

**Mid-Year Evaluation  
OIC Career and Academic Development Institute (CADI)**

**Provider:**

OIC of America

**Site Visit Date:**

Tuesday, November 21, 2017 - 10:00 am

**Contract Term:**

FY 2018 - 2022

**Child Count Compliance:**

92.86%

**Program Capacity:**

130

**Percent of students attending at least 85% of school days: 50.3%****Site Visit Review Team:**

Christina Grant, Assistant Superintendent,  
Opportunity Network  
Dr. Wanda Y. Jenkins, Director, Special Projects,  
Opportunity Network  
Rodreen Howell, Transition Liaison, Opportunity  
Network  
Leta Johnson-Garner, Director of Evaluation, SDP  
Leadership Development & Evaluation  
Jacqueline Jones, Transition Liaison, Opportunity  
Network  
Luis Rosario, Project U-Turn Fellow, Opportunity  
Network

**Program Staff:**

Michelle Beech, Career Counselor  
Benjamin Latimore, Director of Literacy  
Lester Lowery, Case Manager  
Kelly Lugo, Special Education Liaison  
Dr. Pamela Thomas, Principal

**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). OIC CADI utilizes a combination of traditional and blended learning approaches to literacy and numeracy skill-building. The program administers the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to conduct initial assessment of each student's reading and math skill levels. Once program staff receive results from each student's TABE assessment, they work closely with teachers to ensure that all students' specific math and reading skill needs are addressed. This is often achieved through differentiated instruction. Additionally, the program shifted to a one-to-one ratio for technology, ensuring that students have access to online adaptive software tools, which serve as interventions to increase student literacy and numeracy achievement levels. With the one-to-one technology model, students have access to these interventions throughout the instructional day. The program iReady is an example of one online adaptive software intervention that students have access to within the program. In using this intervention, students progress at their own pace through a personalized instructional pathway, which is designed to address each student's personal skill gaps in math and reading. The iReady program provides students, teachers, and staff members access to a plethora of data reports on student usage and progress, which enables teachers and program staff members to monitor student progress closely and provide additional supports when needed.

**Retention plan implementation** (Yes). The program employs a holistic approach to the implementation of its retention plan. The written retention plan details an eight-pronged approach to student retention: 1) Engage and Partner with Parents, 2) Cultivate Relationships (with students), 3) Pay Attention to Warning Signs, 4) Make Learning Relevant, 5) Raise the Academic Bar, 6) Success in Size (maintain small learning environment), 7) Rethink Schedules (flexibility based on student needs), and 8) Develop a Community Plan (work with community organizations to support the whole child). Additionally, in an effort to enhance the quality of the program retention plan implementation, the program hired a case manager, as well as college and career counselor.

These staff members use a robust system of accountability and support which ensures that each student remains in the program, explores career paths of interest, and pursues a postsecondary plan. Also, OIC CADI has an open door policy for parents who want to meet with program staff members to discuss their student's performance. **Orientation for new students** (Yes). The program utilizes a comprehensive orientation plan which includes administering baseline assessments to determine each potential student's level of academic readiness, a comprehensive analysis of each potential student's credit profile used to determine a potential graduation date and personalized pathway toward graduation. The orientation process also includes a tour of school which allows potential students and program staff an opportunity to determine if the program climate and culture is a good match for the student. The orientation is mandatory, as the process allows the student and program staff to ensure that potential students are prepared to meet the program expectations and requirements, as well as to ensure that the supports students will need to be successful in the program have been identified. Orientation is mandatory for parents and students. During orientation, parents participate in one-on-one meetings with administrative staff during which they have the opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions, and provide feedback. **Family engagement plan** (Yes). The program presented current communication logs, which showed active engagement with parents. In addition to live phone calls, communication between families and the program takes the form of parent/teacher conferences, as well as home mailings. OIC CADI also encourages families to engage with the program via technological means such as monitoring student progress through accessing online academic accounts on the Engrade system, as well as reading and taking the program pledge online. This year, program leaders enacted a major shift in practice by calling home for positive issues in addition

to calling home when there are areas of concern. **Individual graduation plans or personalized learning plans** (Yes). Upon entry into the program, each student receives a senior packet and tracking document, which includes a personalized learning plan, credit profile, official transcript, roster, community service tracker, College Application Tracker, and a system to monitor the completion of college application materials. As part of his/her primary job responsibilities, the program's college and career counselor consistently updates these files through a robust system designed to ensure ongoing tracking and planning. This tracking and planning process begins when students enter the program and continues through eighteen months after graduation.

