

SchoolWorks School Quality Review Report

Valley View Elementary Boys Leadership Academy
September 26-28, 2017

SchoolWorks

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



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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
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 2: Targeted Support Required
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Behavior Expectations			
Ineffective	Partially Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective ¹
1	2	3	4
8%	17%	42%	33%

- Behavioral expectations are clear and understood by students.** In 33% of classrooms observed (n=12), behavior expectations were effective; students consistently behaved throughout the lesson and had internalized classroom expectations. In one classroom, for example, students worked as expected in centers, and rare minor misbehaviors were corrected by the teacher’s eye contact. In 42% of classrooms, behavior expectations were partially effective. In these classrooms, most students behaved appropriately. In one such classroom, nearly all students were on task throughout the lesson, but a small number of students were off task. In another such classroom, all students were on task throughout the teacher’s introduction to new material and guided practice, but some students became off task during independent work. In 17% of classrooms, behavior expectations were partially ineffective. In these classrooms, the majority of students were often off task, and/or minor misbehavior frequently interrupted the lesson. In one classroom, for example, the teacher attempted to use the school’s color yardstick system and counting down to address students’ misbehavior, but did so inconsistently; these attempts were ineffective for the majority of students. In the majority of classrooms, the site visit team observed that misbehavior did not interfere with learning. Teachers reported that student behavior has improved greatly over the last year. The school has consistently implemented and enforced hallway expectations and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS).

Structured Learning Environment			
Ineffective	Partially Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective
1	2	3	4
25%	33%	33%	8%

- In many classrooms, the learning environment lacks structure and learning time is not maximized.** In 33% of classrooms, the learning environment was partially effectively structured, often due to teacher preparation or the use of efficient procedures and routines for some, but not all, parts of the lesson. In one such classroom, class started late; students arrived in small groups after the start of class. However, once the lesson began, the teacher was well-prepared and employed quick transitions

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

to maximize learning time. In another classroom, little time was wasted during transitions; numerous students helped in the distribution and collection of class materials. In 33% of classrooms, the learning environment was partially ineffectively structured, typically due to a lack of teacher preparation or efficient routines and procedures for the majority of the lesson. In one of these classrooms, the teacher struggled with setting up media as students sat idly for a few minutes. In another classroom, the teacher stated that students had a set amount of time to complete a lesson activity, but did not time the activity or hold students accountable for finishing within the stated timeframe. In 25% of classrooms – typically, as a result of a lack of teacher preparation and/or procedures or routines to maximize learning time – the use of learning time was ineffective. In one classroom, for example, a significant amount of learning time was lost due to a lack of teacher preparation of materials and inefficient procedures, such as calling students to the front of the class one-by-one to distribute materials.

2. Is classroom instruction intentional, engaging, and challenging for all students?	Level 1: Intensive Support Required
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Focused Instruction			
Ineffective	Partially Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective
1	2	3	4
33%	33%	33%	0%

- Few teachers provide students with clear learning goals and focused, purposeful instruction.** In 33% of classrooms, the site visit team observed the partially effective provision of clear learning goals and focused instruction, typically resulting from unclear learning objectives or inconsistent academic content delivery. In one classroom, for example, math concepts were presented clearly, but the lesson objective was unclear and not posted or described by the teacher. In another classroom, the teacher explained academic content clearly to a small group of students, but other groups were unclear on the content and were not provided similar direct instruction. In 33% of classrooms, the provision of learning goals and focused instruction was partially ineffective. In these classrooms, students were not presented with clear learning goals, or all students did not consistently receive effective instruction around academic content. In one such classroom, the teacher explained the lesson objective, but did not explain the unfamiliar vocabulary that the students needed to know to be able to understand the context for the reading passage. In another classroom, the teacher held only a few students accountable for the lesson content by calling on the small number of students who volunteered answers. In 33% of classrooms, the ineffective provision of clear learning goals and focused instruction was evident. In many of these classrooms, the objectives for the lesson or lesson activities were neither posted nor explained by teachers. In a number of other classrooms, teachers lacked high expectations. More specifically, students were not expected to actively engage with the academic content, but were asked to simply copy information that the teacher stated.

