

**Mid-Year Evaluation
Excel Academy South**

Provider:

The Camelot Schools of Pennsylvania, L.L.C.

Site Visit Date:

Friday, December 15, 2017, 8:00 a.m.

Contract Term:

FY 2018 - 2022

Child Count Compliance: 98.25%

Program Capacity: 400

Percent of students attending at least 85% of school days: 80.9%

Site Visit Review Team:

Marcus DeVose, Assistant Director, Transition Services, Opportunity Network
Rodreen Howell, Transition Liaison, Opportunity Network
Dr. Wanda Y. Jenkins, Director, Special Projects, Opportunity Network
Jacqueline Jones, Transition Liaison, Opportunity Network
Patricia Lesesne, Executive Director, Opportunity Network
Elvis Mucaj, Strategy Analyst, Opportunity Network
Marlon Riddick, Transition Liaison, Opportunity Network

Program Staff:

Milton Alexander, Vice President of Operations, Camelot Schools
Scott Cruttenden, Regional Director, Camelot Schools
Patience Danquah, Director of Special Education, Excel Academy South
Erin Kelly, Director of Student Services, Excel Academy South
Jarrad Muller, Executive Director, Excel Academy South
Cassandra Oshinsky, Principal, Excel Academy South

Domains and Performance Levels:

Programs were rated according to **seven domains**: 1) **Vision for Learning**, 2) **Family & Community Relationships**, 3) **School Safety**, 4) **Positive Environment**, 5) **High Quality Instruction**, 6) **Talent Development** and 7) **Data**. The domains are aligned to the School District's evidence-based High Performing School Practices and the 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 rated according to **three performance levels**: 1) **Failing**, 2) **Needs Improvement** and 3) **Proficient**. **Failing** indicates that a program could not demonstrate or did not develop practices identified within a domain component. **Needs Improvement** indicates that a program has made some progress or effort towards practices identified within a domain component, but has not sufficiently developed the practice. **Proficient** indicates that a program has made adequate progress towards the implementation of practices identified within a domain component.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Vision for Learning

Rating: PROFICIENT [5 of 5 components met]

Strategy for literacy and numeracy skill-building (Yes). Excel Academy South administers the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) three times per year: Fall, Mid-Year, and Spring. TABE assessments provide teachers and staff with the literacy and math grade levels for each student. Scores from the TABE are shared with students and teachers. Students use these scores to set achievement goals for themselves. Teachers and staff use these scores to inform their instructional strategies, as well as to identify additional supports students may need to improve their math and literacy levels. Within the program, TABE scores are also used to form grade-level cohorts for whom teachers provide specific strategies to meet students' academic needs and address gaps in math and literacy skills. To address basic academic needs in literacy and numeracy, the program also uses Edmentum, an online adaptive instructional tool. Additionally, program staff utilizes the curriculum-based measurement (CBM) for progress monitoring. All data are shared with teachers and students. The leadership team analyzes assessment questions to identify skill gaps. The results of this analysis drive instruction. Common planning time also provides teachers an opportunity to discuss the progress of each student and identify interventions that should be incorporated into lessons and/or explored through writing and the development of short answer questions. Program staff utilizes pull out services and co-teaching to support English Language Learners (ELLs) and Special Education (SPED) students. All teachers utilize the program's Common Instructional Strategies in every course. These strategies are designed to allow students to hone in on skill building. In itself, the Common Instructional Strategies framework is an intervention to improve literacy and numeracy. **Retention plan implementation** (Yes). The program has a two-pronged retention plan: 1) Incorporating attendance plans, policies, and processes, as well as 2) Student Government. Additionally, Excel Academy South implements a new truancy referral program through the Camelot Schools organization, which includes truancy home visits. According to program staff, the implementation of this program has contributed to an increase in attendance. The campus-wide Positive Behavior Intervention Supports Plan is also utilized to help increase student engagement and retention. Student trips, incentives, and positive peer culture are also central to the program's retention plan. These approaches motivate students to remain in the program and graduate. Excel Academy South also leverages a partnership with their sister program by allowing students to transfer into that program when appropriate. When students are facing obstacles on the campus of Excel Academy South, this transfer agreement enables students to continue with their education without interruption. **Orientation for new students** (Yes). Orientation is a key component of the program's intake process. During orientation, program staff present their application, review the handbook, discuss supports available to SPED students, conduct Individualized Education Program (IEP) revision meetings, as well as assign a case manager to each student. During this process, students also share their issues and strengths, postsecondary plans, and are re-administered the Wide Range Assessment Test (WRAT). Moreover, parents must attend orientation. **Family engagement plan** (Yes). Throughout the year, program staff welcome parents onto the campus according to an open door policy. During the visit, program staff presented the review team with documentation of various forms of parent communication, including letters, a call log on Google Doc, and report card conferences sign-in sheets. Each student is also assigned a staff advisor. The staff advisor serves as a main point of contact for parents. Additional family engagement initiatives include a Thanksgiving family dinner, as well as a full calendar and timeline of events designed to engage families throughout the year. Through the activities, Excel Academy South seeks to increase parent engagement in the program to at least 70% and weekly communication to 85%, thus implemented a Parental Advisory Board. The staff advisory call log was also presented to review team members.

