



Missouri  
Charter Public School Commission

April 7, 2023

Mr. Ramsey Atieh, Chair Board of Directors  
KC International Academy  
414 Wallace  
Kansas City, MO 64125

**RE: 2021-2022 Annual Report**

Dear Mr. Atieh,

This letter transmits the Missouri Charter Public School Commission's 2021-2022 Annual Report of KC International Academy (KCIA). Charter schools sponsored by the Commission are reviewed annually as to their progress in meeting statutes, provisions of their performance contracts and Commission policies. Commission staff review required submissions provided by the school for accuracy, timeliness and compliance. This report is one item in the *comprehensive body of evidence* used in evaluating schools sponsored by the Commission.

This report reflects the six months of FY22 that KCIA was in MCPSC's portfolio. FY22 was the third year of the current five-year contract. KCIA's overall rating for this portion of FY22 is ***partially meets***. KCIA is **on track for renewal**.

- The overall rating on academics is *partially meets*. The focus on student academic growth is clear with the high percentage of growth points earned for all students and student groups and KCIA earning an *exceeds* rating for each of the growth categories. The levels of student proficiency are designated *does not meet*. Additionally, KCIA's proficiency rates fell below the rates of Kansas City Public Schools resulting in a *falls far below* designation. However, in all cases, proficiency is trending in the right direction and should continue to be an area of focus for KCIA.
- KCIA's organizational performance is strong, receiving a *meets* in: financial management, learning environment, governance and operations.

The Commission encourages your board to review the information in this report thoroughly. The FY23 data will be available later this summer. Together, these data should inform the board and management's decision for the 2023-2024 school year. We have attached some questions you and your board may find helpful as you review the annual report and the forthcoming data.

We recognize that the pandemic continues to have an effect on all facets of the organization. KCIA should be proud of the impact you are making for students and families in Kansas City through these difficult times and we look forward to working with you to continue that work. If you have any questions related to the report, please reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robbyn G. Wahby".

Robbyn G. Wahby  
Executive Director

CC: David Leone, Superintendent  
Members, KC International Academy Board of Directors  
Members, Missouri Charter Public School Commission

#### Attachments

Examining your Annual Report Questions  
2021-2022 Annual Report  
FY22 DESE Assurance Checklist  
FY22 School Quality Review Report

## Charter Boards: Examining Your Annual Report from the Commission

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The Missouri Charter Public School Commission has a contract with the Board of each of our sponsored charter public schools. The Annual Report is one of the Commission’s tools to promote a positive and forward-looking relationship with the Charter School Board relative to their accountability for the performance of the school and to the conditions of the contract.

Student, school, and education system data is reasonably complex. The Annual Report, by itself, may not tell a complete story about the progress and circumstances of the school enterprise. Here are some questions that members of Boards may find useful in working with, and supporting, their School Leader in using the Annual Report data to focus the efforts of the Board.

	<b>Considerations When You Look at the Annual Report</b>
<b>For Board Chairs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does our Board’s Annual Calendar force us to routinely examine the key elements of the Annual Report?</li> <li>• Does our Board, collectively, have a clear understanding of both where we are and where we expect to be?</li> <li>• Does our Board, collectively, understand what it will take in resources and support to accelerate achievement gains?</li> <li>• Has our Board taken the necessary Policy, Program, and Partnership actions to support the School Leader and team?</li> </ul>
<b>For Board Members Chairing or Serving on a Student Performance Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do our current and future approaches to Curriculum Alignment and Quality Instruction assure accelerating gains in student performance?</li> <li>• What are the specific Policies, Programs, or Partnership options that are most likely to improve student learning? What is required for local implementation/adaptation as well as fidelity to best practice?</li> <li>• What unique assets and impediments to improvements exist in our school, student population, and community?</li> </ul>
<b>For All Members of the Board</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is our expected rate of improvement for the MAP Performance Index, Student Growth, and Annual Performance Review Points?</li> <li>• How do our most recent results compare to our Performance Contact expectations?</li> <li>• What are the Board and school’s most important levers for accelerating student performance in the next 18 to 36 months?</li> </ul>

# KC International Academy

## 2021-2022 Annual Report

Annual Performance: **Partially Meets**

Year Opened: 1999-2000

Next Renewal: 2023-2024

Location: Kansas City

Enrollment: 654

Grades Served: PK-8

Contract Year: 3/5



*KC International Academy transferred to MCPSC on January 1, 2022. This report reflects Jan. 1, 2022-June 30, 2022.*

# Performance Summary

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	SECTION STANDARD RATING
<b>I. ACADEMICS</b>	
Federal & State Accountability	Meets
Student Academic Proficiency	Partially Meets
Student Academic Growth	Exceeds
Postsecondary Readiness	N/A
School-Specific Academic Measure(s)	Partially Meets
<b>II. FINANCE</b>	
Near-Term Financial Health	Meets
Financial Sustainability	Meets
<b>III. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT</b>	
School Environment	Meets
Education Program Compliance	Meets
Student Rights and Requirements	Meets
School Specific Measures	Partially Meets
<b>IV. GOVERNANCE</b>	
Board Operations	Meets
Holding Management Accountable	Meets
Compliance and Reporting	Meets
<b>V. OPERATIONS</b>	
Financial Management	Meets
Compliance and Reporting	Meets
Employee Rights and Requirements	Meets

# Understanding this Report

Dear Reader,

This report is distributed annually for each school sponsored by the Commission so parents/care givers, community members, elected officials and other stakeholders are informed about the performance of the schools we sponsor. The Commission monitors five key performance areas:

- I.  **Academics** – *How well are the students performing on national, state and interim assessment? Is the school meeting their performance contract goals? Is the school meeting its mission?*
- II.  **Finance** – *Has the school appropriately managed tax payer and philanthropic dollars to ensure the school is sustainable?*
- III.  **Learning Environment** – *Has the school met federal and state requirements so students are safe and have all the rights afforded to them?*
- IV.  **Governance** – *Has the board of directors provided the stewardship, oversight and accountability required of a public school board and a Missouri non-profit?*
- V.  **Operations** – *Has the school operated effectively, safely and in compliance with policies, regulations and statutes?*

The first two pages of this report provide readers with a quick summary of the schools performance. The Annual Performance of the school is rated **Meets**, **Partially Meets/Partially Meets** or **Falls Far Below** based on results in each of the performance areas. Academics can also be rated **Exceeds** if it is higher than the state average. Targets for each indicator can be found in the [performance framework](#). Ratings are color coded throughout the report, as outlined in this chart.

PERFORMANCE RATINGS DEFINED	
 <b>Exceeds</b>	Exceeding expectations and showing exemplary performance. Academic Performance is the only standard eligible for Exceeds.
 <b>Meets</b>	Generally meets the criterion, is performing well, is meeting expectations for performance, and/or minor concern(s) are noted.
 <b>Partially Meets or Does Not Meet</b>	Meets some aspects of the criterion, but not others and/or moderate concern(s) are noted.
 <b>Falls Far Below</b>	Falls far below the stated expectations and/or significant concern(s) are noted. The failures are material and significant to the viability to the school.

Each key performance area contains a specific indicators and measures. Indicators gage these essential compliance and performance areas. The direction of the arrow will tell you if the school’s performance for each specific area is improving or declining since last year’s report.

PERFORMANCE OVER TIME	
	Increasing, moving in the right direction over time
No Arrow	Neither increasing or decreasing
	Decreasing, moving in the wrong direction over time

Each indicator is made up of measures, based on observations and data collected by the Commission. The following pages detail the results of these measures for the current year. When possible, prior year performance and a three year average are noted. Explanations of the various measures, computations (where appropriate), and the source of the data can be found <https://mcpssc.mo.gov/media/pdf/annual-report-terms-calculations-and-sources>.

The Commission wishes to express its gratitude to the National Association of Charter School Authorizers for use of its research and publications, especially Core Performance Framework and Guidance. The Commission has adopted NACSA’s Principles and Standards for authorizing. We have built our performance framework and annual report on NACSA’s research and continue to strengthen our work based on national best practices in charter school accountability.

Sincerely,

Missouri Charter Public School Commission

# Kansas City International Academy Overview

<b>GRADES SERVED</b>	PK-8
<b>SCHOOL ADDRESS</b>	414 Wallace Ave. Kansas City, MO 64125
<b>SCHOOL WEBSITE</b>	www.kcia.us
<b>AREAS SERVED</b>	Citywide
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	Ramsey Atieh, Board President Dr. David Leone, Superintendent
<b>SCHOOL MISSION</b>	Kansas City International Academy is committed to excellence in education, inspiring and empowering children from all nationalities and diverse backgrounds, giving them the foundation they need to achieve the highest level of success in life.

