



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

Doral Academy of Nevada - Cactus Site Evaluation Report: March 4, 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 conduct focus group interviews by speaking with school leaders, governing board members, family members, those employed as staff, and most importantly, students enrolled at the school. The information gained during these focus groups is summarized and included in this report.

The site evaluation is designed to focus on teaching and learning (e.g. curriculum, instruction, assessment, and services for at-risk students) as well as leadership, organizational capacity, and board oversight. The SPCSA uses the established criteria to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations during each year of their charter. Final Site Evaluation Reports are published to the SPCSA website and used in conjunction with other performance information to determine renewal decisions.

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 achievement in elementary and middle school

A major strength of Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus is the high levels of student achievement. The high academic achievement rates support the school’s vision statement, which envisions a dynamic, student-centered community that fosters goal ownership through rigorous, arts-integrated curriculum. According to the 2024-25 NSPF data, the elementary school grades scored 97 index points out of a possible 100, earning a five-star rating. Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus elementary grades earned 10 out of 10 points for the elementary *English Language Proficiency Indicator*², indicating that students meeting their growth targets will be on track to become English proficient and exit English learner (EL³) status within five years or sooner. On the *Student Growth Indicator*, elementary grades scored 34 out of 35 possible points, and 10 out of 10 possible points on the *Student Engagement Indicator*. The middle school obtained 98.3 index points and was rated with five-stars for the ninth consecutive year. Middle school grades earned 25 out of 25 possible points on the *Academic Achievement Indicator*, 29 out of 30 possible points on the *Student Growth Indicator*, and 15 out of 15 possible points on the *Student Engagement Indicator*. Both elementary school grades (90%) and middle school grades (95%) exceeded standards for the SPCSA Academic Performance Framework, which compares area schools in the same zip codes, chronic absenteeism reduction, and NSPF scores to nearby schools.

Adaptability and proactive focus for students and staff

One notable strength of Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus is the leadership team’s exceptional adaptability and proactive focus, characterized by a high degree of responsiveness to the evolving needs of both students and staff. This was recently demonstrated when the campus experienced an influx of students with high needs, necessitating immediate adjustments to staffing and instructional environments. Through thoughtful collaboration and a deep attentiveness to stakeholder feedback, leadership successfully reconfigured the school layout to establish two dedicated resource rooms. This transition was further bolstered by a culture of trust and professional respect, which encouraged two general education teachers to voluntarily transition into special education roles to meet the demand. By valuing the expertise of their team and providing flexibility for creative problem-solving, the leadership team effectively transformed a potential logistical challenge into a student-centered success. Ultimately, this commitment to strategizing based on immediate stakeholder input ensures that the school remains a resilient and inclusive environment where the diverse needs of the entire academic community are met with agility and foresight.

Special education team

Another strength at Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus is the strategic evolution of the Special Education (SPED) department, characterized by a highly-supported ‘grow-your-own’ professional culture and a highly effective collaborative model. Leadership indicated four teachers are currently

² English Language Proficiency is a measure of English Learners (ELs) achieving English Language proficiency on the state English Language Proficiency assessment, WIDA. WIDA is a comprehensive assessment measuring English language proficiency in four categories; identification, placement, progress, and achievement. The WIDA screener is used to determine English language support services as well as determining when a student has developed proficiency to exit English language school services

³ English language (EL) learners, or EL learners, are students learning to communicate fluently or effectively in English.

pursuing endorsements in special education, who comprise 10 percent of the student body. Faculty seeking SPED licensure are supported by rigorous professional development (PD), including being LETRS⁴ trained or currently enrolled, full certification in the UFLI⁵ literacy program and core math curricula. General education faculty, interventionists, specialists, members of administration, and special education personnel work collaboratively during planning, to examine student data, create focused student lessons, and rewrite Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). At the time of the site evaluation, Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus supported 104 students with special needs. Student needs range from a self-contained environment, specialized one-to-one interaction with an educator, to a refined integrated push-in for math and reading. By allowing assistants and interventionists to work directly within the classroom during blended learning blocks, Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus has ensured that SPED students remain aligned with core grade-level instruction, preventing the academic gap often caused by missing primary lessons with students’ peers. This strategic shift ensures that students do not fall behind while receiving specialized support.

