



Nevada State Public Charter School Authority

# Silver Sands Montessori School

## Site Evaluation Report: April 7, 2026

State Public Charter School Authority

775-687-9174

3427 Goni Rd, suite 103

Carson City, Nevada 89706

702-486-8895

500 E. Warm Springs Rd, suite 116

Las Vegas, Nevada 89119

# Table of Contents

Executive Summary ..... 3

Site Evaluation Findings: Strengths..... 4

Site Evaluation Findings: Challenges ..... 6

Site Evaluation Findings: Recommendations ..... 8

Site Evaluation Findings: Deficiencies..... 12

Focus Group Participation Data..... 15

    Focus Group Summary: Governing Board ..... 16

    Focus Group Summary: Family Members, Parents, and Guardians..... 17

    Focus Group Summary: Faculty and Staff..... 18

    Focus Group Summary: School Leadership ..... 20

    Focus Group Summary: Students ..... 22

Classroom Observations and Additional Comments ..... 26

Measures of Progress from Previous Site Evaluation..... 28

Operational Compliance Checks..... 31

Appendix A ..... 32

**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)<sup>1</sup>, 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.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## **Improved elementary school star ratings and index score**

Silver Sands Montessori Elementary School demonstrated notable improvement on the 2024-25 Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF), increasing its overall index score from 20.5 points (one-star) to 55 index points and earning a three-star rating. This represents an area of strength for the school to build upon. Measurable gains were observed across multiple indicators, including the Growth Indicator<sup>2</sup>, which increased from 12.5 out of 35 points in the prior year to 30 out of 35 points, and the Closing Opportunity Gaps Indicator<sup>3</sup>, which rose from five out of 20 points to 18 out of 20 points. Collectively, these improvements contributed to a 34.5-point increase in the elementary school's overall index score, reflecting meaningful progress in student outcomes. Lastly, the middle school has maintained its three-star status, earning 53.5 index points.

## **Inclusive and positive school culture**

A consistent theme across all focus groups was the school's positive and inclusive culture. Stakeholders, including students, families, and staff, consistently reported that the school maintains a welcoming environment defined by a strong sense of safety and belonging. Students specifically highlighted the absence of exclusive social cliques, noting that it is relatively easy to make friends across different grade levels. This atmosphere of mutual respect and kindness fosters a setting where students feel comfortable and included, with low rates of bullying. Collective feedback underscores a school community that prioritizes character development and emotional safety, cultivating an environment where students can focus fully on their academic and personal growth.

## **Small school environment that promotes personalized learning**

Another core strength of Silver Sands Montessori is its small-school environment, which serves as a foundation for personalized learning. This theme was consistently reflected across all focus groups, with board members, leadership, staff, families, and students identifying the school's smaller scale as a key driver of success. This structure, according to the school's stakeholders, allows for more individualized attention, fosters strong relationships between students and staff, and cultivates a close-knit school community. Faculty members also noted that it enables closer monitoring of student progress and strengthens students' sense of belonging, both of which can support positive academic and social development. Collectively, stakeholders identified these features as integral to the overall educational experience.

## **Enhanced classroom management and learning environment**

A notable area of growth observed during this year's site evaluation is the improvement in classroom management and student engagement compared to the previous site evaluation cycle. During the on-site visit, students appeared more settled, focused, and consistently engaged in their academic work. This

---

<sup>2</sup> Growth Indicator is a measure of how much progress individual students make from one year to the next, regardless of whether he/she has yet reached proficiency.

<sup>3</sup> The Closing Opportunity Gaps Indicator determines the percentage of students meeting their annual growth percentile who did not achieve proficiency in the prior year's state-administered criterion-referenced tests in English language arts and mathematics assessments.

qualitative shift is further validated by the classroom observation data recorded on page 23 of this evaluation report. Within the "Classroom Learning Environment is Conducive to Learning" section, 18 classrooms were rated "Highly Proficient," with one rated as "Distinguished." These ratings reflect the faculty's successful effort to create structured, calm, and productive spaces that support the school's academic mission.

### **Strategic enrollment growth via Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) expansion**

Silver Sands Montessori has demonstrated proactive leadership focused on school sustainability by successfully securing a grant to launch a new Pre-Kindergarten<sup>4</sup> (pre-K) program in the 2026-27 school year. This initiative serves as a strategic pipeline for the school, providing an early entry point for families into the Montessori model and creating a natural pathway for increased enrollment in the elementary grades. By engaging students and families at the pre-K level, the program supports the development of foundational skills while fostering long-term community connection and commitment. Set to begin next school year, this expansion not only addresses a community need for high-quality early childhood education but also optimizes the school's financial and operational health by ensuring a consistent influx of students prepared for the primary years.

---

<sup>4</sup> Pre-K (Pre-Kindergarten) is an early childhood education program designed for children typically ages 3–4, prior to kindergarten enrollment, focused on developing foundational academic, social, and developmental skills.

# 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.

## **High chronic absenteeism rates**

A significant challenge for Silver Sands Montessori School is its high chronic absenteeism rate, defined as students missing ten percent or more of school days, which resulted in a noted deficiency during the previous site evaluation cycle. According to the 2024-25 NSPF, the elementary school's rate of 31 percent surpasses the SPCSA district average of 16 percent, while the middle school's rate of 23 percent exceeds the average rate of 13 percent. These elevated absenteeism rates can significantly affect student engagement, instructional continuity, and overall learning outcomes, underscoring a critical area for continued targeted interventions and support. Furthermore, these results influenced the school's scores on the SPCSA Academic Performance Framework<sup>5</sup> (APF), with neither the elementary nor the middle school earning any points (zero out of five) in the chronic absenteeism reduction section.