## Student Demographics

<b>TOTAL ENROLLMENT</b>	654
<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	56.4%/90%
<b>RACE/ETHNICITY</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL</b>
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.6%
Black	59.9%
Hispanic/Latino	21.9%
Multiracial	7.2%
Native American	*
White/Caucasian	3.7%

<b>HISTORICALLY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS % OF TOTAL</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL</b>
Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	100%
Students with Disabilities	7.0%
English Language Learners	54.4%
Homeless/Migrant Students	2.3%

<b>DISCIPLINE INCIDENTS – TOTAL</b>	124
<b>RACE/ETHNICITY</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL</b>
Asian/Pacific Islander	4%
Black	66%
Hispanic/Latino	16%
Multiracial & Other	11%
Native American	0%
White/Caucasian	3%

<b>STAFF AND BOARD DEMOGRAPHICS</b>			
	<b>BOARD</b>	<b>ALL EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>TEACHERS</b>
<b>TOTAL NUMBER</b>	7	126	88
<b>RACE/ETHNICITY % OF TOTAL</b>			
Asian/Pacific Islander	0%	3%	1%
Black	57%	9%	7%
Hispanic/Latino	0%	7%	3%
Multiracial & Other	0%	2%	0%
Native American	0%	5%	2%
White/Caucasian	43%	74%	86%

<b>STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY GRADE</b>	
<b>PK</b>	19
<b>K</b>	84
<b>1</b>	67
<b>2</b>	66
<b>3</b>	73
<b>4</b>	75
<b>5</b>	67
<b>6</b>	75
<b>7</b>	75
<b>8</b>	72

# I. Academic Performance

Partially Meets

This section provides an overview of the school’s performance in the year reviewed on a variety of academic measures, and a view of recent historical trends the school is accountable for achieving, as established by applicable federal and state law and the charter contract. The measures provide information about student growth and outcomes. FY19 APR was produced under MSIP 5 guidelines. Due to COVID19, APRs were not produced in FY20 or FY21. FY22 APR is produced under MSIP 6 guidelines

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	SCHOOL PERFORMANCE				RATING		NOTES
		3YR AVG	FY19	FY21 *	FY22	Rating	Direction	
<b>FEDERAL &amp; STATE ACCOUNTABILITY</b>								
ESEA Designation	In Compliance (IC)		IC	IC	IC	Meets		School identified for Targeted Support in 2022.
State Rating	≥70%	N/A	73.8	N/A	73.5	Meets		This is a combination of performance and continuous improvement points established by DESE for districts in MSIP 6.
State Rating Academic Achievement					69			This number only includes academic achievement points generated using MSIP 6 calculation for the APR.
<b>STUDENT ACADEMIC PROFICIENCY</b>								
Proficiency – English (All)	On Track	19.4	23.2	15.2	19.7	Does Not Meet	↗	Approaching rating on 2022 APR with MPI of 339.4
Proficiency – English (student group)	On Track	18.8	23.2	15.1	18.2	Does Not Meet	↗	Approaching rating on 2022 APR with MPI of 336.3
Proficiency Comparison – English	Meet or Exceed Local District	-3.3	-1.7	-6.6	-1.7	Falls Far Below	↗	
Proficiency – Math (All)	On Track	12.8	15.1	6.9	16.3	Does Not Meet	↗	Approaching rating on 2022 APR with MPI of 316.8
Proficiency – Math (student group)	On Track	12.2	15.1	7.0	14.6	Does Not Meet	↗	Approaching rating on 2022 APR with MPI of 313.0
Proficiency Comparison – Math	Meet or Exceed Local District	-3.9	-6.3	-4.6	-0.8	Falls Far Below	↗	

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	SCHOOL PERFORMANCE				RATING		NOTES
		3YR AVG	FY19	FY20 FY21	FY22	Rating	Direction	
Proficiency – Science (All)	On Track for APR Status	12.8	12.4	9.9	16.1	Does Not Meet		Approaching rating on 2022 APR with MPI of 330.5
Proficiency – Science (student group)	On Track for APR Status	12.4	12.4	9.9	15.0	Does Not Meet		Approaching rating on 2022 APR with MPI of 326.9
Proficiency Comparison – Science	Meet or Exceed Local District	-6.6	-8.4	-7.8	-3.5	Falls Far Below		
<b>STUDENT ACADEMIC GROWTH</b>								
Growth – English (All)	On Track for APR Status	51.6	53.2 (E)	49.5	52.0	Exceeds		Above Average rating on 2022 APR earning 86% of growth points
Growth – English (student group)	On Track for APR Status	51.8	53.9 (E)	49.5	52.0	Exceeds		Above Average rating on 2022 APR earning 88% of growth points
Growth – Math (All)	On Track for APR Status	53.2	52.8 (E)	52.1	54.6	Exceeds		Above Average rating on 2022 APR earning 97% of growth points
Growth – Math (student group)	On Track for APR Status	53.4	53.3 (E)	52.1	54.7	Exceeds		Above Average rating on 2022 APR earning 97% of growth points
<b>SCHOOL-SPECIFIC ACADEMIC MEASURES</b>								
Percent of ELL students demonstrating AEP or meeting growth target on ACCESS 2.0 test.	Benchmark 50%; Target 70%	29%	44%	14%	30%	Falls Far Below		
Percent with above average fall-to-fall NWEA reading growth	Benchmark 50%; Target 70%	49%	53%	43%	51%	Partially Meets		
Percent with above average fall-to-fall NWEA math growth	Benchmark 50%; Target 70%	48%	49%	40%	56%	Partially Meets		

## II. Financial Performance

Meets

This section provides an overview of the school’s performance in the year reviewed and a view of recent historical trends on financial measures the school is accountable for achieving. These measures are established by applicable federal and state law and the charter contract. They provide information about the school’s financial health and sustainability.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	3-YR AVG.	FY20 VALUE	FY21 VALUE	FY22 VALUE	RATING	NOTES
<b>NEAR-TERM MEASURES</b>							
Current Ratio	>1.0			53	52	Meets	
Unrestricted Days Cash on Hand	30/60/90			205	196	Meets	
Enrollment Variance	=>95%				101%	Meets	
Debt Default	No Default				Meets	Meets	
Fund Balance	>3%	52.8%	47.2%	57.3%	54.0%	Meets	
<b>SUSTAINABILITY MEASURES</b>							
Total Margin	Positive			9.1%	5.3%	Meets	
Debt to Asset Ratio	<.9			0.16	0.14	Meets	
Cash Flow	Multiple years positive			Positive \$1,171,587	Positive \$349,549	Meets	
Debt Service Coverage Ratio	=>1.1			8.9	5.5	Meets	

# III. Learning Environment Compliance

Meets

This section reports the school's overall performance in fulfilling its obligation to provide a safe, healthy and equitable place for children to learn and grow. These measures are established in mostly in federal and state statutes, as well as those items required in the school's charter and contract.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	RATING	NOTES
<b>SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT</b>			
Complying with facilities and transportation requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	
Complying with health and safety requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	
Handling student information and data appropriately	Material Compliant	Meets	
<b>EDUCATION PROGRAM COMPLIANCE</b>			
Implementing the material terms of the education program as defined in the current charter contract	Material Compliant	Meets	
Complying with applicable education requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	
Protecting the rights of students with disabilities	Material Compliant	Meets	
Protecting the rights of English Language Learner (ELL) students	Material Compliant	Meets	
<b>STUDENT RIGHTS AND REQUIREMENTS</b>			
Protecting the rights of all students	Material Compliant	Meets	
Open, free access to apply and enroll	Material Compliant	Meets	
<b>SCHOOL-SPECIFIC GOALS</b>			
Average Daily Attendance (Benchmark 90.3%; Target 94.6%)	89.7%	Partially Meets	
Student Retention (Benchmark 70%; Target 90%)	90%	Meets	

# IV. Governance

Meets

This section reports the board of directors overall performance in the year in fulfilling legal requirements and fiduciary/public stewardship responsibilities. Compliance with state statutes and Commission policies relevant to governing a public school and Missouri non-profit are also rated in this section.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	RATING	NOTES
<b>BOARD OPERATIONS</b>			
Board Training	100% of board members have participated in training	Meets	
Committee Structure	Structure is in place and committees are meeting	Meets	
Review and Updates Board Policies Annually	Material Compliant	Meets	
Strategic Plans, Board Goals	Annual goals and plans adopted by Board	Meets	
<b>HOLDING MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABLE</b>			
CEO Evaluation	Completed	Meets	
Monitor Performance, School and Board Goals	Demonstrated Consistent Monitoring	Meets	
<b>COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING</b>			
Missouri Ethic Commission Filings	Material Compliant	Meets	
ASBR	Material Compliant	Meets	
Missouri Sunshine Law Compliance	Material Compliant	Meets	
Registered with the Secretary of State	Material Compliant	Meets	

# V. Operational Compliance

Meets

This section reports the school's overall performance in the year reviewed in fulfilling legal and contractual requirements and responsibilities relevant to organizational reporting and monitoring requirements.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	RATING	NOTES
<b>FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT</b>			
Meeting financial reporting and compliance requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	
Following Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)	Material Compliant	Meets	
<b>EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND REQUIREMENTS</b>			
Respecting employee rights	Material Compliant	Meets	
Completing required background checks	Material Compliant	Meets	
Meeting teacher and other staff credentialing requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	
<b>COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING</b>			
Federal and State reporting requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	
Local Reporting requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	
Commission reporting requirements	Material Compliant; 90% on time; 90% accurate	Meets	Materially Compliant; 91% on time; 100% Accurate
Document Retention requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF QUALITY SCHOOLS – MISSOURI SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT  
PROGRAM

2021-22 MISSOURI CHARTER SCHOOL ASSURANCE CHECKLIST

CHARTER SCHOOL NAME	<b>KC International Academy</b>	COUNTY-DISTRICT CODE	<b>048912</b>
CHARTER SCHOOL CONTACT NAME	<b>Jennifer Wilson</b>	CHARTER SCHOOL CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	<b>816-242-4206</b>
CHARTER SCHOOL CONTACT EMAIL	<b>jwilson@kcia.us</b>	FORM DUE DATE	<b>December 1, 2021</b>

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Charter schools are required to be compliant with state and federal laws and State Board of Education regulations. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has created this assurance checklist to assist charter schools with this compliance as well as to assist charter sponsors in the review of charters. All charters shall send responses to their sponsor by the date specified by the sponsor. Sponsors must submit the completed forms by **December 1, 2021** to [charters@deese.mo.gov](mailto:charters@deese.mo.gov) or mail to:

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Office of Quality Schools  
Attn: Charter Schools  
P.O. Box 480  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480

Mark each item in the left column as **Yes, No, K-8** or **N/A** (not applicable). If answering "No" or "N/A," you must provide an explanation in the comment box below.

