

Site Visit Report: i3 Academy

This Site Visit Report presents i3 Academy's identified strengths, opportunities for improvement, and observations related to compliance with CSP grant requirements and implementation of a high quality academic program. Analysis and ratings were informed by data gained from public sources, school policy, finance, academic, and cultural artifacts, on-site observations, and interviews with key leaders, all grounded in the research base on charter school functions, school improvement, and successful school implementation, expansion, and replication. The report considers i3 Academy's work related to standards in the four core areas of charter school functions as they relate to the CSP grant and its goals:

1. **Leadership and Operations** – the central elements of a charter school that, working together, ensure a clear vision, aligned strategies, and adequate, effectively managed resources to achieve them
2. **Talent and Human Capital** – the capacity and skills of the school's teachers and staff, and the systems in place to acquire and develop the professional capacity necessary to achieve its vision
3. **Culture** – the school's climate and the adult and student experiences that make up school life and make it a compelling place for adults to work and students to learn
4. **Instruction** – the strategies and practices that most directly contribute to students' academic outcomes and the school's vision for academics into individual student growth and learning

The report does not consider all standards related to high quality charter schools, but rather, it provides a snapshot of performance in key areas that are indicators of quality and evidence that CSP requirements and goals are being met or on target to be met.

This report provides a rating for each standard against the following scale:

- Exceeds / on target to exceed the standard
- Meets / on target to meet the standard
- Partially meets / on target to partially meet the standard
- Does not meet / not on target to meet the standard

Leadership and Operations

1. The facility is well-suited to the education model and students' needs.

Rating:  Exceeds

Definition: The space is safe, clean, orderly, well-maintained, comfortable, and provides adequate space for classroom division required for grade levels served and for the education model.

Purpose: Environment is a critical component to the student learning experience and a teacher's ability to instruct.

Quality Standard: There is clear evidence that the facility plan provides for adequate space and the environment enhances program implementation. Class sizes are appropriate, and the building is safe and welcoming. Space allows for full implementation of the education model (technology, PBL, etc.) and all core school functions (general instruction, auxiliary instructional spaces for classes or programs, school nutrition, and physical education.)

Comments:

- The facility was specifically designed around the school's model. Layout of the facility included the library as a central focal space for the school. Areas for collaboration were visible throughout the school with tables and space for movement. The facility had a dedicated "Maker's Space" room, aligned with the STEAM model. Classrooms were organized by floor with a designated color. Each grade level space included a common area. Classroom sizes were adequate for class size targets and allowed for additional growth as well as functional flexibility and collaboration among classrooms. Classrooms were outfitted with age and grade appropriate furniture aligned with the school's model, including convertible desks that could be arranged into group tables, as well as space for gathering of students together for shared activities.
- The building included an adequately sized gym with a storage space for gym equipment.
- The facility did not include a lunchroom, and the school reports that lunch is shared in classrooms as a part of their programming.
- Adequate space for pull-out for various programs such as Special Education (speech, OT, PT), gifted, and EL programming was available. The school also, as part of its focus on promoting wellness for the whole child, included a dedicated room for students to unwind or to take a break and get staff support or guidance as needed. Sensory furniture was noted in this room and other rooms to support students' needs.

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- The facility included adequate office space to support key personnel.
 - Indicators of safety and security were evident in facility design and equipment. The school maintained secured doors, managed by a receptionist housed in a dedicated reception area. During the school door, we observed doors remaining secured and only accessible by authorized staff. Fencing in the playground area was observed. Network and technology assets and curricular materials and equipment were observed to be secured or in spaces where they could be actively monitored.
 - The facility design actively promotes the school's culture. Permanent signage around the school exhibited some of the school's core beliefs ("Empower Learners, Change the World; Imaging; Investigate.)
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2. There is a strong leadership team in place with competencies adequately matched to context and need.

Rating: ● Meets

Definition: The leadership team possesses a balance of instructional and operational leadership capacity. Leadership is accessible to staff, students, and family and knowledgeable about key strategies and progress indicators.

Purpose: Strong school-level leadership is essential for operationalizing a successful education model, supporting a strong instruction program, and ensuring family and community engagement. Charter school leadership requires a mix of diverse competencies.

Quality Standard: There is a leadership team in place with adequate instructional and operational competencies. Multiple team members demonstrate appropriate knowledge and skill sets to operationalize the school model, support teachers, and build strong relationships with students, families, and the community.