Higher-order Thinking			
Ineffective	Partially Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective
1	2	3	4
58%	33%	8%	0%

- Instruction does not require all students to use and develop higher-order thinking skills.** In 33% of classrooms, the site visit team observed the partially ineffective development of higher-order thinking skills; typically, few students were required to engage in higher-order thinking. In one such classroom, students were asked to organize their thoughts before writing persuasively regarding an engaging topic, but less than one-quarter of students reached the rigorous portion of the lesson. In another classroom, the teacher asked low-level questions only (e.g., comprehension questions regarding a character’s actions) regarding a passage, and elaborated on the material and asked challenging questions in response to students’ questions only. In 58% of classrooms, the development of higher-order thinking was ineffective; lesson activities centered on summary or recall. In one classroom, for example, the lesson was entirely recall and review activities, and students were able to quickly answer all questions. In another classroom, students copied notes onto their worksheets for the majority of the observation. The site visit team observed the use of worksheets as the primary learning format in many classrooms.

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
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Assessment Strategies			
Ineffective	Partially Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective
1	2	3	4
67%	25%	8%	0%

- Few in-class assessment strategies are used to reveal students’ thinking about learning goals.** In 25% of classrooms, the site visit team observed the partially effective use of in-class assessment strategies to reveal students’ thinking about learning; assessment strategies were used infrequently or revealed the understanding of most, but not all, students. In one such classroom, the teacher circulated to various centers, checking in with each student group once during a 20-minute activity. At some groups, the teacher checked only for student compliance or behavior, rather than for students’ understanding of the academic content. In another classroom, the teacher asked probing questions about the content presented, but questioned less than half of students during the lesson. In 67% of classrooms, the use of assessment strategies was ineffective, most often as the result of a lack of valid checks for understanding. In one such classroom, the teacher circulated, but did so only to monitor behavior. In another classroom, students worked on whiteboards, but the teacher checked a few students’ responses only. In another such classroom, the teacher asked questions regarding the lesson content of only three of 15 students. Further, the site visit team did not observe in any classroom the

use of systematic checks for understanding of multiple students, such as exit tickets, hand signals, or choral response.

Feedback			
Ineffective	Partially Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective
1	2	3	4
50%	42%	8%	0%

- Timely, frequent, specific feedback is rarely provided throughout the learning process to inform improvement efforts.** In 42% of classrooms, feedback was partially ineffectively provided to students to reveal their thinking about learning; a few students were provided feedback. In one such classroom, the teacher provided specific guidance regarding a student's writing, and the student incorporated that feedback, but this type of feedback was provided to this student only. In another classroom, the teacher asked an individual student to share his/her understanding of a concept, but the feedback to the rest of the class was based on just that student's misunderstanding. In 50% of classrooms, feedback was ineffectively supplied. In the majority of classrooms, specific feedback regarding the lesson content was not observed. In other classrooms, students received only praise or guidance focused on behavior or lesson activity directions. In such classrooms, teachers provided praise (e.g., good work) rather than academic guidance.

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.