## **Enrollment sustainability**

Silver Sands Montessori is currently operating below its approved enrollment cap of 230 students. At the time of the site evaluation, the school reported an enrollment of 194 students. While leadership has bolstered recruitment through social media advertising and community events, maintaining enrollment levels sufficient to fully utilize the school's resources remains an ongoing challenge. The school recently submitted a request to reduce its approved enrollment cap to better align with current trends. Continued attention to enrollment sustainability and outreach will be essential to ensure long-term stability. The school's plan to launch a Pre-K program next year, designed for 20 students, is intended to serve as a strategic recruitment pathway.

## **Academic proficiency**

Despite the school's improved star rating, a challenge for Silver Sands Montessori Elementary and Middle School remains increasing academic proficiency across grade levels. The 2024-25 NSPF Academic Achievement Indicator shows that student performance in mathematics, English language arts, and science continues to fall below SPCSA district averages, highlighting the need to strengthen Tier One instruction<sup>6</sup> and implement targeted, differentiated strategies to improve student learning outcomes for all grade levels. The elementary school's pooled proficiency<sup>7</sup> rate is 22 percent, below the district average of 53 percent, which factored in the school not meeting the standards in the SPCSA's APF. The middle school's pooled proficiency rate of 34 percent is below the district average of 52 percent.

---

<sup>5</sup> The Academic Performance Framework (APF) incorporates corresponding school year NSPF school ratings under the NSPF Index Score indicator, as the NSPF includes key performance measures such as academic achievement and proficiency, academic growth, English Learner (EL) growth, opportunity gaps, graduation rates, and chronic absenteeism.

<sup>6</sup> Tier One instruction is the core high-quality instruction provided to all students in the general education classroom to ensure everyone has access to grade-level standards.

<sup>7</sup> Pooled Proficiency is the weighted average that combines the number of proficient students across all tested subjects (typically Mathematics, Reading, and Science) into a single score.

### **Refining tier one instructional practices and efficiency**

An ongoing challenge for Silver Sands Montessori School is further calibrating Tier One instruction to continually improve engagement and instructional efficiency across classrooms. While progress has been made in classroom management, opportunities remain to improve pacing, transition efficiency, and the consistency of rigorous, standards-aligned tasks. During the site evaluation, some classrooms would benefit from more intentional pre-planning of high-quality learning tasks and clearer instructional structures to maximize instructional time and sustain cognitive demand. Continued attention to these areas will support more consistent student engagement and deeper learning while maintaining the integrity of the Montessori model.

### **Strengthening governance and operations**

Silver Sands Montessori did not meet standards within the SPCSA Organizational Performance Framework<sup>8</sup> (OPF) in the areas of governance and operations. To address this, the school is strengthening board oversight, policy implementation, and compliance monitoring systems. The governing board would benefit from clearer delineation of roles and responsibilities, along with consistent oversight of academic and financial performance. Additionally, refining documentation of board actions and monitoring practices would support transparency and accountability. On the operational side, enhancing internal systems for timely reporting and accurate data submission remains a priority. Continued focus on these areas will solidify improved compliance and organizational effectiveness.

---

<sup>8</sup> SPCSA Organizational Performance Framework (OPF) is the set of standards used by the State Public Charter School Authority to evaluate a school's health in non-academic areas, such as organizational management, board governance, and legal compliance.

# 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 bolster instructional quality**

To support continued progress toward higher performance on the NSPF and elevated student academic proficiency, the SPCSA recommends that Silver Sands Montessori refine Tier One instruction by intentionally calibrating pacing, rigor, and instructional coherence across all grade levels. Maximizing instructional time is critical to ensuring that students are consistently engaged in rigorous, standards-aligned learning, which is directly correlated with increased proficiency and academic growth. By optimizing pacing and lesson structure, teachers can sustain instructional momentum, reduce unnecessary transitions, and minimize off-task behavior, thereby increasing both the efficiency and effectiveness of the classroom experience.

In alignment with the Montessori model, these enhancements should preserve student-centered, hands-on learning while incorporating consistent structures that support focus, independence, and sustained engagement. The intentional use of clear routines, high expectations, and proactive classroom management practices contributes to a more productive environment and enables teachers to deliver high-quality instruction more effectively. These practices not only enhance student engagement but also increase teacher efficacy by enabling educators to respond more strategically to student learning needs.

To support this work, the school should prioritize the following key focus areas:

- *Lesson Design and Pacing:* Ensure instructional plans include clear learning objectives, aligned tasks, and appropriate pacing to maintain rigor and engagement.
- *Continue Enhancing Classroom Management and Routines:* Implement consistent, proactive routines that support focus, minimize disruptions, and promote student independence.
- *Data-Driven Instruction:* Utilize ongoing assessment data to inform instruction, target skill gaps, and adjust teaching strategies to meet student needs.
- *Standards Alignment:* Strengthen alignment between instruction, the Nevada Academic Content Standards<sup>9</sup> (NVACS), and Montessori practices to ensure both rigor and relevance. The school must continue to systematically monitor alignment between the Montessori green binders<sup>10</sup> resource and NVACS while more intentionally leveraging student performance data to inform instructional planning and delivery. As part of this work, the school may benefit from leveraging resources from the Office of Teaching and Learning to support the effective implementation of

---

<sup>9</sup> NVACS (Nevada Academic Content Standards) is Nevada's state-mandated learning goals that define what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. These standards ensure that all Nevada students are prepared for college and careers, and they serve as the benchmark against which school proficiency and growth are measured.

<sup>10</sup> Green binders were created by the school to serve as a resource for staff to organize Montessori-aligned curricular materials that align with the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS).

data-driven instructional practices and reinforce coherence between standards, curriculum, and classroom instruction. ([Office of Teaching and Learning](#))

- *Professional Development:* Provide ongoing, targeted training in instructional planning, lesson pacing, classroom management, and data use to ensure consistency across classrooms while incorporating regular staff feedback to prioritize and refine professional development topics.

Strengthening staff capacity in these areas can improve instructional consistency, increase teacher efficacy, and ultimately contribute to measurable gains in student proficiency, growth, and overall NSPF performance and student outcomes.