**QUESTIONS:** Contact your Area Supervisor or the Charter School Section at 573-751-8247 or [charters@deese.mo.gov](mailto:charters@deese.mo.gov).

**CERTIFICATION**

yes	1. At least 80 percent of teachers are appropriately licensed or certificated to teach in Missouri public schools (substitute certificates are not appropriately certified) ( <u>Section 160.420, RSMo</u> ).
yes	a. Teachers
yes	b. Other certificated staff

**FINANCE**

yes	1. The charter is organizationally and fiscally viable as defined in ( <u>Section 160.405, RSMo</u> ), not having:
yes	a. a negative balance in its operating funds;
yes	b. a combined balance of less than three percent of the amount expended for such funds during the previous fiscal year; or
yes	c. expenditures that exceed receipts for the most recently completed fiscal year.
yes	2. The charter school implements effective and efficient fiscal management systems that ensure accountability of charter school funds and provides charter financial and budgetary information to the public ( <u>Sections 160.066, RSMo and 5 CSR 30-4.030</u> ).
yes	3. If the charter contracts for pre-kindergarten services and claims attendance for state purposes, the pre-kindergarten provider meets the state pre-kindergarten program standards ( <u>Sections 163.018, 163.161, RSMo and 5 CSR 20-100.320</u> ).

**GOVERNANCE**

yes	1. The charter school employs appropriate procedures to assure the accurate and timely reporting of data to state and federal agencies.
yes	a. In accordance with the annual data acquisition calendar ( <u>160.405.4(2), RSMo</u> )
yes	b. Self-Monitoring Documents
yes	c. Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline ( <u>Section 210.115, RSMo</u> )
yes	d. School Safety Provisions ( <u>Sections 160.522, 162.680.2, 167.023, 167.117, 167.627, 302.272, 569.155, 571.030, 574.115, 575.090, and 579.030.1(1), RSMo</u> )

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, age, veteran status, mental or physical disability, or any other basis prohibited by statute in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Director of Civil Rights Compliance and MOA Coordinator (Title VI/Title VII/Title IX/504/ADA/ADAAA/Age Act/GINA/USDA Title VI), 5th Floor, 205 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480; telephone number 573-526-4757 or TTY 800-735-2966; email [civilrights@deese.mo.gov](mailto:civilrights@deese.mo.gov).

yes	2. The charter school complies with federal laws relating to the protection of pupil rights, 20 U.S.C 1232h(b).
yes	3. The governing body of a charter has adopted a written policy relating to information that the charter school will provide about former employees (certified and non-certified) to other public schools (Section 162.068, RSMo).
yes	4. The charter school reports school dropouts to the Missouri Literacy Hot Line (Section 167.275, RSMo).
yes	5. The charter school waives proof of residency requirements for a child whose parent or guardian is serving on specified active duty military orders (Section 160.2000, RSMo).
yes	6. The charter provides for student religious liberties in a manner consistent with (160.405.4(1)) and (Section 160.2500, RSMo).
yes	7. The charter school ensures that an American Flag is displayed in front of each school building and the Pledge of Allegiance is recited in at least one scheduled class of every pupil enrolled in the school, no less often than once per school day (Section 171.021, RSMo).
yes	8. The charter school ensures that, if requested by any recognized organization, it allows at least 30 minutes to provide unbiased information on organ, eye and tissue donation to the governing body of a charter (Section 170.311, RSMo).
<b>INSTRUCTION/CURRICULUM/ASSESSMENT</b>	
Yes	1. The charter school has developed standards for teaching (Section 160.045, RSMo).
K-8	2. The charter school complies with state high school graduation requirements (Section 170.345, RSMo and 5 CSR 20-100.190).
K-8	3. The charter school provides one-half unit of high school health and personal finance credit for graduates (5 CSR 20-100.190).
yes	4. The charter school provides regular instruction in the United States and Missouri Constitutions, as well as American history, American institutions and American civics. Unless an exception applies, students are required to successfully complete a course of such instruction that is at least one semester in length, as required by (Section 170.011, RSMo).
K-8	5. The charter school ensures that all students entering ninth grade after July 1, 2017, pass an examination on the provisions and principles of American civics as required by (Section 170.345, RSMo).
K-8	6. The charter school ensures that each high school distributes to its students the information on critical need occupations as provided by the DESE each year before November 1 <sup>st</sup> (Section 167.902, RSMo).
yes	7. The charter school ensures that it has policies and procedures in place allowing students to participate in the Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program (MOCAP) (Section 161.670, RSMo).
yes	a. The charter school has adopted an enrollment policy that requires enrollment requests for MOCAP to be treated similarly to those for traditional courses.
yes	b. The charter school provides for an appeal process upon denial of enrollment in MOCAP courses.
yes	c. The charter school informs parents of their child's right to participate in the program by making program availability clear in the parent handbook, registration documents and by featuring it on the home page of the charter school's website.
yes	8. The charter school shall determine a child is gifted only if the child meets the definition of "gifted children" as provided in (Section 162.675, RSMo).
yes	9. The charter school's course materials relating to sexual education instruction shall comply with statute (Section 170.015, RSMo).
yes	10. The charter school ensures that it conducts dyslexia screenings for students and provides reasonable classroom support consistent with the guidelines developed by the DESE (Section 167.950, RSMo).
K-8	11. The charter school ensures that all pupils (during the pupil's four years of high school) receive 30 minutes of cardiopulmonary resuscitation instruction and training in the proper performance of the Heimlich maneuver or other first aid for choking. Instruction is to be included in the charter school's existing health or physical education curriculum and must meet the requirements of (Section 170.310, RSMo).
<b>PROFESSIONAL LEARNING</b>	
yes	1. The charter school ensures that all educators in its employ, who hold a career continuous certificate, complete a minimum of 15 contact hours of professional development annually unless exempt (Section 168.021, RSMo).
yes	2. The charter school provides two hours of in-service training for all practicing teachers annually regarding dyslexia and related disorders (Section 167.950, RSMo).
yes	3. All school personnel may participate in a simulated active shooter and intruder response drill conducted by law enforcement professionals, as described in statute. Program instructors must be certified by the Department of Public Safety's Peace Officers Standards Training Commission (Section 170.315, RSMo). This is not a required training.

SAFETY	
yes	1. The charter school has a written discipline policy; provides the policy to students, parents and guardians; and follows the requirements of ( <u>Section 160.405, RSMo</u> ).
yes	2. The charter school complies with statute related to posting child abuse and neglect hotline information ( <u>Section 160.975, RSMo</u> ).
yes	3. The charter school requires the reporting of child abuse, including allegations of sexual misconduct involving a teacher or other employee of the charter school, and provides employee training in accordance with law ( <u>Sections 160.261.2, 162.069 and 210.115, RSMo</u> ).
yes	4. The charter school maintains Immunization records as required by statute and reports such data required by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services ( <u>Sections 167.181 and 167.183, RSMo</u> ).
yes	5. The charter school complies with all statutes related to the transportation of students ( <u>Sections 162.064, 162.065, and 167.231 RSMo</u> ).
yes	6. The charter school complies with the Persistently Dangerous Schools provision of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (P.L. 114-95) and ( <u>5 CSR 20-100.210</u> ).
yes	a. Allow students who attend a persistently dangerous school to attend a safe public school within the charter school Local Education Agency (LEA).
yes	b. Allow students who have been a victim of a violent criminal offense while in or on the grounds of the public school to attend a safe public school within the charter school LEA.
yes	7. The charter school is required to disclose to any public school about any former employee, information regarding any violation of the published regulations of the state board of education, the district, or the governing body of the charter school by the former employee if such violation related to sexual misconduct with a student and was determined to be an actual violation of the board, of the district, or the governing body of the charter after a contested case due process hearing has been conducted, pursuant to board policy ( <u>Section 162.068, RSMo</u> ).
COMPLIANCE	
yes	1. The charter school complies with all the regulations of the state and federal programs in which the charter school participates ( <u>5 CSR 20-100.130, and 5 CSR 20-300.110 to .120.</u> )
yes	2. The charter school meets state and federal special education requirements for students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, migratory children, students whose native or home language is other than English and homeless youth ( <u>Sections 162.680 and 167.020, RSMo, and 5 CSR 20-300.110 to .120</u> ).
yes	3. The charter school complies with statutory standards including:
yes	a. Administration of the statewide system of academic assessments, as designated by the State Board of Education under ( <u>Section 160.518, RSMo</u> ).
yes	b. Assurances for the completion and distribution of an annual report card as prescribed in ( <u>Section 160.522, RSMo</u> ).
yes	c. Collection of baseline data during the first three years of operation to determine the longitudinal success of the charter school ( <u>Section 160.405.7, RSMo</u> ).
yes	d. Measurement of pupil progress toward the pupil academic standards adopted by the State Board of Education under ( <u>Sections 160.514, and 160.405.6(a) RSMo</u> ).
yes	e. Publication of each charter school's Annual Performance Report ( <u>Section 160.405, RSMo</u> ).
yes	f. Compliance with laws and regulations of the state, county or city relating to health, safety and state minimum educational standards, including requirements relating to student discipline under ( <u>Sections 160.261, 160.261.2, 167.161, 167.164 and 167.171, RSMo</u> ).
yes	g. Notification to law enforcement authorities of criminal conduct under ( <u>Sections 167.115 and 167.117, RSMo</u> ).
yes	h. Transmittal of school records as required by ( <u>Section 167.020, RSMo</u> ).
yes	i. Provision of the minimum amount of school time as required by ( <u>Section 171.031, RSMo</u> ).
yes	j. Performance of employee background checks as required by ( <u>Section 168.133, RSMo</u> ).
yes	k. Protections to students and families with respect to certain surveys and evaluations as required by ( <u>Section 167.113, RSMo</u> ).