Comments:

- The school staffing model includes a Head of School (Dr. Martin Nalls), a Chief Academic Officer (Dr. Dylan Ferniany), an Assistant Principal for Student Affairs (Mr. Bo Garrett), Middle School Principal (Dr. Tamala Maddox). This staffing model addresses key components of the school required for effective operations.
- The backgrounds and expertise of the leadership team align with the needs of the school both academically and operationally. Leadership includes expertise in areas such as innovative education, education leadership at the school district, and state levels, teaching, technology, community relations, program operations, education administration, and community relations, development, auditing and accounting.
- The school reports a strength of the leadership team is in their ability to collaborate. The Head of School specifically states, "We are not fragmented." Dr.

Nalls was able to articulate an area of challenge they are working on as a team, the ability to be proactive and to get out of survival mode. Further, Dr. Nalls was able to articulate specific needs that would support this work, including technical assistance around policies and procedures, particularly with meeting expectations from the state related to reporting.

- The Head of School was able to articulate knowledge of board and school leadership roles and was also able to describe areas of strength and opportunity in board function. Head of School obtains networking and coaching support through the Charter School Growth Fund.
 - Evidence on the website indicates that the governing board meets regularly (every other month.)
 - Governing Board member bios published demonstrate a diverse set of professionals representing a broad range of community stakeholders. Areas of expertise of those serving encompass general business and entrepreneurship, facilities, equity and diversity, leadership development, non-profit management, community engagement, education, change management, legal, business development, and public school administration. Stakeholders on the board include parents, local business owners, local non-profits, and those serving in public education at the local and state levels. Of note is that the Board Chair is a prior state superintendent, representation from The Woodlawn Foundation and Kuumba Community Arts, a non-profit aligned with the school's model is present, and several parents serve.
 - Evidence reviewed in the school's by-laws and practices indicate the board and leadership team are working collaboratively to continue to meet the federal definition of a charter school. Specifically noted is that the school publishes the definition of a charter school on its website. In the school's FAQs, the school notes that it is tuition free and non-selective. The website addresses its legal responsibility related to enrollment and the lottery process and articulates eligibility, registration, priority status options, and the lottery process and timing. The Elementary and Middle School Orientation guide available on the website specifically address compliance with IDEA. The board has recently established committees that address various aspects of the school. These subcommittees meet before board meetings to discuss priorities. Noted is that the board members take an active interest in bringing their expertise to support the needs of the school but may need further guidance on governance practices.
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3. There is evidence that the school has sound financial policies and procedures that are implemented with fidelity.

Rating: Partially Meets

Definition: The school has adopted and implemented comprehensive policies and procedures that ensure segregation of duties, a decision-making process, and proper oversight of financial systems. Transparency for stakeholders of process and product is evident.

Purpose: Effective management of financial systems is critical to ensuring the school can invest adequate resources to sustain the school. Transparency ensures the school meets non-profit obligations and is a good steward of public funds

Quality Standard: Fiduciary responsibility for public funds is evident, and school demonstrates financial priorities supporting the school model, transparent fiscal practices and records according to non-profit, state, and local regulatory and reporting requirements.

Comments:

- I3 has submitted reimbursement requests in a timely manner and provided adequate evidence that expenditures are allowable, appropriately documented, and align with grant goals. The school submitted the quarterly report for October 2021; however, it was not submitted by the required due date.
- The school presented a board adopted procurement policy. Evidence of compliance with this process includes an RFP section published on the website, micro-purchase threshold as defined align in CSP procurement, and use of purchase orders, as well as an initiation and approval hierarchy.
- The school demonstrated evidence that there are systems in place for decision-making that ensures both segregation of duties and some oversight of the CSP grant and other financial decisions. The staff has a weekly finance meeting where administration talks through plans and what has been processed, how money is spent, and to connect needs from faculty and staff with possible opportunities within the CSP budget. Dr. Nalls stated that this has made teachers more strategic in how they spend. Contracts are approved by the board at specific thresholds, although it is not evident how else the board oversees the budget and progress towards grant goals.
- Magali Monzon, Bookkeeper and Alana Karl, Director of Development, communicated the school's largest funding priorities as; reading and math coaches, professional development, curricular materials, wrap around services with a social worker, counselor, and behavior interventionist. CSP grant budget and expenditures corroborate these priority area claims. Ms. Monzon communicated that the priorities for use of CSP funds has shifted away from startup purchases to human capital, ensuring the school has the right personnel in place. The school monitors grant goal priority areas and use of funds by reviewing

unused funds, low funded areas such as technology, leveraging other monies such as ESSR more intentionally.

