

# School Support and Readiness Assessment Monitoring Visit Summary Report

<b>School:</b> University High School	<b>LEA:</b> Roswell Independent Schools
<b>School Leader:</b> Lucie Hall	<b>LEA Leader:</b> Brian Luck
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<b>School Successes and Celebrations</b>	
<p>University High School (HS) has achieved success and celebrated numerous milestones over the past year, particularly in its second year as a designated Community School under a federal grant program. Implementing the Community School model has been a source of pride for the campus, enabling it to hire a dedicated coordinator for the work. This role has been pivotal in realizing various initiatives, such as forming the Student Senate, which has significantly amplified student voice and engagement within the school community. Through the Student Senate's efforts, students have spearheaded impactful initiatives, including organizing enriching field trips to venues like the state legislature, Meow Wolf, and Loretto Chapel, fostering a sense of empowerment and ownership among the student body. University HS has also been recognized for its innovative practices, receiving the prestigious Innovation Award and being selected as one of the three finalists for high schools, particularly for its commendable work in improving attendance and behavior metrics.</p> <p>The school also celebrated some achievements in its Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, with a significant number of completers across various disciplines such as Electrical (12), Cosmetology (2), Counseling (5), and EMT/Health (3). These successes reflect the school's commitment to providing students diverse pathways to success. University HS has experienced a tangible improvement in its school culture, marked by reduced disciplinary incidents and a positive shift in student behavior. This transformation is evident in a substantial decrease in suspension days compared to previous years, with students missing only 61 days due to suspension compared to 242 days in the past. This improvement reflects the school's adoption of restorative justice practices, which will be scaled up next year.</p> <p>After attending the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) school improvement and transformation (SIT) meetings in January, the school revamped the Collaboration, Planning, and Improvement (CPI) meetings to align them to share learnings from the training. They now serve as forums for proactive discussions on supporting students and refining school systems. It is an opportunity to engage others in the work to improve school systems. The CPI meetings are more problem-solving meetings for the school team to come together and focus on sustainable practices. Through these collaborative endeavors, University HS continues cultivating a nurturing and supportive environment where students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.</p>	

## Progress Toward Next Steps Identified in SSRA Summary

### **SSRA Summary Next Step #1: To mitigate the enrollment challenges with younger students at University High, the school plans to engage in targeted recruitment with 8th-grade students.**

At Career Day for Sierra Middle School and Military Heights Elementary School, University HS students presented their Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, showcasing their diverse opportunities. The school hosted booths at Heritage Days at Mesa Middle School and Flight Night at Sierra Middle School to engage with parents and prospective students.

University HS teachers and staff have entertained the idea of primarily admitting first-year students, considering the logistical advantages in calculating graduation cohorts. However, after several conversations, the school is deeply committed to its current demographic, particularly juniors and seniors. After careful consideration, it was collectively decided to continue serving the existing student demographic. University HS is dedicated to supporting students needing an alternative setting and fostering their academic growth. By initiating timely interventions and providing comprehensive and individualized support, the school aims to plant the seeds of success and empower all students to realize their full potential.

### **SSRA Summary Next Step #2: Principal Hall plans to increase programming in electrical, health, psychology, and cosmetology.**

Following discussions with district leaders, University HS unfortunately does not have staffing budgets available to expand its programs. Despite this setback, the school remains committed to adding another construction (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning -- HVAC) position once funding becomes available.

Reflecting on the impact of its CTE programs, University HS shared the success stories of two students who struggled academically at Roswell High School four years ago. These students exemplify the transformative potential of a robust CTE program for individuals facing challenges in a traditional high school setting. University HS staff emphasize the importance of building strong relationships with students. They provide a fresh start where students feel supported and empowered. Beginning with an employability course, the school sets clear expectations and fosters trust and reliability, creating a conducive environment for learning.

### **SSRA Summary Next Step #3: Principal Hall plans to intentionally redesign the credit recovery program at University High, moving it to UHS rather than the two traditional district schools.**

University HS has encountered challenges in making progress despite efforts to support students through credit recovery initiatives. Currently, 90% of UHS students have credit recovery built into their schedules, with the district investing \$200,000 in APEX, a credit recovery platform. However, with the expiration of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding, the district's commitment to alternative solutions is hindered by transportation constraints. To address this issue, there is a desire to offer evening credit recovery classes district-wide, potentially supported by a teacher stipend. Discussions are

underway regarding potential options, mainly due to the significant number of students requiring credit recovery. Unlike other high schools with alternating block schedules, UHS operates on a traditional 4x4 schedule, posing challenges for students transferring in with missing credits who must rely on APEX. Despite these obstacles, UHS is committed to developing customized plans for each student and ensuring they remain academically successful.

