

SchoolWorks School Quality Review Report

**MC2 STEM High School
November 28-30, 2017**

SchoolWorks

100 Cummings Center, Suite 236C,
Beverly, MA 01915
(978) 921-1674 www.schoolworks.org



Table of Contents

About the SchoolWorks School Quality Review Process	1
Domains and Key Questions	2
Domain 1: Instruction.....	3
Domain 2: Students’ Opportunities to Learn	7
Domain 3: Educators’ Opportunities to Learn	9
Domain 4: Governance and Leadership	11
Prioritization Process	13
Appendix A: Site Visit Team Members	14
Appendix B: Implementation Rubric.....	15
Appendix C: Summary of Classroom Observation Data	16

About the SchoolWorks School Quality Review Process

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) envisions 21st Century Schools of Choice in which students will be challenged with a rigorous curriculum that considers the individual learning styles, program preferences, and academic capabilities of each student, while engaging the highest quality professional educators, administrators, and support staff available. As part of Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools, CMSD has adopted a portfolio district strategy that includes: growing the number of high quality district and charter schools, and closing or replacing failing schools; focusing the district's central office on its role in school support and governance, while transferring authority and resources to schools; investing and phasing in high-leverage school reforms across all levels; and increased accountability for all schools in the district through the creation of the Cleveland Transformation Alliance (CTA). CMSD has partnered with stakeholders to create a school performance framework that will be used to provide a comprehensive assessment of the quality of each school in the district. The comprehensive assessment will be an evidence-based process that includes data and information gathered on academic programs and performance, school climate, finance, operations, governance, and stakeholder satisfaction, among other sources.

CMSD has engaged SchoolWorks as a partner in implementing a school quality review (SQR) process aligned to CMSD initiatives and the school performance framework. The SQRs are used as one component of a comprehensive assessment of the quality of each school in the district; they are used to provide formative feedback to schools. Reviews include an action planning process in which the team and the school work together to identify prioritized areas for improvement.

The School Quality Review (SQR) protocol and review process provides a third-party perspective on current school quality for all students. The process will include two days of collecting evidence on site through interviews, classroom visits, and document review. While on site, the team meets to discuss, sort, and analyze evidence it is collecting. The site visit team uses evidence collected through these events to determine ratings in relation to the protocol's criteria and indicators. In addition, the review will include a half-day prioritization session on the third day to assist the school in identifying root causes of opportunities for improvement and identifying which opportunities for improvement are of the highest priority and most likely to impact student achievement. The outcome of the action planning process is a prioritized plan of next steps, including strategies, resources, and timelines to accomplish goals.

The report documents the team's ratings for key questions within each of the four domains identified in the SQR protocol: *Instruction*, *Students' Opportunities to Learn*, *Educators' Opportunities to Learn*, and *Leadership*. The final pages of the report are used to record the discussion and action plan developed by the team and the school during the prioritization process.

Domains and Key Questions

Based on trends found in the collected evidence, the site visit team assigns a rating to each key question.

	Rating (See Appendix B)				
	Level 1: Intensive Support Required	Level 2: Targeted Support Required	Level 3: Established	Level 4: Exemplary	
Key Question Ratings	Level 1: Intensive Support Required	Level 2: Targeted Support Required	Level 3: Established	Level 4: Exemplary	Level 4: Exemplary
Domain: Instruction					
1. Do classroom interactions and organization ensure a classroom climate conducive to learning?					
2. Is classroom 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: Students' Opportunity to Learn					
4. Does the school identify and support special education students, gifted students, English language learners, and students who are otherwise struggling or at risk?					
5. Does the school have a safe, supportive learning environment that reflects high expectations?					
Domain: Educators' Opportunity to Learn					
6. Does the school design professional development and collaborative systems to sustain a focus on instructional improvement?					
7. Does the school's culture indicate high levels of collective responsibility, trust, and efficacy?					
Domain: Leadership					
8. Do school leaders act as instructional leaders to guide and participate with instructional staff in the central processes of improving teaching and learning?					
9. Do school leaders effectively orchestrate the school's operations?					

Domain 1: Instruction

The instructional domain centers on the specific interactions between teachers and students around content. Research suggests that high-quality instructional interactions require: supportive classroom environments; involve purposeful teaching that is intentional, engaging, and challenging; and ensure student feedback in response to ongoing assessments.

