

# School Support and Readiness Assessment Summary Report

<b>School:</b> Los Puentes Charter High School	<b>LEA:</b> Albuquerque Public Schools
<b>School Leader:</b> Anna Phillips	<b>LEA Leader:</b> Joseph Escobedo
<b>SSRA Team Leader:</b> Max Perez	<b>Date:</b> October 19, 2023
<b>School Description</b>	
<p>Los Puentes Charter School is located in the central part of the valley in Albuquerque. They employ twenty regular full-time and two temporary part-time staff and serve just over 100 students in grades nine through twelve. This high school serves students in a non-traditional setting, meaning many students attend Los Puentes for credit recovery before returning to their respective home schools for graduation.</p> <p>The staff at Los Puentes believes in creating an environment through inclusiveness and essential instructional best practices. They aim to nurture students mentally, socially, and behaviorally to facilitate their academics and future, specifically toward college and career readiness.</p>	
<b>School Successes and Celebrations</b>	
<p>A new director was placed at Los Puentes High School during the pandemic. The school has since changed and progressed toward more individualized student support, a higher quality and more caring staff, and providing students with needed resources, including social and emotional support.</p> <p>During the first assessment cycle following the pandemic waiver, the school met the proficiency target for year 2 of the turnaround plan/charter agreement with APS.</p> <p>The grounds and facilities have also significantly improved, including new athletic areas that provide students with clean, newly painted, and organized workspaces. The director contributes the funding for the facilities improvements to the State Legislators. The staff and leadership take thoughtful care and pride in maintaining the physical environment at the school.</p>	
<b>DOMAIN 1: CULTURE &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<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>	
<b>Promising Practices:</b>	
<p>School leaders have set the stage for hiring two full-time social workers to provide more equitable access to all students. These social workers can meet weekly to establish a wellness room and a refocus room so students have a safe place to meet specific social-emotional</p>	

learning (SEL) needs.

Another positive practice at the school is the culture of welcoming in place. Students are greeted at the doors when they enter the school and their classrooms and leave for the day. Parents and students report that this helps set a positive tone for the learning community daily.

Staff teams have been established to address attendance, graduation, and wellness. These teams meet regularly and focus on making improvements in each area.

Several student programs have been instituted recently, including GEAR UP, Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS), an internet café for tutoring, a food pantry, and a wellness room that provides clothing and supplies to students.

To promote a culture of positivity and communication, the school has developed an application (app) to better communicate with parents and families. Families may use the app to learn about school events, and in an emergency, this app can be used to notify families of lockdowns or drills. Staff, students, and families report feeling safe and secure at the school.

### **Opportunities for Growth:**

There is an opportunity to define special education services considering the variety of ancillary services needed in a single class period with limited staff. This focus will empower teachers to support more inclusive practices in the classroom.

### **Potential Next Steps:**

Ancillary services such as Speech-Language Pathology (SLP), Occupational Therapy (OT), and Physical Therapy (PT) are required for several students outside of regular classroom time. These services cannot be provided effectively in a whole group setting. Because these related services are externally contracted with limited timeframes, creative problem-solving is necessary to give the students what is required outside the classroom.

Director Phillips plans to incorporate specific expectations into outside service contracts to meet all ancillary requirements. This communication will assist the school in aligning external service contracts with their model of providing high-quality special education services.

**DOMAIN 2: LEADERSHIP**

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

**Promising Practices:**

Director Phillips has been instrumental in shifting the vision and mission of the school toward a more student-centered environment. The emphasis of this shift has been preparing students academically for post-secondary success. Academic rigor, accountability, and credit recovery are the pillars of belief on which the staff works with the students. Academic performance is prioritized at Los Puentes—systems and processes for regular check-ins and the development of educational plans for each student demonstrate this priority.

There is an evident passion at Los Puentes for changing lives through student success. The staff has a shared belief in supporting health, wellness, and emotional needs to assist students in moving beyond “survival mode” to a mindset of success and achievement in their academics. There is an intentional focus on the part of Director Phillips to develop staff toward an inclusive leadership model.

Los Puentes High School staff maintains contact with multiple stakeholders, students, parents, and community members to plan to meet graduation requirements collaboratively. This includes awareness of family situations and individualized care depending on the student. The staff communicates regularly with students, especially those who need support toward graduation.

Finally, the school utilizes student ambassadors to connect with students who entered Los Puentes mid-year and did not receive the annual orientation. These ambassadors help acclimate the students to the school and function as a first connection point.

**Opportunities for Growth:**

Leading a transformational change involves careful balance with intentionality, compliance, and support—which is challenging. There is an opportunity to build the leadership team and leverage relationships with other leaders to facilitate helpful support.

**Potential Next Steps:**

Director Phillips has made significant changes to the school’s culture and systems, which are planned to continue. There is an intent to develop further and strengthen the leadership team and its communication process. A two-way communication process will be created and formalized. This system will assist with documentation of expectations, support accountability, and assist all staff with a deeper understanding of strategic processes. This system can also help the administrative team monitor schoolwide priorities.

There is also a need to address the reliance of current systems on specific staff members. The leadership team is developing a plan to continue the school's academic and social-emotional strategies without dependence on individual staff members. A well-documented approach to site-specific systems will help new teachers and leaders better understand how things work at Los Puentes High School and uphold those systems with fidelity.

### **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:**

A partnership with The New Teacher Project (TNTP) is ongoing, providing professional development and support for unpacking grade-level standards and teaching. Classrooms are productive, engaging environments with teacher enthusiasm for content and effective delivery. Lessons are being taught with grade-level appropriate instruction and materials.

Systems are in place for planning, delivering, and assessing instruction. Assessment changes are underway as teachers and leaders do the work of reflection and adjust their practice accordingly. Changes in assessments are providing opportunities for increased effectiveness on progress checks. Teachers are utilizing the structures to meet in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to discuss student learning, analyze data, and reflect on practices to collectively increase effectiveness in day-to-day lessons.

#### **Opportunities for Growth:**

Student attendance indicates a need to strengthen current systems for intervention. Chronic absenteeism can hinder academic success; school leadership can research and implement procedures for tracking and intervening when students are truant. Additionally, academic performance is low.

#### **Potential Next Steps:**

Director Phillips and the school leadership team will continue to work with staff to balance their compassion and firm expectations for students. While the SEL needs of each student are important, an equal amount of focus on academic rigor will assist students in reaching proficiency and beyond in their academics. Staff are working toward increasing the number of students who join the college preparation programs at the school.

A mentorship program is currently being developed to assist students in more effectively and accurately envisioning their post-secondary plans and success. Some elements of this program will involve goal setting and individualized plans intended to assist in realizing these goals.

The instructional leadership team plans to monitor and support the execution of learning

acceleration practices. Careful and intentional support from the leadership team will assist the educators at Los Puentes in driving student achievement while providing students with consistent SEL support that will allow them to engage in rigorous instruction.

Finally, one critical support in terms of both educator growth and student growth is the use of effective instructional strategies. The staff at Los Puentes plan to identify and implement high-leverage strategies that will assist their student body in meeting graduation requirements.