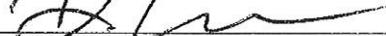
**COMMENTS**

Comment(s) are required for any item that has been marked as No or N/A.

**ASSURANCES**

The superintendent/chief executive officer assures compliance with each of the items on the checklist.

SIGNATURE OF SUPERINTENDENT



DATE

11-4-2021

The Charter Sponsor annually reviews the charter school's compliance with statutory standards, as required by Section 160.405.7, RSMo.

SIGNATURE OF SPONSOR



DATE

11-4-2021



## **BES SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW**

*Kansas City International Academy  
Kansas City, MO  
February 23-24, 2022*

*BES identifies and prepares excellent leaders to transform education in their communities.*

## ABOUT

BES conducts school reviews and consultancies to assess the organizational and leadership health of schools or systems looking to streamline processes, deepen equity and instructional practices, accelerate growth, and improve overall outcomes for their students. Our team of experts works alongside the school's leadership team to understand holistically the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and make recommendations.

### *Components Of A Comprehensive School Review And Consultancy*

- Dedicated pair of reviewers, including two BES team members for the full review, in addition to the Director of Finance for finance and governance components.
- Pre-visit call with the school's leadership team and BES's team to gain context, build relationships and plan the visit.
- Pre-visit assessment of documents and artifacts submitted
- Two-day, on-site guided and independent visit by the BES team, including extensive classroom observations; interviews and focus groups with teachers, caregivers, students, operational and supplementary staff, board members, and leaders to inform deeper understanding
- We use a pre-existing assessment protocol, or our own tools. For KCIA, we used the SQR framework licensed to MCPSC.

Following the visit, BES prepares a comprehensive written report, offers a debrief call to discuss the content or our recommendations, and can offer further coaching or school development opportunities.

## PROCESS

Missouri Charter Public School Commission (MCPSC) has contracted with BES to assess Kansas City International Academy's performance within the domains of the School Quality Review.

The school review process provides a third-party perspective on current school quality for all students. The process includes two days of collecting evidence on-site through interviews, classroom visits, focus groups, and document review. The site visit team uses evidence collected through these events to develop findings in relation to the school review criteria and indicators. The review team's findings, contained in this report, represents one piece of evidence considered by MCPSC as part of their on-going oversight and charter renewal decision-making process.

This report documents the team's findings for each of the domains identified in the school review protocol.

## DOMAINS AND KEY QUESTIONS

### Domain 1: Instruction

1. Do classroom interactions and organization ensure a classroom climate conducive to learning?
2. Is instruction intentional, engaging and challenging for all students?
3. Do teachers regularly assess students' progress toward mastery of key skills and concepts and utilize assessment data to provide feedback to students during the lesson?

### Domain 2: Students' Opportunities to Learn

4. Does the school identify and support students with a full range of needs?
5. Does the school have a safe, supportive learning environment that reflects high expectations for all students?

### Domain 3: Educators' Opportunities to Learn

6. Does the school design professional development and collaborative structures to sustain focus on instructional improvement?
7. Does the school's culture indicate high levels of collective responsibility, trust and efficacy?

### Domain 4: Leadership and Governance

8. Do school leaders guide and participate with instructional staff in central processes of teaching and learning?
9. Do school leaders effectively orchestrate the school's operations?
10. Does the Board provide competent stewardship and oversight of the school?

### Domain 5: Financial Performance

11. Does the school maintain a sound and sustainable financial condition?

### Domain 6: Organizational Performance

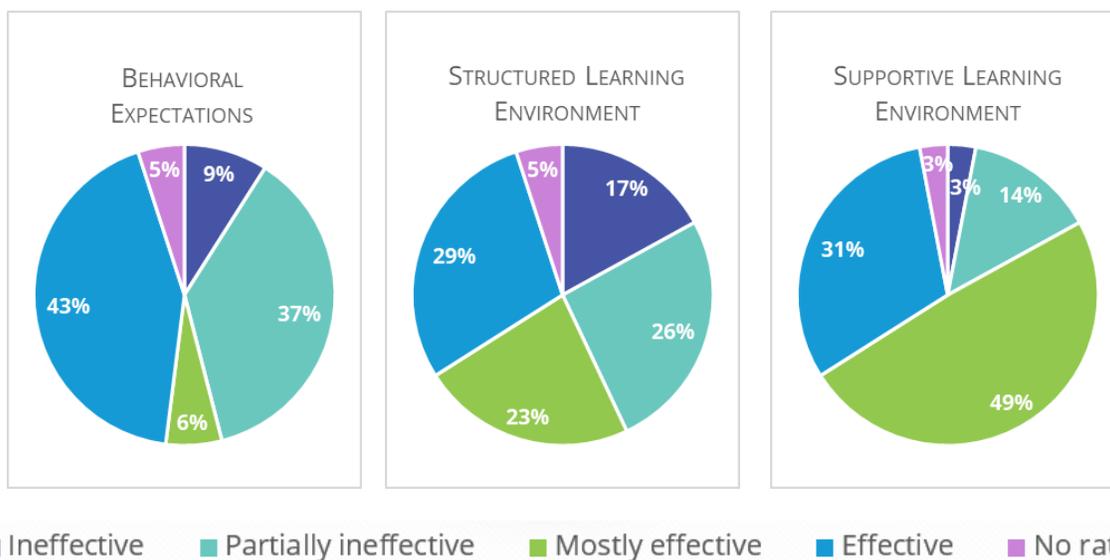
12. Does the school have effective operational systems and structures in place?

## Domain 1: Instruction



### Key Question 1

*Do classroom interactions and organization ensure a classroom climate conducive to learning?*



### **Behavioral expectations were clear in just under half of classrooms.**

The site visit team observed clear behavioral expectations and teacher follow-through on those expectations in 43% of classes. In these classes, behavioral expectations were either explicit, observed through posters or direct stating of expectations by a teacher, or implicitly understood, as demonstrated by students engaging in a lesson appropriately, following through on independent tasks, and knowing when to contribute to a group conversation. For example, in one elementary classroom, the teacher had clear cues during a transition between activities, positively narrated student actions, and thanked students by name for taking expected actions. In one middle school classroom, expectations for behavior were clearly posted in different parts of the room, and student behavior consistently reflected those expectations. In 6% of classes, the site visit team observed mostly effective behavioral expectations. For example, in one elementary classroom, students in small groups with a teacher were fully attending to their lesson activity, while students who were doing independent work had weaker focus.

The site visit team observed partially ineffective behavioral expectations in 37% of classrooms. For example, in one elementary classroom, students showed a clear understanding of the expectation for calm bodies, but few were focused on the teacher reading during a lesson. In 9% of classes, the site visit team observed ineffective behavioral expectations. For example, in one middle school classroom, the teacher was delivering a lesson, but ignoring the fact that students were not paying attention, as shown by off-task or distracted behaviors. In one elementary classroom, two teachers delivered multiple resets to behavioral expectations within the 20 minutes that the team member observed.

On the Fall 2021 TNTIP Insight Survey, 31% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that “Across my school, there are consistent expectations and consequences for student behavior”.

**The learning environment was effectively or mostly effectively structured in just over half of classrooms.**

The structure of the learning environment was effective in 29% of classrooms observed. For example, in one middle school classroom, the teacher’s planning was evident through the use and emphasis of appropriately technical language in a math lesson and a computer application pre-loaded with questions connected to the lesson content for students to complete independently. In 23% of classrooms, the site visit team observed a structured learning environment that was mostly effective. For example, in one elementary classroom, all students were engaged during direct instruction, and students who were distracted received quick corrections and support to stick with the lesson. In another elementary classroom, the teacher had clearly prepared the structure, content, and goals for the lesson, but did not have student attention or investment necessary for fully effective delivery.

In 26% of classrooms, the learning environment was partially ineffectively structured and in 17% of classrooms, the learning environment was ineffectively structured. For example, in one middle school classroom, there was also a lot of down time during transitions and learning time was not maximized. In another middle school classroom, the teacher did not appear to have clear goals posted or shared verbally, and was unsuccessfully redirecting students to an activity that few are completing.

