



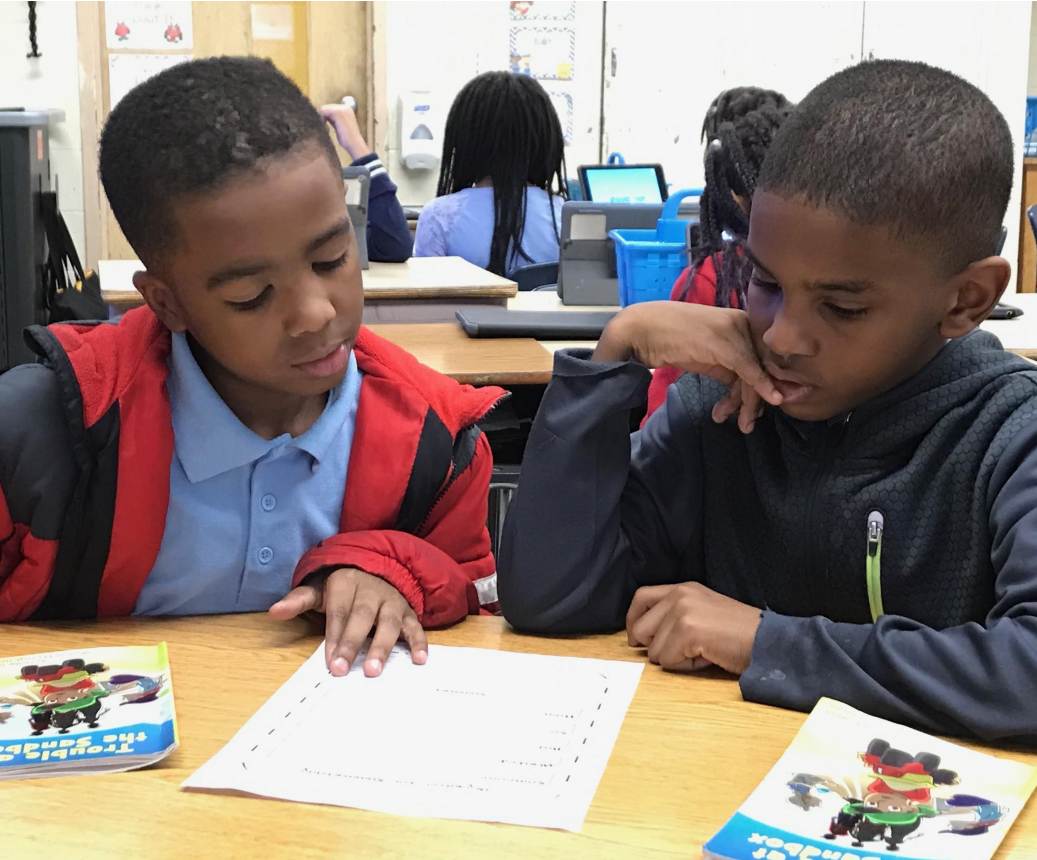
THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
PHILADELPHIA

# Feedback and Findings Meeting

## Add B. Anderson School

December 6, 2019

# Agenda

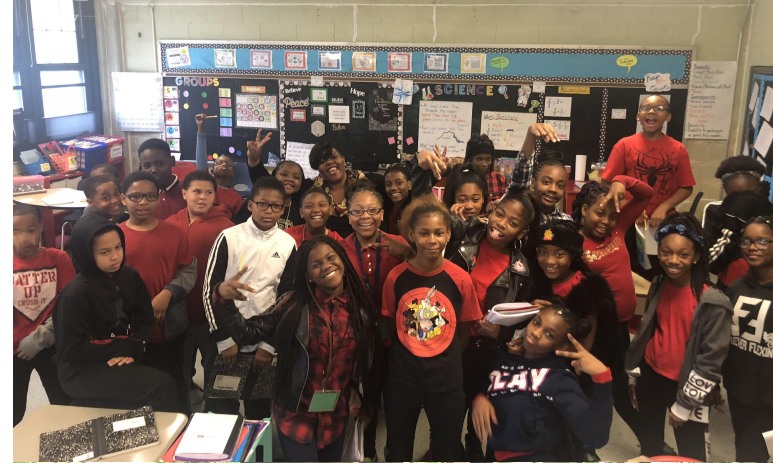


- Why We're Here
- Where We Are in the Process
- Feedback and Findings
- Next Steps
- Questions

