



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA

Feedback and Findings Meeting

Philip H. Sheridan School

December 9, 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

- Some schools need more support so that children can have the learning opportunities they deserve
- **Sheridan** 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 **Sheridan**



How can the school receive additional funding and support?

Enter into the Acceleration Network

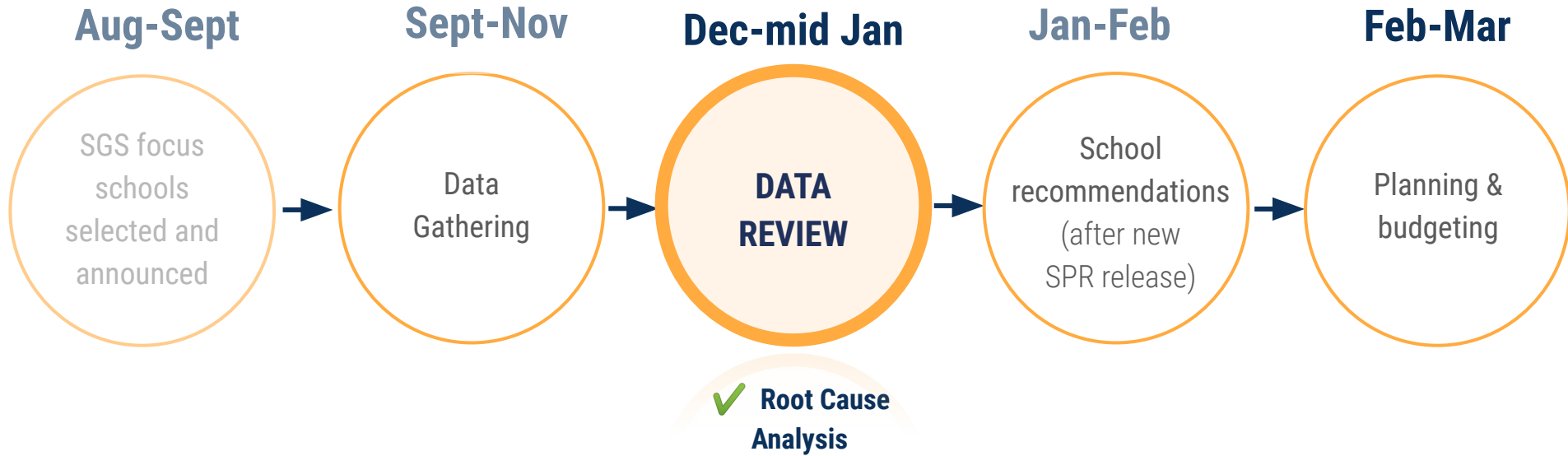


Develop Academic Improvement Plan



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

Where are we in the process?



What data did we gather?

■ Parent/Family Feedback:

- **28** focus group participants from two focus groups
- **19** one-on-one family interviews that occurred before the Literacy Day Parade and during report card conferences
- Feedback was recorded, transcribed and then coded to find trends
- **178** pages of interview transcripts

What data did we gather?

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

How is the information organized?

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

Findings: Instruction



Practices that Support Student Learning

- Clear systems and procedures exist in the majority of classrooms.
 - Students in most classrooms are on task overall and follow teachers' instructions and redirections.
 - Almost all classrooms had anchor charts, learning objectives, and standards posted to support learning.
- Instructional strategies, particularly in 4th grade classrooms, reflect collaborative planning.
 - Grade group and common planning time are used effectively to unpack learning standards.



Practices that Limit Student Learning

- Although students are ready to learn, they are not challenged academically; overall expectations for learning seems inconsistent across classrooms.
 - In multiple classrooms, teachers spoke much more than students, which decreased the amount of time that students were able to participate and be actively involved in their work.
 - Across most classrooms, the work that students are asked to complete is below their grade level and the learning standard and objective posted.
- Heavy focus on classroom behavior management resulted in lost instructional time.

