



## Feedback and Findings Meeting

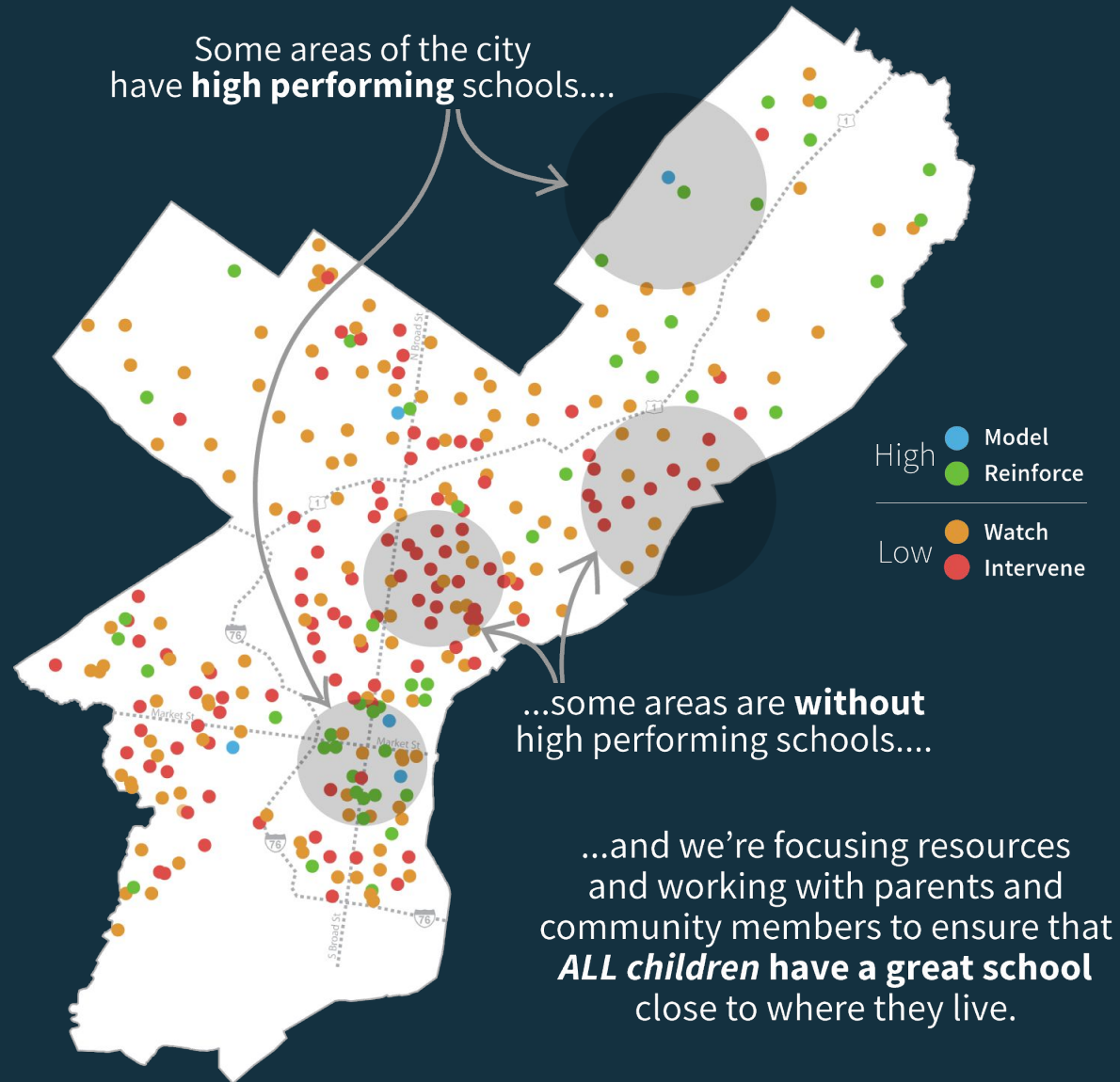
# James Rhoads Elementary School

*November 8, 2017*



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
PHILADELPHIA

# All children deserve **a great school** close to where they live.





# Agenda

- Why We're Here
- Feedback and Findings
- Questions
- Additional Ideas
- Next Steps



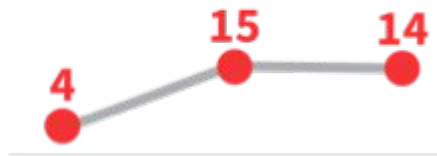
# Why is my school being considered?