### **Strategic priorities for strengthening school systems and leadership capacity**

Silver Sands Montessori has worked hard to build a foundation; however, to maintain and/or move from a three-star status to a higher-performing designation, leadership and the governing board should focus on deepening stakeholder engagement, strengthening brand identity, and instructional excellence. The following recommendations for consideration are designed to foster long-term sustainability and academic success:

- *Deepen stakeholder and community engagement:* The Board and leadership should continue operating as a unified team to strengthen community connection and engagement. This includes increasing the visibility of board meetings, encouraging public attendance, and ensuring board members are present and accessible at school events. To better serve working families, the school should consider replacing midday Saturday events with options that align with student pick-up times. Additionally, the school should utilize surveys to identify family interests, such as parenting strategies, legal resources, or academic support, and offer flexible engagement opportunities, including virtual or recorded sessions, to accommodate varying schedules.
- *Strengthen marketing and brand identity:* The school should strategically highlight and market its core strengths, including its Montessori philosophy, small class sizes, and safe student-centered environment. Expanding the Parent Teacher Organization,<sup>11</sup> (PTO) and creating opportunities for student-led showcases, such as performances or digital presentations, can further amplify the school's positive culture, attract new families, and drive enrollment growth.
- *Strengthen governance and leadership capacity:* The Governing Board should continue to refine its governance practices by clarifying roles and responsibilities, strengthening committee structures, and ensuring rigorous oversight of academic, financial, and operational performance. Participation in SPCSA board training is encouraged to support effective governance practices and informed decision-making. Additionally, improving the consistency and transparency of board documentation and monitoring systems will further support accountability and long-term organizational effectiveness. Listed below are the SPCSA Governance Standards.

<https://charterschools.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/CharterSchoolsnvgov/content/Grocers/Governance%20Standards.2022.05.26.pdf>

---

<sup>11</sup> PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) is a school-based organization comprised of parents, teachers, and staff that collaborates to support school initiatives, promote family and community engagement, and enhance student experiences through coordinated activities and events.

- *Enhance enrichment and staff support:* To enrich the overall student experience, the school should explore ways to ensure consistent access to music, the arts, and physical education. Additionally, recognizing students and staff at board meetings can help reinforce a positive school culture. The school should also prioritize staff retention and development by gathering faculty input on professional development needs to support a stable, experienced faculty.

# Site Evaluation Findings: Strong Recommendations

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

# Site Evaluation Findings: Deficiencies

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

**Continued deficiency for chronic absenteeism (elementary and middle school grades)**

<p>Context</p>	<p>A. Pursuant to legislative intent outlined in Nevada Revised Statutes 388A, charter schools are authorized to serve the best interests of all pupils, including those who may be at risk, and to provide a framework through which successful practices may be replicated and ineffective practices identified and addressed.</p> <p>B. Consistent with the oversight practices outlined in the Charter School Performance Framework and Section 7.5.1 of the Charter Contract, the Authority implements a progressive system of notification and corrective action to address areas of noncompliance or underperformance.</p> <p>C. The Charter School Contract between the State Public Charter School Authority and the Silver Sands Montessori Charter School Governing Board was executed on July 1, 2021. Part 2: School Operations—Student Recruitment, Enrollment, and Attendance—requires that the Charter School adopt and adhere to an attendance policy, including provisions related to truancy and absences, pursuant to Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 388A.160(5).</p>
<p>Condition</p>	<p>According to the charter renewal contract executed on July 1, 2021, Silver Sands Montessori Charter School is required to operate in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, including attendance and truancy requirements. Under Nevada Revised Statutes 392 and Nevada Administrative Code 388A.160, schools are responsible for implementing and enforcing policies that address student attendance and truancy.</p> <p>Consistent with its mission, <i>“To provide a quality Montessori education in an environment that encourages a child’s love of learning and respect for self, others, community and the world,”</i> the school is expected to ensure that students are consistently engaged in learning through regular attendance.</p> <p>Currently, levels of chronic absenteeism—and, in turn, student achievement at Silver Sands Montessori Charter School are below expectations.</p> <p>Attendance categories are defined as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regular attendees:</b> miss five or fewer days per year (less than one day per month)</li> <li>• <b>At-risk attendees:</b> miss 5%–9% of the school year (approximately 9–16 days; one to two days per month)</li> <li>• <b>Chronically absent:</b> miss 10% or more of the school year (approximately 18+ days; more than two days per month)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Severely chronically absent:</b> miss 20% or more of the school year (approximately 36+ days; more than four days per month)</li> </ul>																				
Causes	<p>Silver Sands Montessori Charter School students are not attending school regularly. Chronic absenteeism rates must be improved, as they remain significantly above the SPCSA averages. School leaders and staff are urged to develop and implement targeted strategies to reduce these rates.</p> <p>Chronic absenteeism has a well-documented impact on student outcomes, including lower achievement in reading and mathematics, decreased social-emotional development, and increased risk of grade retention and dropout. Research from Attendance Works<sup>12</sup> and the U.S. Department of Education highlights that students who are chronically absent are significantly less likely to meet academic benchmarks and remain on track for graduation.</p> <p>Immediate and focused action is essential to ensure improved student outcomes and long-term success for students.</p>																				
Effect	<p>The most recent Nevada School Rating Report for the 2024-25 school year, as posted by the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) in September 2025, indicates an overall chronic absenteeism rate of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31.7% for elementary school</li> <li>• 23.4% for middle school</li> </ul> <p>Chronic absenteeism rates have been historically high at Silver Sands Montessori School, as seen in the table below.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>School Level</th> <th>Chronic Absenteeism %</th> <th>SPCSA Average</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024-25</td> <td>ES</td> <td>31.7%</td> <td>16.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023-24</td> <td>ES</td> <td>30.8%</td> <td>20.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024-25</td> <td>MS</td> <td>23.4%</td> <td>13.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023-24</td> <td>MS</td> <td>23.9%</td> <td>15.8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	School Level	Chronic Absenteeism %	SPCSA Average	2024-25	ES	31.7%	16.4%	2023-24	ES	30.8%	20.7%	2024-25	MS	23.4%	13.7%	2023-24	MS	23.9%	15.8%
Year	School Level	Chronic Absenteeism %	SPCSA Average																		
2024-25	ES	31.7%	16.4%																		
2023-24	ES	30.8%	20.7%																		
2024-25	MS	23.4%	13.7%																		
2023-24	MS	23.9%	15.8%																		
Deficiency Finding	<p>Silver Sands Montessori Charter School is expected to have interventions and systems in place to decrease chronic absenteeism rates. According to the Policy Achievement Level Descriptors within the Nevada School Performance Framework technical guide, “The measure for the Student Engagement Indicator for schools is chronic absenteeism. Research shows that reducing chronic absenteeism is critical to improving student achievement. A chronically absent student is a student who has missed 10 percent or more of the days they were enrolled for any reason, including excused, unexcused, or disciplinary absences.”</p> <p>Silver Sands Montessori Charter School considers ways to immediately increase student attendance and growth gains. The governing board and leadership may want to emphasize the following areas:</p>																				

