

School Support and Readiness Assessment Summary Report

School: Mountain View Middle School	LEA: Alamogordo
School Leader: Danielle Kusmak	LEA Leader: Pam Renteria
SSRA Team Leader: Connie Copeland	Date: October 13, 2023
School Description	
<p>Mountain View Middle School serves 483 students in grades six through eight. The staff comprises 60 total, 35 of whom are teachers. 22% of the students at Mountain View qualify for special education services, and 7% are identified as English language learners.</p> <p><i>Mountain View's Motto:</i> To serve, support, educate, and elevate ALL students. We are ALL IN!</p> <p><i>Mountain View's Mission:</i> The mission of the Public School System is to ensure that all students acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to become productive citizens. We are also committed to helping our community of parents, teachers, and faculty to build better connections to improve student outcomes.</p>	
School Successes and Celebrations	
<p>Mountain View Middle School has strong foundations in place in all domains. The administrative team is a visible and positive presence in the school. The staff cares about students and one another. The school has dramatically improved the number of office discipline referrals (from 153 in September to 53 as of the second week of October). There has been similar attention to attendance, and the school is already beginning to see the positive effects of the attention they are paying to this foundational measure.</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>	
Promising Practices:	
<p>The administrative team at Mountain View is open to trying new ideas and approaches. They have emphasized positive behavior support systems, developing "Jag Pride" to encourage and acknowledge appropriate behavior. A new five-tier behavior system clarifies teachers' responsibilities in reinforcing appropriate behaviors.</p>	

The administrative team is responsive to school needs, advocating for and hiring a new attendance clerk to address persistent attendance concerns. They are a visible presence in front of the school and the hallways, and during the site visit, observers noted that staff were eager to work with the administrative team. The administrative team is well aware of their 90-day plan, taking the initiative to share it with visitors.

There is a positive environment that pervades Mountain View. Teachers on grade level and content teams are supportive of one another. This unified focus bodes well for future schoolwide initiatives.

Opportunities for Growth:

While foundational work has been done in all domains, there is an opportunity to refine and focus this work on more formal, systemic protocols. Observers noted inconsistencies in teachers' understandings of the current behavior systems and expected follow-throughs. Similarly, some teachers struggled to identify the instructional priorities identified in DASH. The DASH goals for Math and ELA are to use iMSSA and Common Formative Assessment (CFA) data for targeted interventions and to reassess comprehension of essential standards after reteaching.

The school has structures to support teacher collaboration in professional learning communities. There was no widespread understanding of how to use this time most productively or consistently with school expectations. Likewise, some teachers were not clear about the expectations for lesson plans.

Potential Next Steps:

Principal Kusmak plans to fully implement the school's instructional priorities and new schoolwide initiatives by communicating expectations more clearly and consistently. She will define the tasks that should be completed during collaborative time and provide models of what she expects from lesson plans. When teachers submit these lessons, the leadership team will provide feedback to help teachers further prioritize instructional practices to support the school in meeting the goals outlined in DASH.

The school has seen a reduction in office referrals for discipline. Principal Kusmak will work to ensure that the data collected on behavioral interventions is current and valid by creating a new discipline referral process. She will share this process with stakeholders and enlist teachers' opinions as she designs this new system.

Specific and timely communication will be provided in response to student disciplinary issues. The administrative team will communicate to families what is expected at school, as well as potential rewards and consequences.

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:

Students have broad course offerings, including elective classes. Most teachers could identify vocabulary as a critical support for English language learners. There are distinct expectations for content and grade-level meetings. PLC times are established. Teachers are expected to use the Fundamental Five when writing lesson plans.

Opportunities for Growth:

Within these new systems, some teachers still have inconsistent understandings of the expectations. This inconsistency readily manifested in their grade-level rigor and instructional priorities interpretations. On the day of the site visit, observers noted that most students were on computers with limited teacher interactions. There was little direct instruction. Although student talk is an identified instructional priority, it was not observed. Student work was below grade-level expectations.

While these observations are a small snapshot into instructional practices at Mountain View, they provide helpful information for Principal Kusmak to reflect on as she continues to implement enhanced systems of support and accountability at Mountain View. School data also supports the need for greater fidelity to grade-level instruction. School Vista data indicated low student performance in Math and English language arts.

Potential Next Steps:

Teachers have the best interests of their students at heart. When they learn that their students are struggling, sometimes they attempt to "meet them where they are" by lowering expectations. To support teachers in holding students to higher expectations, the leaders at Mountain View plan to build on what works well and give honest feedback on what does not. Specifically, they will coach teachers on how and when to use Common Formative Assessments (CFAs). These allow teachers to break down grade-level standards into smaller tasks and performance objectives.

The administrative team will work with staff to address core interventions needed during collaboration time. This will ensure that the interventions will be based on student need based on delivery of grade level standards instruction. Additionally, interventions will be documented on lesson plans that the administrative team will review.

DOMAIN 5: SUPPORT & ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Promising Practices:

Teachers upload lesson plans to a Google folder weekly. The administrative team provides specific feedback, identifying non-negotiable components such as the Fundamental Five. During the site visit, observers noted that teachers posted agenda items and some posted objectives. Posting objectives reminds teachers, students, and anyone conducting observations what the targeted skills are for the day.

Opportunities for Growth:

While teachers get feedback on their lessons, there is no system for observations and instructional coaching. Elevate observations and Canvas feedback are currently the priorities for teacher observation. Observations indicated a gap between grade-level rigor and classroom practices, suggesting that some teachers would benefit from specific, timely feedback.

There is an opportunity to create a system for feedback and follow-up after observations. The presence of instructional activities that did not align with the rigor of grade-level standards, inconsistencies in teachers' views of instructional priorities, and current Vista performance data indicate an opportunity to refine instructional practices at the school. Observations, feedback, and instructional coaching with action steps are some of the most effective tools at an administrator's disposal.

Potential Next Steps:

The administrative team has improved systems for attendance, behavior, and collaboration. As they continue to support teachers in raising the level of rigor, they plan to develop a system for observations, feedback, and coaching cycles (OFCC). In order to more fully implement a robust OFCC, the team will prioritize feedback sessions when calendaring. To assist them in supporting all teachers, the team will train, calibrate and schedule Level 3 teachers and mentor teachers to work in the OFCC system. When developing the OFCC system, the administrative team will align the instructional priority “look fors” to the priorities outlined in DASH.