<p>4. Does the school identify and support special education students, gifted students, English language learners, and students who are otherwise struggling or at risk?</p>	<p>Level 3: Established</p>
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- The school has a process for identifying struggling and at-risk students and monitors student progress.** School leaders and teachers reported that the Student Support Team (SST) includes the principal, school psychologist, and special and general education teachers. This group meets for one hour each Monday to identify students with academic concerns based on various assessment data, including Ohio State Test (OST) and Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) data, as well as various early literacy tests. Staff also consistently reported knowing how to refer students to the SST (referrals primarily come from individual teachers), and reported that members of the SST follow up individually with teachers after discussing possible interventions for students. In addition to the SST, school leaders and teachers reported that students are identified for placement in the school's daily 60-minute intervention (Innovation) block through weekly data meetings. Staff reported that in these meetings, students are identified and monitored on an ongoing basis through a system in which teachers identify students as high-, middle-, and low-performing, based on assessment data and class work. After identifying students as high-, middle-, or low-performing, students are then placed in the appropriate leveled Innovation blocks; these groupings are adjusted quarterly as students' progress is monitored. High-performing students are also identified for enrichment during Innovation block classes through this system.
- The school provides appropriate supports for special education, English language learner (ELL), and gifted students.** Staff reported that the school provides targeted academic intervention to all students, including students with special needs and ELL students, during Innovation block. Through this system, any students who are struggling with math or literacy receive an additional 60-minutes of support daily. Teachers and school leaders identified this system as the main avenue through which students with special needs and ELL students are supported. Teachers reported using various strategies (e.g. centers, leveled groupings), curricular materials (e.g. Wilson Reading, Foundations, Simple Solutions), and other resources (e.g., Reading A-Z, Teacher Monster, Moby Max, Newzilla, Raz Kids, Zern) during this time; the site visit team observed various strategies in use. Staff also reported that after-school programming is available to all students; some teachers also offer informal tutoring after school. Additionally, staff reported that the school's special education teachers have small caseloads (between 8 and 12 students), provide push-in supports in science and social studies and pull-out services for literacy and math, and communicate regularly with general education teachers, both informally and in weekly data meetings. Teachers and leaders also reported that district staff

supports the school's 14 gifted and talented students and 7 limited English proficiency (LEP) students through regularly scheduled pull-out services.

5. Does the school have a safe, supportive learning environment that reflects high expectations?	Level 2: Targeted Support Required
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- The school is beginning to develop high expectations for academic learning.** Parents and staff reported that the school holds school-wide academic celebrations, including Student of the Month awards. Students and teachers also reported that some teachers celebrate academic achievement in class (e.g., celebrations for mastering specific academic skills). Additionally, parents, teachers, and students reported that the principal consistently conveys messages regarding the importance of academic achievement. Students further reported that the principal and some teachers expect them to do their best at all times, and gave examples of being encouraged to retake assessments to demonstrate their mastery, as well as to complete work to the best of their abilities. However, when asked, teachers were not able to consistently describe how they convey high academic expectations to students. In addition, the majority of students interviewed reported knowing their NWEA goals and performance levels, and some provided examples of why achievement is important (e.g., future success). On the school's most recent Conditions for Learning (CFL) survey, 66% of students in grades 2-4 and 96% of students in grades 5-8 reported feeling challenged at school. Yet, students reported that worksheets are commonly assigned across classes and reported feeling challenged in approximately only one-third of their classes. Further, the site visit team observed few examples of rigorous work in classrooms and noted that students were allowed to opt out of learning in many observed classrooms.
- The school provides a safe environment to support students' learning.** Students, parents, and teachers reported feeling safe at school; staff reported that this reflects significant improvement from past years. The site visit team observed that the school's physical environment is clean, orderly, and safe, and that staff consistently supervise students in the school's public spaces, including hallways and the cafeteria. The school's staff handbook includes expectations that teachers monitor common spaces, the site visit team frequently observed staff monitoring students as expected, and hallway rules and expectations are posted throughout the school. The site visit team also observed that the principal and a small number of middle school students monitor and support morning arrival. Also, the school's all-school morning meeting, breakfast, lunch, and dismissal were orderly and calm. While parents and some students reported that bullying takes place occasionally, students stated that most teachers and school leaders effectively intervene to stop bullying when it happens. Additionally, teachers and students reported that the school implements the Winning Against Violent Environments (WAVE) peer tutoring program. Students confirmed participating in this program. Staff reported that incidents of bullying are declining, attributing the decline to both the principal's schoolwide behavioral expectations and to the use of WAVE. Further, all students reported having an adult on campus to whom they can speak if they have concerns.