1. Do classroom interactions and organization ensure a classroom climate conducive to learning?	Level 1: Intensive Support Required
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------

Behavior Expectations			
Ineffective	Partially Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective ¹
1	2	3	4
11%	37%	37%	16%

- Behavioral expectations are followed by students in some classrooms.** In 16% (n=19) of classrooms, behavior expectations were effective; all students behaved throughout the lesson. In one classroom, for example, during independent, small group, and whole class instruction, students were on task without teacher redirection, having internalized the posted classroom expectations. In 37% of classrooms, behavior expectations were partially effective. In these classrooms, most students behaved for most of the lesson. In one such classroom, most students worked silently as expected, and the teacher effectively redirected most, but not all, off-task behavior, such as the use of cell phones for non-academic tasks. In another classroom, some students were off task during a brief introductory activity, but all students were then on task for the remainder of the lesson. In 37% of classrooms, behavior expectations were partially ineffective, characterized by minor misbehavior frequently disrupting learning and teachers not consistently or effectively addressing misbehavior. In one such classroom, multiple groups of students had side conversations throughout the lecture portion of the lesson, and the teacher did not consistently redirect those students. In another classroom, students had side conversations, used cell phones for non-academic tasks, and put their heads on desks during the teacher’s presentation of new material, and the teacher’s redirection did not improve those students’ behavior. In 11% of classrooms, behavior expectations were ineffective, as characterized by persistent misbehavior that stopped classroom learning and teachers ignoring misbehavior. In one such classroom, most students talked off task throughout the lesson. At the start of the lesson, the teacher frequently stopped instructional delivery to attempt to address the misbehavior, and then began ignoring the misbehavior to finish delivering new content while the classroom grew louder and more chaotic. Teachers and students reported that student misbehavior interferes with learning in some classrooms. Some teachers reported that the school lacks a schoolwide approach to behavior management.

¹ Due to rounding, the percentages for a particular indicator may not appear to total to 100%.

Structured Learning Environment			
Ineffective	Partially Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective
1	2	3	4
21%	63%	5%	11%

- The learning environment is not highly structured, and learning time is not maximized.** In 11% of classrooms, the learning environment was effectively structured to maximize learning time through the use of appropriate pacing and effective routines and procedures. In one such classroom, the teacher posted and followed an agenda that included times, and students transitioned quickly between lesson activities. In 63% of classrooms, learning time was partially ineffective, often due to some wasted time at the start of class or due to learning activities taking longer than necessary. In multiple classrooms, for example, instruction began approximately 5 minutes after the scheduled start of class because students entered classrooms late, or teachers chatted with students. In another classroom, the teacher allotted 10 minutes for a literacy task that many students finished in approximately 5 minutes. In another classroom, learning time was lost because the teacher had multiple, brief, tangential conversations with students about topics unrelated to the lesson activities while introducing new material. In 21% of classrooms, the lesson was ineffectively structured, resulting in a significant amount of wasted learning time. In one such classroom, a teacher gave students 20 minutes to complete a problem, but many students finished in the first few minutes, then sat idly for the remaining time, talking, eating, and using cell phones.

2. Is classroom instruction intentional, engaging, and challenging for all students?	Level: 1 Intensive Support Required
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------

Instructional Strategies			
Ineffective	Partially Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective
1	2	3	4
26%	47%	26%	0%

- A variety of instructional strategies and materials are rarely used to support students’ diverse needs.** In 26% of classrooms, instructional strategies were partially effective, typically due to varying instructional formats or modalities, but not both. In one such classroom, the format of lesson activities varied; students worked in a large group, small groups, and independently, but all activities were in the modality of written worksheets. In another classroom, students read, watched a demonstration, and completed a worksheet, but did each of these activities independently. In 47% of classrooms, instructional strategies were partially ineffective, often due to most of the lesson being in a single format or modality, or because classes were primarily teacher-led. In one such classroom, a small group of students performed a short skit for their peers before spending most of the lesson completing worksheets. In another classroom, small groups of students took turns briefly presenting to the class, but spent the remainder of the lesson listening to their peers’ presentations with no interaction. In another classroom, students received an extended lecture before watching a brief demonstration. In 26% of classrooms, instructional strategies were ineffective, most often due to lessons relying heavily on listening or copying. In one such classroom, students only listened to a lecture and copied notes. In another, students completed worksheets only.