Individual graduation plans (Yes). Excel Academy South presented documentation of individual graduation plans to review team members. When students enter the program, postsecondary questionnaires are given to them and program staff supports students with exploring their career interests. Program staff identify speakers, workshop topics, and transition activities for college and career by using the results of these student questionnaires. Staff members meet with seniors to complete college applications. Students meet with counselors, and have 'Cocoa with the counselor'. Students schedule time with the counselor to help with writing resumes, cover letters, and FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The program also continues to support alumni by assisting them with various post-graduation tasks, continuing to share information about college and career/job opportunities, and providing resources that will support them in postsecondary endeavors.

Family and Community Relationships

Rating: PROFICIENT [5 of 5 components met]

Parents surveys (Yes). Parent surveys are administered several times a year and were well documented and presented to the review team. Excel Academy South uses the results of parent surveys to determine which parents may be interested in joining the parent advisory board. **Parent/community Outreach** (Yes). Program staff members consistently make calls to parents regarding challenges as well as positive behaviors. Additionally, each time a parent visits the Excel Academy South, staff members invite them to become involved in the program and ask for their input and honest feedback on a questionnaire. Program staff also send notification letters for report card periods, warnings for danger of failing, attendance letters, letters to families of diverse learners regarding special education students, senior check-ins, important dates, and events on campus to parents. Additionally, program staff members also send thank you emails to parents who support campus events. All communication is documented in Google docs. **Communication logs** (Yes). All communication with families was well documented and organized in materials presented to the review team. Communication logs consisted of outreach about meet and greet night, back to school night, as well as the "Nes" system, a program-based Google docs system, where all communications regarding students are entered. **Strategy to improve family engagement** (Yes). Program staff indicated that their strategy to improve family engagement includes the orientation process, as well as maintaining an open door policy for parents. Staff members and program leadership make it clear that parents may visit the program at anytime. The program team is also committed to maintaining a transparent relationship between parents, students, and the program. Students must accompany parents on visits to campus. Additionally, when parents pick up students, staff members ask them to fill out a parent survey. The Thanksgiving dinner hosted by the program is also part of the strategy to improve family engagement, as well. This is "Turkey Bowl Feast" is a Thanksgiving dinner for families. The staff provides and cooks the food and parents serve the dinner. Additional family engagement activities include a haunted house, which parents attended and made apple cider from fresh apples. Program staff and leadership review their parent involvement plan every year, and they are constantly seeking ways to increase parent involvement. **Partnership with employers and postsecondary institutions** (Yes). Within the program, partnerships with employers and postsecondary institutions are personalized according to student interests. Each student completes a postsecondary questionnaire, which includes questions about their postsecondary plans and interests. Each senior also completes a capstone course in which they focus on career readiness. Program staff invite individuals, organizations, and institutions relevant to students' postsecondary interests to meet with them. Experts in fields of interests to students will meet with seniors one-on-one. The program has forged various partnerships with 4-year colleges and universities, 2-year colleges, trade and certification programs, U.S. Military branches, as well as, supportive agencies, charities, and community organizations. All

communication with postsecondary institutions and employers was well documented and included the name of the organization, number of students connected to that organization, and a summary of activities.

