

School Support and Readiness Assessment Summary Report

School: San Juan Elementary School	LEA: Española Public Schools
School Leader: Monique Garcia	LEA Leader: Holly Martínez
SSRA Team Leader: Bernadette Ellis	Date: February 15, 2024
School Description	
<p>San Juan Elementary is one of 11 elementary school sites within the Española Public School District. San Juan Elementary is a public school situated within the Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo. The school serves 165 students in grades kindergarten through six.</p> <p>San Juan Elementary serves a large Native American population, the district's highest concentration for an elementary school. The school prides itself in serving and providing bilingual programming in Tewa and Spanish to serve the community's needs. The heritage language bilingual program is designed to deliver language instruction to students in their families' home/heritage language. When students enter the program, they may be fluent in their home language or have lost their language with generational changes. The goal is to halt home language loss and ultimately recover or newly develop native proficiency in the language.</p> <p>Monique Garcia is the San Juan Elementary Principal. Principal Garcia is native to Northern New Mexico and has been an educator for 20 years. She has been with Española Public Schools for two years. As the San Juan Elementary principal, she looks forward to building positive relationships with students, staff, and the community to ensure a fantastic school year.</p> <p>The school's mission and vision statement are as follows:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">San Juan Elementary dragons and stakeholders are dedicated to sharing in a world where problem-solving, creativity, and civic responsibility are seen as real-world contributions.</p>	
School Successes and Celebrations	
<p>San Juan Elementary offers a variety of programs to serve its students and families. The school is a 21st Century Community Center, offering fine arts programming, homelessness support through HOPE programming (Homeless Opportunities = Power in Education), and Cooking with Kids. The school has a heritage language program model to support students' language learning in Tewa and Spanish. Two teachers are fully fluent in Tewa and Spanish. The Tewa teacher is one of only four public school teachers fully fluent in the language.</p> <p>The teacher-to-teacher culture is positive, and teachers are supportive of each other.</p>	

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:

Parents and families feel welcome at the school, and Principal Garcia cares about students' learning and well-being—the small, close-knit nature of the school yields close, family-like relationships between educators and families. Teachers know many parents by name. When families come onto campus, they are greeted by the office staff and offered support, and the classrooms have an open-door policy that encourages family participation in student learning.

Principal Garcia has made efforts to refocus the school on academics. Due to the pandemic and high leadership turnover in recent years, inconsistent messages about the school's academic priorities have developed. During her first year as principal at San Juan, Ms. Garcia has spearheaded a shift toward data-driven instruction. In service of this focus, she is strengthening and adding consistency to professional learning community (PLC) processes.

The principal is present and visible throughout the school daily. Teachers notice her presence throughout the halls and in classrooms. This allows her to stay aware of classroom practices and needs while building relationships with staff and students.

Opportunities for Growth:

Although Principal Garcia ensures she is present in the hallways and regularly pops into classrooms, she can capitalize on this practice through systematic observation, feedback, and coaching cycles (OFCCs). Some teachers see the principal during walkthroughs but have never received feedback. Others feel that her feedback focuses only on areas for improvement and can sometimes be overwhelming in scope.

Currently, observations and feedback meetings are not something the principal schedules in her calendar, so when parents stop in to meet with her or other campus needs arise, OFCCs take a backseat. Prioritizing OFCCs while offering precise praise for behaviors and bite-sized actions the principal would like a teacher to implement is a high-leverage leadership action for a supportive culture. Observation data-based changes can be implemented quickly and effectively build teacher trust while improving instructional practices.

Potential Next Steps:

Principal Garcia sees the importance of regularly scheduled observations and bite-sized, just-in-time feedback. She believes in being direct with teachers about look-fors and opportunities for improvement. By being transparent about this aspect of her leadership style, she can help teachers become more comfortable receiving constructive criticism.

Principal Garcia welcomes feedback from her staff about the OFCC and plans to prioritize observations moving forward. When communication goes both ways and when school leaders listen to the concerns raised by teachers, trust is established. When there is trust, teachers may be more open to data discussions and trying new instructional practices.

DOMAIN 5: SUPPORT & ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Promising Practices:

San Juan Elementary has gone through a lot of turnover and change in the past few years, which has led to inconsistent expectations and a great deal of distrust. However, most teachers credit Principal Garcia for initiating consistency this school year, which has increased a sense of hopefulness and optimism. Many described this year as feeling like the school has turned a corner in the right direction. This consistency has resulted in tangible results as well. It has translated to fewer office disciplinary referrals (ODRs) and suspensions. Additionally, a focus on addressing student absenteeism has led to meetings with families and increased attendance by some students.

The school is beginning to use data and has increased teachers' focus on identifying gaps in a student's learning. Some classrooms have posted data from recent assessments. Student performance data is shared with students, and families are shown their child's data during parent-teacher conferences. Finally, although PLCs are still gaining consistency, most groups are using data to focus some of their collaboration. These practices are setting the groundwork for deeper data discussions and use as the school embraces this practice.

Opportunities for Growth:

There is an opportunity to provide a positive balance of support and accountability, which will build trust and grow a culture of collaboration. Because of the multiple changes in school leadership and staffing over the last few years, there's a strong need for consistency and stability. One way to address this need is by establishing school priorities, communicating them, providing support to grow teachers in their ability to meet them, and holding everyone accountable.

There is a need to identify and communicate non-negotiables more clearly. These might include posted learning objectives designed to be mastered in a single class period. The school might also prioritize adherence to the master schedule and pacing guides. Clear instructional priorities can help build school culture and increase the alignment of practices toward a shared goal.

Another potential opportunity for growth at San Juan ES is developing and refining schoolwide structures and processes. Currently, the master schedule does not provide time for teacher collaboration, and there is a need for ongoing professional development (PD) to help teachers

understand how to use the newly adopted, district-provided curriculum and pacing guides. Developing structures and systems would allow for distributed leadership, increasing sustainability and continuity through leadership changes.

Finally, ensuring teachers have needed materials and backup systems in place could increase the effectiveness and timeliness of instruction. Teachers have experienced supply shortages and delays in receiving curricular materials. These situations stress teachers and students, particularly when technical difficulties compound the problem by preventing teachers from accessing the online versions of the materials. Teachers would benefit from learning to pivot between online and in-person resources when technological difficulties arise.

Potential Next Steps:

Principal Garcia sees some next steps that are within her immediate capacity and others that are beyond her control. Declining enrollment has led to full-time equivalent (FTE) and staffing changes. In response to the ongoing stability and consistency challenges created by staffing shortages, Principal Garcia wants to build teachers' capacity for leadership. She plans to empower teachers to take on more responsibility and to become more involved in schoolwide decisions. Developing the 90-Day Plan and accessing on-site support from teachers would help support the school in this way.

Principal Garcia identified some challenges that must be addressed in concert with district leadership. The master schedule, time for collaboration, and ongoing PD to help teachers understand how to use district-provided resources all surfaced as potential next steps that will benefit from coordination between the school and the district. Clear communication about any delivery delays affecting curricular materials and support for teachers to create materials when technology is unreliable are identified needs she plans to address.

Principal Garcia immediately plans to build teachers' planning capacity by providing professional development on curricular design. She would like to support teachers in breaking down content standards into daily lesson objectives and to aid teachers in crafting content and language objectives as standard practice. This professional learning, combined with instructional coaching through observation and feedback cycles, can help teachers build capacity and restore trust between all parties.