

## Instructional Walkthrough Report

SY 2022-2023

## Excel Middle Years Academy

Provider: The Camelot Schools of Pennsylvania, LLC  
(a Specialized Education Services, Inc. (SESI) company)

Program Type: Continuation  
Grades 6-8

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<https://www.sesischools.com/locations/excel-middle-years-academy/>

### Instructional Walkthrough Overview

Instructional Walkthroughs for all Opportunity Network contract programs focused on the instructional design and implementation of this design with consistency and fidelity at the classroom level required to deliver high quality instruction to all 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.

Walkthrough Date: February 9, 2023

Contract Term: FY2023 – FY2027

### General Information

Program Mission: *At SESI, our mission is to provide educational services for K-12 students who require specialized educational and behavioral supports to overcome challenges that impede their success in a traditional school setting. We believe that all children deserve an education that goes beyond academics and enables them to grow into responsible, self-sufficient adults.*

Program Leadership:	Milton Alexander <i>Deputy Superintendent</i>	Scott Cruttenden <i>Regional Director</i>	Cassandra Oshinsky <i>Instructional Specialist</i>
	Sadiqa Lucas <i>Executive Director</i>	Toni Hurt <i>Principal</i>	

Walkthrough Review Team:	DawnLynne Kacer <i>Executive Director, Opportunity Network</i>	Daniel Turner <i>Director of Instructional Resources, Opportunity Network</i>	Marlon Riddick <i>Student Transition Liaison, Transition Services</i>
	Nolita Pettus <i>Case Manager, Specialized Services</i>		

## Program Overview

The following is a brief description and summary of different aspects of the Opportunity Network program. These descriptions were shared by the programs prior to the walkthrough and informed by observations as part of the formal Instructional Walkthroughs.

### Daily Structure

#### Program Snapshot

Enrollment	66 (as of April '23)
Instructional Model	Direct Instruction

#### Daily Student Schedule

Full Day	7:45 am – 2:00 pm
Early Dismissal	7:45 am – 1:00 pm

#### Course Frequency

Core Courses	Once a day (or 5 times a week)
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#### Class Duration

Core Courses	50 minutes
SEL Period	30 minutes

#### Number of Classes

Number of Courses Students Can Take	6 courses per year
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#### School Culture

There is a town hall each morning from 7:45-8:00, followed by a 30 minute SEL period.

#### Core Curriculum Resources

Math	SDP Curriculum
English	SDP Curriculum
Science	SDP Curriculum
History	SDP Curriculum

### Student Supports

- ✓ iReady Literacy
- ✓ iReady Math
- ✓ Small Group Instruction
- Intervention Period
- ✓ Co-Teaching/Push-In Support
- ✓ Community/External Partners (ex: ELECT, etc.)

#### Additional Supports:

The program also provides some students with a "Force Field" which is a comprehensive support plan for attendance, behavior, and academics.

### College & Career Readiness

- ✓ Support with HS Application Process
- ✓ Naviance Career Interest Survey
- ✓ 1-on-1 HS/Career Counseling

#### Additional/Other Certification Opportunities:

The program hosts an annual dinner for parents to come and learn more about the high school selection process.

### Culture of Academic Success

- ✓ Honor Roll
- ✓ Public Recognition
- ✓ Restorative Practices
- ✓ Student Government

#### Additional/Other Academic Success

The program hosts a monthly writing contest, with incentives and recognition for the winners.

## Summary of Program Areas of Strength

Below are short descriptions of areas where the program has shown sustained strength, as informed by the school visit, student and staff interviews, and a review of the provided artifacts.

- **Warm and Welcoming Environment**  
The culture and visible student investment speaks to the warm and welcoming environment the program has created.
- **Behavior and Academic Norms**  
Behavior and academic norms were posted and consistently referenced, and help to establish a productive school environment.
- **Rigor and Engagement Strategies**  
There was grade level appropriate rigor observed and wide variety of engagement strategies were being utilized.
- **Implementation of Routines**  
The VoMo routine was being implemented with fidelity in multiple classrooms and it was shared that students report it being helpful and teachers are buying into the support.
- **Students Effort**  
There was significant improvement in “Students are working harder than the teachers” and the cognitive load has shifted to the students.
- **Diversity of Engagement Strategies**  
There was a variety and diversity of engagement strategies being used to engage students across classrooms and content areas.