School Safety

Rating: PROFICIENT [6 of 6 components met]

Average Daily Attendance (Yes). On record, the average daily attendance (ADA) is listed as 74% for the current school year. For 2017-2018, the program's ADA goal is 85%. There are 400 students enrolled in the program. A print out of the ADA for the day of the visit showed 67.10%. Even though 400 students are listed as their enrollment capacity, the documents provided indicated 389 students were rosted. On the day of the visit, 261 were present and 128 were absent. **Number of students present in each classroom** (Yes). In the Geometry class 12 students were present: the teacher engaged the students and the students were engaged in the assignment that was given; Physics class- 20 students were present; Culinary -11 students were present: the teacher was engaged with students and students were excited about their lesson on broccoli and cheddar soup; English- 19 students were present: students were somewhat engaged in their work, however, the teacher seemed frazzled with the amount of students in class and the goal of getting students to complete the assignment before transition. Additionally, students were witnessed cursing and engaged with each other on personal topics when the review team walked in, rather than focused on the assignment. **Attendance policy & truancy plan implementation** (Yes). According to the program attendance policy, students are expected to attend the program and class daily. If students are absent, program staff respond according to the truancy plan, which includes strategies to assist students with obstacle prohibiting them from attending the program regularly. As part of the attendance policy and truancy plan implementation, program staff members also participate in home visits to assist students and families in understanding the mission and vision of the program, as well as the importance of attending the program regularly. Students with three (3) unexcused absences receive a progress report that is also sent home to parents. Program staff members follow up the progress report with a phone call. Students with six (6) absences receive a letter in the mail, and parents will receive a request for a parent conference. Students with nine (9) absences receive a letter and a parent conference is scheduled. The parents of students who are absent 12 or more times are asked to meet with an attendance review committee to appeal credit denial. Also, the truancy team, participates in home visits to check on students who have been absent for an extended period of time. The teachers track and share data with each other and with students who miss the program frequently. The program has implemented the truancy referral form and the truancy team follows up with students referred through this process. Excel Academy South has grown in its ability to implement a thorough truancy plan. For the students who are present, the program incentivizes them with field trips and student government incentives designed to keep them involved in the program. During the orientation process students and families are made aware of the attendance policy. If a student misses 10 days, he or she will be removed from the program, however, program staff apply this policy on a case-by-case basis. Typically, program staff work with parents and families to determine their circumstances and try to identify solutions to root causes impacting attendance. Once a month, each parent receives a letter in mail updating them on their child's attendance. **Orderly daily routines and transitions** (Yes). Upon entry into the building, students were checked by program staff to ensure no weapons were brought into the program. These staff members checked students' belongings, as well as their pockets. At the beginning of each school day, students are required to hand in their cell phones. Each morning, program staff greet students and ensure that they are wearing their uniforms and are dressed according to the program dress code. Review team members observed that students entered the building in an orderly and appropriate fashion. Transitions between classes flowed fairly smoothly. During transition, students attending classes in the portables outside, lined up next to their classrooms awaiting the start of the next class. Program staff members were present while students in the classes outside transitioned.

For transitions between indoor classes, teachers were present in the hallways to redirect students to their classes and ensure transitions were conducted smoothly. **Use of Scholarchip with fidelity** (Yes). There are district wide challenges with accessing Scholarchip, however, the program has taken steps to ensure that all attendance data are well documented in their system. Program staff stated that they have not had a Scholarchip machine for six months. Excel Academy South also mentioned that they have emailed SDP technical support and requested that they assist with the issue. Members of the program leadership team review their own enrollment data process and cross-references this data with sign-in sheets completed at the front door when students arrive in the morning. The names of students in attendance each day are also entered in the Student Information System (SIS) manually. Program staff members then triple check the system to make sure all students are marked present. Teachers also cross check their attendance with the morning program check-in team, to make sure that all attendance data for the day are aligned. During morning check-in, a staff member was seen writing each student's name down manually on a legal pad to take attendance. Due to district-wide malfunctions, a Scholarchip report was not available. Program staff stated that when they printed the Scholarchip report the data indicated that zero students are present. **Program-wide positive behavior plan** (Yes). Within the program, there are parental agreements that hold students accountable for their actions. These agreements are also used for students who are struggling academically. To incentivize academic achievement, the program offers trips to honor roll students. These trips include events such as: visits to the zoo, as well as enjoying a meal at a local restaurant. Students may also earn a dress down day for positive social or academic behavior. Additionally, the program runs an advisory program. Each staff member is responsible for twelve advisees. Advisors meet with advisees regularly to assist them with positive behavior interventions, as well as other issues that arise inside or outside of the program. Excel Academy South also has a positive behavior support system through which student behavior is rated. The rating system consists of three ratings 1) concern, 2) neutral, and 3) positive. The system also aligns to a three-tier system through which students can earn three designations: 1) pledge, 2) eagle, and 3) executive. Students earn the highest rank in this system by consistently demonstrating positive behavior and a commitment to academic achievement. Students strive to achieve the highest level in this rating system. Also, members of student government facilitate the rating system. Students who have severe attendance issues are rated as a concern, however, the vast majority of students are rated as neutral or positive. Students who are not members of student government also have opportunities to earn incentives such a college trips, as well as participation in other activities, to ensure that all students are included in the incentive system and are inspired to follow the norms of the program.