Deep teacher and staff collaboration

Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus demonstrates a commitment to academic excellence through its sophisticated framework for deep teacher and staff collaboration, specifically centered on arts integration and vertical alignment, which supports the school’s mission and vision. By embedding artistic disciplines directly into core subjects, faculty members create a multi-sensory instructional environment that transcends traditional rote learning, allowing students to grasp complex concepts through creative expression and critical thinking. This collaborative spirit is further solidified by a robust system of vertical alignment, where educators across all grade levels work in tandem to ensure that curricula are not isolated by grade, but rather built upon a continuous, escalating scaffold of knowledge. This seamless transition between grade levels eliminates instructional gaps and fosters a unified pedagogical language throughout Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus. Consequently, this synergy between general educators and specialists ensures that every student benefits from a cohesive educational trajectory, where the skills mastered in one classroom are intentionally designed to serve as the foundational building blocks for the next.

⁴ LETRS stands for Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling. It is a professional development program for educators, providing evidence-based knowledge on the science of reading to improve foundational literacy skills in phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, and spelling.

⁵ UFLI Foundations is an explicit and systematic phonics program that introduces students to the foundational reading skills necessary for proficient reading. It follows a carefully developed scope and sequence designed to ensure that students systematically acquire each skill needed and learn to apply each skill with automaticity and confidence. The program was developed at the University of Florida Literacy Institute and facilitated University of Florida faculty.

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.

Special education resources and demands

Despite the special education population at Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus accounting for only 10 percent of the total student body, the intensity and complexity of individual requirements place a significant strain on existing institutional resources. This high level of specialized need necessitates a disproportionate allocation of staff time and funding to maintain the push-in and self-contained models effectively. Consequently, the school faces the ongoing challenge of scaling its intensive support services to meet these growing demands without compromising the quality of individualized instruction.

Systems and supports

Participants in the leadership and staff focus groups stated a need for schoolwide systems and structures that support personnel new to the school and/or staff moving from one grade to teach in another. Knowing how to complete routine tasks and obtain resources and materials could be more fluid to optimize the classroom experience according to both leadership and staff. Members of the Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus leadership team were actively creating a robust for support at the time of the site evaluation.

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 implementing effective teaching practices in elementary science

SPCSA staff recommend that Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus continue building and implementing effective instructional methods and strategies that increase student performance and achievement in science proficiency at the elementary grade level. The science proficiency rate at Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus, was 27.6 percent for elementary grades in the 2024-25 school year. While this is above the SPCSA district rate of 26.6 percent, the rates are far below comparative rates for English language arts (ELA) and math. Elementary grades earned 72.3 percent in math and 72.3 percent in ELA proficiency on the 2024-25 NSPF.

Develop a formalized transitional support framework

SPCSA staff recommend that Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus construct and implement a formalized transitional support framework for both new staff and existing teachers moving to different grade levels. Based on insights from leadership and staff focus groups, this initiative could build upon the systems and support framework of onboarding cohorts and peer-mentorship pairings to ensure that the transition into a new instructional environment is seamless and data-informed. This framework might provide shifting staff and new faculty with immediate access to grade-level-specific curriculum mapping, classroom management protocols, and knowledge, thereby reducing the learning curve that often accompanies professional shifts. Furthermore, establishing a feedback loop between leadership and staff would allow for real-time strategy adjustments. By formalizing these pathways for collaboration and mentorship, Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus may further empower its educators to leverage their expertise creatively while maintaining a high standard of student-centered instruction during periods of change.

Continue monitoring support for students with special needs

SPCSA staff recommend that Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus continue to identify and implement innovative ways to support students with special needs. Please continue to monitor caseload intensity and proactively identify innovative, scalable support structures, including exploring data-driven scheduling to maximize the impact of the current "push-in" model and investing in further assistive technologies that foster student independence. By prioritizing flexible resource allocation and ongoing specialized training, the school can ensure that high-need students receive the necessary interventions without overextending the existing faculty.

Site Evaluation Findings: Strong Recommendations

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

There were no strong recommendations for Doral Academy of Nevada - Cactus for this site evaluation.

Site Evaluation Findings: Deficiencies

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

There were no deficiencies identified for Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus this site evaluation cycle.