**Site visit team members observed a supportive learning environment in 80% of classrooms.**

In one middle school classroom, both peer-to-peer interactions and student-teacher interactions were observed as cooperative and caring, based on tone, body language, and outcome. In one elementary school classroom, two co-teachers showed strong chemistry and effective planning, which contributed to an environment where students felt supported. Only 17% of classrooms had partially ineffective or ineffective learning environments when honing in on the characteristics of a supportive classroom. In one

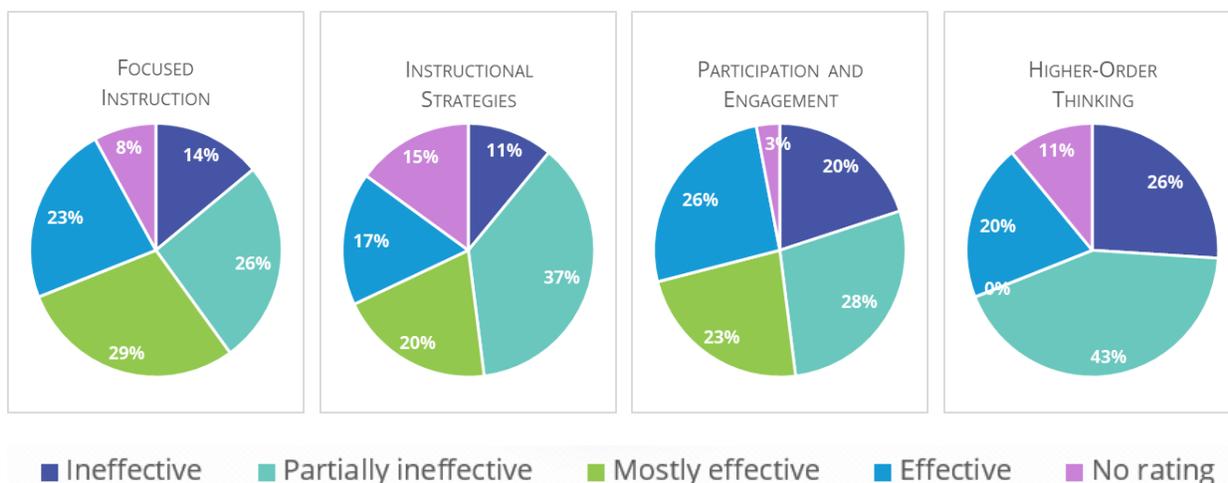
such classroom at the middle school level, the observer saw minimal disruptive behavior but also minimal interest or engagement in learning. In another middle school classroom, students were having side conversations instead of working on the assigned activity independently.

Responses to the Fall 2021 TNTP Insight Survey aligned with these observations: 74% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that “School leaders promote a safe and productive learning environment at my school” and 71% strongly agreed or agreed that, “My school is fun and joyful”.



## Key Question 2

*Is instruction intentional, engaging, and challenging for all students?*



### Teachers provided clear learning goals and purposeful instruction in most classrooms.

Focused instruction was mostly effective or effective in 52% of classrooms. In one middle school classroom, the learning objective was clearly posted and the class activities during the observation connected directly to that objective. In an elementary school classroom, the teacher provided explicit examples and modeling, directly connected to the posted objective. In 40% of classrooms, instruction was partially ineffective or ineffective in providing purposeful learning objectives that drove the lesson trajectory. For example, in one elementary classroom, students were reading, but did not have any annotation tasks or questions to consider while reading or once they finished reading. In one middle school

classroom, the learning goal was not posted and for the full time the observer was present, the class was working on answering one question.

**About half of classrooms had all students cognitively engaged in learning during site visit team observations.**

In 26% of classrooms, student engagement and participation was effective. In these classrooms, the teacher had a firm command of the material and sequence of their lesson, and thus was able to focus on ensuring students were meaningfully engaging with and accessing the content. In one middle school classroom, students showed cognitive engagement through mirroring the level of technical language used by the teacher. Student engagement was mostly effective in 23% of observed classrooms. In one middle school classroom, all students were engaged in a teacher-led discussion, though the discussion could have better engaged students at a higher level of rigor. In 28% of classrooms, student engagement was partially ineffective. For example, in one elementary classroom, all but one student were engaged in an independent writing task, however, the teacher did not effectively monitor progress or provide a next step for students who finished, leading to many students sitting and doing nothing while the teacher circulated.

In 20% of classrooms, student engagement was ineffective. In one middle school classroom, students showed apathy and disengagement with a challenging text, and the teacher continued moving through the lesson without building further student investment..

**Few classrooms showed both varied instructional strategies and rigorous instruction such that all students were supported and challenged.**

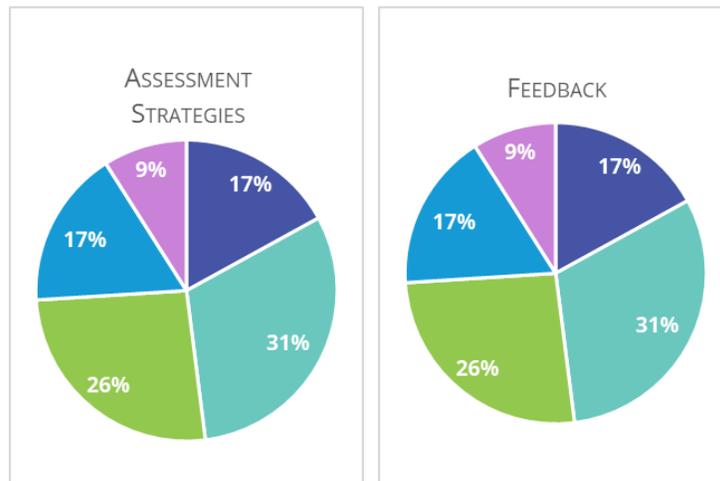
In 20% of classrooms, instruction was effective in engaging students in higher-order thinking. In one elementary classroom, the teacher had set up peer conversations reflecting on their learning and in what ways the content had been challenging for them, requiring them to observe themselves as learners and draw conclusions based on those observations. In another elementary classroom, the task required students to consider the perspective of the author of a text and how the text would have been different if written from a different perspective.

In 69% of classrooms, instruction was ineffective or partially ineffective in requiring students to use and develop higher-order thinking skills. For example, in one middle and one elementary classroom, only questions at the “identify” level were posed during the 20 minute observations. In another middle school classroom, the content was taught at a basic procedural level without building conceptual understanding that would allow for higher-order thinking.



### Key Question 3

*Do teachers regularly assess students' progress toward mastery of key skills and concepts and utilize assessment data to provide feedback to students during the lesson?*



■ Ineffective   
 ■ Partially ineffective   
 ■ Mostly effective   
 ■ Effective   
 ■ No rating

**Most classrooms did not have consistent progress monitoring toward student mastery of key skills and concepts.**

Assessment strategies were partially ineffective or ineffective in 48% of classrooms, and use of feedback was partially ineffective or ineffective in 45% of classrooms. For example, two middle school classrooms had no checks for understanding during the 20-minute observation of a lesson. In another middle school classroom, when the teacher posed a question to the group, students called out incorrect answers that the teacher did not address and the teacher also spent time circulating during independent work to restate directions or help students get started, rather than to monitor progress or provide feedback. In contrast, 17% of classrooms had effective assessment strategies and 11% had effective feedback practices. In one such classroom at the elementary level, a co-teacher recognized a common mistake among a few students early on in guided practice, and provided more frequent checks for understanding for these students individually. In one middle school classroom, during independent practice, the teacher checked in and provided specific feedback to almost every student in the class.

## Domain 2: Students' Opportunities to Learn



### Key Question 4

*Does the school identify and support students with a full range of needs?*

**The school has a strong foundation in place to identify and support students with a full range of needs.**

School leaders and teachers indicated that the school is using a range of screening and progress monitoring tools to evaluate and meet student needs, while also working toward a more data-driven instructional culture. In elementary grades, teachers do formative reading assessments quarterly, including Fountas & Pinnell (F&P), SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words), and Heggerty Phonological & Phonemic Awareness. In middle grades, students take NWEA's MAP assessments 3 times per year and Achievement Network (ANet) assessments quarterly, in addition to F&P reading assessments. The school uses screening assessments for new English Learner students and annual ACCESS testing to identify and support EL students who comprise about two thirds of the student population.

School leaders and teachers cited the importance of the school's daily 1-hour intervention blocks, and the data they use to drive how they support students in those groups. Teachers described a push in middle school specifically to do more daily data work, rather than relying on more summative assessments to make data-driven instructional decisions.

Additionally, teachers reported that Student Support Team meetings by grade-level allow team members to raise concerns about individual students, have a team discussion, and determine a path forward together. These meetings include instructional and behavioral support staff (counselors, social workers, behavior interventionists). In focus groups, students at the middle school level reported that there are multiple opportunities for them to get additional help with content they do not understand, including going to a teacher at lunch, bringing up this concern in advisory, and getting support through intervention. These anecdotal descriptions from leaders, teachers, and students were backed up by documentation provided by the school, clearly laying out the school's practices for screening, assessment, intervention, and progress monitoring, in addition to their overarching Multi-Tiered System of Support for both academic and social and emotional needs.

**The school has implemented systems of support specifically targeting their large and multilingual English Learner population, and has room for growth in strategic use of multilingual staff for academic support.**

For communication with students and families, one staff member reported having 10 translators on staff in addition to a phone translation service when needed. Translators play a role in both family engagement and in student support. Teachers and administrators spoke highly of the trusting relationships that translators on staff have built with families with whom they share language and culture. These relationships are important in maintaining on-going communication with families of these students, and in having a trusting foundation when presenting student concerns.

In classroom observations, there was less clarity or consistency in translators' roles in direct student support. The site visit team observed a classroom with translator support, and saw minimal interaction between the students and the staff member who was there to provide additional in-class support in their native language. Some teachers at the middle school level also reported not feeling equipped to fully meet the needs of older students who are English Learners, even with the support of a translator.