## Performance Summary- All Domains

The table below summarizes the number of standards by category that met expectations consistent with contract requirements during the 2022-2023 Instructional Walkthrough. Information regarding how standards in each domain are measured can be found in the Performance Framework for Opportunity Network contract programs.

Domains	Program Performance	Total Possible	Average Rating	Category
<a href="#">Domain I: Overall Management (Page 4)</a>	15	20	3	Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i>
<a href="#">Domain II: Instructional Delivery (Page 6)</a>	18	28	2.6	Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: ▲ Nearing Expectations)</i>
<a href="#">Domain III: Conditions for Learning (Page 8)</a>	22	28	3.1	Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i>
Total	55	76	Overall Percentage: 72%	

## Domain 1: Overall Management

Management for a Safe and Educationally Supportive Environment	Observation Notes (notes are provided for standards rated Nearing or Did Not Meet Expectations)	Performance Rating
1. Program Environment Maintains a school environment where students feel welcome and invited.		<b>Exceeding Expectations</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Exceeding Expectations)</i>
2. School-wide Rules and Procedures The program ensures school-wide rules and procedures are operating effectively.		<b>Expectations Met</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i>
3. Classroom Rules and Procedures The program ensures classroom rules and procedures are operating effectively.		<b>Expectations Met</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i>
4. Acknowledgement of Students The program's acknowledgement of students who are/are not following school-wide and classroom procedures is evident.	Students were redirected effectively as needed; however, there was little positive narration of those that were on task observed during the walkthrough. There were several missed opportunities for this type of reinforcement to support overall engagement. For example, in the math class when they began work on their graphing project, some students were on task and working to complete the project, however, others were off task and needed a reminder of the directions or reinforcement to stay on task, using positive narration here would likely have resulted in a more productive class period.	<b>Nearing Expectations</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Nearing Expectations)</i>
5. Awareness of Conditions Teachers display an awareness of conditions.		<b>Expectations Met</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i>

### Observation Summary

The program has created an environment that is welcoming and fun for students, with adults building and maintaining relationships with students, including the teachers and the support staff. Inside classrooms, students are frequently monitored and supported by a variety of adults with all of them comfortable in redirecting and refocusing students as needed. The school wide and classroom level norms and procedures are in place and support students- be that the beginning of the day town hall, or the classroom level distribution of materials. One opportunity for improvement would be to increase the amount of positive narration or acknowledgement of students that are on task and following directions in the moment.

## Opportunities for Growth

1. Standard 4: Acknowledgement of students who are/are not following rules and procedures is evident in classroom/school-wide.

The program should provide professional development and coaching on acknowledging practices such as Positive Narration which support students in remaining on task and focused in the moment.

The program has acknowledgement systems in place; however, the quick in the moment narration of students to help get and keep others on track is one that can be strengthened. This is a practice highlighted in the book *Teach Like a Champion*, but there are other similar resources available as well.

## Domain 2: Instructional Delivery

Components of Effective Instruction	Observation Notes <i>(notes are provided for standards rated Nearing or Did Not Meet Expectations)</i>	Performance Rating
1. Instructional Modeling Teachers model the thinking and learning process.	Modeling was not consistent across content areas and is likely an area where students would benefit from having more support. In the Digital Literacy class and with the VoMo routine in ELA, there was strong modeling.	Nearing Expectations <i>(SY2021-2022: Nearing Expectations)</i>
2. Curriculum Relevance Teachers make the curriculum relevant for their students.	There was not a consistent level of effectiveness in making the curriculum relevant for students. Some teachers doing an excellent job of finding ways for students to connect with the content- making these explicit and or allowing students choice. While in others the teachers struggled to do so, or there was no attempt to make the content relevant that was observed.	Nearing Expectations <i>(SY2021-2022: ▼ Expectations Met)</i>
3. Curriculum Rigor The program ensures all lessons are rigorous.		Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: ▲ Nearing Expectations)</i>
4. Student Effort Courses are developed and implemented to ensure students are working harder than their teachers.		Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i>
5. Classroom and Instructional Data Evidence of data is visible.	There was a great deal of data collection taking place (teachers scanning and looking at student responses) however, there were very few trends shared positive or areas of needed improvement. One example of this taking place was in the math lesson when the teacher utilized a strong student example to clarify the directions and help students know what to do. Much of the posted student work was several weeks old and not up to date.	Nearing Expectations <i>(SY2021-2022: Nearing Expectations)</i>
6. Teacher Questioning Teachers question all students with the same frequency.		Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: ▲ Nearing Expectations)</i>
7. Cognitive Complexity Teachers ask all students questions at different levels of cognitive complexity.		Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: ▲ Nearing Expectations)</i>