Positive Environment

Rating: PROFICIENT [4 of 4 components met]

Engagement of students and families in building positive environment (Yes). Excel Academy South discussed a clear plan and presented evidence documenting their strategic efforts to engage students and families in building a positive environment. Strategic efforts included a comprehensive orientation process, an advisory case management process, a fully functioning truancy team, an active Parental Advisory Board, ongoing student and family support initiatives, and opportunities for involvement such as a disaster relief drive for Puerto Rico, an AIDS Walk, and a turkey drive. Program staff provided evidence and engaged in an extensive discussion about how data are being utilized to guide decisions on how to improve student and family engagement. **Respectful interactions between staff, students and families** (Yes). Review team members observed respectful interactions between staff and students. **Staff has a good rapport with students** (Yes). Excel Academy South clearly discussed and provided evidence of strategic efforts to build rapport with families and students as evident, but not limited to,: Newsletters highlighting upcoming events, activities, food and clothing drives etc. Monthly college and university initiatives/open house events on and off-site, professional guest speakers based on student request/interest and staff insight. **Team building activities for staff and students** (Yes). Every month

Excel Academy South engages in team building activities. Past team building activities have included a pastry baking contest, trivia competitions, and going to Escape the Room together.

High Quality Instruction

Rating: PROFICIENT [7 of 7 components met]

Students actively engaged in class (Yes). Within the program, student engagement appeared to be strong overall, however, in most classes there appeared to be a small handful of students who seemed disengaged, and a couple teachers appeared to need improvement in this area in general. Instruction in the senior capstone and biology classes appeared to be particularly rigorous. This rigor seemed to increase student engagement. Students were also especially engaged in the culinary course. In the culinary class, students were engaged in various activities throughout the room; each student appeared to be on task and the movement around the room was purposeful and orderly. In another course, however, the teacher appeared unable to gain control of the class. While observing this course, a review team member concluded that some students did not have assignments and others appeared to be unaware of the instructions for the assignment; moreover, the teacher appeared to be primarily focused on redirecting students rather than attending to the flow of the lesson and checking for understanding.

Early warning system for academic interventions (Yes). There are two focus areas within the program's early warning system for academic interventions: 1) underclassmen interventions and 2) interventions for seniors. Program staff take a proactive approach to both focus areas. Program leadership consistently performs walkthroughs throughout the program, as well as in each classroom. From these walkthroughs, program leadership always has a general sense of how students are performing academically and which teachers are doing to promote academic achievements, as well as the challenge areas. The implementation of the Advisory Program is another proactive strategy that program staff employ to ensure that students remain on track. Through Advisory, each staff member is assigned to a small group (12-16) of students with whom they develop a mentor-like relationship. Advisors meet with their advisees daily and program staff reported that students look forward to spending time with their advisors every morning. Due to the close relationships that advisors create with students, students often reflect on their underlying challenges and display vulnerability with their advisors. For instance, one promising student began to display a pattern of challenging behavior as he approached graduation. When his advisor approached him, he felt comfortable admitting, "I'm scared to graduate." With the support of the advisor, this student is now back on track. The advisory program increases students' buy-in to the mission of the program, provides advisors the opportunity to constantly and easily monitor student grades and adjust schedules when needed. Overall, the advisory program serves as a proactive approach to intervention before a more serious intervention is required. Program staff reported that "At-risk" meetings (described below) have declined as a result of the advisory program. In addition to all staff serving as student advisors, teachers are also expected to have a sense of which students are struggling and enact appropriate classroom level interventions. When teachers notice that an underclassman is experiencing ongoing academic challenges, they submit a pink slip to the administrative staff or academic coordinator. On this pink slip, teachers indicate why the student is struggling, what interventions the teacher has attempted, as well as suggestions for next steps to support the student. When the program's administrative staff receive a pink slip from teachers, they are aware that this is an indication that teachers need them to step into the process to provide additional support. At this point, administrative staff schedule an "At-risk" meeting with the student and appropriate staff members. During the meeting, the student and staff member explore the causes for the academic challenges, identify next steps for support and intervention and determine additional supports that will help to resolve the challenges. At this meeting, the student and staff determine a timeline and set a date for a follow up meeting. Program staff engage parents in this process, as well. Through this process, program staff usually find that academic struggles are the result of poor attendance patterns. At this point, the program involves a truancy officer in the process. For seniors, program staff members engage in a more intensive early