Higher-order Thinking			
Ineffective	Partially Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective
1	2	3	4
53%	21%	21%	5%

- Instruction does not require all students to use and develop higher-order thinking skills.** In 21% of classrooms, higher-order thinking was partially effective, as characterized by most, but not all, students having opportunities to engage in challenging tasks during most of the lesson. In one such classroom, most students participated in rigorous peer questioning regarding their writing, including explaining their language choices, reflecting on their messaging, and analyzing their audience. In 21% of classrooms, higher-order thinking was partially ineffective, often due to limited access to challenging tasks. In one classroom, all students completed a simple problem set. A small number of students were given the opportunity to extend their thinking by showing and explaining their work to their peers on the class whiteboard, but most students were not given this opportunity. In 53% of classrooms, higher-order thinking was ineffective. In these classes, students were required to answer and/or complete low-level questions and/or activities only. In one such classroom, students were engaged in comprehension questions on a worksheet throughout the lesson. In another classroom, the learning task required students to match and copy information only. In another classroom, the teacher asked students only yes/no questions throughout the lecture and group work. The site visit team observed few examples of challenging texts or multi-step problems, and students reported being challenged in few of their classes.

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?	Level 1: Intensive Support Required
---	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------

Assessment Strategies			
Ineffective	Partially Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective
1	2	3	4
47%	37%	11%	5%

- In-class assessment strategies are rarely used to reveal students’ thinking about learning goals.** In 11% of classrooms, assessment strategies were partially effective. In these classrooms, teachers employed strategies to check the understanding of most, but not all, students. In one such classroom, the teacher circulated and viewed students’ responses while students worked independently. The teacher asked probing questions and was able to check the understanding of most students. In 37% of classrooms, assessment strategies were partially ineffective due to checking the understanding of less than half of students. In one such classroom, the teacher circulated during small group work and asked clarifying questions to groups of students, but only had time to check in with two of five small groups. In another class, the teacher asked choral-response questions to gauge understanding while introducing new material, but most students did not respond as asked. In 47% of classrooms, assessment strategies were ineffective. In some of these classrooms, teachers checked the understanding of a few students only. In one such classroom, the teacher circulated but looked at the responses of a few students only, and chatted with students regarding topics unrelated to the lesson. In another class, a teacher circulated while students worked in groups, but did not look at student

work and, instead, only encouraged participation and positive behavior. In multiple classrooms, teachers did not employ any strategies to check understanding.

Feedback			
Ineffective	Partially Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective
1	2	3	4
53%	32%	11%	5%

- Timely, frequent, specific feedback is not provided throughout the learning process to inform improvement efforts.** In 11% of classrooms, partially effective feedback was provided. In these classrooms, clear, specific, high-quality feedback was provided to approximately half of the students. In one such classroom, the teacher circulated and asked probing questions to guide students' responses regarding a challenging nonfiction text, and was able to speak with approximately half of students while circulating. In 32% of classrooms, feedback was partially ineffective, typically due to few students receiving high-quality feedback, or due to feedback that was not fully clear and specific. In one such classroom, the teacher provided useful guidance regarding students' work on a poster, but few students had the opportunity to speak with the teacher. In another, the teacher asked probing questions of small groups to guide their group work, but the questioning left many students confused, such that they stopped working when the teacher moved to the next group. In 53% of classrooms, the provision of feedback was ineffective. In the majority of these classrooms, no feedback was provided to students. In other classrooms, feedback did not provide academic guidance. In multiple classrooms, for example, teachers circulated but provided only praise (e.g., "Good job," "Nice work"). In another classroom, the teacher circulated between groups but clarified activity directions only. The site visit team observed that in many classrooms, teachers only provided feedback and guidance to students who requested help from teachers.

Domain 2: Students' Opportunities to Learn

Students' opportunities to learn are influenced by the *school-wide learning culture*, or the norms, values, and relationships students experience at school each day, as well as the *school-wide practices and interventions* that support students' academic and social-emotional learning. Research suggests that students learn best when their schools have a culture of high expectations for behavioral and academic performance *in concert with* a culture of caring and support. This context is further bolstered when schools monitor students' academic and behavioral progress, identify students' in need of more targeted support, and ensure interventions and guidance for students at risk of disengaging or failing

4. Does the school identify and support special education students, gifted students, English language learners, and students who are otherwise struggling or at risk?	Level 1: Intensive Support Required
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------

