



## 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. 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.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Walkthrough Date:** February 28, 2022

**Contract Term:** FY 2018 - FY 2022

**Program Type:** Accelerated (Grades 9-12)

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Webpage:** <https://www.liguoriacademy.org/fortis-program/>

### INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

Liguori Academy Fortis offers a blended learning model where students work with online platforms supplemented by three days a week of direct instruction with a classroom teacher.

### PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

**Michael Marrone**, Chief Executive Officer and President

**Rebecca Tomlinson-White**, Principal

**Gina Craig**, Chief Academic Officer

**Patrick Durkin**, Director of Climate and Culture

### WALKTHROUGH REVIEW TEAM

**DawnLynne Kacer**, Executive Director, Opportunity Network

**Daniel Turner**, Director of Instructional Resources

**Seth Morones**, Strategy Analyst II

**Kia Woods**, Special Education Case Manager

**Joel Witter**, Professional Learning Specialist

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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Here is a brief description of different aspects of the program, these descriptions were shared by the program and observed as part of the Instructional Walkthrough.

**Daily Structure** – Students begin their day with a short advisory period and a period of community building. Their school day consists of 6 academic periods as well as a lunch period, with an option to engage in Career & Technical Education (CTE) programming during the day and after school. There are a variety of after school clubs as well as additional enrichment opportunities each afternoon. The program adjusted their entry routines this year to accommodate more social emotional supports as well as the enhanced health and safety screenings.

**Teacher Development and Feedback** – Teachers submit plans for each unit in advance using the Understanding by Design approach, and then submit weekly updates throughout the unit to identify progress. Comments from the admin team provide guidance and feedback on both documents for teachers to reflect, enhance, modify, or highlight. All documents are submitted as Google Docs and feedback is designed to encourage conversation between the teacher and admin team around the feedback. The administrative team conducts brief walkthroughs and semester formal observations as well to provide feedback through the lens of lesson implementation.

**Multi-Tiered System of Supports** – Fortis staff meet weekly to review student progress and to discuss their needs. For academic concerns, teachers discuss techniques and strategies that have worked for those students in their classes. Behavioral and social emotional concerns are referred to the Dean of Climate and Culture or the counselor. Teachers update the MTSS tracking document weekly with interventions that they have tried with their students.

At the time of the walkthrough, attendance was the number one concern program-wide. To address this concern, the program has increased outreach via morning texts and emails throughout the day. While this has had some short-term success, the program acknowledges this is not a long-term solution. The Merit Mall (ie, incentive system) has been reintroduced this year, and the hope is this action will encourage students to return to school. The program has held *Just in Time* PD/coaching sessions focused on the purpose of the Merit Mall, and the implementation procedures to ensure uniformity throughout the school.

**Professional Development** – The program has implemented *Just in Time* professional development, a PD and coaching session held weekly on Wednesdays to address areas identified in the lesson plans and walkthroughs as needing support. Topics such as Understanding by Design, Writing Across Content Areas, Behavioral Systems, The Merit Economy, and Classroom Engagement provide teachers with new ideas that fall within the parameters of the program's culture and include actionable items for teachers so they walk away ready and able to implement.

**Parent and Family Engagement** – The program has an attendance coordinator who calls, emails, and texts students who are absent or late daily. The Dean of Climate and Culture also reaches out to families on a regular basis to communicate about student progress. Posts are made on Liguori social media regarding any information. This year the program has added multiple open houses into the schedule to allow for both prospective students to get a feel for the new building and their programming as well as to give current families a chance to meet with staff to discuss their students' progress.

**Use of Data** – For the 2021-2022 school year, STAR testing is administered each quarter to assess the reading and math levels for students in the program. Teachers use the data from the testing, in combination with data gathered from Edgenuity, teacher created materials, and classroom performance, to assess student levels and achievement. The data is then used for a variety of purposes, including building supports into the coursework, creating interventions and enrichment, and building action steps to help students achieve success. Weekly MTSS meetings are held to discuss student progress, the need for supports, and the results of the actions taken to provide the supports.

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM AREAS OF STRENGTH

- High level of student engagement observed with students present among those that were in person.
- Most classrooms had many student activities that required a written (not just verbal) response.
- During the observations, there were many different engagement strategies evident and were supported by the strong embrace of educational technology (eg. Google classroom, smart boards, etc.).
- The school culture was warm and welcoming; it was evident that program staff were aware of, responsive to, and understanding of student needs.
- Regularly scheduled staff professional development and intentionality PD and staff development is a strength to build from, and time is protected and used productively.
- Instructional leader in a blended role, both teaching and supporting instructional practice/development had the strongest instruction. Additionally, her instructional practice supports were mentioned positively in interviews and were observed as strategies being implemented during the walkthrough.

## 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 2021-2022 Instructional Walkthrough.

Domains	Program performance	Total Possible	Average Rating	Category
Domain I: Overall Management	16	20	3.2	Expectations Met
Domain II: Instructional Delivery	17	28	2.4	Nearing Expectations
Domain III: Conditions for Learning	19	28	2.7	Expectations Met
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>Overall Percentage: 68%</b>	

## DOMAIN 1: OVERALL MANAGEMENT

Management for a Safe and Educationally Supportive 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.				X	
5. Teachers display awareness of conditions.				X	

## Summary:

The program was very welcoming and inviting for students, and it was clear that teachers and staff had developed strong relationships with students. There were several small ways teachers created a warm and peaceful environment by playing music quietly in the background, and in many cases beginning class with an inclusive opening. Rules and procedures were well established and led to a productive school environment. Minimal misbehaviors were observed, and teachers were consistently scanning and trying to support students whenever they noticed someone needing more help. The program noted, and it was observed, attendance is a growth area, and it is important that the learning environment is maintained even as attendance improves.