warning and intervention process to ensure that they graduate. On an ongoing basis, the entire staff reviews a list of seniors to identify their status. Through a rating system, in each course seniors are determined to be 1) passing, 2) struggling or 3) extremely at risk of not passing the course. When seniors are at risk of not passing a class, program staff utilize the process described above. Additionally, program leadership connect with each teacher to discuss which interventions they have attempted. If the student is a special education student, administrative staff meets with the student and the special education coordinator. During this meeting, the special education coordinator confirms that the interventions in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) are currently being enacted. Once parents are involved in this process, the program staff can make appropriate amendments to the IEP. Students sign off on these amended plans, as well. As a result of these processes, students typically get back on track academically. Program staff reported that the one-on-one meetings involved in this process often provide students the opportunity to self-correct, and the intervention meetings usually inspire students to get their “heads back in game”. **Students enrolled in the courses they need to meet graduation requirements** (Yes). Program staff provided sample rosters and credit profiles through which the review team determined that there is a process in place to ensure that students are enrolled in the courses they need to meet graduation requirements. **Program has identified students eligible for Keystone Exams** (Yes). Program staff provided a list of student eligible to take the Keystone Exam in each required subject areas. **Strategies used to prepare students for Keystone Exams** (Yes). This year, Excel Academy South is piloting a Testing Improvement Plan. This pilot is comprised of, “Countdown to Keystone”, sixteen days during which program staff expose students to test taking strategies and vocabulary lessons in all content area courses. Additional strategies within this pilot include Word of the Day (WOD) activities, as well as test-related explorations in advisory. Each student receives a “Countdown to Keystone” packet, and all content teachers utilize this packet to guide students in various test preparation learning activities. Additionally, in daily instruction teachers design Warm Ups, Do Nows, and Questions that expose students to skills and knowledge that will be required to demonstrate on Keystone Exams. Currently, the program’s primary test preparation strategy is Guided Group Interaction (GGI) support: 10-20 minutes daily during which teachers address testing strategies, as well as test anxiety and additional related concerns. **Postsecondary bridging plan** (Yes). Excel Academy South prepares students for postsecondary bridging, by rosters all seniors for the Senior Capstone class. **Postsecondary exploration and preparation program** (Yes). When students enter the program, they complete a postsecondary questionnaire. Program staff use the results of each student’s questionnaire to personalize the program’s postsecondary bridging plan, as well as their postsecondary exploration and preparation program. Program staff meet with seniors one-on-one regularly to discuss postsecondary planning. Seniors also have the opportunity to enroll in the senior capstone course (as noted above under postsecondary bridging) through which they complete rigorous activities that prepare them for postsecondary success. Seniors who are not enrolled in the senior capstone course receive this type of this support by meeting with their advisors everyday. Each senior completes a project through which they are required to create a resume and cover letter, fill out three postsecondary applications (including trade school, college: 2-year or 4-year institutions). Seniors receive a timeline for their senior project, which includes specific deadlines. These activities usually take seniors an entire semester to complete. All students are also required to complete the FAFSA. Additionally, colleges and trade schools that reflect student interests visit the program every month, and professionals from fields of interest to students serve as guest speaks. Program staff provided a list of all partnerships with postsecondary institutions, as well as a syllabus for the senior capstone classes. There are currently 212 seniors. Program staff and teachers work diligently to create a college-going culture throughout the program. Excel Academy South constantly expose students to college options in formal and informal ways. Once per month, teachers participate in competitions and activities that highlight their own alma maters. This is one of many subtle strategies that program staff employ to inspire students to enroll in college. Additional activities in this domain include a Back-to-school night attended by 10-12 postsecondary institutions. The program also hosted a trip to the Community College of Philadelphia (CCP). On this trip, all seniors completed the entrance exam. The visit to CCP was one of many postsecondary trips that the program hosts annually. Once

