

School Support and Readiness Assessment Summary Report

School: Cuba Elementary	LEA: Cuba Independent School District
School Leader: Judy Atencio/Olivia Casaus (co-principals)	LEA Leader: Karen Sanchez-Griego, Ed.D.
SSRA Team Leader: Eileen Reed	Date: November 16, 2023
School Description	
<p>Cuba Elementary School (ES) is located in the village of Cuba. Cuba is part of the Albuquerque Metropolitan Statistical Area with a population of 628 (2020 Census). The most recent reported enrollment is 314 students in grades pre-kindergarten through five, of which 45% are identified as English Learners and 26% qualify for special education services. The school serves primarily Navajo and Hispanic students. 100% of the students are economically disadvantaged.</p> <p>The school website states the following: <i>Cuba Elementary School's Preschool-5th curriculum is rooted in Common Core State Standards. It prepares students to build their foundational language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies skills to set them up for academic success in elementary school and beyond through a Project Based Learning approach. Incorporated into the daily elementary curriculum, students participate in Social Emotional Learning, which supports academics by teaching students healthy ways to deal with their emotions and strategies to solve conflict by creating a healthy environment where students want to learn.</i></p>	
School Successes and Celebrations	
<p>Cuba ES prides itself on serving its school community with an emphasis on honoring the culture and diversity of its student population. The district employs two Navajo teachers, and all students participate in a daily bilingual class either in Navajo or Spanish.</p> <p>The school has a strong sense of community, collegiality, and a strong partnership with the students' families. Parents have access to <i>Parent University</i>, a program that addresses various topics, such as how to use the district's technology to access student learning information. Monthly meetings are offered in-person and by remote access.</p> <p>Cuba ES has a holistic focus, conducting frequent home visits to understand student needs better and build relationships with families. The school employs a social worker and administers Cuba Cares, a program that provides resources for clothing and hygiene needs. To meet students' technology needs, the school offers a laptop for every student and Starlink for Internet connectivity so that all families have strong and reliable Internet access. Preschool</p>	

students are given school supplies, and all families can access the District Wellness Center for dental and other health services.

The school's commitment to Project-Based Learning (PBL) is a point of pride. The district uses the Defined Learning program to guide the PBL work with students completing one project per semester. Each project has a career focus, and the 5th-grade students complete a capstone project that serves as a performance assessment.

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:

Cuba ES uses the NM Instructional Scope (NMIS) to provide professional learning for teachers to develop a deep understanding of their content standards, emphasizing instructional rigor to ensure students receive grade-level instruction. Teachers examined exemplar assessments to understand how the standards are assessed in state-level summative assessments to provide classroom instruction that prepares their students for success.

The school focuses on improving Layer 1, 2, and 3 instruction and interventions using the Multi-Layered System of Support (MLSS) framework to guide the planning and delivery of instruction and i-Station to support small group instruction and Layer 2 and 3 interventions. Students are reassessed at least monthly to inform new learning targets.

Teachers use a lesson planning template with the required components to design an effective lesson. The Dean of Instruction reviews lesson plans, and teachers receive feedback as needed.

Opportunities for Growth:

There is an opportunity to increase the support for teacher collaboration. Teachers indicated they need more time to work together as a professional learning community (PLC). Current practice is one 45-minute monthly PLC meeting focusing on analyzing and acting upon i-Ready data. Teachers wanted more opportunities to work with their colleagues, especially regarding implementing the new math curriculum.

There is a need for a schoolwide strategy to address writing aligned to the standards and reflective of the expectations on state assessments. Interviews evidenced teachers scaffolding students' writing independently but lacking an understanding, on a schoolwide level, of how students are progressing in their writing. There was no reference to a schoolwide writing initiative appropriate for the various genres, including time for assessing proficiency against standards or for the school to evaluate their students' progress in writing.

Potential Next Steps:

With the recent hiring of a school librarian, there is a plan to adjust the schedule to provide additional time for teacher collaboration. Co-principals will set an expectation that teachers meet as a grade level two days per week for one hour each day. In addition, the principals plan to start peer observations based on a schoolwide focus area to increase collaboration and opportunities to learn from one another.

The principals identified an opportunity to integrate a focus on writing into project-based learning. They indicated they can use the NMIS to access exemplars and scoring rubrics. Teachers can work with one another as a form of job-embedded professional learning to conduct peer ratings and demonstrate inter-rater reliability.

DOMAIN 4: TALENT MANAGEMENT

To what degree does the school ensure effective teachers are hired, retained, developed, and leveraged to improve student outcomes?

Promising Practices:

Cuba ES has a multi-pronged approach to recruiting, supporting, and retaining educators. Cuba ES has used School Improvement funds to hire a retired teacher to mentor teachers in their first two years of practice. The mentor teacher also works with select teachers in need of extra support. The district and school are investing in a "grow your own" strategy by supporting education assistants participating in the Ed Fellows Program.

Feedback at Cuba ES is reciprocal. The co-principals engage in frequent walkthroughs above and beyond those required for the evaluation process to observe teacher practice and provide feedback. Likewise, the campus engages in periodic climate surveys to gather teacher perspectives and teacher voices regarding strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Opportunities for Growth:

There is an opportunity to increase the amount of professional development and support related to implementing the Eureka Math curriculum. Providing support aligned to the planning cycle of units of instruction is a "just-in-time" professional learning strategy that is more effective than one overview at the beginning of the year.

There is an opportunity to increase the effectiveness of classroom walkthroughs to deepen their impact on improving instruction.

Potential Next Steps:

Leverage the professional development available through the ZEARN math learning platform to address Eureka Math's priority. Also, dedicate a PLC meeting aligned to the planning cycle

to provide "just-in-time" support.

The co-principals indicated that, as a leadership team, it would be helpful for them to meet and decide on shared foci for their walkthroughs. It would also be beneficial to tie the peer observation foci to the same foci as the administrator walkthroughs. To improve their effectiveness, the principals were interested in pursuing professional learning using the Paul Bambrick-Santoyo Observation, Feedback, and Coaching Cycle (OFCC).