attributed this success to strong instructional systems, targeted interventions, and a consistent focus on monitoring student progress through data-informed decision making.

A significant strength of the school is its well-developed schoolwide systems and processes, particularly through the implementation of PLCs and the school’s MTSS framework. Leadership described a highly structured PLC system of collaboration focused on standards, learning targets, and ongoing analysis of student data. These systems allow staff to respond quickly to student needs and adjust instruction accordingly. The MTSS framework includes clearly defined Tier one, Tier two, and Tier three supports, restorative practices²¹, and regular team meetings that involve staff, students, and families when appropriate. These processes reflect a deliberate and systematic approach to both academic and behavioral support.

The school also demonstrated a strong adult-learning culture, supported by high-quality professional development. Leadership highlighted multiple professional learning opportunities, including book studies, instructional coaching, and committee-led initiatives focused on literacy, mathematics, science, and arts integration. Professional development is described as ongoing, job-embedded, and supported by feedback loops that allow teachers to implement strategies and refine practices over time. Regarding staff feedback, one leader stated, “The school is built on a collaborative environment and getting input from stakeholders”. Additionally, leadership encourages the development of internal expertise by cultivating teacher leaders who can facilitate training and share effective practices across the faculty and with the other Doral Academy campuses.

Another notable strength is the school’s effective support for English language learners. Leadership shared evidence of strong student progress, including multiple students exiting ELL services based on WIDA assessment results. The school supplements these efforts with targeted instructional supports and intervention programs designed to accelerate language acquisition while maintaining access to grade-level content.

While the school demonstrates many strengths, leadership also acknowledged several areas of challenge. Ongoing traffic and safety concerns during arrival and dismissal remain operational issues that require continued attention. Additionally, the school is strengthening its new student enrollment and onboarding processes to ensure that incoming students are promptly acclimated to academic expectations and school culture. Despite these challenges, the school continues to demonstrate strong organizational leadership, with the executive director and school leaders providing high-quality oversight that prioritizes academic achievement and student development, fosters arts integration, and maintains high outcomes.

²¹Restorative practices are a relational approach to building community, repairing harm, and resolving conflict by focusing on accountability, empathy, and relationship strengthening rather than punishment alone.

Focus Group Summary: Students

Students participating in the focus group represented a range of grade levels and academic interests. When asked about current learning experiences, students described studying topics such as the Oregon Trail, the Cold War, natural disasters, and literary analysis in English language arts. Mathematics topics mentioned included division, fractions, and working with positive and negative numbers. Students shared that they enjoy learning through a variety of instructional approaches, including projects, arts integration, and interactive lessons, particularly in subjects such as science and social studies, where hands-on activities and discussions are incorporated into the learning process.

Students identified several aspects of the school experience that they enjoy most. Many participants emphasized the positive relationships they have with teachers and peers, noting that it is easy to make friends and feel part of the school community. Students also highlighted several extracurricular and enrichment opportunities that contribute to their engagement in school, including the theater program, science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) initiatives, student council, the National Junior Honor Society²² (NJHS), and the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program. These programs were described as opportunities for students to explore their interests, develop leadership skills, and engage more deeply in their learning.

While students expressed overall satisfaction with their classes, some participants noted that the pace of instruction, particularly in mathematics, can feel fast at times, leading to stress when combined with homework expectations. Students indicated that extra help is available when they need academic support, though one student mentioned that additional assistance may be less accessible in the upper grades. Despite these concerns, students generally reported that teachers are supportive and willing to help when questions arise.

Students also discussed how school expectations and behavioral guidelines support a positive learning environment. Participants referenced the school's emphasis on the Three R's: Respect, Relationships, and Responsibility, explaining that these expectations encourage students to treat others with kindness, follow rules, and prepare for future responsibilities. Some students also described their participation in leadership and support roles as highlights, including serving as Volunteer Peer Mentors, where they help support restorative practices and assist peers in maintaining positive relationships within the school community.

Students reported feeling safe and supported at school and shared that the school celebrates academic achievements and milestones in various ways. Examples included certificates for completing i-Ready lessons and recognition for meeting diagnostic growth goals, and pizza celebrations for students earning high grades. When asked about possible improvements, students suggested a few minor adjustments, such as changes to certain physical education activities and improvements to outdoor spaces. Overall, students expressed positive feelings about their school experience and appreciated the opportunities for learning and the arts, leadership, and participation in extracurricular activities.

²²The National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) program empowers and equips students with the knowledge and skills to be transformative leaders in the school, community, and beyond.

Classroom Environment and Instruction

Observation Rubric

A total of 22 elementary and 12 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: 3	TOTAL: 27	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: 2	TOTAL: 30	TOTAL: 2	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0

Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 22 elementary and 12 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: 3	TOTAL: 29	TOTAL: 2	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: 2	TOTAL: 26	TOTAL: 2	TOTAL: 1	TOTAL: 3

Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 22 elementary and 12 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: 5	TOTAL: 26	TOTAL: 3	TOTAL: 0	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: 3	TOTAL: 29	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 1	TOTAL: 1

Classroom Observations and Additional Comments

During a phonics activity, students used letter tiles to manipulate sounds and graphemes within words as they spelled words with related patterns. The teacher guided the lesson by prompting students to orally sound out each word, then build it with the tiles. Students adjusted and rearranged letters as needed, reinforcing the spelling pattern through repeated practice.

Middle school students in a math class worked independently on pre-algebra tasks focused on analyzing and solving linear equations and pairs of simultaneous linear equations. Students applied previously taught strategies to organize their work and check their solutions. The class demonstrated high levels of independence and self-direction while completing the assignment. The teacher circulated around the room, monitoring progress and providing clarification when needed. The structured work period allowed students to focus on problem-solving and practice key algebraic concepts.