- Ms. Monzon communicated examples of efficiencies and internal controls. Active in the decision making process are Dr.Nalls, Ms. Monzon, and a part-time CFO who helps to guide the big picture. Ms. Monzon writes checks, and Ms. Karl is not part of this process to segregate duties. A purchase requisition with a tracking system is in place. Budgets are established with the leadership team.
- Board minutes on the website were incomplete and not up-to-date. Although upcoming board meetings are posted, board agendas and minutes demonstrating effective oversight, particularly over finances and the CSP grant were notably lacking. The last posting was from November of 2020. These minutes demonstrate that some oversight is in place including discussion around recruitment and contracts, as well as use of a dashboard that has been developed. Review of financials was notably missing from the minutes. The website did not include published financials or a budget, although a space for publishing RFPs is visible.
- Asset management is conducted through Asset Tiger for Technology, where items are tagged, and a listing of curricular assets is also maintained. The school provided inventory lists. Inventory lists do not identify funding source. Evidence of tagging of non-consumable assets other than technology was not observed.

4. The school has a system for meeting non-academic needs of students as necessary to support student learning.

Rating: ● Meets

Definition: Support services such as health, mental, emotional, physical, and social health, nutrition, social services, college and career planning, and transportation are adequate and coordinated to serve students' needs.

Purpose: Students have emotional, physical, social, and logistical needs that must be met for them to engage fully in learning.

Quality Standard: Services supporting health, nutrition, emotional, physical, social, and transportation are provided as necessary. Service providers are coordinated centrally and effectively.

Comments:

- I3 Academy has a number of programs and supports to address the physical, social, emotional, mental health, nutrition, and transportation needs of students.
- The school provides a physical education where students utilize equipment to exercise and develop fine and gross motor skills.

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- i3 has a health room that is staffed with two nurses to address student health. The school also has a detailed protocol to address Covid 19.
 - The school offers an intentionally planned counseling program with a stated mission to: "Advocate for the overall development of the child, which includes the academic, social and career aspects of our program to promote a collaborative relationship with parents, students, community and faculty." Counselors listen and problem solve on issues such as divorce, transitions behavior, attendance, managing emotions productively. They also provide support for personal challenges, create a plan for success, and explore career awareness. Notable in the counseling plan is a parent engagement component where parents are supported with academic and non-academic tools and supports for their student and a connection to community resources.
 - The school utilizes a SEL curriculum called Caring School Community produced by Center for Collaborative Classroom, and the daily schedule incorporates time for SEL learning.
 - The Physical Education program is greatly expanded to incorporate a variety of wellness activities, including movement and performance, personal and social behaviors, fitness, and wellness mindset. Recess is a committed part of the school's daily schedule.
 - The school offers an After-School program for K-5 students Monday-Thursday
 - I3 provides transportation utilizing bus hubs to ensure equitable access to the school for all students. The school has 3 or 4 buses for 2 campuses and are working to increase their fleet. Dr. Nalls communicated that based on feedback, there are no major issues.
 - A school nutrition program has been fully implemented and equipment has been procured. Dr. Nalls reports that last year, meals were prepared off-site, but this year the school has hired a vendor and is preparing meals at the middle school campus and bringing food over to the elementary students. The school is reimbursed through a Civil Money Penalty (CMP) grant, and they have extended waivers so parents have not been asked to fund lunch. Breakfast and lunch menus for the program show a variety of healthy, balanced meal options. Students eat meals in their classrooms as part of the school's norm.
 - There was no evidence provided or identified related to extracurricular (sports, clubs) programming.
 - Dr. Nalls reports that a key component of the school's culture is the family success plan and that the school's goal is to ensure that the entire family is successful. He noted examples of jobless parents and those interested in going back to school. He further stated a desire to motivate, inspire, and plant seeds, which the school feels will encourage them to do the same for their students. To this end, the school has procured a social worker and community liaison to implement this plan and to work directly with families by mobilizing resources for families, and Dr. Nalls noted examples such as when power is turned off or families are facing eviction.
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Talent and Human Capital

1. Processes are in place for the acquisition, development, evaluation, and retention of talent.

Rating: ● Meets

Definition: A school's needs, research on effective practice, and recruiting strategies are combined to identify professionals whose talents and capacity align to the mission. Intentional processes are in place for retention, development, and feedback loops.