## James Rhoads Elementary School

### SPR

3-year SPR trend

2013-14 2014-15 2015-16



3-year SPR average

**11.0**

### Key Data

2015-16 Performance

Reading Achievement\*

10%

Math Achievement\*

1%

Attendance^

34%

\* School Year 2015-16 performance for achievement equals the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the English language arts and math PSSA exams. ^Attendance equals the percentage of students attending school 95% or more of school days.



## Important Notes

- Becoming a charter school is not an option in this process
- Closure is not an option in this process.



# Overview of Main Findings from School Quality Reviews

## Strengths

- Strong school culture and climate
- Positive relationships with new school leadership
- Impact of ClassDojo on behavior and on communications with families
- Use of technology in the classroom

## Growth Areas

- Challenging instruction
- Use of data to inform instruction and planning
- Frequency and quality of feedback for teachers
- Development of the School Advisory Council

Please record feedback on the cards you were given:

- 1) Which findings and feedback matched your experience, and which ones surprised you?
- 2) What else do you think would help improve students' academic performance?
- 3) What are other ways in which the school could involve parents and the community?



# Overview of Feedback from parents and community

## Strengths

- Strong and caring leadership
- Improved teacher/parent communication (including impact of ClassDojo)
- Many caring teachers
- Strong after-school program

## Growth Areas

- More adults are needed on playground, cafeteria, and classrooms to keep students safe
- The math curriculum moves too quickly
- Some staff members are not professional with students and parents.

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- 1) Which findings and feedback matched your experience, and which ones surprised you?
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# School Quality Review

## Purpose:

Identify main factors that support learning or limit learning

## Process:

- 2 day site visit
- 15-20 classroom observations
- Meetings with the school leader
- Student, staff, parent focus groups
- Staff survey





# Stakeholder Feedback

## Forums and participants

*In addition to the School Quality Review focus groups led by Cambridge, Temple facilitated:*

Kickoff meeting

Community input and ideas meeting

Two parent/family focus groups

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51 Parents, students, family members

8 Staff members

36 Community members



# Feedback and Findings

Please record feedback on the cards you were given:

- 1) What did or didn't surprise you?
- 2) What else would help students?
- 3) How else can we involve families?

## Strengths:

- The principal, teachers, and staff members promote and foster positive relationships with members of the school community.
  - a) Parents in the focus group report that the school staff members are caring, and they work hard to support the academic and social needs of their children.
  - b) Students in both focus groups have built positive relationships with teachers. All students stated that they had an adult in the building that they can go to if they need support with personal issues.
  
- The principal models high expectations for the staff and families of the students he serves.
  - a) The principal has established positive relationships with students, staff members, and parents. His interactions with all stakeholders exhibit a commitment to academic excellence and exemplary behavior for all.



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### Strengths:

- Family members feel that there are many caring teachers in the school.

*"[Teachers] greet them, they encourage them, they smile at them, they have a joke." -- parent*

*"They speak to the child as if it's their own." -- parent*

*"And I see a lot of the teachers...some teachers will [say], "Okay, you have breakfast...and they'll ask you, 'Are you hungry? Would you like some more.'" -- parent*



## Feedback and Findings

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### Strengths:

- The recently-hired Principal has developed positive relationships with parents.
  - a) All parents in the focus group shared that they have a positive rapport with Principal Parker.
- Feedback from stakeholders in Temple focus groups also confirms positive parent relationships with Principal Parker.

