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School name	Penn Treaty School
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Review date(s)	October 5-6, 2017
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School Quality Review Report School District of Philadelphia

Penn Treaty School Grades 6-12
October 5-6, 2017

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1 The School Context

1.1 Introduction

In 2017 Cambridge Education was awarded a contract against RFP-499 to provide School Quality Reviews (SQRs) to six School District of Philadelphia (SDP) schools. The SQR program includes the following:

- a School Quality Review (SQR) orientation for principals
- a two-day SQR for each school
- a meta-analysis report of the school findings

The SQR report contained herein was prepared by the Lead Reviewer based on the evidence collected and the assessment made by the full SQR team (Lead Reviewer, Team Member Reviewer). Evidence was collected via classroom observations, interviews with the administration, and focus groups with students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders.

1.2 Background information about the School

Location and enrollment

Penn Treaty School is in the Fishtown section of Northeast Philadelphia. At the time of this writing, the school had an enrollment of 537 students. The enrollment has shown fluctuations over the last three years. In 204-2015 the enrollment was at 544. In 2015-2016 it dropped to 494 and increased again in 2016-2017 to its current level of 537.

School Performance and survey data

2015-2016 School Progress Report for Penn Treaty

Overall: 11% Intervene (up from 9% in 2013-2014, and 6% in 2014-2015); City Rank-31st out of 37; Peer Rank-11th out of 14

Achievement: 1% Intervene (decrease from 13% in 2013-2014, but an increase from 0% in 2014-2015); City Rank-30th out of 37; Peer Rank-11th out of 14

The Achievement domain measures performance on standardized assessments, including PSSA, Keystone Exams, ACCESS for ELLs, and reading assessments.

Progress: 0% Intervene (decrease from 2% in 2013-2014, and 3% in 2014-2015); City Rank-34th out of 34; Peer Rank-12th out of 12

The Progress domain measures growth on standardized assessments and progress towards graduation (for high schools only).

Climate: 33% Watch (increase from 19% in 2013-2014 and 15% in 2014-2015); City Rank-25th out of 36; Peer Rank-9th out of 14

The Climate domain measures school climate and student and parent/guardian engagement.

Notable areas of strength listed on the SPR included the total absence of in-school suspension, the annual retention rate of students, and the school climate, suggesting that the school is performing well with regard to creating an environment where students feel safe, appreciated and cared for. Notable areas in need of improvement on the SPR included academic achievement in all subjects, educator

effectiveness, and academic progress. These areas suggest that the school is performing well below expectations in a number of areas critical to school success.

Comprehensive Plan

In its comprehensive plan, the school noted the following areas of focus for the school over the next two years: improving attendance, credit accumulation for 9th grade students, improving the academic performance of students in math, improving the climate of the school, improving teacher effectiveness, and improving the graduation rate. At the time of the review, teachers had received the following training and supports related to these focus areas: questioning and discussion techniques, analyzing data, and restorative practices.

Other contextual factors

Penn Treaty High School is the only grade 6-12 comprehensive/neighborhood high school within the School District of Philadelphia. In 2013, the school was transformed from a middle school when three neighboring high schools were closed, and the students were enrolled at Penn Treaty. The enrollment dramatically increased from approximately 300 students to approximately 600. Students from three different schools, with their own school cultures, and expectations, were now within one space and that presented specific school climate and instructional challenges to the staff. Several middle school teachers transferred, and with the school in flux, it was a tremendous time of adjustment for the school community.

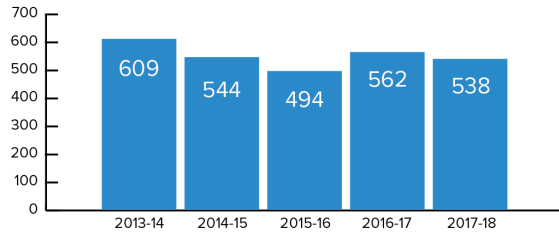
The principal has been a stabilizing force at the school, having been there for fourteen (14) years, ten (10) of which has been as the principal. He is from the community, went to school in the community and knows the parents and students well. He is affectionately referred to as “dad” by many of the students. The climate is now much improved, and the focus is now on teaching and learning.