Purpose: Provides for the acquisition of talent through various means such as, career fairs, local colleges and universities, professional partnerships, internal networking, etc. that improves the quality of the team and program delivery. Ensures development and retention of quality staff. Improves academic achievement and operational effectiveness and efficiency through a more highly skilled and prepared team.

Quality Standard: There is clear evidence that the school invests significant time and resources to the process of acquiring the right people and supporting their development. Evidence includes establishment of a sustainable and competitive compensation package, strong retention rates, a professional development plan that considers the needs of the individual and overall organization, reported levels of satisfaction with employment, and high staff retention rates.

Comments:

- Leadership oversees instructional staff through observations and feedback utilizing a platform called Whetstone. Dr. Nalls communicated that he has started providing 1:1 support as needed and identified some teachers to just meet to listen and provide support and coaching outside of evaluation. He reports that all interactions are not evaluative, and many are informal. He expressed his commitment to building relationships, "I see you." Formal evaluations are provided mid and end of year. These formal observations, aligned with accreditation, use ELEOT and focus more on what students are doing. Dr. Nalls noted that there are limitations where context is needed, so the informal evaluations are also valuable.
- Dr. Nalls stated that the number one priority for the CSP grant is teacher and staff support. The school dedicates resources to ensure that paraprofessionals receive extensive professional development support. In addition, he acknowledged that as a start-up, the school has people coming together from many different experiences, and he is focused on providing training and development to get everyone on the same page related to academic values and practices, as well as school culture. The CSP budget and expenditures support this priority claim.

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- Staff development is described by the Head of School as “tremendous.” Development work begins every summer before school starts with a summit that includes all types of PD. Last summer the author of *Hacking School Discipline* was brought in to address challenges the teachers had faced with student behaviors. Collaborative Classroom, a non-profit provider and producer of the SEL curriculum, was part of the summit and provides training throughout the year. Solution Tree provided professional development around RTI and interventions for SEL.
 - The school model provides for a paraprofessional in every K-2 classroom with a goal to build their own teacher pipeline by providing scholarships to paraprofessionals to pursue degrees in education.
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Culture

1. There is evidence of a staffing model that results in adequate, representative staffing aligned to the educational model.

Rating: ● Meets

Definition: A school's staffing approach is effective and aligned to the education model and context, resulting in adequate and representative professional capacity to deliver the educational model.

Purpose: Teachers' skills, experience, and cultural capacity can affect their effectiveness on delivering the educational model and positively impacting student growth.

Quality Standard: The core components of a school's education model are well-served by the staffing structure, with teachers who demonstrate adequate professional capacity, are representative of the community and student body served, and demonstrate skills aligned to the educational model.

Comments:

- The organizational chart and staff list reviewed includes a Head of School reporting directly to the Governing Board. The leadership team reporting to the Head of School is comprised of a Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Chief Academic Officer (CAO), Assistant Principal of Student Affairs (APSA), and a Founding Middle School Principal (FMSP). The CFO oversees the Director of Development and a Payroll Specialist. The CAO is responsible for all instructional staff including coaches, teachers, and paraprofessionals the elementary level, and the FMSP oversees these positions at the middle school level (currently 6th grade). The APSA supervises technology, communications, after school programming, clerical and operational, school nurse, and social worker personnel. The staffing model exhibits adequate academic and operational capacity in both leadership and other staffing. The model provides for distributed leadership that balances workload and ensures competency in oversight falls under a leaders' area of expertise. Notably, the school employs more paraprofessionals than typical for a public school, which aligns with the school's model and intent to grow a pipeline of future teachers.
- One position noted in the CSP grant application is an Academic Integration Specialist intended to expand capacity for the PLC. No such position was noted on the current organizational chart.
- As noted, administration at the school is diverse and credentialed with experience in education and non-profit sectors that align with the school's needs and mission.
- The Head of School reports staffing as a strength of the school. Teachers are experienced and there are few novices on staff. The school was able to recruit

staff from all over the metro area that were high performing and understand the school's mission.