# Vision: All children have a great public school close to home

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- Some schools need more support so that children can have the learning opportunities they deserve
- **Anderson** has been identified for additional funding to support the school in meeting its goals
- We gathered your feedback on school strengths, challenges, and ways to improve **Anderson**



# How can the school receive additional funding and support?

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## Enter into the Acceleration Network

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## Develop Academic Improvement Plan

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**Note: School closure and becoming a charter school are NOT options**

# Where are we in the process?

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**Aug-Sept**

SGS focus  
schools  
selected and  
announced

**Sept-Nov**

Data  
Gathering

**Dec-mid Jan**

**DATA  
REVIEW**

**Jan-Feb**

School  
recommendations  
(after new  
SPR release)

**Feb-Mar**

Planning &  
budgeting

✓ **Root Cause  
Analysis**

# What data did we gather?

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- Parent/Family Feedback:
  - **20** focus group participants from two focus groups
  - **65** one-on-one family interviews that occurred after school, at Family Online Intervention Night, and during report card conferences
  - Feedback was recorded, transcribed and then coded to find trends
  - **343** pages of interview transcripts

# What data did we gather?

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- School Quality Review (SQR):
  - 2 day whole school review
  - Visited every classroom for average of 15 minutes
  - Teacher and student interviews
  - Teacher survey

# How did we organize the information?

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- Instruction
- School Culture, Climate
- Family & Community
- Leadership and Systems



# Findings: Instruction

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## Practices that Support Student Learning

- Learning objectives and aligned standards-aligned objectives are posted in most classrooms, particularly in grades 3, 4, and 8.
- There are select teachers, across grades, that provide instruction and give students work that is appropriate for their grade level, have clear student expectations, and keep students engaged in the classroom.



## Practices that Limit Student Learning

- Overall, teachers are doing a lot of the thinking and talking for students as opposed to creating classroom environments that promote student discussion and allow students to engage in challenging work that is appropriate for their grade level.
- While there are structured opportunities for teachers to collaborate weekly around instructional practices, teachers do not always use these practices in the classroom.
- In many classrooms, teachers cannot always get through all the learning objectives because of timing and pacing issues, and deprioritizing instruction to address other issues

# Family Feedback: Instruction - Strengths

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Parents generally reported feeling that the teachers were dedicated, caring, and willing to collaborate with parents.

- “The teachers work with the kids. They don't dismiss them. If they see something they stop right then and address it. They don't let it linger on and then wait till the last minute and say, your child could have done better.”
- “So, that's one thing I can say about her teacher. She makes sure they understand. Because when my daughter brings her homework and when it's time to do homework, she does it. She might have one question like, hey can you help me with this? But for the most part she does it, so she understands.”
- “The biggest strengths is the staff, the strengths as far as working with the kids, they do, they get in here, and they really care about these kids. They work with these kids, the best. They care about the kids, they know their students. And that's very important to me. “

# Family Feedback: Instruction - Strengths

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ClassDojo was seen as particularly helpful in keeping parents informed about students' progress.

- “Everything through their app, you can figure out everything. They keep up with you, send you pictures, and all of that. You can get everything through that app.”
- “You can check their grades on your phone.”
- “Because the teachers, they stay collected with the ClassDojo, so I know what's going on with the homework and the activities and the projects that's going on.”

# Family Feedback: Instruction - Strengths

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Parents were especially appreciative of opportunities for children to be involved with projects and other more creative activities.

- “Okay, the most recent project I would say is a passport project, where the kids had to make their own passports and basically go through the five different like landforms. And he did it for five things and then he also did four or five more places that he would want to go, so that was pretty cool.”
- “One child did a cereal box project and it turned out really excellent.”
- “We did projects from the beginning. Kindergarten until now is projects. We love the projects. The best thing they give, they do give you a lot of projects here.”

