THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

OPPORTUNITY NETWORK
INSTRUCTIONAL WALKTHROUGH 2020-2021
Program Name: El Centro de Estudiantes
Provider: Big Picture Philadelphia

INSTRUCTIONAL WALKTHROUGH OVERVIEW

Instructional Walkthroughs for all Opportunity Network contract programs focused on the instructional vision and implementation of the vision at the classroom level required to deliver high quality instruction to students. Instructional Walkthroughs assessed program performance across three domains: 1) Overall Management; 2) Instructional Delivery; and 3) Conditions for Learning. Taken together, the three domains encompass key instructional expectations that are required to ensure effective instruction that facilitates meeting the program's contract requirements with The School District of Philadelphia, as well as applicable federal, state and local laws.

Instructional Walkthroughs are one part of the School District's three-part approach to the formal annual evaluation of all contracted Opportunity Network programs. In addition to Instructional Walkthroughs, Operational Walkthroughs and Alternative Education Progress Reports (AEPR) provide qualitative and quantitative data for program performance that inform decisions related to contract renewal, termination, and program expansion. *NOTE: Due to the COVID pandemic, availability of some academic data was affected. Academic data may be available in part, whole or not at all.* This report summarizes the program's performance for each of the three domains reviewed during the Instructional Walkthrough. Each domain has been considered, in terms of key indicators for the domain area, and were rated by the walkthrough team on a four-point scale. In addition, this report provides ratings for select contract requirements indicating whether the program met those requirements or standards based on evidence reviewed during the Instructional Walkthrough.

During the 2020-21 school year, due to Covid related health restrictions meant that instruction was being conducted remotely. All Instructional Walkthroughs were conducted virtually as well, including meetings with leadership, class video conference observations, interviews with staff and students, and review of documentation. Initial feedback from the walkthrough was also given at the end of the visit to the program.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Walkthrough Date: March 12, 2021

Contract Term: FY 2018 - FY 2022

Program Type: Accelerated (Grades 9-12)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

The model of El Centro de Estudiantes is focused on incorporating project-based learning and extending the learning experiences with community internships.

PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

David Bromley, Executive Director

Lydia Gonzalez, Principal

Monshell Reyes, Director of Post-Secondary Services

Cristian Ruiz, Special Education Support

Stephen Schaeffer, Advisor

WALKTHROUGH REVIEW TEAM

DawnLynne Kacer, Executive Director, Opportunity Network

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Jennifer Szwec, Special Education Case Manager

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Daily Structure

El Centro's model is one that combines project based learning and real world learning experiences for students. The day to day schedule for students shifts between three days a week of synchronous academic classes followed by small group interventions and office hours support, and two days a week of real world learning where they are engaged in career development, individual check-ins, and workshops on a variety of topics.

Teacher Feedback

The program has adopted a standard set of lesson plan expectations that align to their project based and competency aligned approach. Teachers submit and receive feedback on their lesson plans each week. Teachers are also observed both formally and informally, with informal observations taking place at least every other week. Teachers receive feedback from these observations in writing as well as in a debrief and coaching conversation with the principal. Teacher also engage in goal setting and participate in improvement plans as necessary based on performance.

Intervention

Student progress is measured in a variety of ways, and the program offers both academic and non-academic interventions. The academic interventions provided in math and reading are done with the STAR aligned Freckle platform. There are variety of non-academic interventions that have been implemented, including creating asynchronous learning plans for students whose life circumstances prevents them from engaging in the synchronous lessons because of Covid restrictions or other challenges.