2. School culture is representative of the community, positive, and inclusive.

Rating: ● Meets

Definition: The school has a distinctive set of core values, attitudes, norms, practices, and routines that align with the mission, vision, and model. The school culture is welcoming to students, staff, families, and the community, and creates a place where adults and students want to be.

Purpose: Ensure all school team members have a positive shared experience, while creating an environment to build trusting relationships and the foundation for student learning and success.

Quality Standard: There is evidence that there is a shared, positive experience for adults and students in this school, which focuses on student learning as the ultimate objective and welcomes all students, families, and the community. Staff and students work towards common goals in a supportive environment where relational trust is fostered through mutual respect. Evidence of schoolwide norms, traditions, celebrations, shared attitudes, a common vocabulary, and school pride are pervasive across all school structures.

Comments:

- The school's CSP grant application notes a priority on imagination, creativity, innovation, positive and affirming environment, student voice, schoolwide norms, and addressing underlying causes of behavior. Several observations demonstration implementation of these cultural values were evident. Students were observed in core content area classrooms, as well as in art and MakerSpace class employing imagination, creativity, and innovation such as creating watercolor designs and constructing with blocks and other materials. During the site visit, instructional staff and other school staff were consistently observed using respectful language and tone and showing interest and actively listening to students sharing their ideas or needs. An observed teacher was calm and supportive when a student was demonstrating a disruptive emotional outburst, and the situation was quickly diffused and the student was able to return to productively working. The school provided a dedicated space for students to reflect or obtain support for emotional needs or counseling/coaching. Norms were posted pervasively across the school.
- Communication is a key part of the school's culture. This was evidenced by a robust website with clear, comprehensive, and easy-to-locate information. The school provides both an elementary and middle school orientation. The website is also available in Spanish. The school utilizes Google Classroom for students, which includes a guardian summary to keep parents apprised of academic progress and grades. During the pandemic, the school focused heavily on family engagement

and frequently conducted a Facebook Live event. Returning back to face-to-face, the school has continued the Facebook Live events, as they were popular among stakeholders and gives a voice for suggestions and questions by parents.

- One component of the school's culture is school pride, which is evidenced with the dress code including branded clothing and the "Swag Shop."
- The school's academic culture is evidenced broadly through the facility design, staffing choices, particularly supporting non-academic student supports, MakerSpace class, the daily and yearly schedule that includes time for valued focus areas (SEL, play time, professional development, for example.) The classrooms exhibited a cohesive focus on topics the school values such established norms, becoming agents of change, growth mindset and goal setting, literacy, and problem solving.

3. Engagement and contributions of all stakeholders, including families and the community, are prioritized and valued.

Rating: ● Meets

Definition: School culture and practices reflect the engagement and influence of all stakeholders. The school has effective strategies for engaging all families and the community in key school decisions and activities.

Purpose: Incorporate diverse and representative practices into school functions. Plan for sustainability by ensuring strong ties between the school and its families and the broader community.

Quality Standard: There is evidence of regular practices and processes for engaging families, community members, and other stakeholders in key activities and decisions. Structures are included where family and community voice are welcomed and considered in tactical and strategic decision making.

Comments:

- As noted above, the school values student voice and promotes opportunities to share their ideas and needs about the school program.
- 4 of the 8 board members are parents at i3, which demonstrates parent voice is valued in decision making. In addition to substantial representation in governance and the family success plan, the school maintains a family advisory board that supports the school by promoting legislative priorities, most recently around local funding. The school is beginning to host legislators at the school so that parents can tell their stories. Dr. Nalls expressed an interest in giving parents a role in removing barriers for the school in meeting its mission.
- No evidence of board training was available for review.

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- Building community partnerships and active engagement is a key value the school demonstrates. The school was built through a partnership with and mentorship by the Eastlake Foundation, which developed a high performing charter school in Georgia, Charles R. Drew Charter School. The Woodlawn Foundation is not only represented on the school's board, but actively engages in the work of the school, such as promoting enrollment. The Goodrich Foundation, like Woodlawn, provides not only board representation, but also ongoing support of the school. Another example is the school holding a Covid vaccination clinic and weekly Covid testing for staff, students, and community members, allowing community to actively see the school in action. The school is also affiliated with and benefits from affiliation with the New Schools Venture Fund and the Charter Schools Growth Fund.
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4. The campus exemplifies a student-centered learning environment.

