

School Support and Readiness Assessment Summary Report

School: Tse' Yi' Gai High School	LEA: Gallup-McKinley County Schools
School Leader: Sharon E. Vannier	LEA Leader: Mike Hyatt
SSRA Team Leader: Eileen Reed	Date: February 29, 2024
School Description	
<p>Tse' Yi' Gai High is a public high school in Pueblo Pintado, within the Navajo Nation's eastern region in northwestern New Mexico. Serving a student body of 64 spanning grades six to twelve, the school operates as a comprehensive four-year high school. One hundred percent of the student body qualifies for free meals. Twenty-eight percent (18 students) are classified as English Learners (ELs), with Navajo being the primary language spoken in the home and the community. Six percent (5 students) have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). The school is a one-to-one school, meaning each student receives a laptop they can use in school and at home. TSG school has sixteen staff members, eleven of which are certified.</p>	
School Successes and Celebrations	
<p>Assuming her role for the 2023-24 academic year, Principal Vannier brings a solid commitment to providing high-quality education for students. She is viewed as a proactive problem solver through collaboration with faculty, which has improved rapport between faculty and leadership. With a clear vision for change, there is a notable energy of positivity among staff. There is unity and hopefulness around the current principal's vision, believing in the positive progress that can be made serving the student body.</p> <p>TSG has faced challenges due to frequent turnover in leadership and teaching staff, but the transition under Principal Vannier's leadership is looking to stabilize this negative trend. The recent shift from a 6-12 to a 9-12 campus presents an opportunity to address staffing vacancies and establish a dedicated team aligned with TSG's mission, particularly in the sciences.</p> <p>A reduction in absenteeism evidences one tangible outcome of the change in leadership and faculty. Students feel a stronger connection to teaching staff due to stability, new incentives, sporting events, and targeted outreach. These aspects demonstrate a positive shift for TSG as a school.</p>	
DOMAIN 1: CULTURE & EQUITY	
<p><i>To what degree has the school established equitable practices that ensure ALL students and staff have an opportunity to reach their full potential?</i></p>	

Promising Practices:

TSG's leadership is actively working to foster community and enrichment among the student body by providing extracurricular experiences such as outings to the Elevate trampoline park in Gallup and Meow Wolf in Santa Fe. In addition to this effort towards community building, the leadership and faculty at the school are invested in learning about and honoring the culture of the Dine' people. This includes incorporating culturally responsive teaching materials into classroom instruction and eating lunch with students, with faculty rotating between different tables. The aim is to help forge positive relationships that can be leveraged to enhance the educational experience at the school.

There are plans to leverage the Engineering Pathway program to increase engagement with the community. TSG is fortunate to have hired a retired engineer passionate about creating projects that build relationships with the Navajo community. The focus of these projects is environmental sustainability. For example, there are plans to construct a greenhouse for sustainable food sourcing. Other faculty are excited about the opportunity to support these efforts through cross-curricular connections.

Another positive development is that TSG has reinstated athletic teams. This comes with support from the principal and the leadership of a teacher/coach. The mindset behind athletics has to do with community involvement and academic standards. The girl's basketball team was first established, and new sports such as track and cross-country are being developed.

TSG has also recently taken significant steps towards ensuring students stay on track to graduate by implementing thorough and timely credit reviews. These processes represent a dedication to improving past systems, as some students had been assigned to classes that were not aligned with their needs. The school plans for the Student Success Advisor to provide training sessions on graduation credits to parents and families to garner additional student support.

Opportunities for Growth:

There is a need to address the vacant position for the Navajo Heritage and Language class. TSG leadership may need to explore partnering with the district to fill this position effectively. Despite challenges in finding suitable candidates, TSG is exploring various recruitment options.

An opportunity exists to address the reading performance of TSG students strategically. The school may want to explore research-informed strategies appropriate for adolescent students. For instance, incorporating a daily half-hour tailored reading block with access to an online fluency program can significantly enhance reading skills. Providing leveled, high-interest reading materials and engaging students in setting reading goals with corresponding incentives can further support their individual literacy development. One way to enhance this practice would be to offer professional development opportunities for teachers focused on reading across the curriculum. Professional development (PD) can ensure consistent implementation of effective reading instruction across classrooms.

Finally, there is an opportunity to leverage the dedication and energy of the committed faculty to build more robust school engagement and a sense of partnership between the school and the community. By actively involving faculty members in initiatives to build community connections and collaboration, TSG may enhance its overall school culture and effectiveness.

Potential Next Steps:

Principal Vannier plans to continue exploring opportunities for additional recruitment. She is hopeful that potential candidates will pass the required Navajo language testing. Concerning staff, the principal continues to support and monitor teachers in their efforts to incorporate more academic vocabulary into their lessons. Teachers are also participating in the district-provided reading apprenticeship initiative.

Additionally, the principal plans to research opportunities for lexile testing to gain further insights into current reading levels among students. The intention is to brainstorm and explore ideas with staff on advancing community engagement to foster stronger connections between the school and the community.

DOMAIN 5: SUPPORT & ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Promising Practices:

Teachers are feeling supported and valued by the new principal. The staff holds a collective hope for consistency in leadership after years of principal turnover. One element of this support has been communicating a clear vision on behalf of the leadership. This vision is one of service for TSG's students and community. With changes in expectations, it has been clear that the administration is candid and respectful but will not shy away from difficult and necessary conversations. The first element of this service vision concerns a renewed focus on attendance through data monitoring and celebration of progress or improvement with students and families.

One promising practice concerning support and accountability is leadership's review of lesson plans. Principal Vannier's feedback helps teachers improve the instructional planning process. As part of the coaching, the principal conducts walkthroughs regularly to support teachers with instructional delivery and focus recommendations.

Opportunities for Growth:

Teachers may benefit from specialized training on providing accommodations as outlined in their students' IEPs. Similarly, dedicated special education staff would benefit from additional support and training measures to better serve students with IEPs and ensure that all necessary documentation complies with regulations.

The administration may be able to take a proactive approach by working with the community school to understand the needs of incoming students. This would allow them to create a comprehensive master schedule that accommodates the dedicated special education staff member and ensures students receive the minutes of service as outlined in their IEPs.

Potential Next Steps:

The administration is collaborating with the district's special education leader to address the needs of students with IEPs at TSG.

An in-depth review of student IEPs can highlight the scaffolds that students need and inform professional development initiatives on the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework—the principal plans to leverage a faculty member for this training.

Adjustments to next year's master schedule are considered part of systemic improvements, specifically to enhance accountability for special education services. Aligning resources and training with the stated and observed needs of the faculty will ensure a more sustainable future.