

# THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

## Opportunity Network

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PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19130

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### One Bright Ray Community High School- Simpson Campus Mid-Year Evaluation December 23, 2016

**Provider:** One Bright Ray/IECI  
**Contract Term:** FY 2013-FY 2017  
**Program capacity:** 270

**Site Visit Date:** Monday, December 12, 2016- 9:00 a.m.  
**Child Count Compliance:** 100%  
**Average Daily Attendance & Number of Students Present:**  
47% (113 students present out of 240 students enrolled)

#### Walkthrough Review Team:

Christina Grant, Assistant Superintendent  
Majeedah Scott, Director, Multiple Pathways  
Darryl Johnson, Transition Liaison  
Marlon Riddick, Transition Liaison  
Tiana Wilson, Program Manager

#### Program Staff:

Marcus Delgado, CEO, One Bright Ray, Inc.  
Joycet Velasquez, Principal  
Suzette Fonseca, Social Worker  
Derrick Hrubosky, Dean of Students

#### Domains and Performance Levels:

Programs were rated according to seven domains: Vision for Learning, Family & Community Relationships, School Safety, Positive Environment, High Quality Instruction, Talent Development, and Data. The domains are aligned to the School District's evidence-based "High Performing School Practices" and "Essential Features of Alternative Education Programs", as well as the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Leadership Framework. Each domain includes three to seven components that are individually rated according to three broad performance levels: **Failing**, **Needs Improvement**, and **Proficient**. In general, a **Failing** rating indicates that a program could not demonstrate or did not develop practices identified within a domain component. A **Needs Improvement** rating indicates that overall a program has made some progress or effort toward practices identified within a domain component, but has not sufficiently developed the practice. A rating of **Proficient** indicates that, in general, a program has made adequate progress toward the implementation of practices identified within a domain component.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### Vision for Learning

OBR Simpson was rated **Proficient** all of the five components within this domain: orientation for new students, strategy for literacy and numeracy skill building, retention plan implementation, family engagement plan, and individual graduation plans.

The program's strategy to build students' literacy and numeracy skill levels starts with TABE administration to get initial reading and math levels. This baseline data sets the caseload for the program's Ed Support Teacher, who provides supplemental supports to students with very low levels. OBR Simpson stresses the importance of improving reading and math levels, which starts at orientation. Parents are included in that message and are encouraged to know their children's reading and math levels. The program ensures that each student understands their raw TABE scores, and does this by delivering a lesson on the topic.

OBR Simpson's retention plan begins with completing a social history report for each student in order to uncover potential barriers to school engagement. The program conducts home visits for students with five or more absences, and continues to reach out to their families for several more visits if the students remain absent. The program presented its tracking system for documenting outreach efforts and related outcomes. The system uses

tiers to prioritize and develop interventions for students. The program also discussed its positive retention strategies, which include trips and other special events for students who are making satisfactory progress. Other incentive programs include “Student of the Month” and making positive phone calls home to parents.

Individual graduation planning begins at orientation, at which time students are made aware of the credits they have accumulated and the credits they still need to earn in order to graduate. All students are in possession of their credit profiles and graduation plans, and that information is also documented in OBR Simpson’s online database- PowerSchool. During orientation, each student completes a 5-year, 10-year, and 20-year planning exercise, and then has a one-on-one interview with a staff member to discuss postsecondary aspirations. The individual graduation plans that students develop at Simpson follow them to the Fairhill campus. In addition, the program will offer “Career Exploration” as a 30-minute elective course, in which students will explore and research careers, and develop a understanding of the many career options available and what it will takes to accomplish their career goals.

### **Family and Community Relationships**

OBR Simpson was rated **Proficient** in four of the five components within this domain: parent/community outreach, communication logs, strategy to improve family engagement, and partnerships with employers and postsecondary institutions. OBR Simpson was rated **Needs Improvement** in one of the five components within this domain- parent surveys.

OBR Simpson has administered parent surveys this school year, but has not moved toward using the results to inform programming. OBR Simpson presented its communication logs, which are documented in PowerSchool. The organization plans to standardize and streamline communication even more across all three of its campuses. All staff make contact with families and keep written notes, which are then transferred to PowerSchool. Any staff can then look in PowerSchool to see what communications have been made to get a better understanding of next steps in order to best support a student. The program discussed its system to notify staff of urgent information, which involves the Director of Student Services sending an email to all pertinent staff immediately after information is received or an incident occurs.

The program presented its family engagement plan and discussed some efforts it has made to improve family engagement. OBR Simpson held a spaghetti dinner for families at the start of the school year. The program held a food drive and donated Thanksgiving baskets to students and their families in need. The last Friday of every module is report card conferences, during which parents talk with teachers about their children’s progress, and no appointments are necessary. The program provided documentation for the most recent report card conference, which was well attended by parents.

### **School Safety**

OBR Simpson was rated **Proficient** in all six components within this domain: orderly daily routines, attendance policy & truancy plan implementation, program-wide positive behavior system, average daily attendance (ADA), number of students present in each classroom, and use of Scholarship with fidelity.

The review team’s count of the number of students present in classrooms matched the programs self-reported attendance data. Approximately 113 students were present out of 240 enrolled (47% average daily attendance). The review team is concerned about the low attendance on the day of the site visit and recommends that the program develop an aggressive analysis on attendance in order to uncover reasons why students are absent so frequently.