The school provided documentation indicating service delivery models for both elementary and middle school English Learners with up to seven different formats for content delivery and setting, ranging from "Newcomer ELA" to "Push-in core content support", depending on the student's English Language Development level.

**The school's staffing model allows for varied support of a wide range of student needs.**

One staff member reported having two counselors, two instructional coaches, two administrators, and a behavioral specialist at the elementary school level. In the middle school, a staff member reported having a social worker, a counselor, an administrator, and a behavior interventionist, in addition to the option for a smaller class size in appropriate cases.

The school has implemented a comprehensive behavior management system through the program *Conscious Discipline*. Staff reported that the elementary school has more comprehensively implemented this program, and that the middle school is in the process of adapting it to meet their students' needs in an age-appropriate way.

**Most classrooms do not yet effectively use a variety of instructional strategies and materials to support students' diverse learning needs.**

In 56% of classrooms, use of varied instructional strategies was partially ineffective or ineffective. For example, in one middle school classroom, the whole class was focused on a sample essay on the smart board, and there were very few supporting posters or

documents on the wall or in student binders. In one elementary school classroom, instruction was delivered solely via a video during the site visit team member's observation. Particularly given the high number of emerging bilingual or trilingual students, the scaffolds, materials, and supports in these classrooms appeared less robust than necessary. In 20% of classrooms, the teachers made effective use of varied instructional strategies. In one elementary class, the classroom was filled with anchor charts and other learning tools, and the students were using whiteboards, hand signals, and conversation starters to engage in small group learning. In a middle school classroom, the teacher had posted supportive tools on the wall and pointed students to make use of them as they worked through content together.

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### Key Question 5

*Does the school have a safe, supportive learning environment that reflects high expectations for all students?*

### **The school provides a safe and supportive environment for students to learn.**

This is an area of outstanding strength for KCIA. Students and families both reported a safe environment that makes learning possible. Several students and family members drew comparisons to past experiences, highlighting the differences in their experiences at this school, including a feeling of physical safety, getting support with student and family needs, and overall communication with families. One parent described that the classrooms are very calm and that is reassuring to them about their children's safety. Elementary students described an environment focused on safety and respect. One student articulated that school staff expect students to be respectful of everyone, not just of teachers, but also of other students. Middle school students reported that this school is different from their previous schools because it is a more caring environment both emotionally and academically - they feel emotionally supported and they feel that they are both supported and accountable for their academic learning. One student articulated that they are proud of the diversity of the school and how welcoming the school is to such a diverse group of students. Another student stated that teachers care and that there is no violence. These anecdotal reports align with site visit team observation data, with 80% of classrooms at the mostly effective or effective level for creating a supportive learning environment.

## **The school provides opportunities for students to form positive relationships with peers and adults in the school.**

At the middle school level, advisory is one of the primary structures through which students build a foundation for relationships with adults in the building. Students and families at both the elementary and middle school levels reported celebration of student accomplishments both at school and in communication home. A middle school student mentioned that they feel the way the school celebrates their achievement is motivating for students. Other students reported feeling recognized for both achievement (e.g., earning all A's in one marking period) and effort (e.g., completing ANet interim assessments). Middle school students also reported leadership opportunities such as being on a leadership team that works with elementary students and a student council that plans events for the school.

The school aligns on and sets student behavioral expectations through the program *Conscious Discipline*, which hones in on both skill-building and self-regulation for both adults implementing the system and students experiencing it. Teachers described a continuum of responses to student behavior intended to keep the student safe and allow them to process their emotions. Middle school students were able to articulate an understanding of the purpose of the behavior management system that their teachers use, including that it acknowledges how they are feeling, gives them time to calm down, and then encourages finding a solution to the problem. Teachers and leaders also cited support from counselors, behavior interventionists, and translators in building positive relationships with students who struggle behaviorally.

## **The school engages families in support of students' learning.**

Many families reported consistent communication from their student's teacher and the school community as something that has been different and positive in their experience at this school. Documents provided from the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) team show that this team does intentional outreach at least once per quarter and also administers surveys to families when needed. One of those surveys this year was to gather input on their preferences in opportunities to engage with school and barriers to accessing those opportunities to ensure the team is responsive to family needs. Other surveys provided from the previous school year included questions specific to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as surveys about family needs for wireless hotspots and input regarding the return to school in Fall 2020. The surveys provided had a wide range of response rates - the recent survey regarding engagement opportunities only showed 14 responses, while the return to school survey had 385 responses.

In focus groups, family members described a range of experiences of communication about their students' academic progress. While all expressed satisfaction with their students' progress, few were able to name something a staff member had previously identified as an indicator of that progress. One parent described quarterly conferences

where the teacher had printed out a number of pages of information on their child's progress and explained what each meant and how the parent could support their child at home. A staff member confirmed that they hold quarterly conferences, and that in Fall 2021, attendance reached 100% between in-person and virtual conferences. Another parent described satisfaction with their child's progress in learning English, but did not recall any specific information they had received that demonstrated that progress.

This inconsistency is also visible in the Fall 2021 TNTP Insight survey, where only 46% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that "Families at my school regularly receive useful updates about their student's progress" and 56% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that "My school has established systems that ensure families are well-informed about the school."

According to the school year 2021-22 milestones in the strategic plan, the school does not yet have a family advisory council. The FACE team aimed to establish this at the beginning of this school year, and cited challenges with in-person meetings due to COVID-19 as the reason for not yet reaching this milestone.

## Domain 3: Educators' Opportunities to Learn



### Key Question 6

*Does the school design professional development and collaborative structures to sustain focus on instructional improvement?*

**The school provides professional development and collaborative opportunities that focus on a unified approach to instruction and classroom climate and that promote a culture of continuous improvement.**

Discussion with school leaders and teachers revealed an extensive professional development infrastructure that supports team alignment and teacher growth at every stage. New teachers start with summer training each year, and then, if applicable, are in a new teacher cohort for their first and second years. Every first- and second-year teacher meets with a mentor weekly.

All teachers have a coach, and coaching starts at the beginning of the year with establishing both what their goals are for students and their goals for their own growth. Teachers meet with their coach weekly or biweekly, and some also reported that their coach has been available outside of the coaching structure for additional support. School leaders reported that much of their coaching this year has been oriented toward counseling teachers through the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis and impacts on their day-to-day responsibilities.

On the school's Fall 2021 Curriculum and Instruction Survey (C&I Survey), 66% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that "KCIA provides instructional support that significantly improves my teaching." Additionally, 47% of respondents indicated that their team's instructional planning meetings and/or team collaboration time are almost always effective and 47% indicated that these meetings and collaboration time are somewhat effective, with only 6% indicating that they are rarely effective. 93% of respondents also indicated that professional development at their school this semester (Fall 2021) has helped them or somewhat helped them grow as an educator.

Beyond individual coaching, the school has early release for students on Wednesdays for professional development as a team. Instructional professional development was mapped out by a Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the year. Teachers indicated that they provide feedback on professional development and at some points, have choice around which sessions they attend based on their interests and development needs. Teachers and school leaders shared that more Wednesday professional development time has been

offered as work time in the past two years to balance supporting staff development with the reality of teachers' planning needs.

Teachers described that adult culture has become much more collaborative because of the systems provided, such as common planning time. Teachers also reported that there was explicit development at the beginning of the year around how to use this collaborative time effectively, and that they feel comfortable with and make good use of the time because of the intentions set at the beginning. This anecdotal information is aligned with the results from the school's Fall 2021 C&I Survey, with 80% of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing that their work environment is collaborative, and with 88% who feel motivated to work with their peers. Further documentation submitted by the school aligns with the descriptions given in focus groups, laying out internal practices for individual coaching and professional development for instructional staff, including goals, expectations, and intended annual trajectory.



### Key Question 7

*Does the school's culture indicate high levels of collective responsibility, trust and efficacy?*

### **Educators' mindsets and beliefs reflect shared commitments to students' learning.**

In focus groups, teachers referenced the turnaround effort that started about 5 years ago. Those who continued with the school have observed a significant positive change in staff mentality toward their roles as teachers and ensuring they meet student needs. One teacher reported in a focus group that staff are treated as people first by their leadership, which allows and encourages them to do the same for students. One leader shared the importance of creating a culture of respect, love, and care, *and* holding high expectations for each other and students. This leader also shared that they believe the teachers are here for the mission and vision of working with a diverse population, and, out of love and respect, holding them to high expectations. This person also referenced that their staff retention rates in the last few years have been very high, and that in their 135 member staff, there are likely only 2-3 team members leaving after this school year. On the Fall 2021 C&I Survey, 99% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they "feel motivated to work with our students."

**School leaders have created a growth-oriented professional climate, and there are some foundational elements with curriculum adoption that need to be addressed to build a rigorous and supportive environment for students.**

In a focus group, one teacher articulated that the teaching staff have autonomy and feel trusted by their coaches and school leaders and another articulated that teachers feel supported by coaches and school leaders, and that when they request support, planned or in the moment, they are confident that they will get the support they need. Teachers reported that they feel connected to the leadership team and because of that connection, they do not feel nervous when an administrator enters their classroom for an observation or other purpose. In the Fall 2021 Insight survey, 78% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their “school is committed to improving [their] instructional practice,” and 67% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they “get enough feedback on [their] instructional practice.”

