THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

OPPORTUNITY NETWORK
INSTRUCTIONAL WALKTHROUGH 2020-2021
Program Name: YESPhilly
Provider: Youth Empowerment Services d/b/a YESPhilly

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, interviews with key stakeholders, and observations in the classrooms.

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: February 23, 2021

Contract Term: FY 2018 - FY 2022

Program Type:

CONTACT INFORMATION

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INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

YES Philly is an accelerated high school program that supports classroom learning with integrated technology with a blended model program using the Summit Learning platform that is supplemented with classroom instruction.

PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

Gary Paprocki, Executive Director

David Rivoire, Principal

Shanta Richardson, Team Lead Special Education, Post-Secondary, and Compliance

WALKTHROUGH REVIEW TEAM

DawnLynne Kacer, Executive Director, Opportunity Network

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Daily Structure –

This year, YES Philly's daily structure was designed to support hybrid learning, with students taking 6 academic courses that meet 2x each week (mix of live synchronous instruction and supported independent work time), with Wednesdays reserved for a focus on SEL Skills, Academic Supports and Career Development. In addition, the school has worked to support students with conflicts that need more asynchronous support by recording and posting lessons to an internal YouTube channel.

Teacher Feedback

- Teachers submit unit and daily lesson plans for feedback, these are designed utilizing the materials on the Summit platform
- Leadership observes teachers formally 2x each year, with feedback aligned to the Danielson Framework, these include written feedback and debrief conversations
- Leadership also informally observes teachers weekly depending on need and performance, this feedback is provided in writing our through feedback and coaching conversations

Intervention

- There are 1:1 Mentoring sessions for all students on Wednesdays, where they then create goals and individual support plans for students
- Office hours and support meetings are held each afternoon
- Case managers meet bi-weekly to review data and plan/adjust interventions as needed around attendance and academic outcomes
- There is a school wide incentive system that is aligned to attendance, grades, improvement/effort, completing assessments, and at teacher recommendation

Professional Development – The staff has had professional development following topics:

- Dealing with Stress and Self Care
- Utilizing technology tools for remote teaching
- Engagement strategies
- SEL and Trauma informed teaching practices
- Restorative Practices

Parent Communication – parents receive information from the program staff as needed and during regularly scheduled times for sharing progress

- System created to maintain accurate parent contact info during mentoring conversations
- Frequent updates to the website, Facebook page, and Instagram
- Flyers and partner opportunities are shared via email with families
- Dean of Students and Counselors use direct calls and texts for targeted communications

Use of Data – administration and instructional staff use the following to monitor student performance

- STAR testing data, both baseline diagnostic information as well as more in depth skill focus reports
- Daily attendance (managed by the Dean of Students)
- Staff input and counseling data
- Summit platform progress
- Naviance assignments

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM AREAS OF STRENGTH

- Teachers have created welcoming and inviting virtual spaces for student
- There was evidence of some higher level thinking questions as well as scaffolding, an area of focus for Professional Development and feedback which has improved
- Students were participating in all classes, and some students were participating a great deal- very engaged and willing to share and contribute
- Some staff were providing strong mindset coaching, prompting students to take risks, creating a culture of effort
- Staff were utilizing the Summit platform to provide students with independent and rigorous tasks
- Clear efforts were made in the design of the tasks to make them relevant and interesting for students
- STAR data was used in the design and creation of the intervention supports
- A variety of tech tools and strategies were observed being used by teacher to make their lessons more interesting

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 2020-21 Instructional Walkthrough.