Family Feedback: Instruction - Strengths



Positive Teacher-Students Relationships

- “Academically, the kids are doing fine, they [the school] alert you on everything. If your child is lagging behind they help your child get to where they need to be. So that’s a good thing.”
- “That’s what I like the most. They [staff] never give up; they want us to do well. They push you through.”
- “As long as you’re involved with this school, they will help you the whole way. They will help you out the whole way through.”



Support for Students with Specific Needs

- “My little sister, she struggled hard. I think she has dyslexia, so her teacher makes it really comfortable for her in learning.”
- “He came a long way. And he has the STS, so he’s made major progress as far as behavior, speech, motor skills, and everything. He was rough all the way around... Now he’s reading and trying to read things on his own without help. So, this school, I would say they helped him a lot.”

Family Feedback: Instruction - Strengths (contd.)



Good Communications About Expectations

- “The teacher he has, he had her last year, ... and she got him for fourth grade again. She keeps me updated on everything. The sight words and the math and the projects, everything. She’ll write me or text the class schedule, she’s a good one.”
- “Well, my concern was I realized she’s struggling in math So, I text the teacher to get information... I just prefer to be on the same page with the teacher and that way we can help the child overall.”

Family Feedback: Instruction - Challenges

Lack of Technology

- “They don’t have like a computer lab, or like a computer class, or they don’t have computers for all of the children and things of that nature. And since technology plays such a big part these days in our children’s growth and development, I mean let’s face it...”

Lack of Academic Press

- “I think she [my daughter] could be challenged more because the homework that she’s getting... she’s like, oh mom, this is baby work.”
- “But as far as the academics, as far as what they’re learning in the school, I think that can be improved.”

Family Feedback: Instruction - Challenges (contd.)

Misbehaving Students Interfere with Learning

- “I think they focus on a lot of the bad students, that takes away in the classroom, you know, learning. You got a bad apple on the bunch and that takes away from the teacher learning. She got to deal with this student. Things like that.”

Supporting English Language Learners

- “My boy is in second grade and his homework is in English and I don’t speak English and he doesn’t either because he just arrived.”
- “That’s why I tell you that even if you have books in Spanish at home, learning to read results from the habit of reading. If the child loves to read in Spanish, he will love to read in English. Have books around the house in English and in Spanish and the child will use the same technique he uses to read in Spanish to read English with your help.”

Findings: School Climate, Culture



Practices that Support Student Learning

- The schoolwide environment is warm and welcoming.
 - All staff referenced their collaborative relationships and the school's "all hands on deck" working style
 - Staff verbal interactions are positive (e.g., morning greetings)
 - There are clear written behavioral expectations in school common spaces.
- There are intentional supports to promote student and adult well-being and socio-emotional health.
 - School has implemented programs such as Wellness Wednesdays, Sheridan Shepards, student ambassadors



Practices that Limit Student Learning

- Lack of consistency of PBIS implementation school-wide.
 - Teachers and staff were not consistently using Bee tickets; some did not seem to have them at all.
 - Adults do not consistently use words and language that reflect the written expectations that are posted around the school, particularly for Tier II students.
 - Climate staff/support staff did not always use positive language when de-escalating or managing students' lunchroom behaviors

Family Feedback: School Climate, Culture - Strengths



Safety is Prioritized

- “They keep the kids safe and everything, because it’s very hard to even get in to anywhere, without a guide or something. So, they’re doing pretty well with the security...”
- “I live right around the corner and I can actually say that I feel safe walking my son to the corner and him walking down the street by himself because there’s always somebody outside the school yard waiting for the children and greeting them as they come in.”
- “I will say something about the crossing guard. That lady, she’s so good, both of them are. So I give it to them. They’re doing their job... And people respect them. They won’t be beeping their horn at them. They do their job. Yeah, they’re on point.”



