

Instructional Walkthrough Report

SY 2022-2023

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: March 2, 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:

Milt Alexander <i>Deputy Superintendent</i>	Scott Cruttenden <i>Regional Director</i>	Cassie Oshinsky <i>Instructional Specialist</i>
Jarrad Muller <i>Executive Director</i>	Misha Memon <i>Principal</i>	

Walkthrough Review Team:

DawnLynne Kacer <i>Executive Director, Opportunity Network</i>	Daniel Turner <i>Director of Instructional Resources, Opportunity Network</i>	Nefertiti White <i>Director, Special Education</i>
John Hale <i>Prevention and Intervention</i>	Carrie Haslanger <i>Professional Learning Specialist, Learning Network 13</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	373 (as of April '23)
Instructional Model	Direct Instruction

Daily Student Schedule

Full Day	7:50 am – 2:25 pm
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Course Frequency

Core Courses	5 times a week
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Class Duration

Full Days	50 minutes
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Number of Classes

Number of Courses Students Can Take	5 class maximum per semester
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School Culture

Students participate in two 10min school wide assemblies each day, at 7:50 am and again at 1:30 pm.

Core Curriculum Resources

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

Student Supports

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| ✓ Achieve 3000 Literacy | ✓ Intervention Period |
| ✓ Achieve 3000 Math | ✓ Co-Teaching/Push-In Support |
| ✓ Small Group Instruction | ✓ Community/External Partners (ex: ELECT, etc.) |

Additional Supports:

The school has a Fun Friday system where students earn tickets, and can then spin a prize wheel- tickets are earned as part of their PBIS system.

College & Career Readiness

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| ✓ Service Learning Opportunities | <u>Certifications Offered</u> |
| Internship Program | |
| ✓ 1-on-1 Counseling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSHA 10 • CPR/First Aide • Mandatory Reporter (Act 31) |

Additional/Other Certification Opportunities:

The program offers ASVAB and SAT testing supports. The program has also developed supports to help students to find full time employment opportunities as to use this as Act 158 evidence.

Culture of Academic Success

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

Additional/Other Academic Success

The program has a robust student government system where students earn "status" at different levels which come with additional privileges, this is a reinforcement for positive behaviors (cultural and academic).

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 program has created a very welcoming environment- both from the greeting that visitors receive in the main office to the noticeable happiness and joy present in classrooms.
- Grade-Level Content**
 Students were provided grade level content and expectations especially in regards to the majority of student tasks and activities, including text driving the lesson in many classrooms (in alignment with the Science of Reading initiative in the network) and experiential learning activities in Science.
- Student Engagement**
 Students were engaged in almost all classrooms, furthermore there were almost no disruptive behaviors observed evidencing students' awareness of classroom and school wide expectations and norms.
- Relationship Building**
 Teachers have established relationships with students, and positive reinforcement was often provided strategically to help push students and keep them engaged/working hard.
- Meeting Students' Needs**
 Teachers were sensitive to students' needs and how they were showing up to the learning space (comfort checks, support and accommodation with reading aloud, skipping a word while keeping students focused on the work) which positively impacted how they were engaging with the work.
- Student Voice**
 There was observed growth in the amount of student voice and collaboration opportunities taking place, which likely also supported growth in student engagement and learning.

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
Domain I: Overall Management (Page 4)	18	20	3.6	Exceeds Expectations <i>(SY2021-2022: Exceeding Expectations)</i>
Domain II: Instructional Delivery (Page 5)	17	28	2.4	Nearing Expectations <i>(SY2021-2022: ▼ Exceeding Expectations)</i>
Domain III: Conditions for Learning (Page 8)	21	28	3	Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i>
Total	56	76	Overall Percentage: 74%	

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.		Exceeding Expectations (SY2021-2022: Exceeding Expectations)
2. School-wide Rules and Procedures The program ensures school-wide rules and procedures are operating effectively.		Exceeding Expectations (SY2021-2022: Exceeding Expectations)
3. Classroom Rules and Procedures The program ensures classroom rules and procedures are operating effectively.		Exceeding Expectations (SY2021-2022: Exceeding Expectations)
4. Acknowledgement of Students The program's acknowledgement of students who are/are not following school-wide and classroom procedures is evident.		Expectations Met (SY2021-2022: ▼ Exceeding Expectations)
5. Awareness of Conditions Teachers display an awareness of conditions.		Expectations Met (SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)

