

School Support and Readiness Assessment Summary Report

School: Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School	LEA: Albuquerque Public Schools
School Leader: Jenn Prye	LEA Leader: Jenn Prye
SSRA Team Leader: Matt Williams, Ph. D.	Date: November 14, 2023

School Description

Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School is an alternative school employing a highly individualized approach. The school operates on a quarter system, which makes credits quickly attainable, encouraging students to complete credit recovery.

Students at Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School are offered two pathways: a college-bound pathway or a school-to-careers pathway. Incoming students must take a career interest inventory at enrollment to assist advocates in guiding students’ career development plans. Students are encouraged to declare their pathway within their first or second year and create a course of study that reflects their career choice. Using this system, they can earn eight credits a year. They are supported and monitored by advocacy classes, a freshman academy, and a senior seminar.

Sena High attracts students from small middle schools who enjoy a more intimate school experience; it is also a small, safe, and welcoming environment for students re-engaging with education after being unsuccessful in larger, more traditional high school settings.

The school offers dual credit enrollment with Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) both on and off campus. Additionally, students can participate in local apprenticeships and partnerships with the district’s career education center.

Sena High School’s vision is: *Opportunity to Accelerate Student Success*

Sena’s mission is:

To engage students and their families in an innovative and supportive environment directed at gaining academic and social skills necessary for personal and career success. Gilbert L. Sena promotes, honors and

School Successes and Celebrations

Since the pandemic, Sena High has increased attendance, retention rates, and enrollment of students. In 2023, staff retention was 92%, and all of the instructional staff are highly qualified. Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School staff deeply care for each student, and they love the school. Parents are partnered with and know who to go to when their child has a specific need to be met.

There are systems for restorative justice to ensure students' social and emotional needs are being met. Principal Prye has a positive vision for the school and a strong relationship with each staff member. The support staff are committed and have embraced the leader's vision. Staff at Sena High School communicate and build relationships well with their students and support every student to be successful no matter their needs.

DOMAIN 1: CULTURE & EQUITY

To what degree has the school established equitable practices that ensure ALL students and staff have an opportunity to reach their full potential?

Promising Practices:

Sena High promotes equitable practices by ensuring that all students have access to individualized planning and support to be successful. This support enhances students' feelings that this is an acceleration school with adult support to go farther and faster. In the weekly advocacy class, students set goals; this class is viewed as valuable, and students follow through on their goals. The social work and counseling team provide substantial support for each student, and each student has equal access to these services. Finally, the school has various online programs to help students meet their learning needs.

Opportunities for Growth:

There is an opportunity to strengthen the school-wide restorative practices system to implement these practices more deeply. For restorative programs to succeed, all stakeholders must be educated about their rights and responsibilities. Effective programs empower students, as well as adults, to reach their goals. Full implementation takes ongoing education and periodic adjustment.

Potential Next Steps:

The school has plans for professional development sessions on restorative practices on January 6 and 7. The goal is to offer a “train the trainer” session. The newly-trained trainers will then provide professional development to the faculty by Spring Break of next semester.

Offering embedded professional development on-site in response to school-specific needs is a wise way to build teacher community and capacity. Implementing in-house trainers will help ensure buy-in and develop teachers’ leadership capacity.

DOMAIN 2: LEADERSHIP

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

Promising Practices:

Principal Prye leads by example, modeling deep care and the desire for each student to be successful. She displays a high degree of enthusiasm for the school’s vision, and this passion inspires others on staff. She and her leadership team also demonstrate a strong work ethic. Her staff respects her for this and emulates her example. The leadership team meets regularly, making it cohesive and responsive to challenges. Finally, Principal Prye provides frequent opportunities for students, parents, and staff to provide feedback through surveys to help guide targeted initiatives.

Opportunities for Growth:

Sena High has many systems that must all work together to serve a student population with varied needs and prior educational experiences. Approaching school-wide initiatives from a systems approach would help coordinate services to ensure maximum efficiency: the freshman success academy and senior seminar present opportunities to streamline and coordinate services.

The school has had success increasing student enrollment and attendance; there is an opportunity to build upon this success by strengthening the Sena Bucks program or some other similar incentive program to increase attendance and credit attainment. Leadership has an opportunity strategize funding for need-based transportation to increase attendance.

Finally, and most impactful on student learning, there is an opportunity to train teachers in using data in professional learning community (PLC) meetings. As students progress through varying curricular offerings, it is helpful for teachers to remain closely aware of students' current success and challenges toward mastering grade-level skills and standards. Similarly, teachers may help analyze school-level attendance data and provide expertise in solving whole-school challenges.

Potential Next Steps:

Teams at Sena High analyze attendance data by implementing Live View within PLCs. To increase attendance the leadership team plans to analyze funding opportunities to decrease transportation barriers. The leadership team plans to revamp and clarify the next steps and expectations for the freshman success academy and senior seminar. The leadership team plans to guide focused data analysis in PLCs to support these initiatives.

When teachers understand the rationale behind school-wide initiatives, they are more likely to support them wholly. Breaking down the data and analyzing it together in PLCs provides an opportunity to enlist teacher knowledge and action. Starting with school-wide data paves the way for teachers to collect and analyze data at the content and classroom levels.

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:

Gilbert L. Sena Charter High School has some visible signs of schoolwide expectations for instruction. There are established expectations for objectives and standards to be posted. Anchor charts and posters are used in the classroom to allow students to understand the concepts they are learning.

More subtle instructional supports are also being offered. Teachers provide individualized attention to student learning with feedback. A strong technology presence during instruction allows students to learn and understand concepts through digital media.

Opportunities for Growth:

There is an opportunity for teachers to leverage the strong relationships and trust built with students to ramp up the level of rigor in classroom instruction. Additionally, teachers can identify students' passions and provide academically aligned learning to deepen student understanding. Sena High has a student-centered approach, providing social-emotional support and mentoring in various settings. Students would benefit from being more challenged academically.

There is an opportunity for teachers to learn and implement deep-level questioning strategies to push students deeper in their learning. As teachers model this kind of questioning, they can gradually release some of the inquiry to students, modeling the "habits of mind" in their respective content areas.

Due to the commitment of teachers but the limitations of funding for an increase of personnel there is an opportunity to build the capacity of current personnel to have a broader impact on students. With teachers being certified in multiple areas they have the ability to provide a multifaceted education for their students.

Potential Next Steps:

Principal Prye acknowledges the need for more rigorous instruction aided by deeper questioning. As they roll out this instruction priority, the leadership team plans to model the deep-level questioning techniques they want teachers to use during PLCS and feedback sessions. They are making this next step approachable by offering quick, bite-sized strategies to help teachers begin to use these techniques.

Teachers will need continued guidance, support, and resources to implement this instructional priority. The language of Depth of Knowledge (DOK), Bloom's taxonomy, and Costa's levels of questioning can all be helpful starting points as teachers reflect on the rigor of their instruction. It will benefit school leaders to model target strategies in a classroom setting during content instruction. Similarly, peer observations and coaching using observation data would prove beneficial. Administrators might transcribe the questions teachers are asking, helping to raise awareness and allow teachers to reflect. This focus on deep-level questioning could also provide stimulating conversation for future PLC collaboration.

Teachers eager to build their capacity can obtain certification in multiple areas and are able to provide a wider range of opportunity for Sena High students at large. The leadership team will seek out possible funding to support and guide teachers and staff to pursue their professional development.