Rating:  Exceeds

Definition: The campus is a welcoming, safe, and caring environment for adults, students, and families with displays and visual evidence that demonstrates student academic success, growth, and cultural norms.

Purpose: Provide a positive and supportive environment for student learning.

Quality Standard: There is evidence of cultural norms and quality student work, both process and product, throughout the campus. Classrooms and common spaces are designed in alignment with the school's model, the unique student population, and the school's cultural elements, providing an environment where students, staff, and families feel a sense of ownership and belonging.

Comments:

- Academic norms were evidenced with posted rubrics and exemplars/models observed in numerous classrooms.
- The leadership team and board have implemented a data dashboard which includes information such as tracking behavioral incidences and types, academic performance and growth by semester, parent survey data focused on the student experience, and student survey data. The data is tied to specific goal targets, progress monitored monthly, and used to drive decision making.
- Cultural norms were widely observed during the site visit, and evidence of consistent application across classrooms was also observed.
- During the site visit, instructional staff and other school staff were consistently observed using respectful language and tone and showing interest and actively

listening to students sharing their ideas or needs. One behavioral intervention was calm and supportive, and the situation was quickly diffused, and the student was able to return to productively working.

Instruction

1. Teacher instructional and assessment practices are effective, research or evidence-based, and aligned to the academic model.

Rating: ● Meets

Definition: Varied and appropriate instructional and assessment strategies that ensure students have multiple ways to engage with content and demonstrating absolute achievement and growth are effectively employed and align with the school's model. Instruction motivates students to make psychological and behavioral investments in learning.

Purpose: Ensures that teachers are aware of student learning needs and skill levels and can teach and assess in ways that connect to the students, promote active engagement, and drive strong academic outcomes.

Quality Standard: Teachers employ a balance of student and teacher directed activities that promote engagement and equitable access. Multiple learning modalities are addressed through varied instructional tasks, resources, and strategies. Technology if effectively integrated into the instructional program. Students are provided with opportunities to access learning in authentic ways and to actively engage in lessons. Appropriate scaffolding is employed to ensure all students can access knowledge and develop skills. Academic rigor is evident in questioning and academic tasks promoting higher level cognition. Teachers maximize instructional time. Student growth is apparent. Both formative and summative assessment data is used to drive instructional decisions at the classroom, grade, and school level.

Comments:

- The school has employed curriculum, support, and resources as noted in the CSP grant application, including Alabama standards, Collaborative Literacy, Investigations Math, the Alabama Math and Science Teaching Initiative (AMSTI), and FOSS, and Social Emotional Learning.
- The school model incorporates STEAM based learning with Project Based Learning (PBL), with a focus on: challenging problems/questions, sustained inquiry, authenticity, student voice and choice, reflection, critique and revision, and public products. Evidence obtained in the site visit demonstrated that implementation of the model is still in progress. Significant groundwork has been laid with professional development around academic culture, investment in and procurement of furniture, materials, and facilities aligned, and pervasive mindset work on norms supporting STEAM and PBL. Curricular materials selected including Math Investigations, Collaborative Literacy with SEL components, as well as a standards based grading approach further support the model.