OBR Simpson presented its “Behavioral Continuum” with levels of infractions and consequences. Students are very well aware of the levels and know what to expect when they engage in certain behaviors. The program uses

restorative practices to resolve behavioral challenges, and presented the written guide that it uses to do so. “Classroom and Circle Norms” were posted in each classroom and in the hallways, and serves as a guide and reminder to students about expectations.

The program gives out a lot of student incentives, including a weekly drawing for a gift card for students who are doing well. High performing students are also rewarded with pins, which students wear proudly around their ID badges to show off their accomplishments. The program has an “85ers Club” for students who have at least 85% attendance and are passing all their classes; these students get to go on the end of module trips.

In addition to student incentives and recognitions, the program has an employee of the month program, in which one staff is recognized for excellent service. That staff member is selected by the student government.

### **Positive Environment**

OBR Simpson was rated **Proficient** in all four components within this domain: respectful interactions between staff, students and families, staff have a good rapport with students, engagement of students and families in building a positive environment, and team building activities for staff and students.

The review team witnessed respectful interactions between staff and students. The program discussed its team building efforts for staff and students, and presented related documentation as evidence. The program held its annual holiday event for faculty the Friday before the site visit. OBR Simpson held a potluck Thanksgiving dinner during the school day; staff brought in food, all students ate, and they also took plates of food home. OBR has a prom every year for upperclassmen. It also hosts winter and summer graduations, and recognizes student achievement during awards and honor ceremonies.

Staff engage in fun activities together in order to maintain high morale and a sense of community. Staff play Family Feud on Fridays and the Principal acts as the host. At the end of every module, staff enjoy meals together during their planning time when students are not in school. The program also has a number of after school clubs for students, including Video Game club, Poetry club, and a Talent Show club.

### **High Quality Instruction**

OBR Simpson was rated **Proficient** in all seven components within this domain: identifying students eligible for Keystone exams, students actively engaged in class, strategies to prepare students for Keystone exams, postsecondary bridging plan, postsecondary exploration and preparation, early warning system for academic interventions, and students enrolled in the classes they need to graduate.

The review team observed a high level of student engagement in all classrooms. We observed a good balance of academic rigor with students’ current academic levels.

Students receive grade reports every two weeks from all classes that they are currently taking. Students meet with teachers after school to receive extra help. OBR Simpson discussed its focus on students who are in the middle/swing group (i.e., students who are not passing all classes or have attendance challenges). Students in the bottom third, in terms of progress, are placed on the school Social Worker’s caseload for additional interventions. Keystone standards are imbedded into lesson storyboards. Storyboards are aligned with Keystones and Pennsylvania state core curriculum standards.

A review of student credit profiles and rosters showed that students are appropriately rostered for the courses they need to graduate. OBR Simpson discussed its understanding that students often enter the program with too many elective credits and not many credits in core subjects. The program incorporates this understanding into rostering and ensures that students are taking the major subject courses needed for graduation.

## **Talent Development**

OBR Simpson was rated **Proficient** in all seven components within this domain: common planning time for teachers, differentiated staff supports, principals conduct regular observations and provide constructive feedback, staff selection process, staff turnover and new staff induction, and professional development calendar.

OBR Simpson has a half-day professional development every Wednesday, during which time common planning among Teachers occurs. The program uses the Master Teacher professional development program for all teachers. The program's Director of Curriculum and Instruction provides coaching for teachers, and works closely with the Principal to devise support strategies for teachers in need. Each teacher completes a self improvement plan to reflect upon and improve their practices.

OBR Simpson has very low staff turnover. Staff tend to stay with the program for many years, and promotions usually occur from within. The program discussed its low staff turnover and attributed it to the strong systems that are in place to support teachers, as well as the program's overall positive culture.

The program presented its yearlong professional development calendar, along with sign-in sheets and agendas for sessions that were already held. OBR Simpson began a new Teacher professional development series this school year, which provides targeted training to new Teachers every eight weeks.

Principals conduct teacher observations using the Danielson Framework. Each teacher receives two-days of formal observation each module. Overall, teachers are evaluated based on their lesson plans and student outcomes. Principals are expected to ensure high quality instruction in every classroom, and are evaluated based on school-wide outcomes for students.

## **Data**

OBR Simpson was rated **Proficient** in all four components within this domain: formative and summative assessments, strategy to track student academic progress and provide interventions, system to collect and analyze data, and program improvement plans and related data reports.

The program uses the aforementioned PowerSchool instructional management system. Students and parents have access to grades through the student and parent portals of the system. Students often download the application to their smart phones and receive alerts when there is a change in grades. The program presented documentation from PowerSchool for the review team, including the many reports that the system generates, which help staff to monitor individual students, as well as individual classroom and program-wide trends.

OBR Simpson presented its program-wide strategic plan, which included goals, tactics, deadlines, and benchmarks compiled into one document. The program also presented its Middle States accreditation action plan, which included 3 main goals: student lateness, using TABE scores to better inform instruction, and using more technology inside the classroom.

In addition to summative assessments administered daily in classrooms to check for understanding, students submit final projects for each class every four weeks. The program presented the rubric it uses to grade all final projects. Students must also complete two writing assignments in each course every module. The program uses a standard writing rubric to grade writing assignments.