



Feedback and Findings Meeting

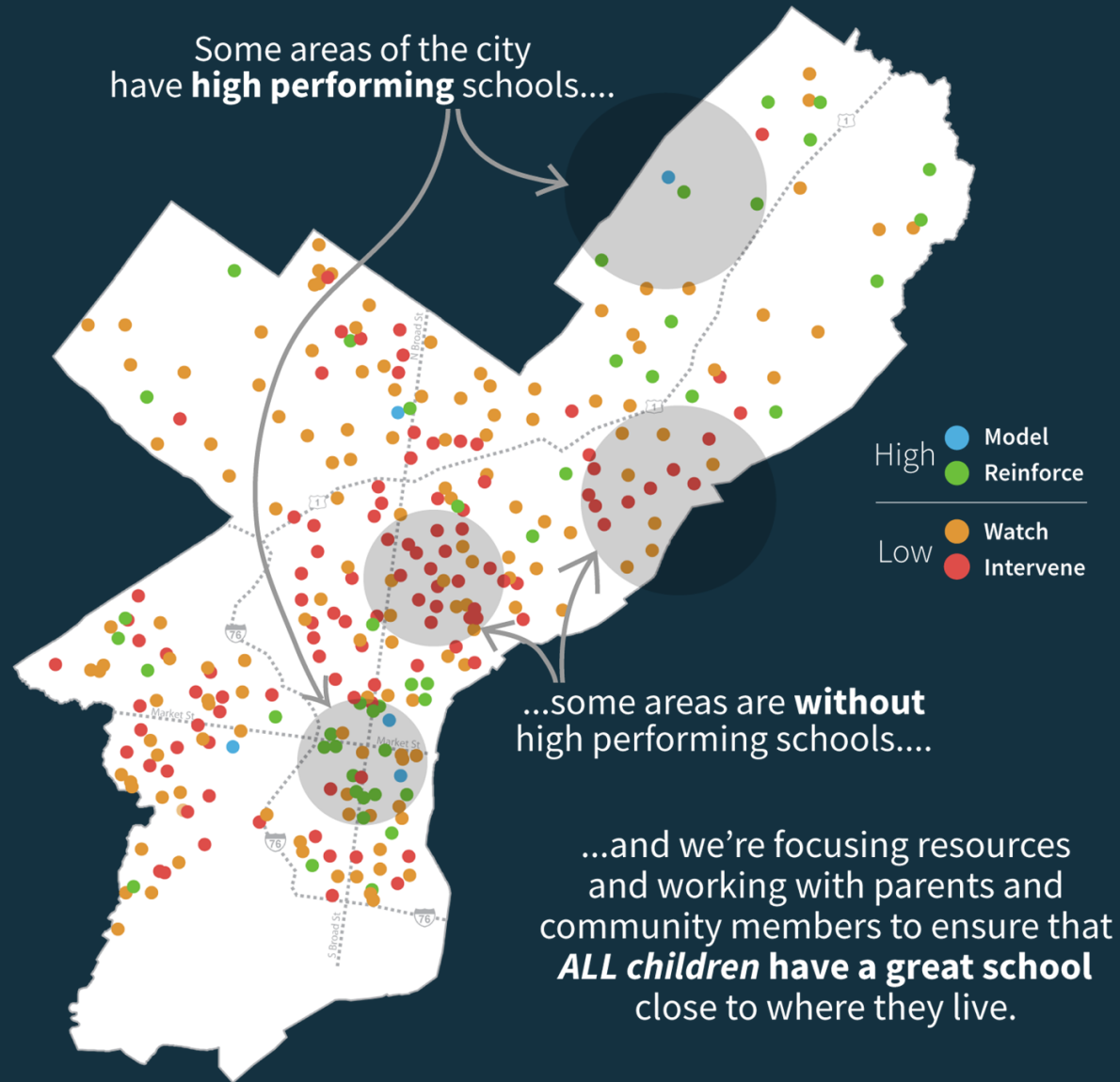
Penn Treaty School

November 15, 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?

Penn Treaty School

SPR (MS)

3-year SPR trend

2013-14 2014-15 2015-16



3-year SPR average

8.7

SPR (HS)

3-year SPR trend

2013-14 2014-15 2015-16



3-year SPR average

14.7

Key Data

2015-16 MS Performance

2015-16 HS Performance

Reading Achievement*

19%

18%

Math Achievement*

3%

5%

Attendance^

24%

17%

4

* School Year 2015-16 performance for achievement equals the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the English language arts and math PSSA and Keystone 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 for Penn Treaty.
- Closure is not an option for Penn Treaty.
- Teachers will not be asked to reapply for their jobs.



Questions & Clarifying Answers

- A letter was sent home with students on October 2, 2017 that incorrectly stated there would be 4 options for Penn Treaty in this process. The 4 options noted in that letter were for K-8 schools, not high schools.
- Findings gathered in this process and ongoing feedback from the principal, students, parents, teachers, and community members will inform what additional investments are needed to improve student learning.
- These findings and ongoing feedback will also inform how ISA supports the school.
- The District currently has a contract with ISA to support 3 high schools to improve their academic outcomes.