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 ⁶	3
Family Members, Parents, and Guardians	13
Faculty and Staff	15
School Leadership	15
Students	16

⁶ 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 Vegas⁷,” 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,

⁷ The Best of Las Vegas, primarily presented by the Las Vegas Review-Journal, is a premier annual reader-choice recognition program honoring top local businesses, entertainers, restaurants, and attractions.

enrollment trends, financial reports, and climate indicators to guide strategic planning. The board also 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 participating in the family focus group indicated they specifically chose Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus in which to enroll their child(ren) to escape overcrowding in neighboring public schools. Parents said they were also attracted to the school’s unique arts integration model. Many family members reported that they chose the institution based on positive word-of-mouth recommendations, the appeal of small class sizes, and the welcoming atmosphere experienced during campus tours. For families relocating from out of state or from other countries, the school provided a necessary sense of community and a robust student-centered approach that addressed concerns regarding the general quality of education in the region.

Family members in the focus group said they fostered a culture of respect for Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus by emphasizing the privilege of obtaining an education. Parents also said they teach their children to appreciate the complexities of the classroom environment. Parents reported that their children speak about school on a daily basis at home. Children were proud to show their work to their families and highlight the arts integration component in their projects. Parents feel there is a high level of student engagement, and the teachers offer many creative ways in which content is reinforced. Parents said their children frequently blended artistic expressions into their academic lessons and provided such examples as writing rap songs to capture the theme of a piece of literature, writing poetry to convey the mood of a text, or developing visual interpretations for literary intent, such as posters, advertisements, or brochures. In science and math, parents said students often make visual representations of what they are studying, such as models and sketch notes. Families expressed a deep appreciation for the diverse extracurricular opportunities and the supportive nature of the teaching staff.

Parents said school leadership and faculty maintain a high standard of transparency by providing consistent and detailed updates regarding academic performance both for the school as a whole as well as their individual child(ren). Parents noted that communication was frequent and comprehensive, often delivered through weekly newsletters, emails, and the sharing of color-coded standardized testing data. This proactive approach ensured that families remained informed about class averages and individual student progress. While some parents expressed a desire for more physical, handwritten work in the middle school grades to better track progression, they generally remained satisfied with the digital tools and portals that allowed for real-time monitoring of assignments and grades.

Families in the focus group did advocate for earlier access to the annual school calendar. Several parents said they understood this may not be possible but would like to have something tentative in which to plan for events such as the first day of school. A few suggested access to the first month of school, with a tentative idea as to when the first day of school might be within a range of days, would be very helpful for family planning.

Focus Group Summary: Faculty and Staff

The faculty participating in the focus group consistently characterized the school environment as "super-collaborative," emphasizing that professional egos were set aside in favor of a supportive, student-centered culture. Teachers reported that decision-making was a reciprocal process facilitated through department and grade-level meetings where content and management strategies were freely shared. This sense of unity was further strengthened by the use of common language and informal communication channels, such as team texting, to maintain engagement and support. Staff noted that leadership fostered a high level of professional trust and autonomy, which they described as "freeing." This trust was evidenced by administrators inviting staff input through various committees and ensuring all employees, including non-teaching staff, had access to necessary curriculum resources, thereby making teachers and staff feel respected and valued.

Teachers shared several recent examples of successfully shifting student attitudes from negative to positive by fostering investment and leadership. One teacher provided the example of a student with a default negative mindset regarding academics who transitioned from frustration to independent problem-solving after a breakthrough in a math assessment. Another educator highlighted a long-term transformation in a student who moved from defiance and thoughts of dropping out to actively planning for high school. Participants in the focus group also discussed the success of applying academic content to students' personal interests and encouraging high-achieving students to take on leadership roles within peer groups. To deepen academic understanding, faculty said they often leveraged arts integration across subjects. Examples teachers provided included the use of dramatic dialogues, stop-motion movies for molecular science, and the conversion of student data into musical compositions. According to teachers, these creative methods allow students to access and personify complex concepts.

Teachers said Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus utilized a multi-faceted approach to peer-to-peer support and student connectivity. Older students frequently served as role models, assisting younger peers with technology, reading, and athletics, which teachers noted improved the behavior and responsibility of the older students themselves. Within the classroom, educators often acted as facilitators while students took the lead in daily operations. In many of these cases, students had assigned classroom roles. To combat student disconnection, teachers and staff implemented several restorative and inclusive practices, such as safe space designations, affirmation pockets, and kindness trees. School-wide initiatives, including the buddy bench and kindness awards, ensured that students were recognized by their peers and felt a sense of belonging throughout the academic year.