### **Family and Community Relationships**

**Rating:** PROFICIENT [5 of 5 components met]

**Parents surveys** (Yes). Parents of new and returning students are required to complete a parent survey. With a focus on continuous improvement, OIC CADI staff rely on the results of parent surveys to make ongoing adjustments to the practices of the program. Recently parents requested better communication, and the program became more intentional about engaging parents, through increased interactions between parents and the program. These interactions are documented and modes of communication include phone calls, in-person parent/teacher conferences, mailing interim reports, and parent attendance at school events. **Parent and community outreach** (Yes). As part of a recent update to parent and community outreach efforts, program leaders call parents personally to congratulate honor roll students. The program also enlists colleges, universities, and technical schools to speak with students about postsecondary opportunities. Additionally, the program operates multiple mentorship programs designed to support students while they are enrolled. This mentorship support continues after graduation as well. **Communication logs** (Yes). All program communication is documented on a Google platform. Through this platform, communication logs and documentation are visible to all staff members. **Strategy to improve family engagement** (Yes). The program has an open-door policy through which parents are encouraged to "drop-in" to the school as needed and to visit classrooms when they believe that doing so would be supportive of the student's success. Recently, the program also increased the number of ways in which they communicate with families. These new means of communication ensure that parents receive timely and up-to-date information about their child's progress via emails, text messages, mailings, and phone calls. **Partnership with employers and postsecondary institutions** (Yes). In support of students' postsecondary success, the program has forged various partnerships with companies, as well as postsecondary institutions. Through a partnership with the United Parcel Service (UPS), students are employed and receive tuition assistance while attending Community College of Philadelphia (CCP). Additionally, a variety of colleges, universities, and technical schools visit and present to students. Most recently, former students who now attend Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) returned to speak with the current students about considering IUP as an option for postsecondary education. Lincoln Technical Institute also visited recently to speak with students about their educational program.

### **School Safety**

**Rating:** PROFICIENT [6 of 6 components met]

**Average daily attendance** (Yes). The program provided attendance reports on the day of the site visit and was able to calculate daily attendance. **Number of students present in each classroom** (Yes). Review team members' count of students present in classrooms aligned with the program's stated attendance on the day of the site visit. **Attendance policy and truancy plan implementation** (Yes). The program's attendance policy and

truancy plan was derived from the School District of Philadelphia's (SDP) administrative procedures for truancy and attendance. After three absences, program staff make phone calls home. Teachers reach out to the parents to ensure students wellbeing and confirm they will be present the next day. The program also reports truancy according to SDP's truancy policy. The program's daily attendance goal is to achieve over 80%. If a student is habitually absent, teachers engage the student in one-on-one conversations to determine the issues preventing him or her from attending school, as well as, discuss what can be done to change the behavior. Program staff also send home warning letters when students have multiple absences and/or consistent tardiness. The program holds students accountable for absences and tardiness by implementing attendance improvement plans. Through this process, the program was able to improve students' attitudes about attending school. For example, one student would leave school early every day to go to work. After speaking with the student and providing him/her with daily reports and an attendance contract, the student felt encouraged to attend every class to ensure that she had a positive daily report and that she was rated well on her class performance by each teacher. Additionally, each time students retrieve weekly transpasses, the program leader refers to their most recent attendance, academic, and behavior records and utilizes this brief interaction as another means to track student attendance and encourage practices that will lead to success. These processes enable students to own accountability for their performance and brings their attendance patterns to their attention in a timely manner. OIC CADI has found that these methods encourage students to arrange their lives in a way that prioritizes their high school graduation and postsecondary goals. **Orderly daily routines and transitions** (Yes). Class transitions were quiet and orderly. Similar to a college environment, within the program students are granted freedom to transition without rules or restrictions from program staff, and they do so at appropriate noise levels and without chaos. Due to the recent No Cell Phone policy, students were engaging with their peers in discussions about their classes during transitions. Some teachers stood at their classroom door to greet students, ensuring sufficient oversight and positive interactions in the classrooms, as well as in the hallway. When noise levels became slightly elevated, staff members kindly redirected students. **Use of Scholarchip with fidelity** (Yes). The program utilizes Scholarchip with fidelity. This is evident through Scholarchip records. Additionally, review team members witnessed interactions that support this assertion. For example, a security officer was seen checking bags and ensuring that students were swiping into Scholarchip. **Program-wide positive behavior system** (Yes). OIC CADI enters into academic contracts with students who do not meet academic, attendance, or behavioral expectations. The contracts include letters, phone calls home, meetings with parents and in-class accountability. Students have the opportunity to receive a weekly star in each class if they meet all expectations. Students who make exemplary progress receive gift cards and their status is announced throughout the learning community. Students who consistently follow the program's BARC system (Behavior, Attendance, Academics, Respect, Communication) receive honorable mention and tangible rewards, such as gift cards.