Professional Development

The instructional staff have received feedback and development on the following topics:

- Trauma Informed Practices, Implicit Bias, Supporting LGBTQ Students, Teacher Self Care
- Competency based instructional approaches
- MTSS and the Data tools- Naviance, STAR, etc. to support that process
- Real World Learning System
- Focus Goals for El Centro for 2021 School Year

Use of Data

Administration and instructional staff use the following to monitor student performance

- STAR assessment scores are used for determining intervention supports and academic growth
- Freckle data is used to track engagement with intervention supports
- The program also reports having tools to measure student engagement data, attendance, real world learning participation, post-secondary planning, credit accumulation, as well as emotional/social supports

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM AREAS OF STRENGTH

- School wide focus on relationships and student well-being is evident across classrooms and in staff/student interactions
- Students were engaged and willing to participate across classrooms, as demonstrated when they were sharing their work, asking questions, and participating in learning tasks
- There was a consistently strong opening to lessons, often using a visual- these activities were engaging to students at the start of each class
- Some staff were leveraging technology (including doc cams) so that all students could access the text and the teacher could effectively model the thinking strategies
- Program has made several accommodations for students this year- including the development of asynchronous learning plans and providing some in person learning support called "PODS"
- Program is utilizing the STAR data to tailor student assignments on an online platform called Freckle to meet individual student academic needs

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY OF ALL DOMAINS

The table below summarizes performance by category on elements that are conducive to effective instruction and are consistent with the academic performance measures in the contract during the 2020-2021 Instructional Walkthrough.

DOMAINS	PROGRAM PERFORMANCE	TOTAL POSSIBLE	PERCENTAGE
Domain I: Overall Management	15	20	
Domain II: Instructional Delivery	15	28	
Domain III: Conditions for Learning	21	28	
TOTAL	53	76	

* Percentages were not calculated due to COVID and full-time virtual teaching and learning, this structural change does not support comparison of the report for the 2020-21SY to previous or future school years.

DOMAIN 1: OVERALL MANAGEMENT

Management for a Safe and Orderly Environment	N/A	Did Not Meet Expectations (1)	Nearing Expectations (2)	Expectations Met (3)	Exceeding Expectations (4)
1. The program is welcoming and inviting.					X
2. School-wide rules and procedures operating effectively. Several classes had students in the course together, supported by the same modeling and completing the same tasks, but rostered to different courses. There was not sufficient of effective differentiation observed to account for the different course requirements.			X		
3. Classroom rules and procedures are operating effectively.				X	
4. Acknowledgement of students who are/are not following rules and procedures is evident in classroom/school-wide.				X	
5. Teachers display awareness of conditions.				X	

Summary:

The program has created and maintained strong student/staff relationships. They work to understand their students' interests and passions and then to incorporate that into their academic programming. Teachers were familiar with their students, and there was evidence of a strong awareness of student's current situations. There were rostering concerns, as students were in classes together for synchronous instruction, despite being scheduled for several different courses in the SIS. There was no meaningful differentiation observed in instruction or planning to account for the different content of multiple courses.

Opportunities for Growth:

1. Adjust rosters or schedule so that student classroom instruction and experience aligns to their course enrollment in SIS. Work to make sure that rosters and credit accurately align to the instruction taking place in classrooms. If there are situations where an instructor needs to mix students, take to care to make sure that differentiation is present (both in planning, materials, and instruction) to meet the standard and expectations of all students.

DOMAIN II: INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

Components of Effective Instruction	N/A	Did Not Meet Expectations (1)	Nearing Expectations (2)	Expectations Met (3)	Exceeding Expectations (4)
1. Teachers model the thinking and learning process. Lessons observed were frequently not aligned to the PA Core standards, and at times they did not account for the different contents and levels rostered to a course. Some courses had strong modeling, while others seemed to focus on content that was not aligned to the course topics/title.			X		
2. Teachers make the curriculum relevant for their students.				X	
3. Lessons are rigorous. Lessons were related to relevant content, but often times did not provide rigorous tasks that are aligned to grade level expectations. For example, few prompts asked students to write out their answers or to explain or justify their thinking.		X			
4. Students are working harder than their teachers. In the classes observed, most questions asked of students were lower level (recall, comprehension, etc.). In addition, students were not asked to defend or support their answers, often times- the teacher would explain why an answer was correct or how it could be improved (without giving students an opportunity to do so first.)			X		
5. Evidence of data is visible. Leadership mentioned that data was utilized to drive the assignments and work completed on the Freckle platform. However, there was no evidence of data or differentiated supports in the lessons observed today. Some teachers referenced past lesson content, but did not specifically reference past performance or particular areas of strength or concern based on student work or exit tickets.		X			
6. Teachers question all students with the same frequency.				X	
7. Teachers ask all students questions at different levels of cognitive complexity.				X	