1.3 School demographic and performance data

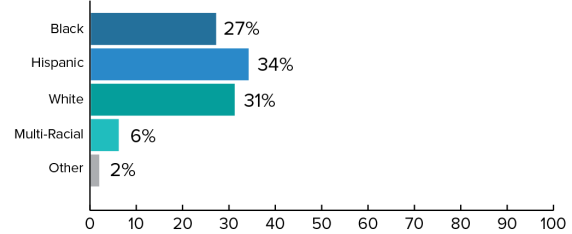
Penn Treaty School

At a glance

Enrollment



Race/Ethnicity Breakdown



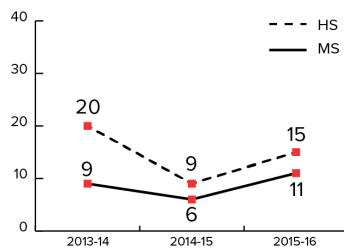
Students living in this catchment area choose to go to:

- Penn Treaty (23%)
- Amy @ James Martin (9%)
- Franklin Towne Charter School (6%)
- Mariana Bracetti (3%)

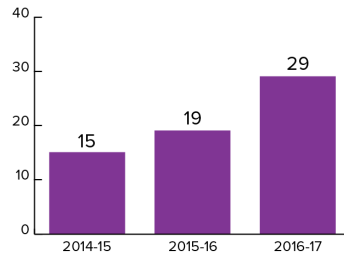
Students attending this school come from the following catchments:

- Penn Treaty (40%)
- Kensington High School (20%)
- Memphis St. Charter School (17%)
- Frankford High School (4%)

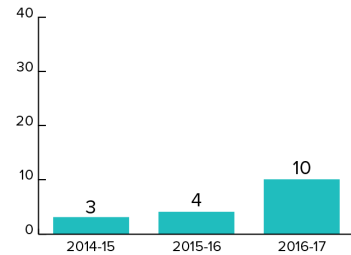
3-Year SPR Trend



ELA Achievement



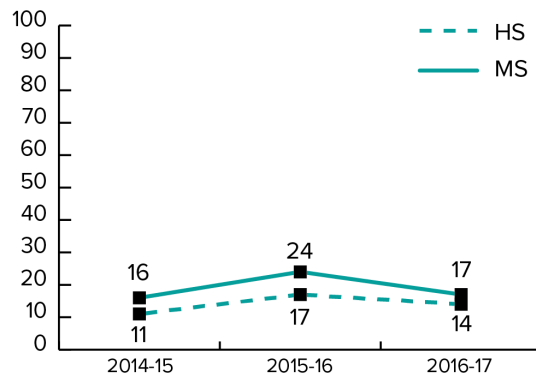
Math Achievement



combined HS and MS % students scoring proficient or advanced on state tests (PSSA and/or Keystone)

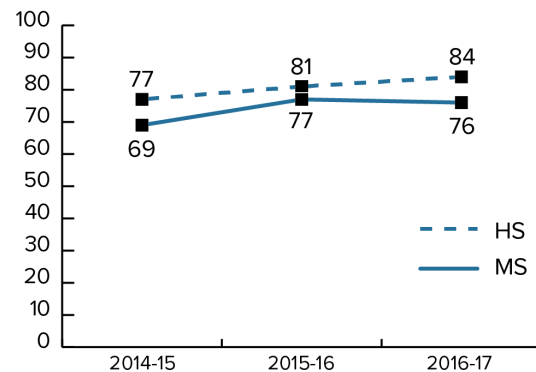
Attendance

% of students attending 95% or more of school days



Suspensions

% of students receiving zero suspensions



2 SQR Process and Details

2.1 Background on the SQR process

Meeting with the Principal

The SQR team consisted of two members - a lead reviewer and an assistant reviewer. The SQR team began the process with a one-hour meeting with the school principal. The principal provided background information on the school, its current strengths and challenges from his perspective, and the school's current priorities.

The principal shared the following priorities for the school: Improving attendance, credit accumulation for 9th grade students, improving the academic performance of students in math, improving the climate of the school, improving teacher effectiveness, and improving the graduation rate. To support these priorities, the school has taken or is planning to take a number of actions. The school has trained teachers on questioning and discussion techniques, utilizing the new curricular resources for math and literacy, and restorative practices.

The priorities listed by the principal in the meeting aligned to those listed in the Comprehensive Improvement Plan.

Classroom visits

The SQR team visited 21 classrooms over two days. The average classroom visit was 17 minutes, with a maximum of 22 minutes and a minimum of 8 minutes. The team visited classrooms in all grade levels. Classrooms visited had an average of 19 students, with a maximum of 27 students and minimum of 11 students.