## Observation Summary

The program has made improvements and is providing students with grade-level appropriate tasks and the teachers are crafting lessons that are very active and engage all learners at multiple levels of cognitive complexity. The program can better support their students with more consistent modeling of the skills and concepts as well as making explicit connections between the content and student's lives. There were some classrooms with strong modeling and lessons where the relevance was explicit and built into the content, but this needs to be more consistent. Finally, teachers need to utilize data more often and effectively to help make instructional decisions. By using data, they can make decisions informed by their student's understanding and most efficiently help them to learn the skills and content they are focused on.

## Opportunities for Growth

1. Standard 1: Teachers model the thinking and learning process.

The program should provide professional development and coaching support for teachers on strong modeling techniques focusing on the objective skill or concept, not just the task or activity.

This support may also require more feedback in lesson plans or some explicit modeling from the principal or a coach to help support the teachers in understanding the vision for a strong model of a concept or skill.

2. Standard 2: Teachers make the curriculum relevant for their students.

The program should provide professional development and coaching for teachers on how to explicitly make the connection for students in how the content of the lesson is relevant to their lives.

This is important for driving student investment and helping them to retain the skills that are being taught. There were some teachers doing this effectively, consider utilizing their strengths in this area to highlight and share with other teachers during your Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings.

3. Standard 5: Evidence of data is visible.

The program should provide professional development and coaching support on how to make transparent adjustments in a lesson or activity based on student data.

Teachers were observed scanning and gathering data in several classrooms, however, they often did not share a trend or their response to the data with students. Consider ways to support the teachers in having a set of responses that they can make to adjust in a lesson, and to narrate that action for students so that they see the connections as well.

## Domain 3: Conditions for Learning

Establishing Conditions Necessary for Learning	Observation Notes (notes are provided for standards rated Nearing or Did Not Meet Expectations)	Performance Rating
<p>1. Non-Engagement Teachers are aware of non-engagement in their classrooms.</p>		<p><b>Expectations Met</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>2. Engagement Strategies Teachers use a variety of engagement strategies.</p>		<p><b>Exceeding Expectations</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Exceeding Expectations)</i></p>
<p>3. Student Engagement Students appear to be engaged in the lesson.</p>		<p><b>Expectations Met</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>4. Peer Interactions Students are interacting appropriately with other students.</p>		<p><b>Expectations Met</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>5. Teacher Interest Teachers demonstrate a clear interest in their students.</p>		<p><b>Exceeding Expectations</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: ▲ Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>6. Student Responsiveness Students are appropriately responsive to teacher interactions.</p>		<p><b>Expectations Met</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>7. School-Wide Focus There is clear evidence of the school-wide focus in the classrooms.</p>	<p>There was evidence of progress in many of the school-wide focus areas. This progress was not consistent in all areas- for example, the gathering and sharing of feedback on student responses were not fully executed (teachers scanned, but rarely shared out the results.) Consider narrowing the number of focus areas so that the program may more effectively develop and monitor growth on the highest leverage actions or changes.</p>	<p><b>Nearing Expectations</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Nearing Expectations)</i></p>



## Observation Summary

The program has created a very positive learning environment for students, one in which not only was there an intentional effort made to vary the activities and seek out ways to engage students but one that also has student leaders playing a significant role in driving that focused and productive environment. Teachers utilized a wide variety of strategies throughout their lessons as well as incorporating many opportunities for student-to-student communication, this was clearly a norm and those interactions were productive. One growth area would be to limit the number of focus areas so that the program can more likely find success in a small number of initiatives.