DOMAIN II: INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

Summary:

The program has developed a variety of approaches for engaging students and teachers have designed lessons where students find the material relevant and interesting. The program has implemented a competency model for instructional planning with a more consistent planning tool- however, these competencies are not always aligned to the content of the courses the student is taking in the SIS, and do not always reflect the full scope of the content as reflected by the state standards. Lesson tasks did not match the level of rigor expected and required by the state standards, and there was little evidence of differentiation or accommodations made to allow students to access the rigorous content. With relevant content, the program also needs to make sure that students are owning the thinking and that lesson tasks push students to explain or justify their answers.

Opportunities for Growth:

1. Align the competencies of each course to the expectations of the associated state standards. There is key content and skills associated with each course that should be similarly accounted for in the competencies El Centro has adopted. Revise and further differentiate these competencies to more effectively align with the state standards.
2. Support teachers in designing more rigorous lesson tasks that are aligned to the lesson goals (and that include student writing). Consider providing teacher development around task design, and on the software and technology tools we have available to help support students writing and creating more of their products. There is a reliance on sharing out or using the chat that does not meet the level of rigor expected the standards or for college and career readiness.
3. Support teachers in developing stronger responses to checks for understanding. Consider the most frequent questioning techniques that the teachers in your program employ- and then develop strong teacher responses to student answers. Frequently, checks for understanding resulted in student responses that were short and without explanation. Providing teachers with stronger follow up or push responses, will allow them to increase the rigor of their questioning and gain stronger insights into student's comprehension and/or misunderstandings.
4. Develop stronger systems to utilize data in lesson planning and differentiation. Lesson plans should include key areas where they are providing supports for students with special needs, MTSS interventions, or limited English proficiency. There may need to be professional development on these techniques as well.
5. Utilize data to improve the structure and focus of the interventions provided. Develop other supports, such as targeted small group instruction or intervention courses that utilize academic data (STAR, teacher created assessments, etc.) as part of the MTSS programming and taking place during office hours to better serve students and the variety of needs they present.

DOMAIN III: CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING

Establishing Conditions Necessary for Learning	N/A	Did Not Meet Expectations (1)	Nearing Expectations (2)	Expectations Met (3)	Exceeding Expectations (4)
1. Teachers are aware of non-engagement.				X	
2. Teachers use a variety of engagement strategies.				X	
3. Students appear to be engaged in the lesson.				X	
4. Students are interacting appropriately with other students. During the classes observed, there were several missed opportunities for students to interact with one another and to give feedback to their peers. These types of conversations were largely taking place during the lesson opening, and were not consistently taking place through all parts of the lesson.			X		
5. Teachers show interest in their students.					X
6. Students are appropriately responsive to teacher interactions.				X	
7. There is evidence of the school-wide focus in the classrooms.				X	

Summary:

The program has worked hard to develop relationships and create a safe and respectful learning environment. Leveraging these strengths and the variety of techniques teachers are using while teaching remotely - the school has created a strong environment for learning. Providing more opportunities for students to discuss with one another or generally to interact with their peers will further support the conditions for learning.

Opportunities for Growth:

1. Support teachers in designing lesson activities and leveraging video conferencing tools so that students have more opportunities to interact and work collaboratively. Some things to consider are the small adjustment to teacher questions/prompts that push students to respond to one another's answers to the larger adjustments of using breakout rooms or shared documents to create more collaborative spaces.