At the time of this writing, the school had two vacancies – one middle school learning support and one high school English teacher.

Focus groups

The team conducted two student focus groups, one staff focus group, and one parent focus group. The student focus groups consisted of a group of nine students and a group of ten students, all of whom were chosen by the principal. All participating staff members (7) were chosen by the principal.

The parent focus group included 5 parents. All school parents were invited to be a part of the focus group through flyers, emails, and robocalls.

3 SQR Main Findings

In this section of the report, the SQR team has identified the factors that are most significantly supporting and limiting effective student learning. (Please see the sections that follow for more details).

3.1 Factors that support effective student learning:

- i. The principal and his leadership team have been successful in dramatically improving the climate and culture of the school. Though still a work in progress, all constituents recognize this as a marked improvement. (*Domain 4, P. 11*)
- ii. A system of tiered leadership is being developed by the principal that creates opportunities for teacher-leaders to adopt shared responsibility for improving the school. (*Domain 3, P. 9*)
- iii. The school has successfully established some meaningful partnerships with diverse community entities. These partnerships extend students' learning experiences beyond the classroom and provide various opportunities for college and career exploration. (*Domain 5, P. 12*)
- iv. Parents and students alike, regard the staff as caring and invested in the success of all students. Students in focus groups unanimously say that they are connected to the adults and can approach them in confidence if they have a problem. (*Domain 4, P. 11*)

3.2 Factors that limit effective student learning:

- i. Learning objectives are not consistently communicated in ways that allow all students to understand the purpose and importance of what they are learning. (*Domain 1, P. 7*)
- ii. Teachers' planning and instructional routines do not yet demonstrate adequate use of assessment data, deep understanding of and alignment to the PA Core Standards, and knowledge of the learning needs of individual and groups of students. As a result, not all students are able to make the progress that they are capable of. (*Domain 1, P. 8*)
- iii. Communication to parents and guardians about the academic and social achievements of children needs improvement. Parents who do not take the initiative to inquire about their student's progress are not systematically informed. (*Domain 4, P. 12*)
- iv. The quality of instruction in many classrooms is not yet of a quality that engages students in the building of critical thinking and problem-solving skills that prepare them for college and career. (*Domain 1, P. 8*)

4 Individual Domains

In the sections below, each domain received a rating based on the evidence collected during the SQR. The judgments have been broken down into *Factors that Support Effective Student Learning* and *Factors that Limit Effective Student Learning*.

4.1 Domain 1: Quality of Learning & Teaching

The Quality of Learning & Teaching requires support in targeted areas

Factors that support effective student learning:

- i. The principal has instituted a system of short-cycle assessments to assess students' performance and to make instructional decisions.
 - a) In addition to the district's benchmark assessments, teachers use the Standards Alignment System (SAS) and Acuity to create assessments that are aligned to the Pennsylvania (PA) Core Standards. These assessments are administered between benchmark assessments and the results are inputted into a tracker on Google Sheets to group students based on their performance. Teachers utilize this data to plan for small group instruction and follow up with assessing students again to determine mastery of the standards.

This system of formative assessments works well to inform teachers about how well students are progressing. However, it has not yet resulted in improved student performance in all grades and subject areas. As a next step, the principal could focus on the quality of the instruction that is undertaken in response to assessment data to make sure they are effective in advancing students' progress on identified challenges.

- ii. Teachers generally manage student behavior in a respectful and effective manner.
 - a) Every student in the school has a point-person and is well known by adults who are looking out for them. This was described by the principal and confirmed unanimously by students in focus groups and by teachers.
 - b) The code of conduct and behavioral expectations are taught and reinforced every year.
 - c) Students have forms for reporting issues.
 - d) The middle school has a daily reporting system to flag issues.
 - e) Students in focus groups unanimously agree that teachers and school leaders treat them with respect, even when they get into trouble.

The respectful way that teachers manage student misbehavior has resulted in a mutually respectful environment, and a model for how students should respond to each other. This has positively contributed to the improving climate of the school, which contributes to enhancing the learning experiences of students.

- iii. Teachers feel comfortable using technology to make instruction more interesting for students.
 - a) In 6 out of 21 classrooms, teachers used video and interactive technology during their lessons.
 - b) Students use the computers during their computer class. In one such class, students were observed learning keyboarding skills.