Teachers were also able to describe a focus on students doing the “heavy lifting”, the adoption of rigorous curriculum, and their priorities for differentiation. Both focus group responses and survey responses to the Fall 2021 C&I survey indicated mixed opinions on the adoption of Eureka Math and Wit & Wisdom for ELA. In one focus group, a teacher shared that they are doing a lot of work to make Eureka accessible for their students, and another shared that they do not really use Eureka because they “use questions kids need instead.” Another teacher mentioned that they are now able to supplement each of these curricula when “it doesn’t work”, presumably meaning when exit ticket, check for understanding, or formative assessment data indicates students are not progressing toward mastery.

They shared that building scaffolds they believe their students need to reach the curriculum has been a challenging process, and they spend a lot of time modifying lessons and pacing to meet their students where they are. While teacher comments on Eureka Math were largely focused on concerns around their students’ ability to master grade-level content, one instructional leader also articulated concern that using the curriculum is challenging since it does not fully align to Missouri state content standards.

Differing opinions on students’ ability to access grade-level content were present across focus groups and indicated in prior surveys. In the Fall 2021 Insight survey, 82% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their “...school implements a rigorous academic curriculum”, while only 53% strongly agreed or agreed that “Students at my school can achieve the academic standards for their grade level.” In the Fall 2021 C&I survey, only 36% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that “Wit & Wisdom helps students meet the rigor of the ELA standards”, and 23% strongly agreed or agreed that “Wit & Wisdom is appropriate for the students at KCIA”. On the same survey, 67% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that “Eureka Math helps students meet the rigor of the math standards”, and 57% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that “Eureka Math is appropriate for the students at KCIA”.

## Domain 4: Leadership and Governance



### Key Question 8

*Do school leaders guide and participate with instructional staff in central processes of teaching and learning?*

#### **School leaders have established a vision for students' long-term success and set clear goals to meet that vision.**

The school has a detailed multi-year strategic plan that includes priorities across instruction, school culture, staffing, and operations. Organizational leaders update the strategic plan documents with milestones under each priority for the current school year. Leaders also keep a “Balanced Scorecard” data dashboard as part of the strategic plan that includes the data elements they use to measure progress toward milestones and annual goals. As of the time of the site visit, this scorecard was updated to reflect Winter 2021-22 student assessment results on NWEA exams.

On the Fall 2021 Insight survey, 76% of respondents indicated that they strongly agree or agree that their “...school leaders articulate a clear overarching vision that drives priorities, goals, and decision making within the school” and 80% of respondents indicated that they “...understand how [their] actions contribute to school priorities and goals.

While both of these results evidence significant work in building and articulating the school’s vision, pushing understanding of these foundational elements across the full school team will be crucial for continued positive and constructive staff culture. Instructional leaders also shared that the Elementary and Middle Schools each have their own data dashboards that track progress toward annual goals. The school has ‘Instructional Commitments’ and academic goals shared across elementary and middle, including annual targets for student data on ACCESS for ELLs, NWEA, ANet, and Fountas & Pinnell.

#### **The school has adopted high-quality and rigorous curriculum, but has not reached full implementation across grade-levels and subjects.**

The high-quality and rigorous curricula include Eureka Math, Wit & Wisdom (ELA) and Amplify (Science). As mentioned above, in some cases, teachers are significantly modifying content from these curricula to make the lessons “usable” with their students. In focus groups and on recent surveys, teachers have expressed concerns related to curriculum implementation including students’ ability to access grade-level content, lesson pacing that

supports student needs, and teacher time invested in scaffolding Eureka and Wit & Wisdom.

As evidenced by the strategic plan and the Fall 2021 C&I survey, this is an area where the school is actively working on adoption and implementation. There are strategic plan priorities that address adoption of Eureka and Wit & Wisdom. The status updates in the strategic plan document indicate that while milestones related to Wit & Wisdom have advanced this year, some important components of Eureka adoption have been moved to Summer 2022 for implementation in 2022-23: 1) Revise what rigor and language development should look like in math, including goals/non-negotiables for Eureka implementation; and 2) Develop a school wide protocol for customizing a Eureka lesson to address unfinished learning. From teacher comments and survey responses, these two elements seem to be the crux of where teachers are struggling with implementation and where teachers have expressed concerns about keeping up with pacing and exposure to grade-level content while also ensuring their students are progressing toward mastery.

While the coaching structures set up for instructional staff are generally strong, one leader shared in a focus group that the leadership team needs further alignment work to effectively coach teachers toward full implementation that meets student needs. This leader also shared that most staff members in leadership roles have some form of coaching and leadership development from external organizations, but did not share how learnings carry from those programs into implementation on the leadership team within the school.



### Key Question 9

*Do school leaders effectively orchestrate the school's operations?*

**School leaders build and communicate effective operational systems, but have not yet established clear division of responsibilities and communication across the organization.**

From the documentation available, it is clear that the leadership team has invested significant time in building and documenting operational processes that will allow the school to function effectively day-to-day and allow teachers to focus on instructional priorities. These processes are documented in the Staff Handbook, Student and Family Handbook, Financial Operations Policies, coaching model, and professional development plan for the year.

School leaders shared that the leadership team needs more meetings to ensure alignment across the team. One leader reported that they need more structure across leaders who manage different projects, and sometimes are not aware of the prioritization and execution of projects by other leadership team members. This was also echoed in a teacher focus group, where the teacher referenced the shared leadership model at the school, and articulated that the roles and responsibilities within that shared leadership model are not adequately clear.

The organizational chart shows delineation of responsibilities for crucial internal systems, such as food service, safety, maintenance, non-instructional staff, federal programs, Special Education, 504 plan administration, technology, business operations, and student recruitment and enrollment. Oversight of these responsibilities is divided across the Superintendent, Middle School Principal, Elementary Principal and Assistant Principal, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Director of Student Services. Some of the confusion among staff about this division of responsibility seemed to also stem from not knowing, in a given area, who needs to give input, who needs to be consulted, who needs to be informed along the way, and who is the person making the final decision.

### **School leaders have had success in recent years retaining effective teachers.**

One leader shared that they have employed the former Superintendent to go to job fairs in the area and help recruit teachers. This leader also described that they have had very high teacher retention over the last few years, and are only filling a few teaching positions per year. Two strong indicators related to retention come from the Fall 2021 Insight survey, where 92% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that “[They] applied for a position at this school rather than being ‘placed’ here” and 78% of teachers indicated that they plan to stay 2+ years at this school. The most common reasons cited for teachers planning to stay were a positive school culture and learning environment, relationships with students and families, and an ability to have a positive impact on student outcomes. Some concerning indicators from the Fall 2021 Insight survey included only 38% of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing that “[They] can consistently accomplish essential work during [their] regular planning time” and 32% of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing that “Over the long term, [their] workload as a teacher is sustainable”.

### **The school does not yet recruit and retain teachers and leaders who reflect the demographic makeup of the student population.**

Responses on the Fall 2021 Insight survey indicated that 25% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that “[Their] school retains teachers and leaders who reflect the demographic makeup of our student population.” Additionally, 83% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that “[Their] school’s leaders have encouraged [them] to engage in learning around diversity, equity, and/or inclusion.” Hiring and retaining a diverse and high-quality staff is cited in the strategic plan, with several milestones due in May 2022.

The two milestones slated for March 2022 are not yet complete, according to updates in the strategic plan document: “Identify five historically black colleges and universities nationwide and begin establishing recruiting relationships” and “Strategically send diverse staff members of color to recruitment events.”

**There is not currently a leadership succession plan in place.**

In the past several years, leadership succession has happened internally - two Instructional Coaches have moved into Principal and Assistant Principal roles, and some teachers have moved into Instructional Coach roles. Their current Director of Curriculum and Instruction also grew into her role internally. Additionally, on the Fall 2021 Insight survey, two elements in ‘Career Progression’ speak to the need for more intentional succession planning. Only 32% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed both that “Someone at [their] school is thinking about [their] career progression” and that “There are opportunities for me to advance at my school.” These responses will be important to address so as to avoid a significant dropoff in teacher retention based on lack of investment in their development and leadership trajectory. Leadership development opportunities cited in the strategic plan for high-performing teachers include pursuing additional professional development beyond what the school provides and leading professional development internally for their peers.



### Key Question 10

*Does the Board provide competent stewardship and oversight of the school?*

**The Board provides competent oversight of the academic program, financial condition, and legal standing of the school.**

The Board is appointed and includes members from throughout the city who work in a variety of industries. It does not yet include members from the community surrounding the school. Four of the Board’s six members bring education experience in addition to other knowledge and skill sets including early childhood development, youth development, community development, communications, public relations, advocacy, finance, and engineering. The Board is currently made up of three white men and three Black women, and was initially a founding Board of all white men. The Board is in the process of recruiting two additional Board members, with this process led by the Board Chair. One leader indicated that they would like to have a parent join the Board. Approximately half of

the school's Board is relatively new and some Board members cited that they may leave within the next year.

Sample meeting minutes show that the Board meets monthly, with a relatively consistent structure, including unfinished business from the prior meeting when needed, new business, and a slate of reports from school leadership varying by meeting and time of year. Agendas indicate that the Board is presented monthly with report outs on different topics related to their governance role (e.g., policies, financials, academic results, personnel updates), and asked to approve next steps, as needed. The school contracts with EdOps for support in Finance and Accounting. The Board reviews a monthly financial report and reviews and approves a check register monthly as well. One leader reports that most communication with the Board happens in Board meetings, and the primary avenue for any other communication is through the superintendent. In the focus group, participants indicated that Board meetings are very informative. The Board uses tools from SchoolSmartKC - a non-profit organization that provides Board training - to support effective stewardship and oversight, though tools were not specified by focus group members or in documentation provided.

