



**Mid-Year Evaluation
Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy**

Provider:

Philadelphia OIC, Inc.

Site Visit Date:

Thursday, November 9, 2017- 10:00 a.m.

Contract Term:

FY 2018 - 2022

Child Count Compliance:

88.8%

Program Capacity:

125

Percent of students attending at least 85% of school days: 50.3%

Site Visit Review Team:

Christina Grant, Assistant Superintendent,
Opportunity Network
Patricia Lesesne, Executive Director,
Opportunity Network
Luis Rosario, Project U-Turn Fellow,
Opportunity Network
Ebony McCormick, Executive Assistant,
Opportunity Network
Yolanda Allen, Director of Program Management,
Philadelphia Youth Network

Program Staff:

Dr. Kahlila Lee, Principal, Philadelphia OIC Workforce
Academy and Executive Director and Vice President of
Education, Philadelphia OIC
Mahdi Alston, Director of Operations, Philadelphia OIC
Workforce Academy
Jade Lomax, Dean of Students, Philadelphia OIC
Workforce Academy

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.

Comments/ Considerations:

Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy is an Accelerated program in its first year of operation. Philadelphia OIC, Inc. was awarded a contract to operate an Accelerated program via the Request for Proposals 520 competitive bid process for Alternative Education Programs.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Vision for Learning

Rating: PROFICIENT [4 of 5 components met]

Strategy for literacy and numeracy skill-building (Yes). Program staff discussed the instructional strategies they use to increase student skill levels in reading and mathematics. The instructional strategies are embedded within the curriculum and teacher pedagogy. The pedagogical approach includes four distinct styles of teaching, which are used to engage students with learning and to ensure that students can access the curriculum. The four distinct styles of teaching are: mastery (remember and summarize information), understanding (evoke and develop students' capacities to learn), self expression (tap into students' ability to create and imagine) and interpersonal (foster students' need to have close relationships). **Retention plan implementation** (Yes). The program works to retain students by tracking attendance and grades weekly and identifying students who may be at risk for school disengagement. The staff meets weekly to review the status of each student, and the program develops interventions for students based on attendance, grades, and the staff's knowledge of individual students. Students with poor attendance receive home visits from Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy staff. Home visits provide staff with a better understanding of each student's personal situation and the ways in which they can better support the student. **Orientation for new students** (Yes). Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy staff described their program's orientation for new students as "leading with love". New student orientation provides students with ample opportunities to understand the program culture and academic expectations. Orientation sets expectations for learning and postsecondary plans for all students who attend Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy. **Family engagement plan** (No). Program staff acknowledged the correlation between family engagement and student academic achievement. Staff noted that they have put a lot of effort into building community within the program, which includes students and staff from a variety of backgrounds. However, the program has not put as much effort into their family engagement plan. Program leaders stated that they will begin engaging with families soon. **Individual graduation plans** (Yes). The program uses the Salesforce database platform to track individual student information. After orientation, students work with a school counselor to conduct a credit review and to create course maps or plans for completing all graduation requirements. School counselors also support students with accessing postsecondary opportunities by guiding students through goal setting and career exploration activities. Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy staff noted that they are concerned about the social and emotional needs of students and are willing to meet students where they are in terms of their skills, challenges, and strengths.

Family and Community Relationships

Rating: NEEDS IMPROVEMENT [3 of 5 components met]

Parent surveys (No). Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy has not administered any parent surveys. The program is working to roll out parent surveys in the near future. **Parent/community outreach** (Yes) and **Communication logs** (Yes). The program reaches out to parents regularly regarding student absences. Program staff presented an extensive call log that documents the outreach they make to parents regarding student attendance. The review team recommends that the program communicate more with parents about student

achievement and growth. **Strategy to improve family engagement** (No). As noted in the “Vision for Learning” section of this report, Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy has not yet moved toward implementing its family engagement plan. Likewise, the program has not yet moved toward implementing its strategy to improve family engagement. The program has developed its strategy and plans to implement the strategy soon in order to improve family engagement. **Partnerships with employers and postsecondary institutions** (Yes). Philadelphia Workforce Academy partners with numerous businesses, city agencies, and postsecondary institutions to provide their students with internships, paid work experiences, social services, and college exploration. Partners include Pierce College, PECO, Pennsylvania Convention Center, Department of Human Services, Comcast, Loews Philadelphia Hotel, JNA Institute of Culinary Arts, Philadelphia Marriott, Hyatt at the Bellevue, Hampton Inn, Greater Philadelphia Hospitality Association, Santander Bank, Citizens Bank, and Wells Fargo.