<sup>12</sup> Attendance Works is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to improving student attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism.

- [Cultivate a schoolwide culture of attendance](#)
- [Use chronic absence data to determine the need for additional supports](#)
- [Develop staff capacity to adopt effective attendance practice](#)
- [Advocate for resources and policies to improve attendance](#)

Additional strategies include participating in community-wide efforts to address root causes of chronic absenteeism, as well as maintaining consistent communication with staff, students, and families regarding the importance of daily attendance and available support.

Schools with chronic absenteeism rates above 10 percent require targeted improvement efforts. The school must submit an improvement plan within four weeks of receiving the site evaluation report. The plan should include specific strategies, support, and measurable goals aligned to indicators that are below standard. Extensions may be requested in writing if needed. The site evaluation team will review the response plan, meet with leadership, and provide feedback prior to finalizing the action plan and timeline.

Notably, this area was previously identified as a deficiency, underscoring the need for immediate and sustained improvement.

# 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 <sup>13</sup>	2
Family Members, Parents, and Guardians	6
Faculty and Staff	8
School Leadership	4
Students	6

---

<sup>13</sup> Quorum was not met, and Open Meeting Law was not violated.

# Focus Group Summary: Governing Board

The governing board focus group reflected a structure designed to enhance its oversight engagement while maintaining a collaborative relationship with school leadership. The board currently consists of six members with no open seats, and governance processes are supported through regular reporting from the administrative team. Members reported regularly receiving clear, transparent updates on academic, financial, and operational performance data.

In reviewing academic and operational data, the board emphasized its role in monitoring trends rather than directly managing day-to-day operations. Members noted that they rely on administrative reports to understand student achievement, chronic absenteeism, and subgroup performance, including English Language Learners and other diverse populations. Discussions included examining root causes of challenges, such as transportation and post-pandemic impacts on engagement and attendance. Board members also mentioned a continued focus on restoring engagement levels, which they identified as closely tied to improvements in attendance and overall student performance. While chronic absenteeism was recognized as a key concern, it was discussed within the broader context of improving family engagement and participation.

Financial oversight remains a core responsibility, with the board actively monitoring enrollment trends and conducting year-over-year comparisons to ensure stability. In response to a downward enrollment trend, the board is prioritizing recruitment and retention strategies. This includes exploring expanded program offerings, such as Pre-K, arts, and music, to enhance the school's appeal to prospective families while maintaining a focus on teacher retention and strategic marketing.

The board discussed the Montessori model and its alignment with state accountability expectations, noting that there is occasional tension between preserving the model's integrity and meeting external performance requirements. Members expressed a desire to further emphasize and strengthen the school's unique instructional approach while continuing to meet accountability standards. Leadership evaluation processes were described as generally structured and supported through ongoing communication, budgetary alignment, and periodic discussions focused on leadership performance. The members noted that advancing to a more formal leadership evaluation method would enhance the process. The addition of a new Director of Finance and improved organization during board meetings were noted as contributing to progress toward a refined structure and clarity in governance processes.

Regarding school culture, the board identified a strong sense of family and community as a key asset of the school. Simultaneously, members acknowledged a need to broaden community engagement, including more active participation by board members in school events and in encouraging greater family attendance at board meetings. Overall, the board described itself as a cohesive team navigating a period of strategic refinement, with a continued focus on bolstering systems, supporting leadership, and improving attendance to ensure long-term school success.

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

The family focus group reflected a positive perception of the school’s academic program, with several describing the school experience as “phenomenal.” Families emphasized that instruction is adaptable and responsive, noting that students receive individualized support tailored to their specific needs. Engaging opportunities, such as science projects and interdisciplinary cultural assignments, were highlighted as both rigorous and meaningful contributions to students’ development.

Communication was identified as a core strength. Families reported that teachers maintain consistent, clear contact through multiple channels, including email and social media. Teachers were described as highly responsive and accessible, ensuring families feel well-informed and comfortable reaching out for assistance. Support for the Montessori model remains strong, particularly its focus on respect, independence, and character development. Families noted that this approach fosters leadership and positive social behaviors, with minimal concerns regarding bullying. Participants consistently shared that the school’s culture of kindness and inclusion effectively supports both academic and personal growth.

Regarding support systems, respondents acknowledged the structures in place for academic and behavioral needs. However, in discussing chronic absenteeism, a clear opportunity for growth emerged. While families were aware of existing incentives, they expressed that more explicit communication regarding attendance data would be beneficial. They suggested that deeper insights into the broader implications of absenteeism would help them and other families better understand how attendance patterns directly influence their child’s long-term success and the school’s overall performance.