## 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. <i>Plans reflected rigorous instruction across the majority of classrooms, however, there were some classrooms observed that did not meet grade level rigor expectations. There were classrooms in which the planning included rigorous activities, however, in execution this was not consistent. The majority of questions asked of students were recall or restate, as opposed to application or comprehension. In addition, there were few opportunities for students to practice the objective in writing where the teacher could observe student responses.</i>			X		
4. Students are working harder than their teachers. <i>In the classrooms observed, teachers were frequently not providing students opportunities to gain independence or apply concepts on their own. Often time, checks for understanding were questions broadcast to the class, and then responses were restated with a stronger explanation by teachers. To improve in this area, add more rigorous questions (eg, higher depth of knowledge), and ask students to respond more in writing or explaining to a partner as opposed to just answering the teacher.</i>			X		
5. Evidence of data is visible. <i>There were few examples observed of teachers utilizing student responses or past performance to inform instructional decisions. There were no data walls observed, and limited graded student work. In teacher interviews, the most common data point was "student responses," however, this practice was not observed in most classrooms. There were almost no class-wide checks for understanding for the teacher to assess student understanding.</i>		X			
6. Teachers question all students with the same frequency.					X
7. Teachers ask all students questions at different levels of cognitive complexity. <i>In the classrooms observed, there were some bright spots, where teachers asked "why" questions and pushed student understanding. However, there was not a consistent level of questions at high-level for students. In several other classrooms the level of questioning was lower and did not reach the higher levels of cognitive complexity.</i>			X		

Summary:

The program demonstrated strength in making sure all students were being engaging with questioning, and nearly all classrooms had strong modeling of the content or skill as well as consistent attempts from teachers to make the content relevant for their students. The level of rigor observed was not consistently at grade level, and the rigorous activities included in teachers lesson plans were not always being implemented. The teacher often instead replaced higher-level questions with more recall and basic comprehension questions or would rephrase student answers to improve the response. In addition, there was a lack of student data-based decision-making observed during the walkthrough.

Opportunities for Growth:

1. (Standard 3) **Program should provide teachers more consistent feedback and support on lesson implementation and instruction.** In the program narrative shared prior to the walkthrough, it described infrequent classroom visits and formal observations each semester. Consider increasing the frequency of classroom visits by instructional leadership to support teachers in implementing their lesson plans with fidelity, and maintaining the rigor of the lessons as planned.
2. (Standard 4) **Program should provide (or collaborate with the School District) teachers with more professional development/coaching on checks for understanding/formative assessments.** Consider adopting some program-wide formative assessment strategies teachers could use to gather in-the-moment student data in a variety of lesson formats and support them in not only implementing those strategies but also using them to inform instruction in the moment. This should be incorporated into their Understanding by Design approach, and questions should align to the larger goals of the unit whenever possible.
3. (Standard 5) **Program should provide (or collaborate with the School District) teachers with professional development and coaching around whole group student engagement strategies.** Consider providing teachers with more professional development on ways to effectively include engagement strategies where all students have the opportunity to participate. For example, supporting teachers with a shift from individual questioning to a think/pair/share approach or the Teach Like a Champion strategy of "Everybody Writes."
4. (Standard 7) **Program should provide (or collaborate with the School District) teachers with more professional development and coaching on how to utilize more text to drive instruction.** To improve the rigor of the lessons, consider supporting teachers with strategies on how to center their lessons on a piece of content and grade level appropriate text, rather than relying on videos, slide decks or teacher lecture.

## 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. <i>Student interactions were generally appropriate and responsive. However, there were very few opportunities built into the lesson for students to engage with each other 1:1 in a pair share or debate, in small groups or as a class to reach consensus.</i>			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. <i>The school-wide focal areas reported by leadership were the Understand by Design (UbD) and iterative unit planning, writing throughout the curriculum and student engagement and motivation. There remained variability in the lesson plan deployment and instructional practices which suggests that UbD and unit planning feedback has not yet been implemented with fidelity. There was evidence of student motivation PD. There was not evidence consistently of writing throughout the curriculum and limited notetaking or writing was observed by students in some classes (Biology). No merits observed in any classroom observations today.</i>			X		

## Summary:

During the walkthrough, we were able to observe nearly all students engaged in lessons, and a variety of different approaches and engagement strategies being used. Students interactions were all appropriate, but they were limited. Teachers showed interest in their students as people and in conversations- but there was limited reflection of this in the lesson content. Students were willing to engage and followed teacher directions and completed activities as asked. There were few opportunities for student interaction planned or utilized in the lessons observed, and there was limited implementation of other school wide focus areas as well.

## Opportunities for Growth:

1. (Standard 4) **Program should continue to develop and coach teachers on the use of the Think-Pair-Share strategy.** The just in time PD calendar reflected that the team had covered this topic, however, it was not observed being implemented during the walkthrough. Consider providing more development and teacher coaching on how to effectively use this instructional technique and student engagement strategy.

2. (Standard 7) **Program should adopt new and different approaches to the follow up and monitoring of Professional Development in order to improve implementation fidelity.** During the walkthrough there were many different approaches and topics shared in the PD calendar and described as school wide focus areas. However, several of these were not observed being executed with fidelity during classroom observations. Consider adjusting how your leadership team supports teachers post PD with implementing these strategies- perhaps adjusting your walkthrough approach to focus on these new strategies/approaches or adopting other accountability and support measures.