### **Positive Environment**

**Rating:** PROFICIENT [4 of 4 components met]

**Engagement of students and families in building positive environment** (Yes). The program builds positive relationships between family, students, and staff members through various means, including hosting school events such as back-to-school night. Additionally, the program reaches out to parents for both positive occurrences, as well as to address challenges when necessary. Also, parents are welcome to visit the school to discuss interim reports, observe classrooms, and talk with staff as needed. Through a "drop in" policy, parents are welcomed into the school anytime that is convenient for them. Additionally, the program employs a weekly student incentive program. Through positive behavior, attendance and academics, demonstrating respect, and communicating appropriately, students can earn a variety of incentives on a weekly basis. These incentives include a dress down day, snacks, pizza, a discount on prom tickets, etc. Each week, winners are announced

publicly. **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). During the visit, all program staff appeared to have positive relationships with students, as review team members observed both inside and outside of the classroom. In an effort to enhance respectful interactions between all members of the school community, the program recently implemented a No Cell Phone policy, which seems to have increased engagement between students, as well as improved connections between teachers and students. According to review team members, program staff appear to approach their work with “love and care”. Review team members reported that this approach was evident in both the choice of content, as well as the approach to teaching styles in the classrooms visited. Throughout the visit, students were fully engaged and participating in positive interactions among each other and with the teachers. **Team building activities for staff and students** (Yes). Each year, OIC CADI leadership hosts two off-site team building activities, one in the fall and the other in the spring. Each year, the fall activity occurs during new teacher induction and provides staff members the opportunity to welcome their new colleagues. Additionally, ongoing in-house team building activities take place two to three times per trimester. This year staff participated in a bowling party to welcome new staff members. The program also partnered with Leadership for Development, a summer program for students that focuses on decreasing dehumanization. As a result of this partnership, a staff member now supervises a group of 20-25 students who meet each week and continue that work within the school. Through this work, they also learn to work together.

### High Quality Instruction

**Rating:** PROFICIENT [7 of 7 components met]

**Students actively engaged in class** (Yes). In each classroom, review team members observed clear blackboard configurations which included the lesson topic and current focus. The information detailed on the blackboard configuration matched the activities in which students were engaged during the classroom observations. In one classroom, students were engaged in a conversation about dreams and assimilation as they played out in the novel *A Raisin in the Sun*. In another classroom, students were deeply engaged in a science lesson on osmosis. From review team member observations, it was clear that teachers had well developed lesson plans and deep content knowledge about their respective subjects. Additionally, the program provided copies of syllabi from various courses. Each syllabi was detailed with a wide variety of engaging high school instructional practices, as well as clear, and robust course sequences documents. **Early warning system for academic interventions** (Yes). Program staff utilize TABE pre and post tests to determine student skill levels in reading and math. After reviewing the results, teachers adjust instruction and program support according to student academic needs in these two areas. Program staff also conduct ongoing sessions with students to monitor their progress and respond to individualized academic progress plans. **Students enrolled in the courses they need to meet graduation requirements** (Yes). Rosters and credit profiles were available and review team members verified that students were enrolled in courses needed to graduate. **Program has identified students eligible for Keystone Exams** (Yes). Program staff provided a complete list of all students who are eligible for Keystone exams in each exam area. **Strategies used to prepare students for Keystone Exams** (Yes). The program primarily utilizes online test preparation materials to support student success on Keystone exams. **Postsecondary bridging plan** (Yes). OIC CADI presented their postsecondary bridging plan. **Postsecondary exploration and preparation** (Yes). The program has forged several partnerships with various organizations that support postsecondary bridging, exploration and preparation efforts. Partner organizations include Lincoln Technical Institute, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, UPS, and K.I.A. Design and Construction, Inc., as well as Mentoring Philly. Additionally, the career and college readiness counselor facilitates an extensive, personalized college and career planning and tracking system detailed in documents provided after the visit.

## Talent Development

**Rating:** PROFICIENT [7 of 7 components met]

**Common planning time for teachers** (Yes). Teachers participate in common planning time every Wednesday afternoon. Copies of agendas and sign-in sheets are in Section 13 of the Mid-Year binder provided by staff.

**Differentiated staff supports** (Yes). The school leader provides a variety of differentiated supports to teachers, including: (1) frequent observations for new teachers, (2) regular observations for tenured teachers, (3) peer observations between teachers, and (4) teacher-leader observations, which provide staff opportunities to reflect on strengths and areas of growth. Additionally, the program recently created the teacher-leader position; the teacher-leader assists with guiding teacher growth through differentiated support.