Families further described the school culture as welcoming and inclusive, highlighting the “small school” feel as a major asset. Events like Peace Week<sup>14</sup> and International Children’s Day<sup>15</sup> contribute to a sense of stewardship and belonging. This close-knit environment is bolstered by the accessibility of staff and leadership, which maintains a high level of transparency and trust.

Based on feedback, recommendations include expanding resources for English Language Learners<sup>16</sup> (ELLs) and increasing enrichment opportunities in art and music. By continuing to build on strong communication practices, specifically by clarifying the data on chronic absenteeism, the school can further enhance the community’s understanding of student achievement and sustain its positive trajectory.

---

<sup>14</sup> Peace Week is a significant cultural event in many school communities, particularly within Montessori and inclusive environments, designed to foster a sense of global citizenship, empathy, and social harmony.

<sup>15</sup> International Children’s Day is an annual observance that the school uses as an interdisciplinary, project-based learning event, where students engage in cultural research and classroom transformations to celebrate global diversity and children’s rights.

<sup>16</sup> English Learners (ELs/ELLs) are students whose primary language is not English and who are currently developing their English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing to fully access the academic curriculum.

# Focus Group Summary: Faculty and Staff

The staff focus group reflected a shared focus on improving student achievement across grade levels. Instructional priorities included foundational literacy and numeracy skills in the early grades, such as decoding, sight words, and skip counting, as well as more advanced content, such as poetry, social studies topics, and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium<sup>17</sup> (SBAC) test preparation in the upper grades. Staff also emphasized integrating Individualized Education Program<sup>18</sup> (IEP) goals and targeted support into daily instruction.

Staff described efforts to improve Tier One instruction that is standards-aligned and appropriately rigorous. Teachers referenced their work to ensure lesson plans aligned with grade-level standards, supported by tools such as the Montessori-aligned green binder and curricular resources, such as Math-U-See<sup>19</sup>. Instructional sequencing and standards alignment were identified as an area of focus, with staff working to balance Montessori philosophy and state accountability expectations by maintaining an emphasis on student-centered learning in the morning sessions while incorporating standards-based instruction and assessment in the afternoon.

The use of assessment data to inform instruction was a consistent theme across responses. Staff reported using multiple data sources, including easyCBM,<sup>20</sup> Scholastic reading data<sup>21</sup>, and Math-U-See assessments, to identify student strengths and areas for growth. This data is used to group students, differentiate instruction, and provide targeted small-group support. Group members shared that Tier Two<sup>22</sup> supports are delivered through structured response-to-intervention<sup>23</sup> (RTI) groups and after-school tutoring, while Tier Three<sup>24</sup> interventions are more clearly defined and monitored through IEP processes.

Staff described a range of systems to support both academic and behavioral needs, including schoolwide incentives such as the Silver Sands Dollars<sup>25</sup> program and classroom-level strategies, such as daily report cards. To address chronic absenteeism, staff reported encouraging attendance through incentives, communication with families, and family engagement strategies, such as promoting carpooling. While these efforts demonstrate multiple approaches to supporting attendance, responses suggest the need for a more cohesive, schoolwide approach to addressing absenteeism, particularly given the frequency of student tardiness noted by staff.

---

<sup>17</sup> SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) is a standardized testing system aligned with the Common Core State Standards that measures student proficiency in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science.

<sup>18</sup> Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a legal document developed for students with disabilities to ensure they receive specialized instruction and services tailored to their needs.

<sup>19</sup> Math-U-See is a multi-sensory, mastery-based math curriculum that uses manipulatives to help students visualize and understand mathematical concepts.

<sup>20</sup> easyCBM: Is a standardized "Curriculum-Based Measurement" tool used for universal screening and progress monitoring to identify students who may need extra support.

<sup>21</sup> Scholastic Reading Data refers to results from evidence-based assessments (such as the Scholastic Reading Inventory) used to measure reading comprehension and track Lexile® growth over time.

<sup>22</sup> Tier Two targeted, small-group interventions are designed for students who are not making adequate progress in Tier One.

<sup>23</sup> Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs.

<sup>24</sup> Tier Three is Intensive, individualized interventions for students who show minimal progress in Tier Two.

<sup>25</sup> Silver Sands Dollars is a school-wide positive behavior incentive and reward system (PBIS) in which students earn "currency" for meeting behavioral expectations, which can be redeemed for rewards or privileges.

The Montessori model remains a central component of instruction, with staff working to maintain fidelity while also meeting state standards. Teachers described a focus on preserving uninterrupted Montessori work cycles<sup>26</sup>, particularly in the morning, while incorporating standards-based instruction, student choice, and varied assessment options in the afternoon. Practices such as offering choice in assignments, using hands-on materials, and extending learning beyond standards were highlighted. Collaboration among staff, including cross-grade sharing of materials, supports instructional alignment, particularly at the elementary level.

The group highlighted the benefits of the school's small, community-oriented environment, which fosters relationships and student engagement. Opportunities to interact with students across grade levels help build trust and rapport, while family engagement is supported through communication, events, and invitations to participate in school activities. However, staff noted variability in family participation, particularly at the middle school level.

Staff feedback highlighted a clear need for differentiated in-person Montessori training tailored to varying levels of expertise. To support this professional growth and sustain the school culture, staff emphasized the need for a competitive compensation structure commensurate with the local school district. Addressing these concerns is essential for staff retention and long-term institutional stability. Furthermore, establishing a cohesive, data-informed strategy for chronic absenteeism with clearly defined staff roles and accountability structures can ensure a more consistent approach to improving student outcomes across all levels.

---

<sup>26</sup> The Montessori Work Cycle is a dedicated period of time (typically 2–3 hours) during which students engage in self-directed, uninterrupted work with Montessori materials to foster deep concentration.