Respectful and Nurturing Atmosphere

- “When I pretty much come in the school in the morning, I get greeted warmly every day.”
- “They all be... oh, I like your daughter, she’s wonderful. She’s so helpful and she a real good person and everything.”

Family Feedback: School Climate, Culture - Strengths (contd.)



Responsive to Community Concerns

- “There is a lady always there to help everyone. Maybe she has not helped some of you, but that lady is always there. My son always had problems with other kids... She helps us more than anything with our language, when she translates... The teachers have always been nice with me. The principal, I see her, and she greets me nicely.”

Family Feedback: School Climate, Culture - Challenges



Bullying and Student Misbehavior

- “Bullying is definitely an issue. My daughter, she’s covered, she has the whole hijab on, and she wears a khimar. They want to mess with her, ‘why you got that, why you got that?’ So there’s days that she don’t feel comfortable being her religion, like herself. And that frustrates me.”
- “I just feel like I was just leaving her - - and the parent can’t go up with them. I’m just dropping her off at the front. I used to pray, I pray every morning. I just felt never safe towards the beginning. I still don’t.”



Worries about Food

- “I’m pleased with everything else besides the basement looking cafeteria.”
- “I’m like what’s the whole point of me giving you lunch if they’re already making you throw it away. She said that she could never finish her lunch.”
- “My daughter is in 3rd grade and is told that they have to wait until 1 pm to eat. I don’t know if they say the same thing to yours. Their turn is at 1 pm. You know, from 8:30 in the morning until 1 pm. No one can wait this long.”

Family Feedback: School Climate, Culture - Challenges (contd.)



Kids Waiting Outside

- “Only thing I want to change is the way they open the doors and dismiss them. It’s cold. They shouldn’t have to stand in the school yard, wait until all the classes come out.”
- “The only thing I really don’t like about this school is about, when they took the kids out, like dismissal, when it’s raining. That’s the only time I don’t approve. That we had to stand there on the rain, no matter what we got, umbrella or not. But some kids do this. They all get... easy to get sick and all that. A lot of parents don’t got a car.”

Findings: Family & Community



Practices that Support Student Learning

- School implements various systems and structures to encourage parent involvement and participation:
 - ClassDojo and other teacher communication through email/texting
 - Proactive outreach from climate support staff
 - Parent art class through PAFA partnership
 - Parent dialogues through partnership with Philadelphia Safe Corridors program
 - Monthly parent meetings



Practices that Limit Student Learning

- Despite structure in place, increasing family engagement and involvement continues to be a challenge
 - Almost all staff (leadership, teachers, climate staff) explicitly stated that despite progress made, this continues to be an issue

Family Feedback: Family & Community - Strengths



Ongoing Outreach with Parents

- “I mean they include parents in lots of meetings and if anything’s wrong with the school or something happens, they [provide] information right away.”
- “I like it because every time they got an activity or something happening with my child, they call me and tell me. Like how we’ll have to get here to participate and all that stuff.”
- “(Interviewer) What helps bring parents out to events?... ‘I want to see how the school is interacting with the kids, how they do it, how they make them feel about everything... They want to find different ways to show him how to learn, about how to play, everything. I love that.’”



Humanitarian Activities to Support the Community

- “Ms. D came up to the school at the end of the school year and gave out book bags and stuff to the kids, so they have it for next year. So, staff members in here will do things beyond what they supposed to do. They try, they try, they truly try...”

Family Feedback: Family & Community - Strengths (contd.)



Increased Participation Over Past Years

- “I think it’s getting better because I come to as many [parent & community events] as I can. The past couple of years it was a couple of parents. I would say the max, five parents. But this year, ... there was a lot of parents, it was packed.”

Family Feedback: Family & Community - Challenges



Parents Lead Complicated Lives

- “People [parents] aren’t able to make it out, and unfortunately money does drive most people.”
- “I will say in that part, I’m a little guilty because I work so I cannot participate in all the activities that the school offers.”
- “I think it’s fine [parent involvement], but it still needs a lot of build work. Because a lot of parents don’t take you seriously. They don’t come to the meetings or they don’t come when they’re called.”