**Staff turnover** (Yes). With the exception of the Science department, staff turnover has been relatively low. During the last three years, staff turnover in the Science department has been high. During that time, there has been approximately five different science teachers. The program staff attributes turnover to: high teacher demand, salary, relocating, and additional personal reasons. Overall staff turnover within the program is fairly low. Several current staff members have been at the program for between 7-15 years. According to program staff, staff choose to stay because they are passionate about the work and interested in closing the achievement gap. Also, staff members feel rewarded by having the opportunity to witness student success.

**Professional development calendar** (Yes). While the program selects professional development topics to meet their staff member's unique needs, the program follows the SDP's professional development schedule. Agendas and sign-in sheets for professional development sessions were provided to the review team. The following professional development topics have been offered to staff: Student Information System (SIS), Teacher-Parent Communication, Case Management, Classroom Management, Retention and Withdrawal, Trauma-Informed Care, and Google Platform. An upcoming session on Emergency Preparedness and Safety is scheduled and will be facilitated by law enforcement. Most professional development sessions are in-house and created based on feedback from classroom observations.

**Staff selection process** (Yes). The programs employs a two-step selection process. The selection process used to hire staff includes: posting open positions on job boards such as Craigslist and Indeed and interviews with members of the leadership team. The last stage of the process is a mock lesson with a group of students.

**New staff induction** (Yes). OIC CADI presented its comprehensive process for new staff induction, which includes an introduction to the program's culture and an opportunity for teachers to set professional goals. As part of the process, the program's principal spends three days in new teachers' classrooms to conduct observations. New teachers are also paired with a veteran teacher, and the program follows the corporate onboarding process (i.e. clearances, benefits).

**Principal conducts regular observations and provide constructive feedback** (Yes). During the first 90 days of employment, program leadership conducts observations once per month for new teachers. Thereafter, observations for new and tenured teachers are conducted quarterly. After each observation, the principal provides constructive verbal and written feedback. Patterns which emerge during these observations often inform professional development offerings.

## Data

**Rating:** PROFICIENT [4 of 4 components met]

**Strategy to track student academic progress and provide interventions** (Yes). The program employs multiple methods to track student academic progress, including administering the TABE test three times annually to assess students' skill levels, growth, and identifying areas of support. Instructors and counselors use these

results to guide differentiated instruction with the goal of increasing two grade levels every six months. Moreover, students attend a minimum of one academic check in per week with counselors; additional meetings are conducted as needed to target academic goals. As part of the strategy to track academic progress and provide interventions, counselors and students create personalized learning plans, which the students sign to indicate their commitment to following through. One example of a goal that would be included on a personalized learning plan is 85% attendance. Students who do not reach their agreed upon goals remain involved in ongoing problem solving efforts with staff counselors, teachers, and program leadership until their goals are met. **System to collect and analyze data** (Yes). Multiple systems are put into place to track student progress. In addition to the SDP Student Information System (SIS), the program utilizes an in-house online system called, Engrade, which tracks attendance and academic progress. Teachers and parents have access to this tracking system through which they observe real-time updates regarding student progress, including missing work, recent grades, etc. The program also utilize Fuel Ed, an online course platform through which extensive tools to tracks academic performance are available to program staff, teachers, and students. These tools include online assessments. A snapshot of one of the aforementioned Fuel Ed tools was provided after the visit. Also, the program has a robust system which tracks student progress in regards to postsecondary goals and actions. As evidence of this system, the program provided a detailed spreadsheet showing the following data points for each student: college applications, college visits, scholarship applications, job applications, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), letters of recommendation, etc.. **Program improvement plans and related data reports** (Yes). Documents provided to review team members included a 2016-2018 School Improvement Plan. The plan is holistic and includes the following areas: Professional Development, Highly Qualified Staff, Parent Involvement, Transition Processes, Monitoring and Support, Fiscal Requirements, and Ongoing Program Development. The 2016-2017 evaluations showed that the program targeted challenge areas such as "Reading Across the Curriculum", as well as improved emphasis on successful instructional strategies. Review team members were interested in viewing the raw data that supports the aforementioned conclusions from the evaluations. **Formative and summative assessments** (Yes). Within the program, formative and summative assessments are primarily informed by the results of the TABE. As mentioned in a previous section, students take the TABE three times per year to assess growth and identify challenge areas in literacy and numeracy. As a formative assessment, the TABE is utilized to inform decisions that instructional staff make about instructional materials and differentiated instruction needs. According to OIC CADI leadership, the results of the TABE also function as a summative assessment, and these results are also used to evaluate how well the staff are able to support students in the following domains: 1. Target challenge areas in numeracy and literacy and 2. Show general academic growth. Additionally, the program also utilizes the Woodrow Wilson test to gauge academic growth. To ensure that the program employs a holistic approach to evaluating student progress, members of the leadership team are researching for additional assessments that will complement the TABE.