- The school does not have a clearly defined process for identifying struggling and at-risk students or systematically monitoring student progress.** Teachers at each of the school's three campuses reported that they regularly discuss struggling students in grade-level meetings, but most indicated that these discussions are informal. Some teachers described that their grade-level team engages in a student support team (SST) process, including completing a referral form, reviewing student achievement and classroom observation data, contacting parents, and employing classroom interventions. However, other teachers could not clearly identify the process they would follow if they believed a student needed additional support. When asked, teachers were also not able to consistently identify the individuals who oversaw their grade level SST processes, and stated that they have not received professional development (PD) regarding the SST process this year. Some teacher teams who described an SST process indicated that this process involves generating classroom interventions, but others expressed that this process is instead primarily used to identify students for special education testing. Few teachers reported having referred students this year. Additionally, teachers were not able to describe how they systematically monitor struggling students' progress. School leaders indicated that the school's small size (approximately 100 students per grade) allows the school's informal approach to generally effectively support struggling students, and acknowledged that the school does not employ a formal SST process or progress monitoring.
- The school implements limited academic supports for struggling and at-risk students.** Teachers and school leaders reported that the school provides various behavioral and social-emotional supports (e.g. restorative justice, daily morning meetings, weekly mentoring meetings, site-based and external counseling), but reported few targeted academic supports, despite expressing concerns that many students are multiple grade levels below proficiency. Teachers commonly identified tutoring as the school's primary academic support, but reported that the availability, frequency, and intensity of tutoring varies by grade level. Teachers and school leaders reported, for example, that in some grade levels, tutoring is provided by corporate partners, while in others, it is provided by community organizations; also, in some grade levels, tutoring is not available. Teachers reported that few students (approximately 10-to-30, depending on grade level) take part in tutoring, that the frequency of tutoring varies from daily to weekly, and that students must typically request tutoring to receive this support. When asked, some students indicated that they are unaware of tutoring opportunities. Teachers and school leaders also identified the school's intervention period (mastery block) as a source of academic support. However, staff reported that in some grade levels, this period is focused primarily on test preparation or credit recovery, while in others, it does not begin until the second semester. Some teachers reported using research-based interventions (e.g., Kahn Academy), but

teachers and school leaders reported that this depends on teachers; it is not systematic and school wide.

<p>5. Does the school have a safe, supportive learning environment that reflects high expectations?</p>	<p>Level 3: Established</p>
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------

- The school provides a safe environment to support students’ learning.** All stakeholders – school leaders, teachers, students, and parents – reported that staff and students feel safe on campus. Teachers and students commonly attributed their sense of safety to strong and positive relationships between staff and students and the presence of school security guards. While parents and school leaders reported occasional incidents of students fighting, most students reported that, as a result of strong relationships between students, fights do not take place. The site visit team observed some unsupervised students in common spaces at each campus, but did not observe any unsafe behaviors. On the school’s most recent Conditions for Learning (CFL) survey, 89% of students reported feeling safe on campus. All stakeholders also reported that students feel emotionally safe at school. Students reported that they do not experience bullying on any of the school’s three campuses and that they feel free to express themselves without fear of teasing or harassment. School leaders reported that the school is implementing the Winning Against Violent Environments (WAVE) peer mediation and Not on Our Watch (NOW) anti-bullying programs this year. Students reported varying levels of familiarity with these programs.
- The school provides opportunities for students to form positive relationships with peers and adults in the school.** Students reported that foremost among the school’s strengths are the opportunities to develop strong relationships with their peers and teachers. All stakeholders reported (and review of club lists confirmed) that the school offers various clubs, including robotics, museum ambassadors, city club (civic engagement), gay-straight alliance, chess, yearbook, National Honor Society, boys’ and girls’ basketball, yoga, and drumming, among others. Students and parents indicated that most students take part in clubs. Additionally, staff reported (and Academic Achievement Plan [AAP] and Strategic School Design documents confirmed) prioritizing supporting students’ social-emotional needs this year. Staff consistently reported that strategies for supporting students’ social-emotional needs include daily morning meetings (Circles) and weekly one-on-one mentoring (mentorship period). Teachers reported that mentoring provides valuable support and skills for students and builds trust. Students also described mentoring as valuable, reporting that they feel that the adults on campus care about them personally. Students further reported that, if necessary, they have at least one adult on campus with whom they can speak regarding personal issues. School leaders and teachers also reported (and staffing documents confirmed) that the school has counseling staff at each of the three campuses. Students reported knowing, and regularly meeting with, counseling staff for both career and personal guidance.

Domain 3: Educators' Opportunities to Learn

Teachers' opportunities to learn are influenced by the *school-wide professional culture*, or the norms, values, and relationships teachers experience at school each day, and the *school-wide practices* that support teachers' ongoing professional growth and collaboration. Research indicates that a culture of mutual responsibility, trust, and collective efficacy provides an essential foundation for teachers' and leaders' focused collaboration around instructional challenges. The school-wide culture and the school's supports for professional learning and collaboration contribute to teachers' collective capacity to deliver high-quality instruction, not just in individual classrooms, but across the school.