Staff said leadership prioritized staff morale through a robust system of recognition year-round. This included "shout-outs during meetings, gratitude murals on the wall, and affirming Sunday text messages. By maintaining close proximity to the classrooms and utilizing digital appreciation tools, leadership ensured that outstanding work was acknowledged in both formal newsletters and informal, daily interactions.

Focus Group Summary: School Leadership

Members of the leadership team at Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus demonstrated a rigorous commitment to the science of reading through implementing the comprehensive LETRS program. Leadership reported that currently, 22 teachers at the Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus and 87 network-wide have completed this two-year training. Members of the leadership team stated that this initiative has been instrumental in refining tiered instruction and differentiation across all grade levels. To support these academic goals, the school transitioned to a "push-in" model for math and reading interventions, allowing assistants and interventionists to work directly within the classroom during blended learning blocks. This strategic shift ensured that students did not fall behind while receiving specialized support. Furthermore, the school has focused on growing support personnel from within the current faculty, with four staff members currently pursuing endorsements in special education (SPED) to better serve a population that comprises 10 percent of the student body.

Leadership spent some time in the leadership focus group session speaking about what is unique to Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus that is different from the other Doral campuses. One thing leadership reported that was different at Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus was the school's unique approach to mentorship and student-led initiatives. One example was the "Monster Project," where eighth-grade studio art students transformed kindergarten drawings into 3-D puppets. Student voice was further elevated through a media class that plan and produce weekly news broadcasts, as well as the interactive television presentations for middle schoolers. Leadership said student engagement remained high, with 39 percent of middle school students participating in the school's 19 elective clubs. To foster a positive environment, the school celebrates Kindness Awards and implemented restorative justice practices, which resulted in a significant decrease of 94 student incidents at the Tier-2 level for 2025-26. These efforts contributed to an exceptional 98 percent teacher retention rate according to leadership, signaling a stable and healthy institutional climate. Leadership said the 2025-26 academic year was marked by flexibility and critical self-reflection, prompting leadership to intentionally evaluate schoolwide practices, systems and supports. PD was described as highly differentiated, ranging from full-staff structural support to targeted mentoring and coaching based on specific grade-level trends. Leadership indicated they remained focused on refining their Response to Intervention (RTI) processes. Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus plans to utilize student survey data to further deepen the sense of connectedness across the student body.

Leadership highlighted a robust, three-tiered counseling framework designed to provide everything from universal classroom lessons to individual crisis support. For families in need, the school functioned as a community resource hub, providing access to clothing closets, vouchers, and direct parent letters regarding available services. When welcoming new families, the administration utilized an intentional integration process that included private meetings with the registrar and leadership, school tours, and "new student luncheons" where incoming students were partnered with peers. This personalized approach ensured that rules and expectations were communicated clearly and compassionately, fostering a sense of partnership before a student's first day of classes.

Focus Group Summary: Students

When asked about things they were currently learning, students expressed a high level of excitement, particularly in STEM⁸ and the humanities. Math mastery was reported in complex mathematical concepts, such as calculating volume, circumference, and radius, as well as multiplying large numbers. In science, students highlighted the hands-on experience of chemical reactions as a primary motivator, while in English Language Arts, they studied the structural elements of essay writing. Students described how the arts integration component of Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus was visible in their core subjects. Many in the focus group said the arts component was a significant factor in deepening their personal learning experience. Students described several multi-modal projects, such as creating blackout poetry to understand the three branches of government and using flipbooks to analyze novels. Many students also highlighted the connection between mathematics and music, specifically linking fractions to musical notes and dance movements. These creative outlets, ranging from visual posters to multi-media presentations, allowed students to translate written prose into personal, expressive formats that helped solidify their understanding of the curriculum. When students were asked to define their own cognitive engagement with the content, they noted that they recognized true mastery when they could think ahead, complete tasks without external assistance, or successfully teach the material to their peers.

Students reported a strong sense of belonging at Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus. Several students said this was facilitated by intentional onboarding and a robust support network. New students said they felt welcomed through guided tours and introductory sessions that helped them adjust to the school's layout and expectations before going to their first class. All of the students in the focus group said that they had trusted adults to turn to, including counselors and teachers, when facing personal or academic challenges. Students noted that their families were frequently involved in the school community through Arts Integration Nights, field trips, sports events, and various seasonal festivals, which bridged the gap between home and school life.