*“I like his communication and his interaction with the kids...The kids come in the yard, he give[s] them high fives...” --parent*



# Feedback and Findings

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- 1) What did or didn't surprise you?
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## Strengths:

- Teachers manage student behavior effectively and support the social and emotional needs of students.
  - a) Incidents that interrupted learning occurred in only 2 of the 21 classes observed.
  
- The ClassDojo program has positively impacted classroom management and communications with families
  - a) Teachers were observed in several classrooms using Class Dojo points to redirect off-task student behaviors and reward students for exemplary behavior.
  - b) Students in both focus groups shared that their teachers are using Class Dojo to award points and track positive behavior.
  - c) 7 of 8 students in the Focus Group find Class Dojo rewards motivating.
  - d) 4 parents in the focus group mentioned that Class Dojo is used to keep parents informed of student attendance, behavior, and other important academic progress.

*“My child’s teacher reaches out to me daily.” --parent*



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### Strengths:

- Participants in Temple focus groups also reported improved communication and mentioned the impact of ClassDojo

*“My son loves the points that they have here. He loves it, because it's, like, they're giving him something to strive for. So, I love the points system that they have.” -- parent*



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## Strengths:

- The principal communicates a clear, strategic vision for the school.
  - a) The principal described the roles and responsibilities of the leadership team and how the assistant principal, SBTL, and coaches support instruction.
  - b) Teachers in both focus groups understand the academic expectations for this school year.
  
- The principal has established an observation and feedback schedule that permits him to observe at least one teacher per day.
  - a) The principal has shared with teachers that he will be observing teaching and teachers reported that they are aware of the currently scheduled observations.



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## Strengths:

- Teachers use the district-provided scope and sequence to ensure the curriculum is aligned to state and district standards.
  - a) Teachers in both focus groups stated that they are using the district-wide curriculum with fidelity, but results are still not improving.
  - b) Reviewers observed students using the texts for Envision Math and Ready Generation reading in most classrooms.

*"We don't get enough training [on the curriculum] from the district. I have to teach myself and then teach the students."  
--teacher*

- The district benchmark assessments are given to students every quarter.





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## Strengths:

- Teachers use digital technology in their lessons and they are developing technology skills to keep students interested.
  - a) Teachers were observed using technology to enhance their instruction in 17 of 21 classrooms.
  - b) Teachers used a variety of technologies including power points, videos, and Smartboards to engage students.



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### Strengths:

- Parents report satisfaction with the after school program

*“They’ve got a pretty good after school program, so I kind of can say that. I’ve dealt with a lot of stuff in this school but after school program was one of the best.” -- parent*



# Feedback and Findings

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- 1) What did or didn't surprise you?
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## Challenges:

- There is an overall lack of challenge in instruction in all subjects and grades.
  - a) There was low-level questioning in most classrooms. In 17 of 21 classrooms there were no higher-level questions asked. Teachers used mainly recall questions, such as: "What is the character's name? What number goes in front? Can you find 81? Who can read the definition of Taino?"
  - b) Out of the 16 students interviewed in focus groups, no students shared that they felt challenged in English language arts and social studies.
  - c) 8 of the 16 students interviewed reported that they do not feel like they are being prepared for high school.



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## Challenges:

- Teachers are not receiving effective feedback on lesson plans.
  - a) 2 of the 9 teachers interviewed shared that they received meaningful feedback on their lesson plans.
- Data analysis systems have not yet been established.
  - a) 4 of the 9 teachers interviewed shared that they need more support to use data to drive instruction.

*“This is another one of my goals for this year: getting teachers to use the data to guide their instruction.”* -- Principal Parker



## Feedback and Findings

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### Challenges:

- Mathematics teaching needs intensive support
  - a) Students were rarely asked math questions that required higher order thinking.
  - b) In one focus group 7 out of 8 students interviewed shared that math was too difficult.
  - c) All parents in the focus group shared that they have a great deal of difficulty supporting their children to complete math homework.
- Parents in Temple focus groups also expressed concern with math instruction, feeling that it was too rushed for students.