DOMAINS	PROGRAM PERFORMANCE	TOTAL POSSIBLE	PERCENTAGE
Domain I: Overall Management	14	20	
Domain II: Instructional Delivery	19	28	
Domain III: Conditions for Learning	20	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.				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. Among the classrooms observed there was an inconsistent approach to expectation setting for participation and for what to do when some students are not responding. While praise was given to those who were participating, the efforts to get participation varied across classrooms and none leveraged the school wide incentive system.			X		
5. Teachers display awareness of conditions.				X	

Summary:

The program has established a warm culture and students feel connected and supported as indicated by their interviews. The program has a norm where school leadership support teachers and reach out to students who are not present. Additionally, all classes were recorded and made available for students to review and watch asynchronously. There was also evidence that teachers were aware of their students and tailored the examples they provided to avoid difficult or negative situations.

Opportunities for Growth:
1. Develop staff to create a more consistent approach to making sure all students not participating are addressed or encouraged to engage using a standardized set of strategies. This may mean adjusting the tools used to check for understanding or creating new systems to connect with students who are not responsive. The goal would be, that in class the teacher is aware of who is and is not participating and they have actions to take to re-engage students not participating.

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.				X	
2. Teachers make the curriculum relevant for their students.				X	
3. Lessons are rigorous.				X	
4. Students are working harder than their teachers. In some classrooms, there were missed opportunities to transfer ownership and the work of the tasks from the teacher to the students. Instead- often times the teacher was the person doing the writing (translating student comments/answers into more precise academic language). In other instances, the student would respond with a short answer, and then the teacher would provide a justification to their answer. All activities were teacher led/directed, and few opportunities were given for students to attempt a task on their own and then return to share with the group.			X		
5. Evidence of data is visible.				X	
6. Teachers question all students with the same frequency. In multiple classes observed, the teacher was engaging a small number of the students, but not the entire class. For example, in one room just 2 of the 8 students contributed to the conversation. Teachers often took one response from students verbally or in the chat, instead of attempting to get responses from all students.			X		
7. Teachers ask all students questions at different levels of cognitive complexity.				X	

DOMAIN II: INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

Summary:

The program is utilizing the Summit platform for their curricular materials, and teachers are using these resources to create relevant and standards aligned lessons for their students. There was a clear data driven approach to their supports for students in their MTSS programming, which utilized the STAR assessment to track student growth. Teachers are utilizing a variety of engagement strategies and tools to work with students remotely. However, teachers were not always effectively transferring the thinking load onto students- be that through the execution of their lesson activities and discussions or by not checking the understanding of all students.

Opportunities for Growth:
1. Provide teachers with professional development and support on how to shift the thinking load onto students, even while teaching remotely. This could be done through feedback on lesson activities or feedback on classroom observations where teachers do not push the thinking load onto students. Consider having a set of standard responses to questions that push students to explain, defend, or improve their answers as one way to shift the thinking load back onto students.

2. Support teachers in leveraging the school wide incentive system to encourage and monitor participation. There are lots of tools in place, ranging from the school wide incentive system to teacher grading policies, the Habits of Success from Summit, that could be used to encourage greater student participation. Help teachers to develop concrete systems so that they are aware of who they are asking questions of, and taking answers from- so that all students are expected and participating in the lesson and not just those that are most vocal.

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. Teachers were attempting to engage students and used a variety of tools and platforms. However, at times they would move forward with a response from just one student and at many points in time did not have clear indicators of student engagement from all students (responses verbally or in the chat, adding to a shared document, etc.).			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.				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:

Teachers and other staff in the program were very welcoming and tried to engage with students. They were using a variety of tech tools, in addition to the Summit platform, to make their synchronous lessons more interesting. There were only positive staff to student and student to student conversations observed, nothing of concern. However, there were a limited number of these interactions, and the low levels of participation by some students pose a concern. There was little mention of the school wide incentive systems or other tools that could be used to gauge or increase student engagement.

Opportunities for Growth:

I.   Provide teachers with development and support in utilizing techniques and or tasks that will allow them to have greater insights into student engagement. For instance, shifting from one student responding at a time to tasks that require a response from all students would allow for more insights. In addition, building into the lesson moments where the expectation is everyone participating by completing a document or sharing a response- teachers would have stronger awareness of who is and is not engaged in the lesson.