While students generally praised the supportive nature of the faculty and the social joy found in clubs and recess, several middle school students identified areas of institutional growth in which they would like the school to consider. There was a collective expressed desire for the middle school experience to be more distinct from the elementary school, with students requesting more age-appropriate fundraisers and field trips. Suggestions for improvement included the extension of physical education requirements through eighth grade, more diverse sports offerings, and the implementation of a dedicated snack time. Despite these suggestions for refinement, students maintained that the primary reason they would recommend the school to friends was the supportive nature of the teaching staff.

⁸ STEAM stands for science, technology, engineering, arts, and math.

Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 28 elementary and 10 middle school classrooms were observed for approximately 15 minutes on the day of the site evaluation.

Classroom Environment					
	Distinguished	Highly Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
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: 12	TOTAL: 25	TOTAL: 1	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: 16	TOTAL: 22	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0

Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 28 elementary and 10 middle school classrooms were observed for approximately 15 minutes on the day of the site evaluation.

Classroom Instruction					
	Distinguished	Highly Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
Communicating with Students	<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: 9	TOTAL: 29	TOTAL: 0	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: 8	TOTAL: 29	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 1

Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 28 elementary and 10 middle school classrooms were observed for approximately 15 minutes on the day of the site evaluation.

Classroom Instruction					
	Distinguished	Highly Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Unsatisfactory	Not Observed
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: 19	TOTAL: 19	TOTAL: 0	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: 7	TOTAL: 31	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 0

Classroom Observations and Additional Comments

Students read poems for literary elements, metaphor, theme, repetition, rhyme, and text structures. Students practiced reading, grammar, and writing skills independently in reading centers. Students moved through centers. One center used Chromebooks and headphones, another employed handouts and worksheets. A third center completed activities on Google Classroom. A fourth group sat with the teacher, practicing reading and writing skills. Students were self-regulated and seamlessly moved from center to center.

During English language arts centers, students completed a “Must Do” and “May Do” set of assignments, selecting activities from the available options. The teacher circulated to confer with students about their “Must Do” tasks and then facilitated a small-group lesson. In the group, students revisited the essential question for a realistic fiction text, “How can others inspire us?” and participated in a choral reading of the text. The lesson reflected a strong sense of urgency, with brisk pacing throughout.

In one middle-level class, the teacher asked students their thoughts, and when a volunteer spoke, the teacher asked the students "how many agreed" and then "how many disagreed." The instructor then asked students to explain why they made that choice. The teacher allowed the students to reason through mathematical problems without stating whether something was correct or incorrect. The teacher allowed the students to reason and problem-solve and arrive at their own conclusions. Students spoke with table partners and as a whole class to arrive at their decisions. Then the teacher affirmed the correct answer to the mathematical equation.

Students organized measurements from one table to another to determine patterns in the data. Once the data was collected and organized, students were asked to make estimations regarding the data and then explain their reasoning. The instructor led a discussion with the students on their explanations for organization and reasoning.

During a closure activity, students gathered in a circle on the floor and used whiteboards to respond to the prompt, “Which task was the most challenging, and how did you overcome it?” Students shared and discussed select responses. They also reflected on whether they worked independently or with a partner and explained how that choice influenced their progress.

In one middle-level science class, students were introduced to "March mammal madness" by the instructor. It is a nationwide competition among sixth and seventh-graders choosing through four divisions, and a bracket, to identify who would be the top mammal. The four divisions were 'library legends,' 'money mammals,' 'distinct species,' and 'that's so metal.' The instructor introduced the topic, demonstrating how the competition compares to the March Madness basketball tournament. Students received a pre-made copy of the bracket. Students then began to fill out their brackets. Every three days, a video is generated discussing current standings, strengths, and estimating what will happen next in the competition. Students were encouraged to research each animal to make their predictions.

In an early grades classroom, students transitioned easily to small group/center time. The teacher met with a group of four, and there was almost no downtime for learning. Another teacher came into the

room and met with a group of five students on sounding out words. Other students (11) worked in centers. Four on the carpet were fully engaged in listening to a story with earphones, and others worked on completing an assignment requiring them to write an informational text (How to Ride a Bike). A third adult roamed the classroom and supported the students in writing. This classroom had excellent pacing, student engagement, and levels of learning.

Students built roller coasters in small groups in one art class. Students were highly engaged and cooperative. Upon entering the class, they began working immediately. Students followed a rubric, used paper, scissors, glue, and tape to construct their coasters. A marble was used to check for the efficacy of the structure as they went along. A QR code on the projector was available for students to use if they needed video assistance.