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- STEAM is evident in the MakerSpace and art classrooms. Further planning is in progress for implementing a more interdisciplinary approach incorporating projects and collaborative planning among staff such as regular education teachers, specials teachers (art, MakerSpace, music, and foreign language), media specialist, and other members of the staff.
 - The school's CSP grant application noted as primary instructional strategies to be employed the use of project-based learning, inquiry-guided instruction, interactive modeling, and math and learning labs. Project-based learning was not evidenced in the visit and was reported by the Head of School to be still in the planning stages. Visits to classrooms provided evidence of inquiry-guided instruction, modeling, and the use of academic supports such as learning labs being actively employed across the school.
 - Rigor is embedded into programming via tiers in the classroom where differentiated teaching and learning take place. Dr. Nalls communicated a desire to provide rigor in every student's learning program that does not overwhelm struggling students, but still pushes them to higher levels of achievement. Dr. Nalls communicated a future desire to utilize the gifted teacher schoolwide.
 - Through the site visit, classroom teachers and paraprofessionals exhibited engagement with a majority of students. Lessons provided scaffolding, obvious differentiation with small group and one-on-one instruction, and some alternative lessons and workspaces. Students were also observed utilizing many hands-on materials such as math manipulatives. Literature was widely present across classrooms and shared spaces, with the library being a focal point of the school. Teachers were observed reading both with students and to students, and students were also observed enjoying literature on their own while actively recording on note-catchers or graphic organizers or discussing stories with the teacher, class, or a peer.
 - The school utilizes iReady twice per year and MAP three times per year as part of the school's growth portfolio. Dr. Nalls noted that iReady is not as aligned with ACAP as they had hoped. The school opts into a statewide data sharing agreement so that they can share scores and see how on track they are.
 - Makerspace is a dedicated class with a classroom and a variety of hands-on materials engaging students' creativity and aligning with the school's STEAM model. The school has partnered with a local non-profit quilt maker to provide quilting kits and projects for students. Students observed during the site visit were actively engaged with a variety of materials and could articulate their ideas and why they enjoyed Makerspace time, as well as some other activities they had done.
 - Several non-core academic classes are offered aside from Makerspace including music, art, and foreign language (Spanish). These classes are material rich, and observation of instruction showed highly engaged students and purposeful instruction.
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2. There is evidence of high expectations for academic performance and a school-wide priority on the quality of student work and a growth mindset.

Rating: ● Meets

Definition: The set-up and focus of the environment is on the needs of the student body, goals for student learning, student work, and student development.

Purpose: Creates an environment that is conducive for learning and student success.

Quality Standard: There is clear evidence that students are motivated to do their best, that all possible accommodations are made to place the focus on students and learning, and that all staff and faculty participate in creating this focus through proper displays, set-ups, and interactions. Evidence of models/ exemplars and expectations of quality are displayed in classrooms and throughout the school and are articulated during instructional time. Displays throughout the school evidence the learning process and growth.

Comments:

- The school has adopted a standards-based approach to grading and has defined “mastery.”
- Exemplars and models were widely displayed across the school. Individual student and class goals and tracking were also evidenced across classrooms. The school’s Leader Board is another tool used to promote growth and focus on goals.
- The school leadership conducts ongoing data meetings with teachers; there are pathways within iReady where students can continue to work on standards outside of testing for progress monitoring, and this can be used with the RTI process.
- Dr. Nalls has asked staff to develop individualized goals with students and to work towards owning their data. The school has a goal of implementing Student Led Conferences where data and progress can be shared and celebrated.

3. A system of identification and instructional supports are effectively serving all subgroups (EL, SPED, gifted, remedial, etc.).

Rating: ● Meets

Definition: Students who require English learner, special education, gifted, remedial, or other services are identified through a systemic and equitable process. Adequate data collection, instructional practices, and resources ensure that all students are

Purpose: Ensure effective and equitable services are provided so that all learners can participate fully in school culture, achieve proficiency, and demonstrate success.

provided with the supports necessary to achieve success.

Quality Standard: There is clear evidence of a school-wide system for identifying students in need of additional supports or enrichment. Data is utilized regularly during the RTI process and in programming to progress monitor and to adjust instruction appropriately. There is clear evidence of students receiving supports to fully engage with lessons (push-in, pull-out, tutoring, etc.) Coordinated efforts between the general education teacher and auxiliary program ensure student learning is seamless.

Comments:

- The school has published its SPED plan and process compliance with IDEA on the website and is also published in the elementary and middle school orientation guide. Currently, 14% of the students at i3 receive SPED supports, requiring the school to invest in additional supports to ensure IEP obligations are met.
- Gifted services are provided to eligible students after evidence of aptitude, characteristics, and performance have been established. The gifted teacher provides pull-out services.
- The school employs a multi-tiered Response to Intervention plan, which includes a universal screener for identification. Low student:teacher ratios were observed and supported differentiated learning, and K-2 classrooms have a dedicated paraprofessional. Ratios include: Kindergarten and 1st 10:1, 2nd and 3rd 12:1, and 4th-6th 25:1. Some pullout is employed, as well as small groups within the classroom. As noted above, iReady pathways blend well with RTI for focused instruction and progress monitoring. The school has a literacy center and a math lab, as well as extended learning after school.
- The Spanish teacher also provides part-time English Language Learner support. She has a scheduled aligned with students on her case load.
- The school employs a gifted teacher, 3 SPED teachers, and a 12-month SPED coordinator, a behavior interventionist, and 2 learning interventionists for math and ELA. The school hired an interpreter for EL needs and contracted with Speech Language Processing services through Child's Play.