The use of technology serves to stimulate students' interests and bolster their participation. However, the principal needs to ensure that all teachers make good use of the technology, with instructional effect. In one classroom, a teacher made use of a video that was related to the lesson under consideration, but the viewing was not structured. There were no instructions to take notes, nor the provision of a template to

facilitate note taking, nor was anything done after the video was shown where students could apply what they had learned. The teacher just transitioned to the next activity without any reference to what the students had just viewed in the video. This eroded the instructional value of the video. Further coaching on effective ways to integrate technology would be a valuable next step for the school.

Factors that limit effective student learning:

- i. Well-written learning objectives are not always posted and communicated.
 - a) Learning objectives were posted in only 10 out of 21 classrooms
 - b) A clear statement of what students would learn was posted in seven of the 10 classrooms where objectives were posted. Further, only two of them indicated success criteria that tell how students would know if they have achieved the objectives.
 - c) 5 of the 10 objectives used with higher order thinking verbs such as “describe and analyze,” “compare and contrast,” and “interpret,” which reflect the rigor of PA Core Standards.”
 - d) In none of the 21 lessons observed were the objectives revisited during and at the close of lessons.

The posting and communication of objectives needs improvement. The objectives were not posted in many classrooms. In some classrooms where they were posted, they were not well written, and in all classrooms, there was no deliberate attempt to help students understand what they were learning, why it was important, and how it connected to past and future learning. This limits student investment in the learning process, and opportunities for them to monitor their own progress against success criteria. A focus on this aspect of teaching and learning would help teachers to understand and embrace the rationale for communicating well-written learning objectives to their students.

- ii. Collaborative learning is not yet a consistent feature of learning in classrooms.
 - a) In only 4 out of 21 classrooms were students engaged in collaborative work, where they discussed the work and decided what their responses should be to the questions/task.

The absence of routine collaborative work reduces the opportunities students have for learning from each other and for developing skillsets in cooperation and collaboration that are needed for college and careers. Support for teachers in designing learning experiences during their lessons that engage students in more collaborative work is needed.

- iii. Opportunities for students to build ownership of their learning is not embedded in classroom experiences.
 - a) In none of the classrooms observed were students engaged in discussing what they were learning, utilizing rubrics to assess their work and that of their peers, or engaging in discussion and debate about each other's ideas.

There are not enough opportunities for students to utilize rubrics to guide their completion of tasks, to debate each other's ideas, and to discuss what they are learning. More exposure to these types of opportunities would support student engagement and support students' ownership of learning in the classroom. Teachers need additional support in facilitating these essential learning experiences for their students.

- iv. The rigor of the learning experiences in most classrooms is too low to advance students learning to the extent needed. Teachers do not always enact the PA Core aligned curriculum in ways that promote deep understanding of concepts, or the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

- a) Planned learning experiences within 15 out of 21 classrooms did not engage students in tasks that appropriately challenged students or engaged them in critical thinking and problem solving.
- b) In 16 out of 21 classrooms teachers used, low-level questions where students were asked to either recall or repeat information without opportunities for students, to comment on each other's responses.
- c) 6 out of 9 students in a focus group indicated that the work they do is not rigorous enough to prepare them for college. They also indicated that advanced students should get more challenge.
- d) The principal expressed concern that students are not moving from "below basic" to "basic" at an acceptable rate.

In far too many classrooms, rigor is not at a level to engage students in learning experiences that will build deep understanding of concepts. Questioning is mostly low-level in classrooms, and teachers do not consistently use questioning in a way that will promote debate and discussion of ideas among students. The tasks that students are asked to complete require recall of basic information and application of facts. If students are to improve their performance on the state assessments and be adequately prepared for the rigor of college, they need more challenging tasks and assignments and asked questions that require critical thinking and problem-solving.

- v. 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 was differentiated and targeted work for groups or individual students.
 - b) 7 out of 9 students in a focus group indicated that everyone in their classes does the same work.

Although the school has done some work on using data, the disaggregation of data to identify specific needs of students has not yet resulted in targeted or differentiated learning experiences during lessons. This is a next step for school leaders. Teachers need to begin to make instructional decisions based on the data they look at, and that must be reflected in targeted and differentiated supports for their students.

- vi. The school does not have a system of intervention and remediation to address the gaps in understanding that students possess.
 - a) Apart from the expectation for teachers to address students' areas of challenge during differentiated lessons, there isn't a plan to address the knowledge and skill deficits of students through more extensive intervention and remediation.