# Family Feedback: Instruction - Challenges

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- △ A number of parents noted that the instruction was often not particularly engaging to the students.
  - “She was getting the same homework everyday. And I was like “why are you getting the same thing?” I know that everybody might not be on the same level as far as like writing and reading and stuff like that. But the curriculum could be a little more different, a little bit more challenging.”
  - “You probably need to step up on the projects.. [Be] a little more creative.”
  - “It's not that challenging.”
- △ Parents also worried about excessively large class sizes and/or a need for more adults to help teachers stay focused on teaching
  - I feel like teachers need an assistant in their class. Maybe it's too many kids to one teacher and, maybe some hall monitors or something, cause it's too much going on here.”

# Findings: School Climate, Culture

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## Practices that Support Student Learning

- Master schedule allocates time for daily instruction for social and emotional learning (SEL)
- There are orderly hallway transitions in lower grades (K-5).
- School-wide expectations (CARE) are posted in common spaces and classrooms.



## Practices that Limit Student Learning

- Outside of being posted, there is no evidence of school-wide expectations (CARE) being taught, reinforced, and/or celebrated consistently through the school.
- Adults are either not present or not effectively supervising during hallway transitions, with clear expectations for student behavior
  - There were unsupervised students during all times of the day, presenting a safety concern.
- Staff inconsistently responded and addressed student misconduct, including leaving classrooms, foul language and physical altercations.

# Findings: School Climate, Culture (contd.)

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## Practices that Support Student Learning

- School implements supports for special education students and students who are struggling with behavioral challenges.
  - Master schedule allocates time for special education teachers to push in and pull out students.
  - Special education teachers have access to specially designed and research-based resources and assessments.
  - There is a designated special education teacher to support social emotional needs of special education students.



## Practices that Limit Student Learning

- Push-in support from Special education teachers seem to lack a clear purpose/goal or evidence of prior co-planning, such as using an intervention guide or bringing in learning from common planning time.
- System and schedule for collaboration among student support members (STS, MTSS, Special Education Teachers, school psychologist and paraprofessional) is not established, preventing collaboration and assigned supports.
  - Multiple staff report there are no regular meeting and structure to discuss students in need, compliance, or decision making protocols.

# Family Feedback: School Climate, Culture - Strengths

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Parents believed the school was generally safe, supportive, and respectful.

- “They have been really caring to us. We just had a situation and they've been there from the beginning. So they're really caring people. We just experienced a real traumatic thing in our family and they have been really supportive in everything.”
- “I feel that [my children] are safe here or they wouldn't be here.”
- “I think the front office is open and nice to parents when you come in.”



Many parents also commented on the “family” feeling of the school.

- “Well what I like most about the school is the family atmosphere here. Everybody here treats people like as a family member.”
- “I think the strengths of this school is that the little small community that there is, they're willing to help out when need be.”
- “It seems like it's a school that they respect. They seem like more like a family than a school from what have I observed. I think they do have respect for each other.”



# Family Feedback: School Climate, Culture - Challenges

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▲ Family members expressed the strongest concerns about discipline. Though they saw the school as generally safe, they were worried about student behavior they saw as often disrespectful and out of control.

- “Well, the thing I noticed the most with the children is more behavior issues. So, my child can be intimidated at times by the behavior of some of the other students. So, if there were a way for either more staff to help control the fighting, the cursing, the temperaments of the kids, or I don’t know what exactly would help.”
- “I see a lot of fighting, hitting each other. I see the kids in the hallway and they should be in class.”
- “They run and fuss and fight. That’s why I say they need more than just one teacher to keep her eyes on them kids. Because once they leave the classroom, especially when they have substitute teachers, the kids be kicking the kids while they’re walking in the lunchroom. Because I caught one kicking mine as they was coming in the lunchroom with a substitute teacher.”