6. Does the school design professional development and collaborative systems to sustain a focus on instructional improvement?	Level 2: Targeted Support Required
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------

- Professional development (PD) addresses some identified areas of school need.** Teachers expressed that the school's primary avenue for PD is through external PD opportunities, such as district-offered sessions, local and national conferences, and graduate school learning opportunities. Teachers and school leaders reported that school leadership is supportive of teachers taking part in these activities. Teachers expressed enthusiasm and appreciation for these opportunities. Some teachers provided examples of their peers returning from conferences and sharing best practices with other staff. However, upon review of the school's AAP, the site visit team found that the external and site-based PD that staff reported receiving is not consistently aligned with the school's AAP priorities. The school's AAP priorities include improving: (1) math instruction; (2) college readiness; and (3) social-emotional supports. While teachers reported receiving PD on social-emotional supports (e.g., sessions on restorative justice, mentoring, and morning meetings), they did not consistently describe receiving PD aligned with the other AAP priorities. Staff reported that in addition to social-emotional learning, PD focus areas include data use, project-based learning, and school culture, rather than college readiness or math. Teachers also expressed concerns that many students are significantly below grade level, especially in literacy, but reported receiving no PD regarding literacy and little PD regarding instructional strategies. Staff explained that the school's year-round schedule allows for one full week of PD between each quarter, but reported that much of that time is spent on planning for the upcoming quarter's instruction, rather than intentional and focused professional development on improving instruction.
- Educators collaborate regularly, but do not yet consistently focus on effective instruction.** Staff reported (and scheduling documents confirmed) that teachers meet for one hour in teacher-led grade-level teams on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings; teachers identified this as the most common opportunity for collaboration with their peers. However, teachers reported that these meetings do not always take place for the full length of time as scheduled, and indicated that they are not typically focused on instruction. While some teachers reported discussing instruction (e.g., sharing best practices, discussing an article related to rigor), others reported (and meeting notes confirmed) that much of this meeting time is spent on grade-level logistics and operations, school culture, and student issues, rather than instruction. Some teachers also expressed that because meetings are led by different teachers each meeting, the meetings lack continuity; some expressed a desire for administration to take part in these meetings. School leaders and teachers explained that this teacher-led meeting structure is new this year and is intended, in part, to develop teacher leadership, but is still being established. Teachers also reported that some collaboration with their peers also takes

place at lunch, after PD on Thursday, and before and after school, but that this collaboration is informal.

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

**Level 2:
Targeted Support
Required**

- Educators' mindsets and beliefs do not consistently reflect shared commitments to students' learning.** While the vast majority of staff reported a high level of commitment to supporting students, teachers conveyed varying beliefs regarding their collective responsibility for students' learning and their commitment to all students' academic achievement. When asked about the school's low academic performance, many staff members conveyed a sense of personal responsibility to improve their instruction or to improve the school's programming. However, others suggested that the school's low performance is the fault of students, their home situations, or the school's open enrollment policy. Similarly, teachers expressed and demonstrated varying levels of commitment to ensuring students' academic achievement. Many teachers reported supporting students in non-academic ways, such as helping pay for students' prom dresses, providing students with food, writing recommendation letters on short notice, and building strong relationships with students. However, many other staff expressed or demonstrated low expectations. For example, some staff members identified subgroups of students who are less likely to succeed than others, or explained that the school's American College Test (ACT) goal is aligned to minimum community college requirements. In classrooms, the site visit team often observed low rigor and students being allowed to opt out of learning. Some parents stated that students are challenged at school only if they seek challenging work.
- The school reflects a safe and trustworthy professional climate.** Teachers unanimously reported that the school's adult culture is collegial, trusting, and respectful. Many teachers reported that they feel their colleagues frequently go above and beyond expectations to support their peers, and gave examples of sharing space and resources. Some teachers who are new to the school similarly reported feeling supported by their grade-level teams, being welcomed at the school, and being comfortable asking for, and receiving, help from their colleagues. Teachers also expressed respecting their colleagues both professionally and personally; teachers and school leaders reported that many teachers have developed personal relationships outside of school. Teachers also described administrators as open, well-intentioned, and caring, and gave examples of feeling comfortable approaching school leaders with suggestions or requests for help. Teachers also reported enjoying working with their grade-level teams; some teachers reported voluntarily visiting each other's classrooms for instructional ideas.