In a special education pull-out setting, teachers provided one-on-one support as students developed written responses to an ELA assignment. Teachers and students discussed each answer, after which the teacher recorded the student's response on a whiteboard for the student to copy. Interactions throughout the lesson were positive, well-organized, and purposeful.

In one elementary class, students were initiating writing a persuasive essay. The teacher began by speaking about writing persuasively. This was followed by students watching a short video by a young student listing the reasons children should read. Students turned to partners and shared some of the reasons they heard as to why people should read. Students utilized academic language, spoke in complete sentences, and were eager to express their thoughts.

In one middle-level science class, students participated in a lab within small groups. The lesson simulated students using different tools to simulate the beak of a bird in order to determine how different traits and variations affect survival, adaptation, and reproduction. Students cycled through various tools (spoon, chopsticks, fork, tape) as well as various food (pasta, beans, sprinkles, paper clips) and recorded their collection data on a table. Students made observations based on the data collected that included, "Which 'beak' type collected the most food?" "What happened when the food type changed?" As a whole, the class was asked, "How does this simulation demonstrate natural selection?" and "How does variation increase survival chances?" Students were very excited to complete each simulation and were very engaged in the learning.

Students in a dance class focused on various movements in different areas of the space in small groups. Students assisted each other with counting, proper posture for the movements and ensuring the sequence and flow were coordinated. The instructor assisted small groups of students when moving from group to group. Students were focused on learning and remained engaged with their learning.

Students practiced writing opinion pieces in one elementary class. Students worked in centers, some independently at their desks, and others with a teacher in a small group. Students were encouraged to identify weak ideas in their writing. Students also checked to make sure every sentence they wrote supported the purpose of the writing.

In an early grade classroom, two students were in the corner reading and selecting books to read. Four students were reading at a table with the teacher. Another four students read with a second teacher. Two students listened to a story and were using headphones. At a different table, five students practiced

writing with the support of another adult as needed. This is an excellent example of small-group/differentiated instruction.

Students worked with the teacher to compare two poems, identifying rhyming words, repeated words and phrases, and discussing the purpose and impact of repetition in poetry. To increase student participation, the teacher incorporated a turn-and-talk strategy. During the discussion, students described the images and meaning evoked by the phrase “thunder rumbled.”

Students reviewed key strategies for listening comprehension, including identifying the author’s purpose, key details, theme, and main topic. The teacher then read a text aloud to provide an opportunity to apply these strategies. After listening, students recorded their thinking about each story element in a brief written response.

In a primary classroom, students prepared for a writing task by brainstorming in pairs items needed for each season. Students then illustrated one item for each season in the corresponding box and completed sentence frames such as, “I need a _____ for winter.”

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
Boost Academic Performance	Doral Academy of Nevada - Cactus reports continued efforts to support teachers through site-based professional learning and development. The curriculum specialists from the Executive Office increased on-campus presence to twice a month in order to collaborate with and provide direct support to instructional staff. Additionally, members of the leadership team during the leadership team presentation said they consistently utilized data analysis and reflective dialogue to identify areas of need in pedagogical practice and to implement targeted strategies designed to increase instructional rigor and student engagement school-wide. Leadership believes these efforts have yielded positive results, as evidenced by the school’s increased NSPF star rating and overall NSPF score.	SPCSA staff agree with this assessment and conclude that the leadership team and staff continue to diligently address the academic and social-emotional needs of students using data to inform decisions.
Address Infrastructure and Traffic Concerns	The leadership team at Doral Academy of Nevada - Cactus reported continuing partnerships with crossing guards and the surrounding community to navigate road construction and the limitations of campus parking.	SPCSA staff agree leadership at Doral Academy of Nevada – Cactus. Traffic safety is an ongoing effort given the geographical placement of the school, nearby facilities, and traffic flow.

Operational Compliance Checks

- Fire Extinguisher YES NO
- Nurse's Station YES NO
- McKinney-Vento Poster YES NO
- Evacuation Plan in Classrooms YES NO
- Food Permit YES NO N/A
- Elevator Permit YES NO N/A

Appendix A

The school may choose to submit a response to the SPCSA Site Evaluation Team's findings. This response will be included with the report in the public domain. The final report is submitted to the school's leadership and governing board, the SPCSA board, and into the public record via the SPCSA's website.