## Opportunities for Growth

1. Standard 7: There is evidence of the school-wide focus in the classroom.

The program should utilize a data-driven decision making process to identify the impactful areas of focus for the program and then align their professional development and leadership actions to make sure these areas of focus are addressed successfully.

Consider limiting the number of focus areas to just one or two per term so that they can be fully addressed and long-term change can be achieved in place of many changes that are more challenging to maintain.

## Addendum: Social-Emotional Learning

Safe Model Components	Observation Notes (notes are provided for standards rated Nearing or Did Not Meet Expectations)	Performance Rating
<p>1. Structured and Sequential SEL standards/goals are embedded into lessons; Curriculum/Lesson is connected to students' needs and/or reasons for referral. Lessons are constructed to introduce new concepts or build upon previously learned ones. Session has Opening, Sharing, Activity and Closing.</p>		<p><b>Expectations Met</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>2. Active Use active tasks and activities that allow students to practice skills and apply knowledge. Teaching strategies should include discussion with higher-order questioning, role-playing situations with takeaways, peer-teachings, gamified activities, interviews, pauses and reflections, incorporation of the arts/writing, and visuals.</p>		<p><b>Expectations Met</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>3. Focus Facilitators can specifically address how a given skill applies in daily life and break down strategies and skills into smaller, more manageable components. Students make connections between SEL and what they're learning and initiate reflection, discussion and practice. The session was more than discussion/talking.</p>	<p>Facilitator used a prompt and questioning but did not connect it to a life skill. Students shared and discuss, however, key takeaways or skills was unclear.</p>	<p><b>Nearing Expectations</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Nearing Expectations)</i></p>
<p>4. Explicit and Evaluative <i>Track/Chart students' SEL progress over time, providing insight into students' skill development and student reviews. Use tools such as exit tickets, grades, rubric/ratings to provide frequent feedback for positive behaviors and identify growth areas as it relates to SEL and assess students' skills acquisition.</i></p>	<p>The SEL Facilitator provided quick feedback during the lesson from students' responses, and used exit tickets to help students reflect at the end of the lesson. Points were given for participation during the lesson. It was not observed how all students' skill development from the SEL session was tracked and contributed to the Periodic Reviews for goal attainment.</p>	<p><b>Nearing Expectations</b> <i>(SY2021-2022: Nearing Expectations)</i></p>

### Observation Summary

The day started with an energetic townhouse and morning ritual. In the session observed, the facilitator led a session with a prompt and reflections. Student voice was very present. The session moved quickly and was not supported by a key concept, skill, or takeaway. Students were highly engaged in the circle.

## Opportunities for Growth

1. Standard 3: Focus - Facilitators can specifically address how a given skill applies in daily life and break down strategies and skills into smaller, more manageable components. Students make connections between SEL and what they're learning and initiate reflection, discussion and practice. The session was more than discussion/talking.

The program should ensure sessions are focused on an SEL concept or skill and help student make connections with what they're reflecting on, discussing, and practicing.

Facilitators can infuse SEL competencies in interactive activities and age/culturally relevant examples to assist students with SEL skills application. The program can conduct regular schoolwide adult SEL professional development (i.e. the what and why of SEL, what are the skills within the competencies, using model strategies/lessons to help develop skills, how to incorporate SEL in life and lessons) so staff can readily and effectively discuss SEL skills and strategies to provide coherent focus in SEL sessions. Additionally, teachers can infuse SEL competencies in class learning, activities, and examples (like how a character in the story exercised self/anger management) to reinforce skills and strategies.

2. Standard 4: Explicit and Evaluative - Track/Chart students' SEL progress over time, providing insight into students' skill development and student reviews. Use tools such as exit tickets, grades, rubric/ratings to provide frequent feedback for positive behaviors and identify growth areas as it relates to SEL and assess students' skills acquisition.

The program should ensure intentional connection of topic/session to SEL and check for students' understanding or application.

This could include a week-long project or poster contribution, or share out of what they learned or how they can use the main idea, concept or skill of the session. The program can use shared takeaways and concepts during morning assemblies to reinforce SEL skills. Additionally, staff can assist students with SEL skills application (like using the decision-making strategy) during redirection.