

# School Support and Readiness Assessment Summary Report

<b>School:</b> Lowell Elementary School	<b>LEA:</b> Albuquerque Public Schools
<b>School Leader:</b> Kacy Cash	<b>LEA Leader:</b> Scott Elder
<b>SSRA Team Leader:</b> Michelle Starnes	<b>Date:</b> January 17, 2024
<b>School Description</b>	
<p>Lowell Elementary School is nestled in the Southeast area of Albuquerque in the shadow of the University of New Mexico and Central New Mexico Community College. The majority of the students who attend Lowell Elementary School live nearby. A few students attend the school for the level of support offered for special education services. The total enrollment is 220, ranging from Kindergarten to Fifth Grade.</p> <p>Lowell Elementary meets the requirements for schoolwide Title I resources. The school staff and leaders take pride in servicing displaced students and families with other unique challenges. A large population of the students are English Learners. There are two teachers per grade level with 50 staff members. The administration comprises a Principal, Dean of Students, and two Re-Directors. Lowell Elementary is a community school.</p> <p>Principal Cash has engaged in many leadership actions to promote and support the school's priorities, such as deepening staff understanding of data-driven instruction (DDI), restorative practices, and social-emotional learning (SEL). These practices align with Lowell Elementary School's mission: <i>to provide an education that engages students in academics, social-emotional, and life skills to become active contributors to the world around them.</i></p> <p>The school vision states, <i>"Daily social-emotional learning is incorporated in the schedule to support students in learning respect, responsibility, kindness, empathy, and self-regulation. Staff works closely with families to communicate any behaviors and work with families to find possible solutions. The goal is for students to have a safe and happy learning environment."</i></p>	
<b>School Successes and Celebrations</b>	
<p>The parents and staff at Lowell communicate optimism and enthusiasm about their progress toward creating a welcoming school. As a staff, they have prioritized building relationships with families and community partners, providing food, clothing, and outreach services to help families manage challenges that arise as part of their everyday living experience. The school administration reports that this has improved school and community relationships and attributes this success to the recent hiring of a Community Coordinator.</p> <p>In addition to hiring a Community Coordinator, Principal Cash has increased support staff to address the needs of students both academically and social-emotionally, and teachers are</p>	

feeling a reprieve. Principal Cash has also developed structures and systems for continuous collaboration and data-driven decision-making. The school leadership team has prioritized the 90-Day Plan as a guide to hold themselves accountable to the team and their co-designed goals. By aligning their efforts, they have increased staff morale as they move towards becoming a data-driven school that will meet the needs of all students.

**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:**

Leadership has prioritized student success by focusing on supporting systems, procedures, and practices. In implementing Focus Teams, leadership facilitates data analysis to address the needs of all students. They have clarified roles and expectations to reduce the duplication of efforts.

Staff and parents expressed their appreciation and support for the clear vision co-developed with the leadership team. Staff indicated that they favored the systems and were complimentary of the principal's support of the community and the classroom.

Interviews also pointed out that the principal encouraged the agency of teachers, staff, and families, contributing to a safe and supportive learning community. A leader who prioritizes agency builds cohesion in the school community.

**Opportunities for Growth:**

Although there has been a positive shift in creating structures and systems for and with teachers and staff, a common theme among interviews was the desire for reciprocal accountability to the co-developed goals and expectations.

One element of strong leadership is a systems approach to communication, priorities, and routines. The school has not yet worked through progress monitoring; however, the fidelity to the 90-Day Plan process has increased awareness of process flaws and potential improvements.

**Potential Next Steps:**

The leadership team at Lowell Elementary School understands the importance of alignment and collaboration through data-driven instruction. The leadership team has committed to supporting staff through frequent check-ins and classroom walkthroughs. This ensures that they can monitor classroom practices connected to schoolwide priorities.

The leadership team plans to align the agendas of all meetings toward the expected outcome of improved student performance. Teachers might need to be supported in conducting this type of work as they shift toward more formal meeting protocols and data analysis.

**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:**

Leadership has implemented Focus Teams to begin utilizing student-level data to drive instruction. The leadership team has further prioritized data-driven instruction by implementing co-developed strategies. Observation and feedback coaching cycles with the Structured Literacy Coach, Interventionists, and Transformational Coach are aligned with these strategies.

This unity of focus ensures teachers can access and deliver a rigorous curriculum aligned to the New Mexico Standards. For observation and feedback coaching cycles to be empowering, all parties understand the goals, the progress toward those goals, and the strategies to help students succeed.

**Opportunities for Growth:**

Ensuring the school has a comprehensive instructional infrastructure will increase the likelihood that students receive rigorous grade-level instruction in every classroom.

To ensure students receive quality instruction in every classroom, leaders must develop structures that support teachers to plan, deliver, assess, and monitor effective teaching. These structures will help solidify the scope and sequence that deepens the understanding and implementation of grade-level standards.

By scheduling frequent classroom walkthroughs, the leadership and the support team can identify common challenges that may indicate deficiencies or misalignment within the school's instructional infrastructure.

**Potential Next Steps:**

To ensure opportunities for growth and development of teachers, the leadership team's next step will be to develop a schedule for observation and feedback coaching cycles that allows all teachers to receive differentiated coaching. Assessment data may aid leaders in identifying areas of highest need as they prioritize observations.

The leadership will work with teachers to break down the standards, analyze a manageable number of key questions, and identify learning gaps. They can further support teachers by connecting these standards to the broader scope and sequence provided by the district and the Instructional Scope of Standards published by the New Mexico Public Education Department.

**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:**

Clear expectations and identified roles have brought the staff and students together toward a vision of improvement. This unity of vision has improved communication amongst the staff. This schoolwide effort has been developed into a system of support for students that includes the newly defined roles of the Dean of Students and two Re-Directors, which has promoted positive behavior. This year, there has been a reduction in disciplinary referrals. Parents have a positive perception of the school and have commented positively on the quick and appropriate response by staff and administration when needed.

To address the needs of students, English Language Arts (ELA) and Math Interventionists were hired to provide additional support to students and collaborative conversations with teachers. A gifted teacher has been hired to support the students screened and identified for enrichment. The Transformational Coach serves students and collaborates with teachers regarding English Language Development and bilingual services.

**Opportunities for Growth:**

Professional support enhances teachers' knowledge, skills, and attitudes to improve student achievement. Professional development is purposeful, intentional, ongoing, and systematic. There is an opportunity to embed professional development through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) aligned with a focused goal consistent with observation and feedback coaching cycles. Providing teachers with these opportunities to build their capacities will lead to retention.

**Potential Next Steps:**

Principal Cash will work with the leadership team to strengthen the Focus Team and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) meeting protocols. This will allow for a common language and shared definition of high-leverage practices. Solidifying the goals of the meetings and connecting them to student data will lead to a more focused intention on support, strengthening Lowell Elementary School's data-driven instruction priority.

Principal Cash will develop a schedule of classroom walkthroughs to identify individualized, small-group, and whole-group professional development opportunities based on the needs identified during observations, coaching sessions, and student and teacher performance data. This will support individualized training, education, and learning to help teachers improve their shared professional knowledge, skills, and effectiveness.