Discussions with Board members and organizational leadership highlighted three areas in which the Board could strengthen its role, including increasing Board diversity through the current new member recruitment process, succession planning, and a formal superintendent evaluation tied directly to organizational goals and the strategic plan. A key part of what would allow the Board to strengthen in these areas would be creation of three committees identified by focus group members: academic, executive, and finance.

## Domain 5: Financial Performance



### Key Question 11

*Does the school maintain a sound and sustainable financial condition?*

**Overall, the school is in a healthy financial state and financial governance of the school is generally strong.**

Through the financial and operations focus groups, the Board and the school's leadership shared that the school has a strong balance sheet. Based on document review, the school has approximately 154 days cash on hand as of December 31, 2021, and the school also has a very low amount of debt. Board members and school leaders shared that the key investments in recent years have been focused on improvements to the school's facility and using ESSER allocations to hire additional staff members to provide at least two teachers in each classroom.

There is room to more strategically align the school's finances with efforts to improve academics and the quality of classroom instruction. There are some financial risks and opportunities to the school's operating model that loom for the school over the short- and medium-term outlook. At this time, the Board has both the window of opportunity and leadership experience to take action to address these potential risks and opportunities. The school has invested in additional personnel primarily through the use of non-recurring ESSER funds to add additional personnel to classrooms for instruction. While this decision is understandable, there was not a clear picture of how the school's budget would sustain these positions in future years when the non-recurring ESSER revenue expires.

Financial governance and expertise of the school's finances is shared but also has room for improvement. Board members and school staff shared that EdOps has been a strong financial partner for budget planning and accounting management. Based on focus group interviews, it appeared that approximately half of the school's governing Board had a more in depth knowledge of the school's budget and some of the intricacies of charter school financial governance.

On the Board, no finance committee is currently in place. The risk of this is that too few members of the board have the knowledge, context, and expertise to help inform the longer-term alignment of resources to priorities.

## Domain 6: Organizational Performance



### Key Question 12

*Does the school have effective operational systems and structures in place?*

**The school's internal operational systems are sufficient to support the smooth operations of the school.**

The school's foundational policies and practices are found in the organization's By-Laws, Financial Operations Policies, Staff Handbook, and Student and Family Handbook, available in 8 languages. The organizational chart shows delineation of responsibilities for crucial internal systems, such as food service, safety, maintenance, non-instructional staff, federal programs, Special Education, 504 plan administration, technology, business operations, and student recruitment and enrollment. Oversight of these responsibilities is divided across the Superintendent, Middle School Principal, Elementary Principal and Assistant Principal, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Director of Student Services. Documentation from the elementary school shows delineation of responsibilities at a more granular level and is intended to support teachers in knowing who to go to for specific needs, ranging from staff absences to English Learner curriculum to technological difficulties administering assessments. Professional development plans for the year show key emergency preparedness sessions scheduled to appropriately train staff in both preparedness and response. In addition to their own internal operations functions, the school contracts with EdOps - a company that focuses on oversight of the school's financial operations and compliance - for support in Finance and Accounting. A staff member shared that all employment paperwork for school staff, such as I-9s, contracts, certification documentation, and background checks/fingerprinting, is maintained in hard copy in a locked filing cabinet within a locked office.

Part of the operations management and accountability system appears to include regular report-outs to the Board in these areas. For example, in the January 2022 Board Meeting Minutes, members of the school's leadership team reported out on enhancements to their facilities, investing in a new student information management system, student recruitment and enrollment, and high school enrollment status for alumni, in addition to the regular monthly finance report and check register.

In the Fall 2021 TNTP Insight Survey, just over half (53%) of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that "Day-to-day operations at my school run smoothly," and one third of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that "Non-academic services for students (such as

buses and school meals) are well managed.” The school has provided strong documentation of operational systems and procedures, so these survey results seem to show a disconnect between operational planning and operational implementation.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Site Visit Team Members

The School Quality Review to Kansas City International Academy in Kansas City, Missouri took place on February 23-24, 2022. The following team members participated in the review:

- Aidin Carey, Team Member, BES
- Hunter Schimpff, Team Member, BES
- Sundiata Salaam, Team Member, BES
- Elysa Severinghaus, Team Writer, BES
- Engin Blackstone, Team Member, Superintendent at Concept Schools

## Appendix B: Summary of Classroom Observation Data

During the site visit, the team conducted 35 classroom observations, representing a range of grade levels and subject areas. The following table presents the compiled data from those observations. Score distribution figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.

*Note:* A score of “No rating” indicates that the site visit team did not have the opportunity to observe the presence or absence of this indicator during the observation period in a given classroom.

	Indicator	Distribution of Scores (%)				
		Ineffective	Partially ineffective	Mostly effective	Effective	No rating
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	-
Classroom Climate	<b>Behavioral Expectations</b> Clear expectations Consistent rewards and/or consequences Anticipation and redirection of misbehavior	9%	37%	6%	43%	5%
	<b>Structured Learning Environment</b> Teacher preparation Learning time maximized	17%	26%	23%	29%	5%
	<b>Supportive Learning Environment</b> Caring relationships Teacher responsiveness to students' non-academic needs	3%	14%	49%	31%	3%
Purposeful Teaching	<b>Focused Instruction</b> Learning objectives that drive all lesson activities Effective communication of academic content High expectations	14%	26%	29%	23%	8%
	<b>Instructional Strategies</b> Multi- sensory modalities and materials Instructional format Student choice	11%	37%	20%	17%	15%

	<b>Participation and Engagement</b> Active student participation Strategies to increase participation	20%	28%	23%	26%	3%
	<b>Higher-Order Thinking</b> Challenging Tasks Application to new problems and situations Justify thinking or reasoning	26%	43%	0%	20%	11%
In-Class Assessment & Feedback	<b>Assessment Strategies</b> Use of formative assessments Alignment to academic content	17%	31%	26%	17%	9%
	<b>Feedback</b> Clear, specific, and actionable Clarifies, misunderstanding or provides guidance	14%	31%	29%	11%	15%

## Appendix C: Site Visit Schedule

Day 1				
Time	Team Member A	Team Member B	Team Member C	Team Member D
7:15 - 7:30 am	Team arrives and morning meeting	Team arrives and morning meeting	Team arrives and morning meeting	Team arrives and morning meeting
7:30 - 7:45 am	Team meets with the Director of Technology	Team meets with the Director of Technology	Team meets with the Director of Technology	Team meets with the Director of Technology
8:00 - 9:00 am	Parent focus groups	Interview with Superintendent	Parent focus groups	Governance Focus Group (via Zoom)
9:00 - 10:00 am	Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Interview with Board Chair and Treasurer, review finance docs (via Zoom) <i>Time: 9:00am - 10:30am</i>
10:00 - 11:00 am	Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Classroom observations <i>Time: 10:30am - 11:10am</i>
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Interview with Curriculum & Instruction team	Classroom visits	Interview with Curriculum Instructional team	Document review <i>Time: 11:10am - 12:00pm</i>
12:00 - 1:00 pm	Lunch; team debrief	Lunch; team debrief	Lunch; team debrief	Lunch; team debrief
1:00 - 1:30 pm	Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Classroom observations
Early Dismissal	Students leave at 1:45pm	Students leave at 1:45pm	Students leave at 1:45pm	Students leave at 1:45pm
2:00 - 3:00 pm	Teacher focus groups MS	Teacher focus groups ES	Teacher focus groups MS (Must include staff member in "specialist" category)	Interview Ops/School admin on finance systems

3:00 - 4:00 pm	Evidence sorting and team discussion			
4:00 - 5:00 pm	Check-in with school leadership			
5:00 pm	Team departs	Team departs	Team departs	Team departs

Day 2			
Time	Team Member A	Team Member B	Team Member C
7:30 - 7:45 am	Team arrives and morning meeting	Team arrives and morning meeting	Team arrives and morning meeting
8:00 - 9:30 am	Observe Arrival and Classrooms	Observe Arrival and Classrooms	Observe Arrival and Classrooms
9:30 - 10:20 am	Operations Leader Interview (Admin Asst & Supt)	Interview school administrators	Interview school administrators
10:20 - 11:00 am	Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Classroom observations
11:00 am - 12:20 pm	Student Focus Groups MS <i>Time: 11:00-12:00</i> Location: 6th Grade Room	Student focus Groups ES <i>Time: 11:20-12:20</i> Location: Art room	Student Focus Groups MS Location: 6th Grade Room
12:20 - 1:00 pm	Lunch; team debrief	Lunch; team debrief	Lunch; team debrief
1:00 - 2:00 pm	Parent focus groups	Parent focus groups	Parent focus groups
2:00 - 3:00 pm	Flextime	Flextime	Flextime
3:00 - 4:00 pm	Team debrief	Team debrief	Team debrief
4:00 - 5:00 pm	Meet with school leadership	Meet with school leadership	Meet with school leadership
5:00 pm	Team departs	Team departs	Team departs

## Appendix D: School Documentation Submitted for Review

- [School Schedules](#)
- [School General Documentation](#)
- [Instruction](#)
- [Students' Opportunities to Learn](#)
- [Educators' Opportunities to Learn](#)
- [Leadership & Governance](#)
- [Financial Documentation](#)