Domain 4: Leadership

School leadership supports the essential work of teaching and learning in schools. *School leadership* influences every aspect of a school's culture, organizational practices, and academic programs. In the SchoolWorks Quality Criteria, school leadership functions are represented by two dimensions. The first – instructional leadership – emphasizes overseeing and guiding the school's collective focus on instruction and student learning. The second – organizational leadership – involves leading strategic conversations and planning and ensuring effective school operations to advance the school's mission and vision.

8. Do school leaders act as instructional leaders to guide and participate with instructional staff in the central processes of improving teaching and learning?	Level 2: Targeted Support Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal is beginning to create clear goals for the school. School leaders consistently cited data when discussing the school's goals, and AAP materials (staff AAP presentations) stated that data were also used in selecting priorities. For example, these documents stated that the school's AAP priority of improving social-emotional supports was selected due to low data from the spring CFL survey's social and emotional learning measure. The school's AAP included clearly-defined goals and accompanying metrics; some school leaders were able to quickly and accurately recall these goals. However, few teachers could identify the school's stated goals of improving (1) math, (2) college readiness, and (3) social-emotional supports. They often provided various other goals, such as improving school culture, cross-disciplinary learning, mastery learning, individualized education, and increasing writing in non-ELA classes. Similarly, some school leaders were able to quickly and accurately recall the specific metrics that will define success in meeting the school's goals, such as growth and proficiency rates on various tests (Northwest Evaluation Association [NWEA], Ohio State Test [OST], ACT). However, no teachers were able to recall these metrics and, instead, provided broad measures (e.g., improving reading) or inaccurate metrics (e.g., increases of 5% in math proficiency). School leaders reported that this is the school's first year completing the AAP process, and acknowledged that the AAP is not yet widely understood by staff. School leaders regularly observe classrooms, but do not yet ensure that teachers deliver high-quality instruction. All teachers reported that school leaders have observed their instruction and provided feedback multiple times this year, but reported that the frequency of observations vary. For example, teachers reported that they receive between one observation per week and one observation per month. Teachers also reported variation in the usefulness of the feedback. Some teachers reported receiving useful, actionable feedback related to instruction or their subject content, but many teachers reported (and review of sample feedback confirmed) that feedback is often procedural or behavioral, rather than instructional, and formatted as questions rather than being actionable and specific. Further, when asked, most teachers were not able to identify specific instructional feedback that has improved their practice. School leaders reported (and review of informal walkthrough data confirmed) that the school has created an internal system for tracking classroom observations, including a cell phone application, but acknowledged that school leaders have not yet established a system for ensuring that teachers implement instructional feedback, and that providing instructional oversight across three campuses has been challenging. Despite inconsistencies in feedback frequency and quality, some teachers reported receiving, and appreciating, mock evaluations to help them understand formal evaluation expectations. Also, some teachers reported that school leaders model instructional strategies. 	

9. Do school leaders effectively orchestrate the school's operations?	Level 2: Targeted Support Required
-----------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------

- School leaders ensure effective communication and inclusive, transparent decision making across the organization.** School leaders and teachers consistently reported that the main avenue for staff communication is Slack (web-based team collaboration software), which allows teachers to message their colleagues throughout the day and share documents. All staff reported regularly using Slack, and also reported (and review of bulletins confirmed) that the principal sends weekly email bulletins to both staff and parents; staff bulletins include upcoming events and due dates, schedule changes, and PD information. Teachers also reported that school leaders are transparent about their schedules, and are available and responsive to their needs. All staff expressed that Slack and bulletins result in effective schoolwide communication. Teachers also unanimously reported that they have input into school decisions. Teachers explained that most decisions are made in grade-level teams, that they feel school leaders empower them to make decisions, and provided examples of having input in staff meeting schedules, curriculum choices (e.g., project-based learning and capstone projects), and class groupings. Staff also reported (and meetings agendas confirmed) that the school has a building leadership team (BLT) that includes the principal, assistant principals (site leaders) of each of the three campuses, and counselors. Staff stated that the BLT meets monthly, on average, and discusses issues such as school culture, instruction, special events, and PD. School leaders also reported that the school also has informal committees, participation on which is based on teacher interest, that meet occasionally to discuss data, school culture, and social-emotional learning.
- The principal engages community members and some parents in the educational process.** School leaders reported (and a list of 25 partner organizations confirmed) that the school has numerous partnerships, many of which provide significant and sustained support, and nearly all of which support student learning. School leaders indicated that these partnerships include the Great Lakes Science Center (that provides space for the 9th grade campus and opportunities to engage with NASA and the science museum), General Electric (that provides space for the 10th grade campus at no cost and tutoring and mentoring), Cleveland State University (that provides space for the 11th and 12th grade campus at no cost and college coursework for students and staff), approximately 10 local and national corporate partners who provide financial support, and various other partnerships (e.g., YMCA, Cleveland Museum of Art, Teach For America). All stakeholders also reported (and parent flyers and sign-in sheets confirmed) that the school provides some opportunities for parent engagement, including an annual open house, quarterly report card conferences, capstone presentations, and other events, such as a FAFSA and science nights. However, stakeholders reported (and sign-in sheets confirmed) varying levels of parent attendance at these events. Similarly, some staff reported frequent parent contact by phone, text, and email, but parents reported little contact with teachers. Parents reported infrequent parent organization meetings, and school leaders acknowledged that the group has met only once this year.