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 also across the school.

6. Does the school design professional development and collaborative systems to sustain a focus on instructional improvement?

**Level 1:
Intensive Support
Required**

- The school lacks a comprehensive professional development (PD) plan to address school priorities.** School leaders and teachers consistently reported that improving the school's state report card grade is the school's top priority. Some staff further identified improving literacy instruction is the strategy to meet this goal. Review of the school's Academic Achievement Plan (AAP) confirmed that reading proficiency is the school's top priority. Strategies to meet this goal are identified as: (1) implementing interventions based on NWEA data; (2) increasing data use in teachers' professional learning communities; and (3) flexible grouping during instruction. While many staff described using these strategies, the site visit team did not observe the use of data or flexible grouping in classrooms. Staff reported receiving PD regarding analyzing NWEA data and grouping students, but the school does not have a year-long PD calendar. Additionally, when asked, teachers were unable to state the school's long-term PD goals or approach to PD, or articulate tangible strategies that they implement in their classrooms to address literacy instruction as a result of PD. School leaders reported (and review of PD agendas confirmed) that PD sessions regarding NWEA data analysis have been offered. However, teachers reported that PD is often responsive/reactive to their needs, rather than intentionally planned. Further, school leaders reported that specific content strategies to support the school's literacy initiative include the RACE (Read, Answer, Cite, Explain) writing strategy and close reading, but the site visit team rarely observed these strategies in classrooms.
- Educators are beginning to collaborate regularly to learn about effective instruction and students' progress.** Teachers and school leaders reported (and review of teachers' schedules confirmed) that all teachers have 60 minutes of formal shared planning time each day independent of teachers' mandated 100 minutes of weekly professional time; on Wednesdays, this time is used for data meetings and counts towards the mandated 100 minutes. Some teachers reported that common planning time fosters a sense of collaboration. Others reported that this collaborative time does not have a consistent focus on improving student learning and achievement; it is used, at times, to discuss topics related to school business. Some teachers reported, for example, that the time is often spent on executing logistics (e.g., grading student work) or discussing student issues, rather than engaging in collaborative planning or sharing instructional practices. Teachers reported that the principal provides guidance and templates regarding the Wednesday data meetings, but reported that the meeting outcomes and expectations for implementation of what they learn in the data meetings are

unclear. While staff expressed willingness to examine student data, school leaders acknowledged that teachers do not yet consistently or independently use data to inform instruction after analysis. Teachers and school leaders provided templates that guide data meetings, but completed data meeting forms were not available. School leaders reported that additional NWEA training sessions for teachers are scheduled. Teachers reported that in addition to formal, scheduled shared planning time, teachers also collaborate informally before and after school, and during lunch.