**SSRA Summary Next Step #4: Principal Hall would like to visit other schools with CTE programs that bridge students' home schools and satellite locations like University High strives to do. She is looking into more flexible transportation options for students.**

Despite visits to CTE programs being successful and informative, University HS has faced challenges in progressing on the transportation front. While transportation remains cost-prohibitive through the current bus companies, Roswell High School (RHS) utilized part of its Innovation Zone grant to purchase a Suburban. It offers a potential solution for University HS to explore transportation between the two schools. University HS aims to facilitate transportation between schools to allow students to access CTE programs at both schools more conveniently. However, budgetary constraints may pose challenges to implementing this plan, and the school is currently exploring all potential solutions.

**SSRA Summary Next Step #5: Principal Hall aims to support teachers through a multi-pronged approach by restructuring professional development time, incorporating end-of-course assessments as a measurement of mastery, sharing student exemplars with teachers, and leading them in challenging conversations about the standards, which will help teachers understand more fully the level of rigor required to master the standards.**

While there has been progress, the school team felt there is still more to do. Members of the school team, including a district representative, attended all three School Improvement and Transformation Conferences provided by NM PED, which provided valuable insights for enhancing educational practices. Collaborating with an MLSS coach, the school completed two Learning Walks focused on English and math, offering structured feedback to support teachers effectively. The school leader reported that this support was extremely valuable and enhanced her ability to develop teachers.

Teachers and administrators visited three Albuquerque schools, including ACE Leadership Academy, Mark Armijo Charter Academy, and Highland High School, to explore Community School models and consider strategies for integrating capstone projects. Efforts have been made to strengthen partnerships, such as the cosmetology instructor's tour of Carlsbad Beauty College, which aimed at facilitating student transitions for licensure opportunities. To better support novice teachers and align instructional standards, the school has initiated professional learning communities (PLCs) for English teachers across University HS and Early College High School.

**SSRA Summary Next Step #6: Principal Hall plans to provide opportunities for peer observations with master teachers.**

Despite successful initial discussions with Roswell HS and Goddard HS principals, progress was not achieved in establishing collaborative initiatives. While both parties expressed willingness, logistical challenges prevented further development this year. However, prioritizing this collaboration for the upcoming year remains a goal.

**SSRA Summary Next Step #7: Principal Hall plans to leverage Community Schools to address students' academic needs rather than solely focusing on social-emotional learning needs.**

Significant progress has been made, mainly through establishing a Community School coordinator role. This position, held by a social worker with extensive community connections, has enabled the school to innovatively provide comprehensive support to students. Spearheading initiatives like the Student Senate, the coordinator has successfully engaged students, with attendance growing from seven to 15 regular attendees. The Student Senate's advocacy led to the organization of prom, attended by approximately one-third of the student body, fostering a sense of community and belonging. Hygiene stations were established, and monthly food banks were implemented to address food insecurity among students, ensuring they have access to essential resources.

The school and the Student Senate have also prioritized experiential learning through field trips, with participation contingent on academic performance and attendance, reinforcing the importance of scholastic achievement. Tax preparation classes have been offered to support financial literacy, equipping students with practical skills for their futures. Recognizing the importance of wraparound services, the school has provided essential resources such as eyeglasses to six students, ensuring their overall well-being is supported.

**School Leader's Next Steps**

In preparation for the upcoming school year, the school leadership at University HS has identified three key focus areas to enhance the educational experience for students and strengthen the overall school community. There will be a concerted effort to implement interdisciplinary Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings to prepare for capstone projects across Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and core content areas. This initiative will emphasize collaboration among teachers across various disciplines to enrich student learning experiences and foster more profound engagement with real-world applications of their coursework. By incorporating more dedicated PLC time into the school day and assembling a diverse team committed to enhancing rigor in core classes, University HS aims to provide students with a well-rounded education that prepares them for success beyond graduation.

Another priority for the upcoming year is to create opportunities for peer observations with master teachers, intending to build instructional capacity and expertise among the teaching staff. By facilitating peer observations, educators can learn from one another, share best practices, and refine their teaching strategies to meet students' diverse needs better.

Finally, the school leaders are focused on communicating a clear vision to parents and students as part of a broader effort to support outreach, recruitment, and improve the school's reputation within the community. Recognizing the importance of changing outdated perceptions and dispelling stigmas associated with the school, efforts will be made to rebrand and redefine the narrative surrounding University HS. By effectively communicating the school's mission, values, and commitment to academic excellence, the aim is to build trust, foster positive relationships, and create a sense of pride and belonging among all stakeholders.