School Safety

Rating: PROFICIENT [6 of 6 components met]

Average daily attendance (Yes). Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy was able to calculate average daily attendance on the day of the site visit. **Use of Scholarchip with fidelity** (Yes). Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy experienced technical difficulties with Scholarchip and was unable to print a report. However, the program’s leadership provided student sign-in sheets and data from Infinite Campus to show that attendance had been taken manually in Scholarchip. **Number of students present in each classroom** (Yes). Review team members counted approximately 45 students present during the site visit. A total of 117 students were enrolled in the program on the day of the site visit. The number of students counted aligns with the percentage of students who attend the program at least 85% of the time (50.3%). **Attendance policy and truancy plan implementation** (Yes). Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy presented and discussed its written plan for attendance and truancy. The program follows the School District’s “3-5-7 rule” for attendance and truancy, which requires parent contact via telephone and certified mail; the program also conducts home visits. The program will make referrals to truancy court for any student under the age of 17 with 10 or more unexcused absences. **Orderly daily routines and transitions** (Yes). Review team members observed students transitioning from second to third period. Students are allotted five minutes for transition between class periods. The transition observed was smooth and calm. Students moved through the hallways speaking at volumes that were appropriate for a learning environment and interacted warmly and respectfully with both staff and guests. **Program-wide positive behavior system** (Yes). Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy develops and implements a program-wide system for positive behavior supports. Gift cards in the amount of \$50.00 are awarded to two students each month who have been designated Student of the Month. These students are honored with a letter of recognition; and a picture of the student holding the gift card is prominently displayed on a bulletin board.

Positive Environment

Rating: NEEDS IMPROVEMENT [2 of 4 components met]

Engagement of students and families in building a positive environment (No). Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy leaders noted that the engagement of families in building a positive environment is an area of growth

for the program. Currently, the program has an open door policy for parents and students. Both parents and students are welcome in the building at anytime and are encouraged to talk to any staff member whenever the need arises. Consistent and frequent engagement of families in building a positive environment will require the program to develop and implement its family engagement plan. In terms of student engagement in building a positive environment, the program encourages all teachers to develop distinct relationships with students so that each student has a meaningful relationship with more than one caring adult. **Respectful interactions between staff, students, and families** (Yes) and **Staff have a good rapport with students** (Yes). Review team members noted that the program's environment was overwhelmingly warm, respectful, and positive. Interactions between teachers, staff, leaders, and students were consistent. Students welcomed review team members as they walked through the hallways: shaking hands, opening doors, and engaging review team members in small talk when appropriate. Review team members did not hear any instances of profanity or inappropriate talk among students or staff. **Team building activities for staff and students** (No). Although staff informally connect as a team (e.g., having lunch together), the program has not yet moved toward the implementation of consistent formal team building activities for staff and students. The program's leadership noted that they are actively working to develop a plan in which they combine the best of traditional practices with practices specific to the needs of their students, families, and staff in order to nurture a team environment among all members of the learning community.

High Quality Instruction

Rating: PROFICIENT [7 of 7 components met]

Students actively engaged in class (Yes). Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy has an engaging and welcoming learning environment. All students observed were highly engaged. Each classroom featured engaging, standards-aligned content. **Early warning system for academic interventions** (Yes) and **Students enrolled in the courses they need to meet graduation requirements** (Yes). The program has a clear and detailed early warning system, which begins with a comprehensive analysis of credit accumulation, student strengths, and challenges. **Program has identified students eligible for Keystone Exams** (Yes). Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy presented a comprehensive list of students who are eligible for Keystone exams by subject area. **Strategies used to prepare students for Keystone Exams** (Yes). The program is clear about the academic support students need in order to be prepared for Keystone Exams. **Postsecondary bridging plan** (Yes) and **Postsecondary exploration and preparation** (Yes). The entire design of the program is focused on postsecondary bridging. The program features a model that allows students to graduate with a career pathway and stackable credentials. The program offers a course of study and job development in four of Philadelphia's high priority occupations, including front desk operations, environmental services, culinary arts, and banking.

Talent Development

Rating: PROFICIENT [7 of 7 components met]

Common planning time for teachers (Yes). Evaluators reviewed professional development plans that highlight common planning time. **Differentiated staff supports** (Yes). The professional development plan offers opportunities for differentiated staff supports to meet the varying needs of teachers. **Staff turnover** (Yes). The

program is in its first year of operation, therefore there is no staff turnover information to evaluate, and all staff have been retained since the start of the school year. The program has clear targets for teacher retention and incentives to ensure that teachers feel valued and respected at work. **Professional development calendar** (Yes). The program presented its yearlong professional development calendar. The calendar is comprehensive and aligned to the program's larger goals regarding staff retention. **New staff induction** (Yes). Leaders discussed their new staff induction process and staff members acknowledged the positive role that induction has played in their ability to lead and support the program. **Principals conduct regular observations and provide constructive feedback** (Yes). The principal of Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy conducts informal observations at least four times each month for all teachers. The principal conducts formal observations twice per school year. Teachers receive feedback from both informal and formal observations.

Data

Rating: PROFICIENT [4 of 4 components met]

Strategy to track student academic progress and provide interventions (Yes). Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy tracks the academic progress of students and consistently provides interventions. **System to collect and analyze data** (Yes). The program uses several systems to collect and analyze data: Salesforce, Naviance, and Infinite Campus. Data from these systems is used to inform instructional and counseling practices in the program. **Program improvement plans and related data reports** (Yes). Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy develops program improvement plans and monitors progress toward those plans through data reviews and analysis. **Formative and summative assessments** (Yes). The program administers formative and summative assessments, and uses the results to inform instruction. Students have individual conferences with a staff member every four weeks to discuss their academic progress. Teachers meet weekly to discuss the entire student body and any academic or social-emotional needs of students. Philadelphia OIC Workforce Academy uses student surveys to collect important feedback on program policies, student needs, student challenges, and program climate.