# Findings: Family & Community

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## Practices that Support Student Learning

- School implements various systems and structures to encourage parent involvement and participation:
  - Monthly family workshops
  - ClassDojo
  - Attendance initiatives (“Every Day Counts”)
  - Back to school night
  - Online Intervention Data and Dinner
  - Books and Bagels
  - Health Fairs
  - District Attorney's monthly sessions, Princess Dance
  - Knights Night Out

## ⚠ Practices that Limit Student Learning

- Despite structure in place, family engagement and involvement continues to be a challenge
  - Leadership and staff identified this as an ongoing issue

# Family Feedback: Family & Community - Strengths

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Family members were generally happy with the school's efforts to reach out to parents/guardians and invite them to various events or activities

- “They do a lot. They have the back to school hours. They have the chat and chew. They have the Lexia night, they have a talent show. Oh, the day they acknowledged the parents for the child's perfect attendance. Oh, and they have for the children to have a breakfast or a lunch for those that score proficient on their benchmarks.”
- “Basically, they're learning apps for math and reading. Mrs. Tolson invites the families to come out so you can get trained how to use the apps at home.”
- “They put a lot of things that they be having and stuff. Like even Saturdays, like stuff outside of school they do, they do a lot of stuff.”

# Family Feedback: Family & Community - Challenges

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- △ However, many family members expressed frustration with overall low levels of involvement
  - “More parents need to come with “I can change it.” I wish more parents came out and interacted with their children towards the education and stuff like that.”
- △ Some interviewees made a point of noting that low attendance at various events could be attributed to work schedules, as many family members have irregular work hours.
  - “We don't get to have a nine to five. Some of us work, like me, I was doing housekeeping, and I was working from 7 o'clock in the morning, so whatever time I was finished. So would miss this. And I think that's the problem with the parents' involvement. Like we want to be involved, but we have to work and that plays a big part in it. And then we have to substitute us for like sending an aunt or a cousin or a grandparent. And then it's just like, “Oh, well where's the parent?” We have to work. And we have to have these people sit in for us.”

# Findings: Leadership and Systems

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## Practices that Support Student Learning

- Main office staff and leaders interact with parents and visitors in a warm and welcoming way.
- Principal and other leaders have strong relationships with students and knowledge of specific student needs.
- An Instructional Leadership Team is established and supports structured meetings with teachers.



## Practices that Limit Student Learning

- A collective vision for community and student success is not readily seen or understood.
- Lack of supervision and management of staff, results in lack of shared ownership for culture, climate, and academics.
- Leadership team members reactively focused on individual students behaviors. It is not clear that proactive supports are discussed and put in place.

# Family Feedback: Leadership & Systems - Strengths

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Parents' comments about the school leader were overwhelmingly positive, and focused on her warmth, dedication, and approachability

- “[A strength is] how she treats all the kids the same and how she really interacts with the parents, and if something's going on she'll call you instead of you being in the dark.”
- “I think the front office is nice because the principal is nice. I think the parents are comfortable because the principal is comfortable.”
- “As far as if they come into fight or something, she's like on the phone with the parent. Or even if there's a fight outside the school, she's out there... Her and the staff out there trying to go and stop the fight.”
- “Most principals ...know maybe the students as a whole, classroom as a whole, but she actually knows individual students and their behaviors.”

# Family Feedback: Suggestions about Enrichment

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- + Many parents said the school needed more activities for students, such as sports, arts, mentoring, or tutoring.
  - “So like mentors for the boys and the girls. Some tutoring, some extracurricular activities.”
  - “Also music class, like cause some kids might be interested in music. They really don't get the opportunity. They really don't have the opportunity to show how they are in music because they really don't have a music class.”
  - “They need some sports, [to] vent all that aggression and all that stuff so they can do that....And doing art, trying to express yourself, like dance or theater. Stuff like that. That would actually help them.”

# Family Feedback: Suggestions about Facilities

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- + Many parents wanted to see the building upgraded and a separate lunchroom.
  - “It needs to be remodeled, it's a very old building. My youngest sister is 28 and she went here, and it's still the same. So it needs to be remodeled.”
  - “Probably the lunch room. Cause the lunch room is the gym, so I think that they need two different places. The lunchroom and the gym are all-in-one, and I don't really like that.”
- + Parents also thought the yard/play area should be improved and have more activities for students.
  - “It's a lot of cracks and stuff. So they could put more activities out there for the kids, instead of just running around and stuff like that. Physical activities.”
  - “Probably just like the play times like the recess and stuff like that. I think they can be a little tailored a little bit closer. Like this school does not have any playground at all.”



# Next Steps

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- Comprehensive reports will be available to all staff and families
- Root Cause Analysis to better understand challenges through January
- School recommendation after SPR release in early February