per week, students also have the opportunity to have “Cocoa with the Counselor” to discuss their postsecondary plans and complete tasks pertaining to their plans. In December, students had the opportunity to attend these meetings everyday. There are no opportunities for students to opt out of these activities. The program also hosts the SAT on campus; all seniors took the SAT during this administration. Additionally, each student has access to two test waivers if they need to take the test at an alternate location. All activities are aligned to the postsecondary interests students expressed in the questionnaires, which were completed upon enrollment in the program. Additional partnerships include the Marines, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia internship program, and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR).

Talent Development

Rating: PROFICIENT [7 of 7 components met]

Common planning time for teachers (Yes). The program presented their common planning time schedule, sample agendas, resources, and activities. Common planning time occurs every Wednesday. During the first Wednesday of every month, common planning time is broken down by departments (i.e. academic, operations staff). For all other Wednesdays in the month, common planning time is teacher-led. The program has a Rounds System Schedule for teachers who would like to observe other teachers; additionally, teachers are paired with other teachers to create student learning questions. Program leadership noted that common planning time topics are based on recurring themes. According to program leadership, teachers enjoy common planning time because it does not involve program leadership staff. Common planning time includes professional development (PD) topics such as: Establishing a Positive Classroom Culture, Common Instructional Framework, and Revisit of Classroom Strategies/How to Use Participation Strategies. Each professional development agenda had a professional development goal, an activity to include collaborative group work, a warm-up, and a closure/exit ticket. **Differentiated staff supports** (Yes). The program presented their specific efforts to provide differentiated supports for staff through evidences of goal-setting samples, a lesson plan feedback document, and other walkthrough documents. Goal-setting, which is conducted at the beginning of the year, drives how professional development supports will be provided in a way that accounts for staff strengths and weaknesses. Program leadership articulated that it is more important for teachers to identify what weaknesses they may have. Every teacher is observed every week in some capacity and results from those observations are updated via Google Docs. Teachers are provided differentiated instruction examples for lesson plans for the following areas: direct instruction, assessments, collaborative group work, literacy groups, questioning, scaffolding, writing to learn, and classroom talk. Teachers receive lesson plan feedback, from program leadership, on a document for the following criterion objectives: lesson opening/warm-ups, assessments, detail of student input, detail of teacher input, lesson rigor, and lesson closure/exit tickets. Each objective is rated as exceeded expectations, meets requirements, or needs improvement. Program leadership also utilizes a Classroom Walkthrough Checklist, which has a rigorous instruction focus for student engagement, whole class, collaborative group work, individual, and instructional materials/ technology. **Staff turnover** (Yes). Program leadership reported having staff members with a tenure span of 7-15 years. Seventy percent (70%) of teachers and about 95-99% of the operational staff returned from last year. Staff turnover is attributed to teachers being new to alternative education, new to teaching in general, or moving on to companies that pay more. In many cases when operational staff leave the program they are normally promoted within the organization. Exit interviews are conducted and most staff reported feeling a high level of support overall. **Professional development calendar** (Yes). Program staff represented their professional development calendar for the 2017-2018 academic year. As noted under the common planning time component, documentation of past PD sessions/agendas include a PD goal, warm-up, and closure/exit ticket. Document samples and sign-in sheets were also presented. **Staff selection process** (Yes). The program presented their staff selection process which involves three steps: phone interview, formal interview, and an invitation to conduct a mock lesson in front of students (if the candidate