Overview of Main Findings from School Quality Review

Strengths

- Strong, caring leadership
- Improved school culture and climate
- Positive relationships with teachers and staff
- Strong community organization partnerships
- Shared school leadership

Growth Areas

- Challenging instruction
- Effective use of learning objectives
- Use of data to inform instruction and lesson planning
- Systems to support parent volunteers
- Use of projects and complex tasks that require deeper thinking

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 Main Findings from Parents and Community Members

Strengths

- Strong, caring leadership
- Teacher-student relationships
- Supportive climate
- Communications with parents about student progress
- Community involvement
- Support for special needs students

Growth Areas

- Safety to and from school
- Transportation to & from school
- Managing organizational changes
- Lack of outdoor space
- Lack of academic challenge
- Inconsistent parent involvement
- Lack of school sports and extracurricular activities

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- 2) What else do you think would help improve students' academic performance?
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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

Three parent/family focus groups

80 Parents, students, family members

31 Staff members

67 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 and his leadership team have been successful in dramatically improving the climate and culture of the school.
 - a. All stakeholders recognized this as a marked improvement.
 - b. One teacher shared, "This is a great place! I recommended my friends' children to come here. I feel we are finally headed in the right direction! "
 - c. 75% of teachers (25 total) responded that they Agree with or Strongly Agree with the Statements, "I feel committed to staying at this school and helping it realize its vision," and "this school provides a positive learning environment that is safe, respectful, challenging, and welcoming."



Feedback and Findings

Please record feedback on the cards you were given:

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

- Parents and students believe the school climate is supportive.

"I've never seen any negativity. I'm always in the school. I come in all the time."--parent

"Every teacher I know, when I go to every conference, when I go to every open house, I know every teacher, the teachers know my name, I know the principal, I know the vice principal, even the new vice principal, I know already."--parent

"I like this school because you can count on the staff to be there. If you have a problem, there's a teacher most likely to be in every room."--student

"There's basically never really problems around here. Everybody just kicks back, do your work, finish. You get prizes if you do stuff sometimes. The things that they do for you are great. If you earn stuff, you could go [on] trips. Like we went to, some people went to Penn Treaty Park today and yesterday, which are really great things for us because we know that we can keep on pushing to get there, and to go to those places."--student



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Strengths:

- The principal communicates a vision of success for all students.
 - a. The vision is understood by all stakeholders of the school.
 - b. When asked to describe the vision of the school, teachers had consistent responses such as “The vision of the school is to create lifelong learners,” and “to promote life long success for all our students, and also “to meet the students' needs to be successful in the present as well as future.”



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Strengths:

- Parents feel the school leader is strong.

“Mr. Howell was the best principal. I knew Mr. Howell maybe 15 years, awesome. He lives in the neighborhood, knows most of the things that are going on. He doesn't see color, he sees person, you know? He sees you're struggling, I got you. You excelling, yeah, you're excelling, I got you... I'm going to help you. Stick with me, I'll help you. If you need to talk, here's my office. You know? If you need anything, here's my office.”--parent

“I love Mr. Howell, I could call him any time. He might not pick up right away, but he'll call me back and he'll address the situation. But he's one person. If he [doesn't] have what he needs, he can't do it all - - he's not superman.”--parent



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Strengths:

- A system of shared leadership is being developed by the principal that creates opportunities to share responsibility for improving the school.
 - a. The principal has assigned various responsibilities to his staff, some of which are: Parent Involvement Coordinator, Ninth Grade Academy Director, Ninth Grade Climate Manager, Ninth Grade Attendance Monitor, Climate Manager, City Year Director, and AVID Director.
- The school has successfully established meaningful partnerships with many community organizations.
 - a. Penn Treaty has partnerships with 12 institutions that regularly support the school: 12+, City Year, WAWA adopt a school, Friends of Penn Treaty, Gear Up, Education Works, LULAC, Coded By Kids, COMHAR, NHS, Kensington Soccer Club, and WHYH Media Lab.
 - b. These organizations support the school in many ways including: academic and tutoring services, college preparation, sporting activities, mental health support, electives, and fundraising.



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Strengths:

- Parents and students believe the staff is caring and invested in the success of all students.
 - a. Students in focus groups unanimously say that they are connected to the adults and can approach them in confidence if they have a problem.
 - b. One teacher described the school community like this: "We are all family. We all (staff and students) work together to make gains."



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Strengths:

- The school has positive relationships with parents and students.