*“The teachers are not taking enough time to go through these instructions with these kids, that’s why they’re failing...[My daughter} said ‘They give it to us, they put it up there and the next thing you know, we’re taking a test and then we fail.’ ....They can’t get it because the teachers says, ‘Well, we gotta get through this.’ The instructor says ‘We gotta fly through this.’” -- parent*



## Feedback and Findings

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### Challenge:

- While some parents feel the school is safe, many others feel that safety is a major concern at the school.

### Lack of Safety:

*“You know, there are fights and stuff.... Some don't feel safe. I hear the conversations of the kids, waiting for my child. That's why I come to drop her off and I wait for her to go in. And I come into school, and I wait.” -- parent*

*My daughter, well she already had gotten jumped plenty of times. [This has happened in the] classroom, after school, at recess at lunch.” --parent*

*“[My son] doesn't even want to come to the school. He's scared and he won't come to school anymore.” -- parent*



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### Challenge:

- The school quality review also found evidence that safety is a challenge at the school.
  - a) 5 out of 8 students in a focus group said that they do not always feel safe around the school, especially in the morning.
  - b) Some parents in the focus group mentioned that they did not feel safe leaving their children in the playground in the morning.
  - c) Two parents shared that they are often late for work because they don't feel comfortable leaving their children outside until they see Principal Parker or a teacher that they know.



## Feedback and Findings

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### Challenge:

- Parents expressed a desire for more adults throughout the building

*“My daughter says some kids try and take her lunch and stuff. So I don't know if there's a lot of staff in the cafeteria. But they needed like three more people in the cafeteria.” --parent*

*“The supervision is not enough supervision outside for those kids whatsoever. In the morning and when these kids get out of school ....not at all, it's not enough.” --parent*

*“I see when they come out the teachers really cannot...account for all those kids.” --parent*





## Feedback and Findings

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### Challenge:

- While some were complimentary of staff professionalism and care, some parents express frustration with staff interactions

*“Also some of the staff is rude and they say things to the children that should not be said.” --parent*

*“The greeting of the staff was unprofessional to me, as I first came in.” --parent*

*“The way that some of these teachers talk to these kids is like they're talking to them like they out in the street somewhere. Not professional. And then they bring the kids' self esteem down even more.” --parent*



## Feedback and Findings

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### Suggestion:

- Parents want support for how to help students with their studies

*“That’s one thing you all could do, send a guide book home for the parents, because they teach them totally different than the way we learned...That’s one thing that would really help because it’s easier to help a child if you know exactly what they’re doing.” -- parent*



## Feedback and Findings

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### Challenge:

- School leaders are not partnering with parents to help with decisions in the school
  - a) Parents shared that there is no functioning SAC (school advisory council) at this time that would serve as a vehicle to voice their opinions on school decisions.
  - b) Two parents reported that they are willing to join a SAC and help organize events with the school, but they do not know if an organization like this exists now.



# Questions

10-15 mins

## Norms for questions:

- 1) Ask questions that benefit the whole group (we are happy to address individual questions after the session).
- 2) Please be mindful of your talk time so that all voices can be heard.
- 3) Please be respectful of differences of opinion.



## Additional Ideas

### Other Feedback

1. Which findings and feedback matched your experience, and which ones surprised you?
2. What else do you think would help improve students' academic performance?
3. What are other ways in which the school could involve parents and the community?

***When prompted, please move to the charts to provide your feedback using the cards that were handed out.***



## **Next Steps**

**December**

**Dr. Hite, Assistant Superintendents,  
and other District leaders review**

- 1) Stakeholder feedback
- 2) Site visit results
- 3) School input
- 4) New data (SPR)

**January -  
February**

**Recommendations for improvement  
shared with community**