passes the first two steps). The program presented their Instructor/Teacher interview rubric and the requirements for the mock lesson interview, which outlines the components that should be included in the lesson plan, expectations, and topics of what the program leadership expects to see, according to the candidate's certification and content area. **New staff induction** (Yes). Excel Academy South discussed their new staff induction orientation/process. A week prior to other staff returning, new staff return to receive detailed information and resources about the program and are partnered with the academic and operations team. Teachers are paired with three model instructors and receive support throughout the entire academic year to ensure they feel comfortable and supported. **Principal conducts regular observations and provide constructive feedback** (Yes). Teachers who have been with the program for over three years receive two (2) formal evaluations and those who have been at the program for less than three years receive four (4) formal evaluations. The evaluation rubric contains four Domains (components included): (1) Planning and Preparation, (2) The Classroom Environment, (3) Instruction, and (4) Professional Responsibilities. Each domain is rated according to the following four, 0-3-point scale: Unsatisfactory, Needs Improvement, Effective, and Highly Effective. The principal provides feedback for both informal and formal observations to teachers within 24-48 hours. Additionally, operations staff also observe classrooms to focus on the environment and use a "non-negotiables for the classroom form", which outlines what key elements should be posted in the classroom at all times and best practices. Moreover, program staff presented the following documents/forms, which are implemented to document their specific efforts to conduct regular observations and provide valuable/constructive feedback: walkthrough schedule, walkthrough follow-up (includes the observations, instructional strategies observed and the feedback), walkthrough examples, formal evaluation form, and formal evaluation samples.

Data

Rating: PROFICIENT [4 of 4 components met]

Strategy to track student academic progress and provide interventions (Yes). All students' grades and skill levels are monitored in the program's "In-Progress Grade Report," which is a spreadsheet that is used to track all students' grades, throughout all classes, in each quarter. If a student is struggling in any class, program administrators first review whether the student has been given all of the proper resources to succeed. After that review process, teachers are asked to create a personalized "Modification Log" that is used to monitor areas in which students are deficient (ex. attendance, writing assignments, exams). Teachers are required to create goals for each student to get back on track and are asked to submit evidence on a monthly basis showing whether the student has met their goals or whether the student is still working toward the goals. Teachers are also required to make at least one call home per month to notify parents of their student's progress. In the meantime, program administrators set up one-on-one meetings with students on specific dates to review the progress they are making and if the student is not improving, the program bring parents in to help get the student back on track. Excel Academy South noted that students typically take ownership after the very first intervention and that students' grades tend to improve within one week of the intervention. **System to collect and analyze data** (Yes). To monitor student-level performance, program staff use the Student Information System (SIS) Passing/Failure Reports and the In-Progress Grade Report spreadsheet, which is an "in-house" tool developed and updated every Monday by the Principal. Teachers are asked to input at least one new grade per student on a weekly basis so that program administrators have up-to-date data to monitor student progress. For program-level data analysis, program staff rely on School District-provided analytical tools, such as the SDP Dashboard Report and the Alternative Education Progress Report (AEPR) to monitor program-level performance. Program leadership reviews these reports to identify areas of strength/weaknesses "as compared to contractually obligated metrics and other School District Schools." The results are included in their Program

Improvement Plan and are shared with all program administrators and teachers. **Program improvement plans and related data reports** (Yes). Program leadership engages in comprehensive self-assessment through their "Campus Improvement Plan." The program's goals are related to "Academics, Special Education Services, Student Services, and Operations." In the strategic plan, program leadership track a three-year historical trend of the following performance metrics: attendance, literacy and numeracy growth, retention, credit accumulation, graduation rate, and postsecondary success. In addition to these performance metrics, Excel Academy South also monitors the program climate and environment by tracking student participation rate in student government, parent involvement, and self-evaluation of "Operational Quality Management" implementations. Administrators have created a "micro-level" strategic plan for each of these metrics in order to help teachers and administrators with driving growth toward their targets. **Formative and summative assessments** (Yes). For formative assessments, program teachers use frequent formative assessments as tools to fine tune instruction and gauge students' progress throughout each term. Teachers rely on differentiated instruction in order to meet the needs of students at different levels in each class and they typically encourage peer-to-peer dialogue through small group projects. For summative assessments program leadership encourages teachers to formulate their own summative assessments in the form of midterms and finals. All teachers are first required to submit drafts of summative assessments to program leadership so that the tests can be reviewed for proper rigor and structuring. Teachers then implement program leaders' feedback and administer the tests to students. In addition to teacher-created summative assessments, the program's leadership team assesses student performance in comprehensive standardized tests such as Keystones and TABE testing.