7. Does the school’s culture indicate high levels of collective responsibility, trust, and efficacy?	Level 3: Established
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- Educators’ mindsets and beliefs reflect a shared commitment to students’ learning.** Teachers consistently expressed the sentiment that all of the children in the school are all of the staff’s responsibility, regardless of their grade level or teacher. Teachers reported frequently checking in with the higher-grade-level teachers who instruct their students from past years, as well as visiting lower-grade-level classrooms to meet the students they will teach in future years. Teachers reported that this is facilitated, in part, by the school’s small size, with a current enrollment of 190 students. School leaders and teachers also reported that during the school’s leadership transition at the end of the 2015-2016 school year, the majority of staff members – due to a commitment to students – chose to remain at the school. A number of teachers also identified their relationships with students as one of the best things about working at the school. Teachers further expressed a willingness to take students from other classes temporarily when asked by colleagues (e.g., during a student behavior issue) to support both colleagues and students. Teachers also reported a willingness to change grade level and content area teaching assignments, as needed, for the staff and students’ best interest. The site visit team observed various examples of staff supporting students, from supervising students from other grade levels in the hallways to the school’s security officer helping young students fill cups of water. Additionally, students reported that they feel that their teachers care about them.
- The school reflects a safe, trustworthy, and growth-oriented professional climate.** Specifically, staff described their colleagues as open, well-intentioned, and caring. Staff frequently reported how their colleagues support them, such as mentoring teachers who are new to the school, filling in for staff members who are temporarily absent for family reasons, and celebrating colleagues’ birthdays. Teachers also frequently expressed feeling appreciated and supported by the principal. Teachers reported that the principal has an open-door policy and that they feel comfortable approaching him to offer feedback or ask for assistance. They also shared examples of how the principal makes them feel appreciated, from sending Individualized text messages of encouragement to bringing food to staff events. Staff also expressed a willingness to try new teaching strategies and materials in their classrooms. For example, teachers reported a willingness to begin analyzing data with the principal’s support, and a willingness to adopt new curricular materials to meet students’ needs. A number of staff members stated that the principal has greatly contributed to this growth mindset at the school.

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 1: Intensive Support Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principal is beginning to create a shared vision and clear goals for the school. Teachers reported that the principal frequently references the school's vision and goals, and were able to state the school's vision. The site visit team also observed that the school's vision and goals are documented and posted throughout the school. However, when asked, staff members were not consistently able to state goals or strategies to be implemented to meet these goals and, instead, often referenced raising the school's state report card grade only. Staff also indicated that a schoolwide approach to instruction has not been clearly articulated by school leaders. The schools has five goals, documented in staff and parent materials and posted in teacher workspaces and hallways: (1) increasing the school's grade (75% of students proficient and above); (2) increasing positive incentives (providing academic/behavior incentives); (3) increasing school culture (increasing all climate indicators by 10%); (4) increasing parent involvement (providing monthly access/development for stakeholders); and (5) decreasing negative infractions (reducing suspensions and office referrals). In addition, the school's AAP identified increasing reading proficiency as the primary academic goal. However, the majority of staff members were able to state only one or two of the school's goals. Also, nearly all teachers stressed the importance of the school's rating, rather than building students' skills (reading proficiency). A small number of teachers described the school's strategies for achieving these goals, identified in the AAP as small group instruction based on NWEA data, data assessment in teacher professional learning communities, and flexible grouping. • The principal does not ensure that teachers deliver high-quality instruction. All stakeholders – students, parents, teachers, and school leaders – reported that the principal is frequently in classrooms. More specifically, teachers reported (and the principal confirmed) that the principal is in most teachers' classrooms multiple times each week. However, the principal indicated that some of the time spent in classrooms is with the intention of observing school culture, building relationships with staff and students, and providing visible leadership, rather than providing instructional feedback to teachers. When asked, most teachers were unable to provide examples of meaningful instructional feedback that they have received from the principal. Further, when asked, the principal was also unable to provide examples of feedback provided to teachers. A small number of teachers reported receiving lesson plan review or affirming notes following observations, and gave examples of resources (e.g., websites) suggested by the principal, but did not indicate that they received instructional or content-based feedback. Teachers identified their peers as their most common instructional resource. They also indicated that they are not held accountable by school leaders for 	

implementing strategies learned in PD, data meetings, or instructional observations. The principal acknowledged that literacy content knowledge is an area for growth in his leadership development, and conveyed an eagerness to continue his professional growth in this area.