Prioritization Process

The site visit team met with the MC2 STEM High School's leadership team to review its findings, discuss the school's areas of strengths and areas for improvement, prioritize areas for improvement, and discuss ways to address the identified areas for improvement.

School leaders and the site visit team agreed that there are significant strengths present in the school. Areas of strength the team discussed included the school's safe learning environment and positive relationships, safe and trustworthy adult culture, positive communication, and community partnerships. The site visit team also noted that areas for growth include improving behavior expectations, maximizing learning time, requiring students to use higher order thinking skills, and implementing a variety of instructional strategies.

The group identified higher order thinking as the area for growth to prioritize. The group identified the following priority within this Domain as having the most potential impact on the success of the school as a whole: Domain I: Instruction – Higher-Order Thinking. Using this priority area, the school team developed a Theory of Action, a goal aligned to the school's AAP, a success measure, and an action plan.

Theory of Action: If the school defines higher-order thinking skills and activities (including project-based learning) and provides PD to all staff, then teachers will design and implement lessons and Capstone projects that include higher-order thinking skills and activities, which will lead to the development of students' higher-order thinking skills and improved student achievement.

Goal: Instruction requires all students to use and develop higher-order thinking skills.

AAP priorities to which the goal aligns: Academic priority 1: Math; Academic priority 2: College readiness

Success measure: By 3/28/18, in 50% of classrooms observed through informal walkthroughs, more than 50% of students will be engaged in tasks requiring higher-order thinking.

3-6 Month Action Plan for Achieving Goal	Target Dates	Champions
1. Research and define higher-order thinking skills and activities (including classroom walkthrough tool).	12/15/17	9 th grade Assistant Principal (AP)
2. Engage CSU stakeholders in the planning of PD planning.	12/15/17	Principal
3. Review and revise capstone planning documents to ensure inclusion of higher-order thinking skills and activities (including providing models and exemplar lesson plans and activities).	12/15/17	10 th grade AP
4. Deliver schoolwide PD to staff.	1/14/18	Principal
5. Implement expectation that teachers incorporate higher order thinking in capstone plans with school leader (and possibly peer) revisions and feedback.	1/14/18	10 th grade teacher
6. Implement expectation that teachers incorporate higher order thinking in lesson plans with school leader (and possibly peer) revisions and feedback.	1/14/18 to 3/28/18	9 th grade teacher and Union chair
7. Implement teacher-created plans with feedback from school leaders and peers (including school leaders collecting data).	1/31/18 to 3/28/18	11 th grade teacher