There is an achievement gap at the school, which persists because the needs of the lowest performing students are not met through interventions and remediation. The principal is aware of this and is exploring options for providing additional supports for these students.

4.2 Domain 2: Curriculum & Assessment

Curriculum & Assessment requires support in targeted areas

Factors that support effective student learning:

- i. School leaders and teachers ensure that the school curriculum is aligned to district and state standards.

- a) The principal ensures that teachers utilize the district's new math and literacy curriculum resources, which are aligned to the PA Common Core Standards.

The use of the district's curricula for math and literacy provides a wealth of PA Core aligned resources for teachers, and results in students being exposed to standards-aligned materials during lessons.

- ii. The school offers art and physical education (PE) in addition to the core academic subjects. Additionally, students can access electives through the AVID program.
 - a) All students in a focus group (10) indicated the availability of these learning opportunities, which was confirmed by the Assistant Principals.

Students' access to art and PE, as well as electives, gives them additional opportunities for success other than in the core academic subjects. This serves to stimulate their interests. Students in a focus group spoke of these experiences favorably, but wished that there were more electives.

- iii. The curriculum is supported by periodic common assessments that are aligned to state standards and state tests.
 - a) Teachers utilize SAS and Acuity to create assessments, which they administer to students between the district benchmarks. The data from these assessments is expected to be used to group students for targeted supports during lessons.

Teachers create the short cycle assessments and input student groupings in Google sheets after the assessments. However, the targeted supports for students were not evident in classrooms. This is an area that needs to be monitored closely, as well as whether students do better on the second assessment after teachers' instructional responses.

Factors that limit effective student learning:

- i. The school does not have adequate or current curricular resources for social studies.
 - a) Teachers in a focus group describe the social studies curriculum as a joke.

The absence of adequate resources for social studies, places a burden on teachers to source resources on their own, and limits the learning experiences of students. The school could seek ways to augment the social studies curricular resources.

- ii. Students do not yet benefit from work on projects and complex problems that engage them in thinking deeply about concepts and building robust understanding about the content they study in their courses.
 - a) Teachers in a focus group indicated that their focus is on preparing students to take the PSSA assessments and do not have time to engage students in projects.
 - b) Students unanimously confirmed in two focus groups that they do not have opportunities to work on projects.

Teachers emphasize preparation for PSSA tests at the expense of meaningful work on projects that are well-structured and that integrate learning of content in authentic contexts. This deprives students of real-world learning opportunities where they could develop their higher-order critical, and analytical thinking skills as well as their problem-solving skills. Teachers need further support in developing projects that prepare students to be successful and to feel comfortable in devoting instructional time towards completing them. These types of experiences can bolster students' performance by helping them to develop the critical-thinking and problem-solving skills that would support their learning.

4.3 Domain 3: Instructional Coaching, Management, and Accountability

Sub-Domain 3.1: Instructional Leadership

Instructional Leadership requires support in targeted areas

Factors that support effective student learning:

- i. School leaders regularly monitor teaching and learning through frequent class observations, review of lesson plans, and analysis of data.
 - a) Teachers in focus groups report that the principal frequents their classrooms and provides feedback after visits based on the Danielson Framework.
 - b) The responsibility for observations are shared with the two assistant principals, who observe teachers on their assigned grade level – one for the 9th grade academy and the other for the 10th grade.
 - c) The principal and assistant principals review teachers lesson plans and provides feedback to them.
 - d) The principal and assistant principals lead weekly data meetings to support teachers in analyzing data to make instructional decisions about their students.

School leaders have developed a good system for monitoring teaching and learning and pockets of good practice are beginning to develop at the school. In some classes there is evidence of good questioning and some teachers plan good learning experiences for students. The principal should now focus on the teachers whose practices still need improving and implement differentiated interventions for teachers who are resistant, those who need intensive support and those who need less intensive support.

Factors that limit effective student learning:

- i. School leaders have not yet developed a systematic and consistent way to engage teachers in setting performance goals, or to monitor their progress towards meeting those goals.
 - a. The principal sets goal for teachers related to academic goals for student performance, but not related to their professional practice or performance. Feedback is provided to teachers after observations and on their lesson plans. However, leaders do not currently set performance goals for teachers related to their practice, which are monitored and followed up with rigor and fidelity.