9. Do school leaders effectively orchestrate the school's operations?	Level 3: Established
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- The principal ensures effective communication and inclusive, transparent decision making across the organization.** Staff reported that communication between, and among, teachers and school leaders is frequent and open. Teachers, for example, reported a high level of informal collaboration with their peers, as well as regular opportunities for communication in scheduled daily common planning time. Staff reported (and review of documents confirmed) that school leadership issues weekly staff bulletins that include upcoming events, school values of the week, and staff recognition. Teachers also reported having input on various school decisions. Teachers explained that the principal is open to feedback from staff members, and that he checks in with representatives at each grade level band before making decisions. Staff also reported having ownership of a recent decision to supplement the Journeys curriculum with Ready literacy curriculum, in which teacher leaders researched curricula, chose Ready based on Common Core State Standards (CCSS) alignment, and collected feedback from colleagues before unanimously deciding to implement the curricular resource. Teachers also reported having formal input by being members of the AAP, building leadership team (BLT), SST, technology, union, and culture committees. Staff reported that members of the AAP committee, for example, were responsible for writing the AAP with minimal guidance from the principal. Teachers and school leaders also reported that the principal communicates frequently with the Union Conference Committee (UCC) chair regarding upcoming decisions and their implications.
- The principal engages parents in the educational process.** Parents reported that the school effectively communicates school events through the school's Facebook page, as well as through newsletters sent home in students' folders. Parents stated that teachers communicate with them regarding their students' academic progress through text messages, telephone calls, and in-person discussions at arrival and dismissal. Parents and students also reported that students are required to get a parent signature every evening on their color cards (for lower grade levels) or SOAR (Safe, Organized, Accountable, Respectful) cards (in upper grade levels), which include a record of students' behavior for the day, as well as teachers' review of students' completion and quality of work. Parents and students also reported that students receive progress reports quarterly, in addition to assessment scores (e.g., NWEA), when available. Teachers, parents, staff, and students reported that parent events addressing academics include monthly parent nights and a back-to-school open house. School leaders reported some grade levels had 100% parent participation at the open house. School leaders reported that the school does not have an official parent organization, but that the principal holds regular "Chat and Chew" events, during which school improvement is discussed. The principal reported that during these parent meetings, he has discussed with parents the possibility of forming a parent-teacher organization or parent advisory committee, and that he intends to do so this year.

Prioritization Process

The site visit team met with the Valley View Boys Leadership Academy 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 student behavior, school culture, and supporting exceptional students. The site visit team noted that areas for growth include instruction, leadership's instructional supports, and professional development (PD).

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: Purposeful Teaching – Higher Order Thinking*. Using this priority area, the school team developed a Theory of Action, a goal aligned to SSD or AAP, a success measure, and an action plan.

Theory of Action: If we provide our staff with high quality PD, our teachers will be able to provide effective instruction, which will lead to our students' improved academic performance.

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

AAP priority: Priority 1 – Increase reading proficiency: Identify student-specific trend data to organize students' learning communities.

Success Measure: Pre- and post-data on the performance task will indicate that 100% of students improved on the indicator for analyzing information text.

3-6 Month Action Plan for Achieving Goal	Target Dates	Champions
Strategy: Planning		
1. Research and define higher order thinking	10/4	Principal and Building Leadership Team (BLT)
2. Develop higher order thinking PD sessions for staff	10/9	Principal and BLT
3. Identify trends from the NWEA data highlighting need for greater rigor; prepare and share summary of data with all staff	10/9	Principal
4. Revise morning meeting to include academic focus	10/15	Principal
Strategy: Implementation		
5. Deliver PD (principal models first session, then department chairs and/or BLT members deliver following sessions)	10/18	Principal, then BLT
6. Practice, sharing best-practices or challenges, work samples	10/18	All staff
7. Deliver morning meetings to students with academic focus	10/15	Principal
8. Visit peer schools (e.g. RG Jones)	TBD	Principal and BLT
9. Administer and score student performance task	10/25	Teachers

3-6 Month Action Plan for Achieving Goal	Target Dates	Champions
10. Identify trends in performance task, share data with staff	10/30	Principal
Strategy: Measures and/or Next Steps		
11. Administer pre- and post-PD exit ticket (KWL format) to staff regarding higher order thinking	10/9, 11/22	Teachers
Strategy: Communication Plan		
12. Develop a communication plan for leadership to consistently share SQR results and process with staff	9/28	UTC Union Representative