# Focus Group Summary: School Leadership

The leadership focus group described a school actively cultivating academic growth, operational stability, and improved student outcomes, while navigating ongoing challenges in enrollment and chronic absenteeism. The school currently serves approximately 194 students and has taken steps to strengthen its enrollment pipeline, including the approval of a Pre-K program for the upcoming year. Leadership noted that this program may support future recruitment efforts, alongside continued engagement through the school's PTO, school choice fairs, and outreach. Despite some enrollment challenges that required charter contract adjustments, leaders expressed optimism about continued growth and progress toward achieving a three-star rating for the elementary grade bands.

A central area of focus for leadership is chronic absenteeism, which remains an ongoing challenge. Leaders described a multi-faceted approach that includes communication with families, follow-up phone calls, conferences, and analysis of attendance data. The leaders noted they have also implemented attendance-focused messaging at the beginning of the year, along with newsletters and family engagement efforts to reinforce the importance of attendance. While there is clear attention to the issue, leadership acknowledged the complexity of addressing absenteeism, particularly given the school's commuter nature and the distance many students travel to attend.

Instructionally, leadership emphasized continued focus on improving student academic proficiency, particularly through targeted interventions, small-group instruction, and alignment with grade-level standards. Data systems such as Measures of Academic Progress<sup>27</sup> (MAP), easyCBM, and other assessment tools are used to monitor student progress, guide instructional grouping, and inform intervention strategies. The school also provides additional academic support, including after-school tutoring, homework clubs, and Title I<sup>28</sup> supported pull-out services. Leadership highlighted a continued emphasis on strengthening literacy through initiatives such as the Science of Reading<sup>29</sup>, Orton-Gillingham<sup>30</sup> training, and the development of a formal literacy plan. Math instruction is supported by the Math-U-See curriculum, and progress-monitoring tools are used to track student growth over time.

The school continues to refine its implementation<sup>31</sup> of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports<sup>31</sup> (MTSS) framework to support both academic and behavioral needs. Systems are in place to track IEP goals and support special populations, including ELL's, through World-class Instructional Design and Assessment<sup>32</sup> (WIDA) aligned instruction, RAZ Plus<sup>33</sup> resources, and staff training. Leadership also

---

<sup>27</sup> Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is a computer-adaptive assessment that provides a clear picture of a student's academic growth and proficiency in subjects such as math and reading.

<sup>28</sup> Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provide financial assistance to local educational agencies and schools with high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards.

<sup>29</sup> Science of Reading is a vast body of gold-standard research that describes how the human brain learns to read, emphasizing phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and comprehension.

<sup>30</sup> Orton-Gillingham is a highly structured, multisensory approach to teaching reading that is particularly effective for students with dyslexia or those who struggle with word recognition.

<sup>31</sup> Multi-Tiered System of Supports is a framework that schools use to provide targeted support to struggling students. It focuses on the "whole child," addressing academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs.

<sup>32</sup> WIDA (World-class Instructional Design and Assessment) is a member-based organization that provides language development standards and assessments, such as the ACCESS for ELLs®, designed to monitor the English language proficiency of students identified as English Learners (ELs).

<sup>33</sup> RAZ Plus is a comprehensive blended learning platform that provides leveled eBooks and resources to help students improve reading comprehension and fluency.

noted the importance of small class sizes and clearly established expectations, which contribute to a more structured learning environment. While behavioral systems have improved, there remains an ongoing focus on consistency and effectiveness across classrooms.

Professional learning and capacity building are key priorities for the school. The team reported that recent professional development (PD) efforts, including MTSS training and literacy-focused initiatives, have been helpful in supporting instructional practice. Teachers are engaged in ongoing training, with some participating in Science of Reading coursework, and the school continues to invest in materials and systems that align instruction with state standards and Montessori practices. Tools such as green binders and Montessori materials are used to support alignment and consistency, while evaluation systems ensure fidelity to the instructional model.

Overall, leadership described a school making steady progress, with data trends indicating a positive move toward state performance goals. By strengthening instructional practices, expanding academic supports, and deepening community engagement to increase student attendance, the school leaders aspire to sustain growth and improve long-term student outcomes.

# Focus Group Summary: Students

The student focus group reported a generally positive, engaged academic experience, with students describing a range of content across core subjects. In mathematics, students referenced working on slopes, formulas, fractions, and division, often in preparation for SBAC assessments. In English language arts, poetry was a current area of study, while social studies included topics such as the Vietnam War. Several participants also highlighted interdisciplinary, project-based learning experiences, such as an International Children's Day project. Overall, students reported enjoying what they are learning and appreciating the variety of instructional approaches.

Students reported that teachers provide multiple avenues of academic support, including structured opportunities such as after-school tutoring, additional help during snack time, and designated support on Fridays. Students noted that teachers are accessible and responsive, often providing targeted feedback and extra practice to address specific misconceptions. Participants generally felt that teachers make a sincere effort to identify where they are struggling and provide appropriate guidance to sharpen their understanding.

Hands-on and experiential learning opportunities were identified as particularly effective in supporting engagement. Respondents shared that using visual models and materials, such as Montessori manipulative blocks in mathematics, helps concepts "stick" and improves recall. Similarly, creative projects, such as using clay to create historical artifacts, were described as memorable and meaningful. One student explained, "When you see it in blocks, it actually resonates more," highlighting the impact of concrete tools in deepening comprehension.

Regarding the classroom environment, students described clear and consistently reinforced expectations, such as maintaining quiet indoor voices. Expectations are reviewed regularly, including after extended breaks, which helps reinforce norms. While students acknowledged that teachers generally manage classrooms effectively, a few noted a need for continued refinement in consistency. Despite this, most students indicated that their classrooms are conducive to learning and that peers typically follow established rules.