The absence of performance goals for teachers fails to help teachers to improve their practice in a systematic and accountable fashion. As a result, the learning experiences of students in many classrooms is not of a quality to accelerate their performance to the extent needed.

- ii. The collection and analysis of data has not yet resulted in improvement in the performance of all student sub-groups.
 - a. Achievement gaps exist at the school among the various sub-groups. African American students underperform the other two groups (Latino and Whites) and students with special needs underperform general education students.

School leaders are aware of these achievement gaps, and are working to address it. They have created a focus and process for teachers to analyze data, but this has not resulted in strategic interventions and remediation processes to address the gaps, beyond differentiated lessons, which do not occur with much consistency across the school. The principal therefore, should work on building a system of remediation and intervention to accompany the analysis of data, and to address students' gaps in knowledge and skills.

Sub-Domain 3.2: Management and Accountability

Management and Accountability requires support in targeted areas

Factors that support effective student learning:

- i. The principal and his leadership team promote and model high expectations for all staff and students.
 - a) The leadership team emphasizes and communicates appropriate behaviors for students, and positive interactions between staff and students. This is evident in the interactions between members of the leadership team and students, and in the communication between teachers and students in at least 18 out of 21 classrooms. This has resulted in some improvement in the climate and culture of the building.
 - b) The principal has used the Danielson framework to create a peer observation tool to facilitate teachers going into stronger teachers' classrooms to conduct peer observations. After the visits, the teachers meet with the principal to develop a plan.

The leadership team needs to promote high expectations for the academic performance of students in addition to behavioral expectations. Additionally, expectations for the professional performance of teachers needs to be clearly communicated, monitored, and addressed when lacking.

- ii. School leaders communicate a vision for the school that is understood by all stakeholders.
 - a) Teachers and parents can articulate the essence of the vision.
 - 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, "To meet the students' needs to be successful in the present as well as future."

The school leaders have done a good job of communicating the vision of the school. All stakeholders can articulate the vision of preparing students for post-secondary success.

- iii. School leaders intentionally develop teacher leaders and encourage staff to develop leadership and management skills.
 - a) The principal values distributed leadership and "coaching up" of his staff. He 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.

This distributed leadership structure fosters a sense of shared responsibility among the staff for improving the school.

- iv. The principal has instituted measures to improve daily attendance for students, and this is having positive effect.
 - a) The school hosts monthly attendance award ceremonies for 95% attenders. These students participate in games, contests, and parties called the "Pack Party."
 - b) Last school year the 95% attenders received uniform shirts.

The instituted measures are having positive effect on attendance, but overall attendance still remains a problem, as well as a high level of truancy.

Factors that limit effective student learning:

- i. The vision for the school is not accompanied by a clearly articulated strategic plan for accomplishing it.
 - a) School leaders identify goals related to the accomplishment of the vision, and highlight various strategies to accomplish those goals, but there is not an intentional plan to enact those strategies. One example of this is the goal to have at least 75% of 9th graders earn at least 5 credits in their first year of high school. The strategies identified are: progress monitoring, data conferences, credit recovery and grade improvement. However, there are no articulated activities to accomplish them, nor is there is any articulated system for benchmarking and monitoring these strategies to ensure they are effectively leading to the desired outcome.

The goals and priorities in the Comprehensive Improvement plan are related to the vision, but do not detail a systematic strategy for achieving the priorities. There isn't a description of strategic initiatives to be undertaken, nor are there systems stated for monitoring early evidence of change and short-term outcomes to make improvements along the way. The principal needs to engage his leadership team and other stakeholders in an exercise of designing a strategic plan to accomplish the vision.

- ii. The school generally runs smoothly, but there are still instances when transitions between classes are not as effective as they can be, and the where the climate in some classrooms is not positive enough to produce an environment conducive to learning.
 - a. Observations of transitions reveal that they are not a smooth as they can be. Other than school leaders, teachers were not routinely seen in the hallways or at their doors ushering students along to their classes.
 - b. Students were often seen lingering in the hallways after transitions when they should be in their classes.
 - c. Students were seen in hallways during class time without a hall pass.

The school leadership should work to enhance transitions between classes and address areas of the school where teachers do not consistently implement agreed procedures to ensure a productive learning environment.