4. Technology is accessible and used effectively.

Rating: ● Meets

Definition: Teachers and students have access to technology resources necessary to implement the school's model and to support learning.

Purpose: Support student learning through equitable access to technology to drive instruction.

Quality Standard: There is clear evidence of adequate technology resources being used effectively to support engaging instruction and student learning. Technology skill development is incorporated into programming. Technology use is managed and monitored for safety and effective use.

Comments:

- One-to-one technology (iPads) was observed during the site visit, and materials were pervasively used across the school. Students were actively engaged with technology, utilizing several applications that supported the lesson. Teachers leveraged the use of SmartBoard to effectively share videos, slide presentations, and other virtual resources.
 - The school utilizes Clever to consolidate learning applications into one place for easy access by teachers, students, and parents. Google Classroom and Jumprope (Standards Based Grading) are used across the school. The school provides a coding class after school, and Dr. Nalls expressed a desire to integrate coding more during the school day.
 - The school has a partnership with Ed Form for teachers interested in technology. A technology intervention specialist for the elementary and middle school campuses support the teachers in implementing technology professional development they receive and provide job embedded professional development as well.
 - The school tour included a view of the network room where considerable investment into technology was made.
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Commendations and Promising Practices

The school employs promising practices that could be replicated to enhance other charter schools' planning, implementation, operations, or practice.

1. Leadership and Operations

The school has an intentionally planned counseling program that includes a stated mission, defined student supports, and a parent engagement component. The counseling program, in conjunction with the Caring School Community Curriculum work to provide robust support for students' academic, social, emotional, and physical well-being.

The school has implemented a data dashboard, inclusive of student-centered and operational tracking mechanisms, specific goal targets, and a documented process for using the data to drive decision making.

2. Talent and Human Capital

The school has implemented a paraprofessional pipeline strategy and invested significant resources. Paraprofessionals are in every K-2 classroom and receive a scholarship for pursuit of a teaching degree. Not only does this create a hiring bench, but these prospective educators will already be versed in the school's academic programming and culture. An added benefit is that class sizes are reduced from typical public school class sizes and provide for a more personalized curriculum for students.

3. Culture

The school has an active parent advisory board that promotes the needs of the school through legislative advocacy.

Corrective Action and Requested Data

Identified practices not meeting CSP requirements and require redress within a specified timeframe to become compliant.

1. Leadership and Operations

- Board agendas should include regular review and discussion of budget and financials. Included should be evidence of oversight by the board of the CSP grant. These activities should be in place by the next quarterly report on January 10, 2021 (or the closest board meeting following this date.)
- Board agendas, minutes, adopted budget, budget revisions, and financials should be regularly published on the school's website in a more prominent location. Currently, website visitors must scroll to find this information. These activities should be in place by the next quarterly report on January 10, 2021 (or the closest board meeting following this date.)
- Asset management systems should be codified and implemented. With respect to the CSP grant, inventory lists should denote source, and all non-consumable assets should be tagged. An inventorying process should also be codified and implemented. Please address this by the next quarterly report on January 10, 2021.
- Please share your records retention policy by the next quarterly report on January 10, 2021.

2. Talent and Human Capital

- **No corrective action or data requested.**

3. Culture

- **No corrective action or data requested.**

4. Instruction

- Begin purposeful planning for PBL interdisciplinary integration with STEAM to be as a focus for next school year to complete implementation of the full school model. A focus on professional development related to developing and delivering multi-disciplinary units incorporating STEAM and PBL is also recommended. Another recommendation is provision of support teachers in visiting highly effective STEAM and PBL schools. Please be prepared to share your planning progress in July of 2022 during quarterly reporting.

Technical Support

Technical support, training, networking, or resources identified as needs by the school.

- Community in practice opportunities for schools receiving the CSP grant to network and share common concerns, successes, and practices.
- Access to model policies and procedures so that the school is not “building the plane while flying it” and can be more proactive. This also helps with staffing overload, as staff are wearing many hats and being asked to create processes outside of their job scope.
- Affinity groups among the sector, particularly with finance professionals and development officers.
- Training and support professional development offerings related to finance and school operations.
- Training and support for new schools on duties related to reporting to the state.