Regarding school culture and belonging, students emphasized a strong sense of community, describing a place where "everyone knows everyone." A highlight for students was the inclusive social atmosphere; they specifically noted the absence of exclusive subgroups or "cliques," observing that the student body interacts across social groups rather than forming exclusive circles. Participants credited the smaller school environment for making it easier to build relationships, even across grade levels. While a few noted that making new friends can sometimes be a process, the overall sentiment was that students feel safe, supported, and connected. Recommendations for improvement included additional class options, such as art and music, and a more organized storage system for playground equipment.

# Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 13 elementary and 6 middle school classrooms were observed for approximately 15 minutes on the day of the site evaluation.

<b>Classroom Environment</b>					
	<b>Distinguished</b>	<b>Highly Proficient</b>	<b>Approaching Proficient</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
<b>Classroom Learning Environment is Conducive to Learning</b>	<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.
	<b>TOTAL: 1</b>	<b>TOTAL: 18</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>
<b>Establishing a Culture for Learning</b>	<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.
	<b>TOTAL: 1</b>	<b>TOTAL: 16</b>	<b>TOTAL: 1</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 1</b>

# Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 13 elementary and 6 middle school classrooms were observed for approximately 15 minutes on the day of the site evaluation.

<b>Classroom Instruction</b>					
	<b>Distinguished</b>	<b>Highly Proficient</b>	<b>Approaching Proficient</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Not Observed</b>
<b>Communicating with Students</b>	<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>	<p>This criterion was not observed or rated.</p>
	<b>TOTAL: 1</b>	<b>TOTAL: 12</b>	<b>TOTAL: 4</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 2</b>
<b>Using Questioning and Discussion Strategies</b>	<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>	<p>This criterion was not observed or rated.</p>
	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 10</b>	<b>TOTAL: 7</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 2</b>

# Classroom Environment and Instruction Observation Rubric

A total of 13 elementary and 6 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
<b>Engaging Students in Learning</b>	<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>
	<b>TOTAL: 1</b>	<b>TOTAL: 11</b>	<b>TOTAL: 6</b>	<b>TOTAL: 1</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>
<b>Using Assessment in Instruction</b>	<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>
	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 13</b>	<b>TOTAL: 6</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>	<b>TOTAL: 0</b>

# Classroom Observations and Additional Comments

In one middle school classroom, students were answering questions about poetry. Students used academic vocabulary, such as assonance, alliteration, and consonance, to answer targeted questions about a poem's theme, form, and structure. Students were generally on task, working at tables, and able to converse with their tablemates about the information.

Elementary students worked independently on their math assignments, which varied according to their learning needs. Several students worked on addition and subtraction, while others worked on multiplication and division. The learning environment was structured, and all students were engaged in completing their work. This reflects a key expectation in Montessori education classrooms, where students progress at an individualized pace within a carefully prepared environment. Students demonstrated sustained concentration and ownership of their learning, with materials and tasks aligned to their current developmental level. The teacher's role appeared to be facilitative, supporting independence and allowing for purposeful, uninterrupted work cycles. To further strengthen the lesson, the teacher could incorporate intentional questioning and discussion techniques to deepen mathematical reasoning without disrupting independence.

A group of 19 students and a teacher discussed upcoming individual projects centered on Australia. The teacher asked each student how they were doing at the beginning of their projects. The session evolved into a productive dialogue regarding project themes, where students offered peer-to-peer suggestions for those in the initial planning stages. Suggestions included creating a piece of clothing, making a model of a house, and creating an animal. All students were very engaged and excited as they discussed the possibilities.

In one class, a student read aloud a story to students sitting on the carpet. The student read the story and then showed the class the pictures. After the reading, the teacher asked direct questions about the story. Students answered the questions orally and by writing in their notebooks. Students were attentive and mostly respectful to their classmates and the teacher. Another instructor in the class sat with a small group of students and focused on targeted interventions.

Elementary students learned about compound words (*e.g.*, doghouse). The teacher presented words on the screen with accompanying audio while students followed along on the carpet. Pacing was appropriate, and the teacher frequently solicited student input regarding compound words. Students demonstrated high engagement throughout the lesson. The lesson incorporated multiple modalities (visual and auditory), which supported accessibility and reinforced understanding. The structured carpet time and clear modeling created a focused learning environment aligned to the lesson objective. To further deepen learning, the teacher could incorporate additional questioning strategies, such as "What two words make up this compound word?" or "How does the meaning change when the words are combined?" to promote analysis and student discourse.

Seventeen students and one teacher were taking a ten-minute snack break. Afterward, the teacher directed the students to return to what they had been doing. Students worked on an assortment of activities, such as word study, independent reading, and completing a worksheet assignment, and some students received one-on-one help from the teacher with spelling or reading.

Students in a science class learned about animals such as mongooses and snakes. The lesson provided students with opportunities to explore characteristics and relationships within the animal kingdom, supporting their understanding of biological concepts such as predator-prey interactions and adaptations. Students were engaged in learning as they examined how these animals survive and interact within their environments. The lesson focused on fostering scientific thinking as students made observations and connections about animal behavior and ecosystems.

In one class, several students were off task, necessitating the teacher stopping the lesson to redirect them. While two teachers were in the room working with students in small groups, several students who were not sitting with the teacher were distracted. Some were tilting back in their chairs, others were wandering the room, tapping on shelves along the side of the room with their pencils. A few others would shout out to the teacher, telling the teacher what other students were doing. These frequent off-task behaviors distracted those in the small group learning.

Middle school students learned about opinion writing and how to construct written responses. The teacher emphasized the importance of restating the prompt and citing text evidence when supporting their ideas. The teacher also reinforced expectations for students to review and revise their work and provided an example of a completed response to model expectations. This lesson demonstrated instructional alignment with literacy practices, particularly in building students' ability to construct evidence-based responses. The use of modeling and explicit expectations supported student understanding of the writing process.