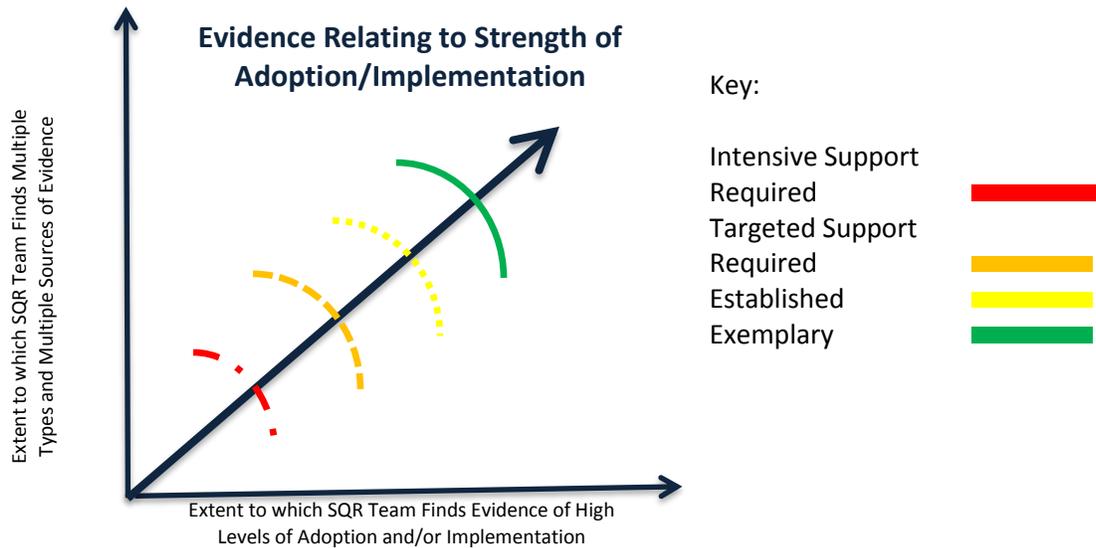
Appendix A: Site Visit Team Members _____

The SQR to Valley View Boys Leadership Academy was conducted on September 26-28, 2017 by a team of educators from the CMSD and SchoolWorks, LLC.

Robin Coyne Hull , Team Leader	SchoolWorks, LLC
Nick Bucy , Team Writer	SchoolWorks, LLC
Jill Cabe , 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 types and multiple sources² 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 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 12 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 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 = 9	44%	22%	33%	0%
	1b. Common Core Math Alignment (for math classes only) Alignment to content standards Alignment to instructional shifts Alignment to standards for mathematical practice N = 3	33%	0%	67%	0%
Classroom Climate	2. Behavioral Expectations Student behavior Clear expectations Consistent rewards and/or consequences Anticipation and redirection of misbehavior	8%	17%	42%	33%
	3. Structured Learning Environment Teacher preparation Clear agenda Learning time maximized	25%	33%	33%	8%
	4. Supportive Learning Environment Caring relationships Teacher responsiveness to students' needs	17%	25%	33%	25%
Purposeful Teaching	5. Focused Instruction Learning objectives High expectations Effective communication of academic content	33%	33%	33%	0%
	6. Instructional Strategies Multi-sensory modalities and materials Varied groupings Student choice and leadership	25%	33%	33%	8%
	7. Cognitive Engagement Active student participation Perseverance	8%	42%	33%	17%
	8. Higher-order Thinking Challenging tasks Application to new problems and situations Student questions Metacognition	58%	33%	8%	0%
In-Class Assessment	9. Assessment Strategies Use of formative assessments	67%	25%	8%	0%
	10. Feedback Feedback to students Student use of feedback	50%	42%	8%	0%