Outreach to Newcomers

- “I wouldn’t really know about community involved, because I’m new to the community. I live on a block where they sell at the corner. I don’t know my neighbors. Nobody said ‘hi’ or nothing. Everybody stays to themselves. Yup, I do too. I stay to myself. I stay to myself.”

Family Feedback: Family & Community - Challenges (contd.)

Cultivating Relationships with Local Advocates and Friends

- “They need a support team to do some footwork for them and go around and shop the school to these businesses and stuff like that. Because if I can get businesses to sign off for the school and help out...”
- “They’re working on bringing in neighboring businesses that are in the community, that they could be able to connect with and maybe further help them in the process.”

Findings: Leadership and Systems



Practices that Support Student Learning

- The principal and leadership team are visible and present across the school, including in classrooms, and are in constant communication with one another
- Leadership has been strategic in allocating staff resources to pressing school needs
 - There are dedicated subject based leads and the Teacher Leader focusing on instructional coaching, counselors and psychologist to address trauma based issues, a Dean to focus on climate issues, and the Assistant Principal supporting both climate and instruction



Practices that Limit Student Learning

- Staff relayed mixed perspectives on the style and frequency of communication from leadership, expressing a desire for more clear and consistent information about shared school directives and initiatives.

Family Feedback: Leadership & Systems - Strengths



Effective Communication Strategies

- “The strength is that they [leadership team] know how to get information. I needed a couple resources and they [were] able to provide me the information to get the resources. A lot of people around here can’t do that.”
- “I think the biggest strength that they got is how fast they communicate. It’s wonderful how fast they communicate.”



Responsive to Parent & Students’ Needs

- “I’ve worked close to the principal before. I have an autistic son and he’s low function... They always send something home with what they did in school, what he learned, how was his behavior, what did he eat.”
- “There have been certain situations with my son and they [leadership team] did not allow the situation to escalate, to become more difficult but they intervened at the right moment and tend to the situation. They don’t allow it to escalate but look for a solution. That’s what I have seen... That is also valuable.”

Family Feedback: Leadership & Systems - Strengths (contd.)



Professionalism

- “This is my first year here. The lady welcomed me very nicely, a lot of politeness in the office. I had problems with the vaccinations because he [my son] came now from my country and did not bring all his records ...”
- “I met the principal and everything, and I think she’s a good leader of the school. Everything about the school is a good thing.”

Family Feedback: Leadership & Systems - Challenges



Visibility around the School

- “I don’t really know her so she should be out more, introducing herself to parents.”
- “I barely see the principal... she should be the one showing her face.”
- “I see the principal. She’s very hard to reach. There was a back to school, like an opening before school started. I never even met her. I got to meet her through Google, I searched her. That’s how I saw the principal, through a picture. And the first time I saw the principal was the first day of school, but that’s because I came in and was looking for her.”

Family Feedback: Leadership & Systems - Challenges



Reviewing how Policies are Perceived by Parenting

- “I had a teacher mistreat my daughter... and I came in to speak with a counselor or somebody. And, they were like, no, you just go to fill this out - - it's a complaint form. I'm like, no ... no I want to talk to somebody. No one was listening to you. I couldn't write what I wanted to express in words and they only gave me three lines. This is school's policy - - the principal is going to go look through it and then we'll give it to your teacher and have them look through it and maybe we could do a meeting... When the counselor came down, she was like, well what is it about? Well my situation was with the teacher. Oh, if it's with the teacher, you got to write this down. So, if it's with a school, I can speak with someone. I don't know why she couldn't give me some of her time... I feel like she just left the paper on the desk.”

Next Steps

- More detailed 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

OUR CHILDREN'S POTENTIAL IS LIMITLESS

Each school has unique strengths and challenges

The goal for all children and all schools is the same:

to ensure that all children are able to learn and to succeed

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