Observation Summary

The program has created a very welcoming environment, one where the staff and students are working together to create a space where students seek to follow the school rules and procedures to focus on their learning. This was evident in the warm welcome that greets visitors, not only from staff but from student leaders as well. In addition, there are many different classroom spaces at Excel South- from large open classrooms to smaller uniquely shaped spaces, in all of these- support staff and teachers collaborate to be aware of who is engaged in their schoolwork and who may be off task, and provide redirection or reinforcement as needed in those different spaces. This same level of awareness is present during transitions, which were supported with adults supervising across many different spaces (hallways, stairwells, outdoor pathways, etc.). Additionally, the program has set some internal goals for how welcoming the school is to potential students, which has resulted in higher enrollment and increased investment in the program from new students. This increased investment was evidenced in a student-led presentation to the walkthrough team about how Excel Academy South students could promote the benefits of the program citywide to other potential students.

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
<p>1. Instructional Modeling Teachers model the thinking and learning process.</p>		<p>Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>2. Curriculum Relevance Teachers make the curriculum relevant for their students.</p>	<p>While students were engaged and working in all courses- the curriculum materials and topics were not always made relevant for students or connected to student experiences. For example- in the physical science class they were working to create models of molecules (focus on covalent bonds), but the materials they were using in that exploration activity were not connected to their everyday experiences. There were some classrooms, such as health, where the teacher did make the content relevant for students by explicitly connecting it to their everyday lives.</p>	<p>Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>3. Curriculum Rigor The program ensures all lessons are rigorous.</p>		<p>Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>4. Student Effort Courses are developed and implemented to ensure students are working harder than their teachers.</p>		<p>Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: ▲ Nearing Expectations)</i></p>
<p>5. Classroom and Instructional Data Evidence of data is visible.</p>	<p>While teachers were very active in circulating and monitoring students, the feedback to students was more compliance oriented rather than focused on improving the student's understanding. There were only a few examples of teachers responding with an instructional shift to the data they observed while circulating. There was some evidence of data-based decision making as student grades were posted in each classroom, and leadership mentioned data conversations with students during the advisory period.</p>	<p>Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: ▲ Nearing Expectations)</i></p>
<p>6. Teacher Questioning Teachers question all students with the same frequency.</p>	<p>While there was a great deal of student voice in classrooms, often times a small number of voices would dominate the conversation instead of being inclusive and pulling in all voices. Most of the questioning observed was done with whole group questions or with volunteers or students calling out; as opposed to cold calling, or setting an expectation that everyone should participate.</p>	<p>Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>

Components of Effective Instruction	Observation Notes <small>(notes are provided for standards rated Nearing or Did Not Meet Expectations)</small>	Performance Rating
<p>7. Cognitive Complexity Teachers ask all students questions at different levels of cognitive complexity.</p>	<p>While some classrooms had students attempting to respond to high-level questions, the majority of questions observed were lower level, one-word answers, or simple comprehension questions. In some instances, where this was done well, students were asked to explain their thinking and defend their responses with evidence or rationale. One classroom where this was happening effectively was in the English 4 classroom where they pushed students to find text evidence to support their answers.</p>	<p>Nearing Expectations <i>(SY2021-2022: Nearing Expectations)</i></p>

Observation Summary

The program has several areas where they are meeting expectations in instructional delivery. This includes classrooms consistently having lesson plans and lesson materials that were grade-level appropriate and rigorous as well as teachers modeling both tasks and skills while providing students with the opportunity to fully own the thinking load in activities where they were practicing the objective skill.

The program did not consistently make sure that the curriculum in the lesson was made explicitly relevant to students, which would likely further support engagement and student retention of the skills and content. In addition, there wasn't a clear use of data to drive instructional practice decisions, instead opportunities to gather formative student data were used to monitor on-task behaviors and engagement.

Lastly, there is also room for improvement in student questioning, both in the technique used to gather student input (moving from volunteers to more strategic teacher controlled responses) and in the types of questions asked (shifting from lower-level short answers to answers that require students to explain and support their thinking).

Opportunities for Growth

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

The program should provide access to resources, professional development, and teacher coaching on strategies to make the curriculum materials explicitly relevant to students' lives.

This may include teacher-driven strategies such as explicitly providing context to issues and how they connect to the broader school and local community, or more student-driven strategies like asking students where they think the skill or topic might be helpful or important outside of school.