Students in a primary classroom reviewed a short nonfiction text with the teacher, identifying and correcting errors through revision. The teacher modeled the revision process using a class example, which helped students successfully apply an editing checklist to their own writing. As they worked independently, students checked for capital letters and end punctuation, spelling accuracy, and proper noun capitalization.

In a middle school classroom, students began class by reviewing the lesson from the prior day on events of the Cold War. Students then used their graphic organizer to identify the most important event of the Cold War and took that information to create a poster. Students were required to use five facts, written in complete sentences, to include sources and artistic elements. Students were tasked with creating a poster that would inform someone unaware of the Cold War about the event, based on the information on the poster.

Students used movement to model how the brain sends signals to different parts of the body to produce actions. As part of the demonstration, students showed that signals take longer to reach body parts farther from the brain, illustrating how signals travel through the nervous system.

A special education teacher provided guided practice on multiplication word problems. Students worked through problems step by step, applying strategies to identify key information and determine the correct operation. The teacher modeled problem-solving techniques and asked guiding questions to support student understanding. Opportunities for independent practice were provided, allowing students to apply the strategies on their own. The teacher monitored student responses and offered individualized feedback to reinforce learning.

In a middle school science class, students worked on using evidence from scientific explorations to understand that gravitational interactions depend on the mass of objects and the distance between them. Students analyzed information from the text and discussed how changes in mass or distance affect gravitational force. As part of the lesson, students worked on projects that they would later present to

demonstrate their understanding of the concept. The lesson emphasized the use of evidence to support scientific explanations. The teacher monitored student progress and provided clarification as students prepared their project materials.

In dance class, students practiced chunks of a dance, both with the teacher leading and on their own. Between steps, the teacher asked students to name the move or position, and students responded with appropriate academic vocabulary. Students followed patterns and moved their whole bodies. At one point, students sat in rows and watched other rows move through segments of the moves. Students were then asked who they noticed "doing a fabulous job." Students quickly raised their hands and praised their classmates. Students were very eager to dance and share their knowledge of the positions. The teacher was very positive and encouraging.

In a middle-level grade class, students created a brochure on a local geographical historical place. Specific directions for what should be included were placed on the projector, and students were given exemplars for reference. Items to include were local history, sights to see, cultural experience, dos and don'ts, and a few others. Students were mostly engaged in completing the project at their table groups. Students participated in a gallery walk centered on integers. Small groups maneuvered through seven stations after completing one station as a whole class. Each station had a specific task. For example, the 'bank statement' station asked students to balance a bank account. Students accessed their academic vocabulary to solve each station's problem. Students had to first determine if they would be adding or subtracting to solve the circumstance. Students also had to write the equation correctly to solve the problem. Students used terms such as 'more,' 'ascend,' 'higher' for addition, and 'descend,' 'difference,' and 'withdrawal' for subtraction. Station scenarios included a Minecraft journey, a weather forecast, scuba diving, the stock market, and hiking. The groups were also asked to create their own scenario by describing the scene and providing the mathematical details.

Students in an intermediate elementary classroom worked independently to solve a multi-step math word problem. The task required students to determine how many bags of conversation hearts to purchase for the class based on the number of hearts in each bag. Students were directed to break the problem into known facts and identify what they still needed to determine to solve it.

Middle school students in a social studies classroom worked in groups to deepen their understanding of life in the West. Students were given several research options, including local history, cultural experiences, and notable sights to visit. Each group discussed its selected topic and gathered information to support its understanding. Students remained engaged throughout the activity and collaborated with their peers as they explored the content. The activity was well structured and supported student discussion and participation.

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
<p>A common recommendation across multiple campuses is to work on attracting and enrolling a more diverse student population.</p>	<p>The leadership team presentation outlined the strategies implemented to recruit, attract, and enroll students from diverse backgrounds, including targeted outreach to communities across the Las Vegas Valley.</p>	<p>The SPCSA acknowledges the school’s efforts to broaden its student population and encourages the continued refinement and expansion of these strategies to further increase access and enrollment among diverse student groups.</p>
<p>Traffic, parking, and safety concerns were raised by multiple campuses. These concerns could be network-wide, as similar issues may arise at different locations.</p>	<p>The school’s administrators' presentation summarized the steps taken to strengthen traffic management, parking procedures, and overall campus safety, including the strategic deployment of staff during arrival and dismissal and consistent communication with stakeholders, while emphasizing adherence to established procedures.</p>	<p>The SPCSA acknowledges these proactive efforts and encourages the network to continue evaluating and implementing coordinated, network-wide strategies to further improve traffic flow, parking management, and campus safety across all locations.</p>
<p>The challenge of teacher turnover or teacher retention was identified in some campuses.</p>	<p>Teacher retention remains a priority for the school’s leadership, with an emphasis on fostering a positive school culture and strengthening staff efficacy to support long-term stability.</p>	<p>The SPCSA acknowledges the school’s ongoing efforts in this area and encourages the continued implementation of these strategies to sustain the retention of high-quality educators.</p>
<p>The Doral Saddle Campus should persist in refining a holistic strategy aimed at elevating academic achievement.</p>	<p>The leadership team reviewed the school’s commitment to academic achievement and the systems and structures in place to support staff growth, including ongoing professional development, strengthening the school’s PLC model, and focused growth plans, to ensure consistently rigorous, high-quality instruction.</p>	<p>The SPCSA commends Doral Academy Saddle for its commitment to academic excellence and encourages school leaders to continue fostering a culture of continuous improvement.</p>

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

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.