

School Support and Readiness Assessment Summary Report

School: Mesa Elementary School	LEA: Central Consolidated School District
School Leader: Gina Jones	LEA Leader: Steve Carlson
SSRA Team Leader: Matt Williams, Ph.D.	Date: February 12, 2024
School Description	
<p>Mesa Elementary is located on the Navajo Reservation in Shiprock, New Mexico. It serves a community of 255 students who reside on the north and northeast sides of Shiprock, extending to the Colorado border. The school caters to a diverse student body, including preschool students aged three to four and kindergarten through fifth-grade students. Mesa boasts a dedicated team of 18 teachers, six educational assistants, and various ancillary staff members.</p> <p>At Mesa, the focus is on achieving positive student outcomes in academic performance and behavior. The school administration is driven by the belief that Mesa has the potential to become the top-rated elementary school in New Mexico, and all efforts are directed toward realizing this ambitious goal. Students are instilled with the belief that they can excel academically, contribute to a safe and inclusive environment, and overcome challenges with resilience.</p>	
School Successes and Celebrations	
<p>Mesa Elementary has recently changed leadership. The new principal is focused on setting a tone of positivity and transparency. The school benefits from a highly supportive community, and staff members project positivity for their students. Attitudes are characterized by collaboration and achievement resulting from collective efforts.</p> <p>Principal Jones disseminates a weekly Roadrunner “Dash” update to all staff members, outlining upcoming activities, deadlines, and important notices. The school is undergoing a cultural shift toward more welcoming relationships and openness to support from district leaders.</p>	
DOMAIN 2: LEADERSHIP	
<i>To what degree does school leadership establish, communicate, support, and monitor schoolwide priorities?</i>	

Promising Practices:

Principal Jones is implementing consistent systems to address morning tardiness, notably implementing a structured breakfast time that has effectively reduced the number of late arrivals. Another shift at the school has been introducing a 6-step unit plan complemented by professional development (PD) sessions to enhance teachers' understanding of standards and refine their lesson planning skills. While this is still in the early stages, these efforts are poised to positively impact the quality of instruction and student learning outcomes at Mesa.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) convene weekly where to analyze data and collaboratively plan instruction. The school uses the district-wide pacing guide. The principal ensures accountability and support for instructional practices through regular walkthroughs, providing face-to-face feedback within 48 hours of observations. Additionally, strategic leadership development efforts have led to direct involvement by the leadership team in shaping, implementing, and monitoring the school's 90-day plan.

Opportunities for Growth:

There seems to be an opportunity to identify a clear focus for the school in concert with the leadership team. Given the magnitude of the tasks at hand and the principal's sense of urgency, there is potential for the principal to effectively engage members of the leadership team to support and champion necessary changes.

There may also be room to establish robust systems of communication that can better facilitate effective dialogue between teachers, parents, and school administration. These systems may offer an opportunity to refine and clarify expectations regarding identified school priorities. This could have a positive effect on accountability concerning future vital initiatives.

Potential Next Steps:

Principal Jones will enlist the kindergarten Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) team member to create an infographic detailing the newly approved 90-day plan. This infographic will serve as a communication tool to relay the plan to all staff members effectively. Following a comprehensive review of the plan components, the principal will articulate clear expectations to the entire staff and oversee schoolwide implementation.

The leadership team also focuses on enhancing teacher capacity and implementing the 6-step math unit plans. To further support mathematics instruction, the principal aims to deepen teachers' understanding of facilitating student discourse through Number Talks. This will involve conducting a book study and providing professional development opportunities for teachers to effectively integrate this strategy into their classrooms. Similar plans are in place for English language arts (ELA) instruction. The principal plans to emphasize vocabulary and word walls in ELA. These strategies will bolster students' operational understanding of grade-level vocabulary.

There is also a plan to work with the leadership team to establish robust attendance procedures and foster productive communication between the administration and teachers.

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:

At Mesa Elementary, students take various assessments, including state, district, and classroom assessments such as IMSSA and iStation, as well as other formative assessments like exit tickets. The data collected from these assessments enable teachers to gauge student progress and tailor instruction accordingly.

The principal facilitates data-driven discussions with teachers in PLCs and staff meetings on grade-level and schoolwide data. In a new initiative, the principal is implementing data walls in the conference room to visually display student data at both the school and teacher levels to enhance transparency and promote data-informed decisions in the classroom.

The principal has tapped the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) through Thrive to create a supportive observation and feedback coaching cycle structure so teachers grow professionally. Principal Jones also has implemented teacher professional development to enhance proficiency using the 6-step unit plans mentioned in leadership domain. Implementing these plans, as well as PD, will assist teachers in identifying targeted best practices, unpacking standards, and refining their lesson planning skills to better meet the needs of all students in their classrooms.

Finally, expectations are in place for certain classroom non-negotiables, such as posting learning objectives and daily lesson standards. This practice helps promote clarity day-to-day and aligns classroom activities with district expectations. As all of these initiatives progress, the school is focused on developing grade-level academic language skills for all students.

Opportunities for Growth:

An opportunity exists for Principal Jones to continue professional development efforts and reinforce expectations regarding implementing the 6-step unit plans to ensure teachers are equipped with the necessary tools to meet expectations and effectively utilize the provided instructional framework. These unit plans may also deepen teachers' understanding of state standards.

There may also be an opportunity to continue to work around the school's culture regarding data transparency at the individual teacher level. This work can serve as a powerful driver for change and teacher accountability; it may also help to cultivate a collaborative mindset throughout the school concerning a "We versus I" culture.

Potential Next Steps:

School leadership is focused on fostering a collaborative culture among teachers. One element of this work is creating opportunities for peer observation. To facilitate this, the principal plans to implement a rotating substitute system, allowing teachers to observe their colleagues in action. This focus aims to cultivate a sense of collective responsibility while enhancing teacher capacity.

The principal also plans to take three staff members to professional learning sessions on Capturing Kid's Hearts to impact adult interactions and foster positive atmospheres throughout the school where strong teacher-student connections may thrive and be leveraged for learning.

Finally, there remains a focus on teachers' ongoing professional development through the 6-step unit planning process, aimed at deepening understanding of academic standards and enhancing instructional effectiveness.