Relevance is not just about the instructional materials, although these should also be relevant to student interests and be inclusive of School District and citywide resources. Prompting students to consider and respond to an open question such as, "Do you agree with this, why or why not?" or "Do you know of a situation where this would be different and how?" allows students to consider, judge and analyze but also connect to the material personally. This ability to connect new learning to their understanding of how the world works is particularly impactful on older learners with more lived experiences.

- Standard 5: Evidence of data is visible.

The program should provide professional development for teachers on how to gather data while circulating and examining student responses, and the support teachers with regularly implementing a small number of potential instructional responses to the data (eg, highlighting a common misunderstanding, sharing an exemplar response, regrouping to reteach a key concept, etc).

Consider utilizing the professional learning community (PLC) structure that is in place to have staff who are already doing this well help to develop their colleagues.

3. Standard 6: Teachers question all students with the same frequency.

The program should provide professional development for teachers on different questioning techniques allowing teachers to be strategic in eliciting student responses.

Some examples might include- cold calling based on observed student written responses, using a participation tracker on a clipboard or drawing names written on popsicle sticks to make sure all voices are included, etc. Focusing on hearing all voices will help to further increase engagement and support the teacher with more data to use when making instructional decisions.

4. Standard 7: Teachers ask all students questions at different levels of cognitive complexity.

The program should provide teachers with professional development and coaching on increasing the cognitive complexity of their questioning.

Teacher questions are currently objective-aligned, however, they often don't push students to demonstrate deeper understanding. Focus the questioning on having students justify, explain, or support their answers with evidence that will further inform the teacher of their understanding and highlight any areas of misconception. As above, this can also support with increasing student connections to the content and increase relevance for students.

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>Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>2. Engagement Strategies Teachers use a variety of engagement strategies.</p>		<p>Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>3. Student Engagement Students appear to be engaged in the lesson.</p>		<p>Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: ▼ Exceeding Expectations)</i></p>
<p>4. Peer Interactions Students are interacting appropriately with other students.</p>		<p>Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>5. Teacher Interest Teachers demonstrate a clear interest in their students.</p>		<p>Exceeding Expectations <i>(SY2021-2022: ▲ Expectations Met)</i></p>
<p>6. Student Responsiveness Students are appropriately responsive to teacher interactions.</p>		<p>Expectations Met <i>(SY2021-2022: ▼ Exceeding Expectations)</i></p>
<p>7. School-Wide Focus There is clear evidence of the school-wide focus in the classrooms.</p>	<p>The program leadership named having data-driven instruction as a school-wide focus area. In some classrooms evidence of data-driven instruction was present, but in others, there was no evidence of data in the classroom (data walls showing no data, no graded student work, and/or no reference to informal assessments). There was growth from past walkthroughs in the amount of student voice and ownership of learning, but there is still room to improve in having students' voices do the majority of talking in all classrooms (a previous focus area).</p>	<p>Nearing Expectations <i>(SY2021-2022: ▼ Exceeding Expectations)</i></p>

Observation Summary

The program has created an environment where students are engaged in their work and oftentimes in a way that has them interacting with their peers. This is key to student learning and creates an environment where students will learn more in not only individual lessons but over time. The program has this level of engagement because teachers and staff are not only frequently present and circulating during work times, but demonstrated an awareness of when students were disengaged from work. There were a variety of engagement strategies utilized in classrooms, which further supported engagement by diversifying the type of work students were asked to do (engaging openings, partner work, group work, experiments, gallery walks, etc.) All of this was further supported by a high level of teacher interest in their students- which was observed not only as encouragement and acknowledgment but also awareness of students' lives. For example, in science class, the teacher previewed that they would be discussing cancer and that it might be difficult for some students to talk about if they know or love someone who has or may have had cancer. One area for improvement would be the school-wide focus, where the evidence of having data-driven instruction wasn't consistent across classrooms.

Opportunities for Growth

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

The program leadership should work to clearly define their school-wide focus areas and provide staff with professional development and coaching to help them implement the aligned strategies. School-wide focus areas should set the theme for professional development during the school year and be revisited often to ensure fidelity in implementation.

Consider how to make sure that the staff has a clear understanding not just of the rationale for choosing the school-wide focus, but what limited number of evidence-based strategies or techniques they should be implementing to be successful with the school-wide focus. It may be helpful to identify what improvement would look like and sound like to someone visiting the classroom and what impact that can have on students so that there is a shared vision for success.