"The staff that's been here, super awesome."--parent

"I like everything. Especially the staff are so supportive and ... like he said, to call people family and not feel [inaudible] about it is a really good feeling. They're really pushing you to do better and I really like that. And Mr. Howell and them are very great. I really think they're really good staff."--parent

"Everybody knows each other. All the teachers are nice and friendly. I can have a brand new teacher one year, and then within two months, I will say hi to them in the hallway and I'll be asking about the homework."--student

"It really is, it's just a great community. And with the friends and the people, and if there's a problem, it gets solved right away. There's not much ... well, there's a little tension. But there's not much tension, and if there is, it's solved. And it's solved really quickly so everybody can get back to learning, and it's always fun and engaging."--student



Feedback and Findings

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Challenges:

- Learning objectives are not consistently communicated in ways that allow all students to understand what they are learning and why it is important.
 - a. Learning objectives were posted in only 10 out of 21 classrooms.
 - b. In none of the 21 lessons observed, were the objectives revisited during and at the end of lessons.
- The rigor of the learning experiences in most classrooms is too low to advance students' learning.
 - a. 6 out of 9 students in a focus group indicated that the work they do is not challenging enough to prepare them for college. They also indicated that advanced students should get more challenge.
 - b. In 16 out of 21 classrooms, teachers used only low-level questions where students were asked to either recall or repeat information without opportunities for students to comment on each other's responses or engage in critical thinking or problem solving.



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Challenges:

- Students do not have opportunities to work on projects and complex tasks that require them to think deeply about a specific topic.
 - a. Teachers in a focus group indicate that their focus is on preparing students to take the PSSA and Keystone assessments and do not have time to engage students in projects.
 - b. Students unanimously confirm in two focus groups that they do not get to work on projects, limiting students' ability to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- The school's focus on data has not yet resulted in effective targeted supports for individual and groups of students.
 - a. In none of the 21 classrooms observed was there any evidence of student grouping based on data, in which there were differentiated and targeted work for groups or individual students.
 - b. 7 out of 9 students in a focus group indicate that everyone in their classes does the same work.



Feedback and Findings

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Challenges:

- Parents reported differences between support in high school and the middle grades

“The issue I have is, I don't think there's enough support for the teachers. I don't think there's enough parent support... The lower grades seems to get a lot more but the high school... there's no help, there's no guidance, I think, or support for the teachers.”--parent

“We learned a lot, I feel like we learned more in ninth grade AVID than we did in eighth grade.”--student



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Challenges:

- The school has not yet developed a system for involving parents in its day-to-day operations.
 - a. There is no organized system for parent volunteers to support the school, nor is there a system for the expression of parental voice and advocacy for their children.
 - b. Some parents in the parent focus group expressed the desire to volunteer at the school but the opportunities have not yet been created.



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Challenges:

- There is inconsistent parent involvement across the school.

WJ: How much parental Involvement? *“Very little, but the ones (parents) that are here, I think, are pretty concerned about what's going on.”--parent*

“They wanted the parents to be on a committee and I was invited to something that they had for students that tested high in school. And then even though he (her son) was in the special needs program, I guess he excelled. So they wanted us to come in and they started saying, ‘Well we're going [to] develop this parent-teacher thing and we need you to volunteer.’ So when after a while I said, ‘Okay well I'm willing to volunteer.’ When I threw out he's in special needs, how is this going to benefit him? It was like - - I got pushed to the back burner. Now, I don't even want to do it because if it's not going to help my child, why should I take my time and do it? Even though I'm an advocate for other kids too but it has to at least involve my child. And I felt it was like when it comes to the special needs program, we don't get enough information. And we're pushed to the back burner.”--parent



Feedback and Findings

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Challenges:

- Despite an improved school culture, some parents believe there is still student misbehavior.

“As far as in my son's situation, I know it can't be just happening to my child... [it would be] faster just trying to nip [it] in the butt from the beginning and just try to resolve whatever issues [are] happening quicker. And not let it escalate to something more aggressive, like say throwing chairs.”--parent



Feedback and Findings

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Challenges:

- Community issues and transportation affect parents and students.

“Like outside, like different neighborhoods, stuff like that escalates outside the schools. But every problem that had occurred with the girls, we've gotten phone calls. They addressed it in the school, but stuff happens outside of school. So, that's it, that's what's going on.”--parent

“...And I couldn't walk. I catch the Berks street train and I had to walk the opposite way because if I go that way and the girls... and those girls [have] been on house arrest, and ... they were arrested, disciplinary schools and everything, and they still, constantly, still come all the time.”--student



Feedback and Findings

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Suggestions:

- Parents want additional staff to support school climate.

“They need more staff, they need more staff. If they had hallway monitors, you know what I mean? Like last night they were saying that one teacher was saying that there was a fight and she waited 20 minutes for someone to come help her. That's not fair, that's not fair to the teachers, it's not fair to the students who are good.”--parent

- Provide more motivation for students to come to school.

“They need to try and help get students more motivated to come to school because a lot of students are late and are absent. And a lot of students cut. So I feel like teachers and staff should motivate the kids to want to come to school, instead of just forcing them to come to school.”--parent



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Suggestions:

- Parents want the students to respect all staff and to receive consequences when they are disrespectful to their teachers.

“I think the teachers are doing their job. They just gotta be a little more strict with the students, because they give them too many chances... Some of them are too nice and the only way they get them to learn is by doing treats or stuff. So I feel like teachers should be a little more strict on students who are disrespectful and don't deserve to be nice to.”--parent



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?
1. What else do you think would help improve students' academic performance?
1. 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 (SY16-17 SPR)

**February -
March**

**Identify priorities for improvement
and additional support resources**

**Spring -
Summer**

Begin planning with ISA