4.4 Domain 4: The Culture of Learning**The Culture of Learning requires support in targeted areas****Factors that support effective student learning:**

- i. School leaders and staff promote, show respect for, and maintain positive relationships with all members of the school community.
 - a) Students in two focus groups indicated that all staff treat them with respect and are invested in their success. They spoke very positively of the principal, affectionately referring to him as "dad." They all indicated that there is someone in the building to whom they can go to if they have a problem.
 - b) Teachers in a focus group spoke very positively of school leaders. They indicated that the feedback they receive is respectful and not demeaning.
 - c) Parents in a focus group spoke very highly of teachers. They indicated strongly that the teachers care about their children. They have very positive regard for the principal and highlighted the ways in which he has improved the school, and continues to improve it. They recounted what the school was like after it became a high school and commend the

principal for where the school is now. One parent commented, “They are as invested in our kids as we are.” One teacher said that the school is, “One team. A family of staff committed to educating our students and making them better individuals overall.”

“The school has a family like atmosphere,” say parents. Students and teachers made similar comments. Teachers maintain collegial, supportive relationships. Students feel cared for by the adults, and parents feel respected by adults and acknowledge that the adults to care about their children.

- ii. The work environment is very collegial.
 - a) Teachers in a focus group positively describe their supportive professional relationships, and teachers made comments like, “There is a supportive culture at Penn Treaty,” and “The, “The culture is respectful, collaborative, and challenging.”
 - b) The principal has established the Penn Treaty Ambassador Program, in which teachers are supported by peers.

The collegial relationship and support from peers serve to help teachers not feel alone in improving their practice. To ensure that this program is effective and improves academic outcomes for students, school leadership should coordinate it with lesson observation data and lesson plan feedback.

- iii. The climate of the building has markedly improved.
 - a) Parents and students, as well as teachers, in focus groups unanimously agree that the building is much calmer since...and has less negative interactions among students and between students and adults.
 - b) The school has a “no cell phone” policy. Students turn in their cell phones on entry to the school and retrieve them at the end of the day. Students in a focus group unanimously support the initiative and agree that it helps them to focus and limits the distractions during classes.

The principal attributes much of this improvement in the climate of the school to his climate manager. He says that he “worked magic.” The students also hold the climate manager in high regard.

Factors that limit effective student learning:

- i. Aspects of the culture for learning that need improvement are directly related to meeting the individual academic needs for all students,
 - a) The learning experience in many classrooms is not engaging for students, nor are they rich in experiences that will help them to overcome their knowledge and skill deficits.
 - b) One teacher commented, “Sometimes, students who are on grade level, or near grade level, probably meet with enough success to prepare them for the next grade or school. However, for many of our students who are below grade level, the curriculum is frustrating. Instead of rising to the challenge, many of these students lack engagement in the classroom. They don't participate or try to learn, and are often disruptive in the classroom.”

This finding echoes the challenges noted in 4.1, regarding the need for more differentiation to ensure students receive the proper level of instruction.

4.5 Domain 5: Family and Community Engagement

Family and Community Engagement requires support in targeted areas

Factors that support effective student learning:

- i. School leaders and some teachers make concerted efforts to regularly communicate with parents.
 - a) Parents in a focus group unanimously agreed that teachers and school leaders regularly communicate with them about the performance of their children.
 - b) All students in a focus group indicated that teachers generally put their grades in the district's online system so that they and their parents can access. This was also confirmed by parents in the focus group.
- ii. The school has formed partnerships with many community entities that support the school and the students.
 - a) Penn Treaty partners 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 WHY Media Lab. These organizations support the school in diverse ways, including academic and tutoring services, college preparation, filling out FASFA forms, sporting activities, mental health support, electives, and fundraising.

These partnerships work well to support the academic and social development of students.

- iii. The school has established a collaborative culture that involves the participation of parents.
 - a) Parents in a focus group indicate that they are always welcome at the school and their input is always respected.
 - b) One parent in a community focus group meeting indicated, "Penn Treaty has an open-door policy and parents are invited in." Another commented, "Our school community is very involved at Penn Treaty."

The school has created a welcoming environment for parents where they feel respected and heard.

Factors that limit effective student learning:

- i. 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.

Parents in a focus group indicated that parents who do not take the initiative to engage the school, may not be as informed about their children's performance or about what happens at the school as other parents who are more engaged. The principal could explore strategies for reaching parents who may not be as engaged with the school. The challenge for the school is to reach out to more parents so that the number of parents who are engaged with the school increases. Additionally, the principal should consider the possibilities of parent volunteers and shared decision-making to engage interested parents more meaningfully in the development of the school.

