

School Support and Readiness Assessment Summary Report

School: Eugene Field	LEA: Albuquerque Public Schools
School Leader: Shawna Wirwick	LEA Leader: Scott Elder
SSRA Team Leader: Regina Timms	Date: September 14, 2023
School Description	
<p>Eugene Field Elementary supports students from pre-kindergarten to grade five. The staff and community consider their institution a generational one; their students are supported by educators who consider their work not just to be a job, but a community endeavor, with staff whose parents attended the school. Their vision for students is the following:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Create and nurture a culture of kindness where all members of our school community are empowered to excel, and children are recognized as our first and most precious priority.</i></p>	
School Successes and Celebrations	
<p>Over the last year, Eugene Field’s Community School Council has gained 20 dedicated stakeholders. These stakeholders, in concert with the faculty and staff of the school, demonstrate dedication and focus on continuing to develop and nurture a culture of kindness.</p> <p>For Eugene Field’s community members, there are robust systems of support. They boast a volunteer-run thrift store and a grocery access program. They also run monthly Family Dinners to break bread together and, as a result, strengthen their community and their students’ and families’ sense of belonging.</p>	
DOMAIN 1: CULTURE & EQUITY	
<p><i>To what degree has the school established equitable practices that ensure ALL students and staff have an opportunity to reach their full potential?</i></p>	
<p>Promising Practices:</p> <p>One important aspect of school culture is a community focused on empowerment and equity for all. When students are welcomed to Eugene Field, some of whom come from nearby shelters, they are not known as “those kids;” instead, they are “our kids.” Throughout the school site, there is a solid commitment to ensuring all families have what they need. This has been enhanced by the recent addition of the Community Schools Coordinator.</p> <p>While Eugene Field is a small school serving a student body of roughly 140, its community is supportive. Field trips are brought to the school due to transportation issues. Neighbors of the school are actively involved as volunteers on the Instructional Council.</p>	

When a powerful community comes together toward a common goal, nothing is out of reach.

Opportunities for Growth:

The school site and faculty demonstrate a clear dedication to meeting student needs through kindness and care. Sometimes, when educators form strong relationships with students, they find it harder to hold those students to a higher academic standard. There is a clear opportunity (and a primed student body) to leverage the strong community toward changing the mindsets of students who think they can't achieve "because, because, because..."

An increased focus on academic rigor will help teach students that they are not defined by their backgrounds and help educators do the work they set out to do, as phrased in the school's vision statement: empowering all community members to excel.

Potential Next Steps:

The faculty and staff may benefit from a community-developed definition of equity and a deep understanding of how a solid education can provide greater opportunities later in life. While it is clear that there are cultural elements in place to meet student needs outside of the classroom, it is not clear that the same level of systems exists for supporting students academically.

Principal Wirick shared, "This is the goal for this year. With the work of last year focused on culture, we are positioned now to leverage our positive culture to support a shift to academic growth as our focus through creating and implementing systems that allow for professional development, collaborations, and instructional practices that will strengthen students' performance."

DOMAIN 2: LEADERSHIP

To what degree does school leadership establish, communicate, support, and monitor schoolwide priorities?

Promising Practices:

At Eugene Field, there is an awareness of the need to define schoolwide priorities and create systems to support follow-through.

Opportunities for Growth:

Throughout interviews, there was consistent recognition of the need to create systems, procedures, and processes. Principal Wirick has an opportunity to translate the generous care and passion of her team into momentum toward a goal. Identifying the highest priority/focus areas would be a jumping-off point for the team.

One aspect of powerful leadership is vision, a vision to create and lead a team of educators, a vision to see the end of the road while still at the beginning. Creating a plan to monitor the implementation of the observation/feedback routine is one way to execute the vision.

One final point raised during the interview process was the need for communication on behalf of the school leader that states their availability to staff; this will ensure that staff feel their needs and concerns are prioritized and addressed. When staff feel their voices are heard, a sense of collective efficacy increases.

Principal Wirick is aware of the importance of frequent and consistent communication. She is working to provide staff opportunities to meet with her in person through scheduling and pop-ins when her door is open.

Potential Next Steps:

Students can only execute a task once they have been taught the expectations; the same goes for educators. Ensuring that all staff understand the priorities of the school improvement plan, such as visible student learning objectives, will serve the school site well. Prioritizing a clear OFCC (Observation Feedback Coaching Cycles) and publishing the schedule site-wide will ensure that educators feel supported by the school leadership team.

DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

To what degree is the school's instructional infrastructure in place, understood, and utilized by school leaders and teachers?

Promising Practices:

Eugene Field has recently created a master schedule to accommodate and foster collaboration. This master schedule also ensures that students are not removed from their core instructional time to receive other services.

This master schedule also allows clear opportunities for specific Professional Development (PD) for teachers, such as cross-linguistic connections, Universal Design for Learning, and PD on accessing and using WIDA standards to support the site's English Learner population.

Opportunities for Growth:

There is an evident need for a system to monitor progress toward school goals and student academic achievement. In some cases, student growth goals are left up to individual educators; there is potential at Eugene Field for site-wide expectation setting and monitoring that, if capitalized on, will be very beneficial. The team was pleased to hear that the Instructional Council is working to improve in this area.

Layer 1 instruction is the jumping-off point for this movement. It may be beneficial to focus PD for teachers on leveraging the school's language pool through instructional strategies and sheltering practices.

Research indicates positive outcomes for schools that provide educators with time, space, and processes to collaborate and reflect on pedagogy and practice.

Potential Next Steps:

Observers noticed many lessons focused on recall level; school leaders can lead teachers in collaborating to examine and refine the current vertical alignment to include more rigorous content applications and push students past the current cognitive demands placed on them. Identifying the current vertical alignment practice at Eugene Field will assist educators in pushing their students past the current cognitive demands placed on them, which seem to be focused on the “recall” level.

To improve in this area, the school is providing site-wide PD on positive instructional strategies in the classroom, specifically those that serve the English Learner population, which will enhance teacher effectiveness and assist in creating a more positive culture of rigor and expectation.

DOMAIN 5: SUPPORT & ACCOUNTABILITY

To what degree do school leaders establish and communicate expectations, monitor progress, provide support, and hold staff accountable?

Promising Practices:

Eugene Field is currently in compliance with state-required evaluation protocols and performing formal observations as required in the Canvas system. Principal Wirick is careful to leverage the talents of staff to support necessary programs. For example, heritage language certified teachers are paired with heritage language students, and educators in the Special Education department offer learning opportunities to their general education colleagues.

Opportunities for Growth:

Talent management has the potential to result in powerful cultural and data-evident shifts at the school level. Ensuring the OFCC calendar is followed by the leadership team at the school will result in increased student learning and improved teacher morale.

Research on coaching cycles indicates that feedback provided in person rather than through e-mail is instrumental not only for teacher development but also for strengthening the coaching relationship and minimizing misunderstandings.

Potential Next Steps:

The leadership team has been receptive to the need for productive feedback on behalf of the staff that was communicated in interviews. Some administrators have successfully scheduled feedback sessions with educators a couple of days in advance. These meetings require the classroom visit to occur before the face-to-face meetings. Using scheduling, the school leadership team can better utilize and communicate respect for the educator’s instructional time. Principal Warwick is working to improve systems, and this is one of her focus areas.