Students completed different tasks during the targeted intervention time within one upper-grade classroom. Some students completed math packets; others read a book silently; others completed a journal entry using a Venn diagram;<sup>34</sup> others answered comprehension questions in complete sentences. Students were focused on the task as the instructor monitored the room, answering questions or redirecting students when they were confused or having difficulty.

Lower elementary students were engaged in math work, with some working independently at tables while two small groups received targeted instruction from the teacher. Students remained focused and demonstrated a commitment to completing the task. Several students utilized Montessori math materials to support their understanding and problem-solving. The use of hands-on materials supported conceptual understanding, while the teacher's small-group instruction allowed for more individualized guidance. The classroom environment was organized and conducive to the lesson's objective, with accessible materials, clear workspaces, and minimal distractions supporting sustained concentration.

In one elementary class, students completed a packet of English Language Arts activities at their tables. Some students completed a crossword puzzle, others worked on a word search, and a third group read a passage at a table with the teacher and then responded to questions focused on the information within the reading. A fourth group worked with another adult. Students were on-task for the most part, talking quietly with the others sitting at their table.

---

<sup>34</sup> Venn diagrams are visual organizers used to compare and contrast two or more concepts by identifying similarities (overlapping sections) and differences (non-overlapping sections).

# 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>SPCSA staff recommend that Silver Sands Montessori Charter School implement an MTSS framework with fidelity.</p>	<p>The school leadership’s presentation and the leadership focus group provided an update on action steps taken to support the school’s MTSS framework, including professional development designed to ensure schoolwide consistency in system implementation.</p>	<p>The SPCSA acknowledges the school’s efforts to strengthen fidelity in implementing its MTSS framework and encourages continued work to develop a high-quality system that effectively supports student needs.</p>
<p>SPCSA staff recommend that Silver Sands Montessori Charter School examine and update schoolwide curricular materials and ensure alignment with the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS).</p>	<p>The leadership team shared measures taken, including professional development and an enhanced focus on refining a resource folder to improve staff use and implementation of newly purchased curricular materials and to ensure alignment with the NVACS.</p>	<p>The SPCSA recognizes the school’s actions and encourages continued efforts to provide staff with professional learning opportunities that enhance the use of schoolwide curricular materials and ensure alignment with the NVACS to support student academic outcomes.</p>
<p>SPCSA staff strongly recommend that Silver Sands Montessori Charter School fill the vacant board seat by July 1, 2025, to fill their seven-member board.</p>	<p>During the leadership and board focus groups, SPCSA staff received an update indicating that the board currently consists of six members. School leaders noted that the bylaws were updated to reflect a governing board membership range of five to seven members.</p>	<p>The SPCSA acknowledges the update and considers this recommendation fulfilled.</p>
<p>SPCSA staff strongly recommend Silver Sands Montessori Charter School pursue PD specific to the demographics of the growing student population and the surrounding community. This may include PD on Title I populations, resiliency, trauma-informed</p>	<p>The leadership team highlighted the school’s focus on increasing staff capacity to serve students with diverse needs, including strengthening understanding of the surrounding community and Title I population, as well as enhancing parent and community engagement.</p>	<p>The SPCSA recognizes the school’s efforts to address the strong recommendation and encourages continued work to deepen staff capacity to serve students from diverse backgrounds.</p>

<p>practices, unhoused populations, and food insecurity.</p>		
<p>SPCSA staff strongly recommend that Silver Sands Montessori Charter School develop targeted PD in classroom management. The site evaluation team observed varying levels of teachers' abilities to run routine procedures and processes within their classrooms.</p>	<p>The leadership team reviewed the steps taken under the school's response plan, which included continued professional development and follow-up observational cycles.</p>	<p>The SPCSA recognizes the work Silver Sands Montessori Charter School has begun to address this strong recommendation and encourages continued progress in this area. The SPCSA further recommends that the school develop and implement targeted professional development focused on student engagement and maintain a continued focus on enhancing high-quality, rigorous Tier One instruction for all students.</p>
<p>SPCSA staff strongly recommend Silver Sands Montessori Charter School participate in PD designed to maximize learning time from the beginning of the lesson until the close of the lesson and implement strategies in their lessons.</p>	<p>The school leaders highlighted professional development sessions provided to their staff, focusing on maximizing learning time.</p>	<p>The SPCSA acknowledges the school's work to improve the use of valuable learning time and encourages the school leaders to continue focusing on ensuring learning time is maximized with high levels of teacher effectiveness.</p>
<p>SPCSA staff strongly recommend that Silver Sands Montessori Charter School develop a robust plan to increase student applications and optimize enrollment.</p>	<p>The school's leadership team and members of the governing board outlined steps taken to increase student applications to optimize enrollment, including outreach efforts to recruit new students.</p>	<p>The SPCSA recognizes the school's leadership team's effort to recruit new students. Continued recruiting efforts can be instrumental in increasing future enrollment.</p>
<p>Silver Sands Montessori Charter School's elementary and middle school has a noted deficiency due to high chronic absenteeism.</p>	<p>The leadership team outlined the action steps they have taken to reduce chronic absenteeism rates.</p>	<p>The SPCSA acknowledges the school's efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism; however, significant work remains, and this area continues to be identified as a deficiency. Silver Sands Montessori Charter School must maintain a focused effort to reduce chronic absenteeism rates. Sustained attention to improving student attendance will support increased daily engagement and</p>

		may lead to the removal of this deficiency.
Deficiency: Silver Sands Montessori Charter School's elementary school has a noted deficiency due to low academic performance.	The school leaders provided regular updates on their response plan to improve academic performance in elementary school. The measures taken raised the 2024-25 NSPF elementary school star rating from one to three, leading the SPCSA board to remove the academic notice of breach and return the school to good standing.	The SPCSA commends the school leaders, staff, students, families, and governing board for the overall improvement. This deficiency has been resolved, and the school is encouraged to continue its commitment to supporting student outcomes. It is specifically recommended that the school maintain a continued focus on strengthening Tier One instruction.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" 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.