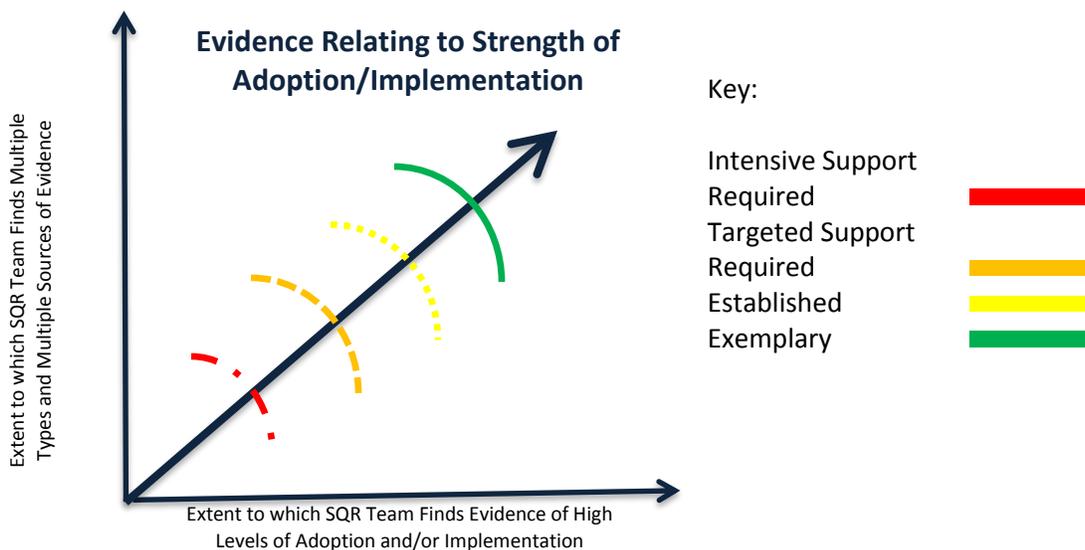
Appendix A: Site Visit Team Members

The SQR to MC2 STEM High School was conducted on November 28-30, 2017, by a team of educators from CMSD and SchoolWorks, LLC.

Paige Gonzalez , Team Leader	SchoolWorks, LLC
Nick Bucy , Team Writer	SchoolWorks, LLC
Dominique Astier , Team Member	SchoolWorks, LLC
Jill Cabe , Team Member	CMSD
Marinise Harris , Team Member	CMSD

Appendix B: Implementation Rubric

The site visit team will use the following guidance to select a performance level for each key question. Note that the quality standard for each implementation level is based on the extent to which the site visit team finds multiple types² and multiple sources³ of evidence related to the adoption and/or implementation of a practice or system and the extent to which the site visit team finds evidence of high levels of adoption and/or implementation of a practice or system.



Rating	Implementation Level	Quality Standard
1	Intensive Support Required	Evidence indicates that the key question is not a practice or system that has been adopted and/or implemented at the school, or that the level of adoption/implementation does not improve the school’s effectiveness.
2	Targeted Support Required	Evidence indicates that the key question is a practice or system that is developing at the school, but that it has not yet been implemented at a level that has begun to improve the school’s effectiveness, OR that the impact of the key action on the effectiveness of the school cannot yet be determined.
3	Established	Evidence indicates that the key question is a practice or system that has been adopted at the school, and is implemented at a level that has begun to improve the school’s effectiveness.
4	Exemplary	Evidence indicates that the key question is a practice or system that has been fully adopted at the school, and is implemented at a level that has had a demonstrably positive impact on the school’s effectiveness.

² “Multiple types of evidence” is defined as evidence collected from two or more of the following: document review, stakeholder focus groups and/or interviews; and classroom observations.

³ “Multiple sources of evidence” is defined as evidence collected from three or more stakeholder focus groups and/or interviews; two or more documents; and/or evidence that a descriptor was documented in 75% or more of lessons observed at the time of the visit.

Appendix C: Summary of Classroom Observation Data

During the site visit, the team conducted 19 observations, representing a range of grade levels and subject areas. The following table presents the compiled data from those observations. *Note: Due to rounding, the percentages for a particular indicator may not appear to total to 100%.*

	Indicator	Distribution of Scores (%)			
		Ineffective	Partially Effective		Effective
		1	2	3	4
Common Core Alignment	1a. Common Core Literacy Alignment (for all classes other than math) Alignment to content standards Alignment to instructional shifts N = 14	36%	29%	7%	29%
	1b. Common Core Math Alignment (for math classes only) Alignment to content standards Alignment to instructional shifts Alignment to standards for mathematical practice N = 5	20%	40%	0%	40%
	2. Behavioral Expectations Clear expectations Consistent rewards and/or consequences Anticipation and redirection of misbehavior	11%	37%	37%	16%
Classroom Climate	3. Structured Learning Environment Teacher preparation Learning time maximized	21%	63%	5%	11%
	4. Supportive Learning Environment Caring relationships Teacher responsiveness to students' needs	11%	37%	42%	11%
	5. Focused Instruction Learning objectives High expectations Effective communication of academic content	21%	37%	42%	0%
Purposeful Teaching	6. Instructional Strategies Multi-sensory modalities and materials Instructional format Student choice	26%	47%	26%	0%
	7. Cognitive Engagement Active student participation Perseverance	37%	26%	26%	11%
	8. Higher-order Thinking Challenging tasks Application to new problems and situations Student questions and metacognition	53%	21%	21%	5%
	9. Assessment Strategies Use of formative assessments Alignment to academic content	47%	37%	11%	5%
In-Class Assessment & Adjustment	10. Feedback Feedback to students Student use of feedback	53%	32%	11%	5%