

**School Improvement and Transformation Monitoring Visit Summary  
Beginning of Year  
(SITM-BOY)**

<b>School:</b> Rio Grande HS	<b>LEA:</b> Albuquerque Public Schools
<b>School Leader:</b> Antoinette Valenzuela	<b>LEA Leader:</b> Gabriella Blakely
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**School Description**

Rio Grande High School (RGHS) in Albuquerque, New Mexico, serves grades 9-12 in a predominantly Hispanic community, where many students qualify for free or reduced lunch. With 41% of students being English Language Learners and 26% receiving Special Education services, RGHS focuses on supporting diverse student needs. The school has seen increased enrollment and staffing, maintaining high staff retention and offering specialized Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs like Welding, Woodshop, and Advanced Placement courses.

Located in a rural-like environment within an urban setting, RGHS has recently become a magnet school. It emphasizes Environmental STEM education through the “Sustaining the Future” pathway. It prepares students for the workforce through hands-on learning experiences and partnerships with Central New Mexico Community College. The school addresses challenges such as a 20% chronic absenteeism rate and high student retention in lower grades by offering credit recovery programs and focusing on post-secondary preparation.

To combat external disruptions to learning, RGHS provides robust support systems, including Restorative Practices for discipline, counseling, food pantries, and social services for students facing homelessness. The school’s mission is closely aligned with the local community’s needs, ensuring students are equipped for success after graduation.

**School Successes and Celebrations**

Rio Grande High School has seen remarkable success in recent years, driven by strong leadership with deep ties to the school community. Enrollment has grown by approximately 125 students since last year, with students who had previously left for nearby schools returning, making Rio Grande a school of choice. The school’s academic performance has improved significantly, with science proficiency on the NM-ASR rising from 15.6% in 2021-2022 to 22% in 2023-2024. Graduation rates have also increased, from 271 graduates in 2021-2022 to 301 in 2023-2024, and the next cohort is on track to maintain this upward trend. Tracking the next cohorts for 2024-2025, Rio Grande High School expects 535 ninth graders, 400 tenth graders, 313 eleventh graders, and 251 seniors to graduate.

The school’s dedication to professional development is evident, with 100% of teachers on track to completing 66 hours of eMints training to boost student engagement. Innovative programs like Ag in the Classroom, including hydroponic labs, have also been introduced.

Student outcomes have also seen positive changes: the dropout rate has decreased to 2.4%, and chronic absences have dropped by 9%, thanks to increased communication with families and students through the Family Center. Discipline referrals have decreased significantly as teachers are empowered to manage classroom behavior through restorative justice practices, and the failure rate has dropped from 30.63% in 2021 to 11.24% in 2024.

Rio Grande High School has also expanded academic opportunities, with enrollment in AP, honors, and dual-credit courses increasing from 262 to 538 students. This includes the addition of bilingual AP courses. The AP exam pass rate has also improved, from 45.7% in 2021-2022 to 54% in 2023-2024. Furthermore, the school offers a credit recovery program that helps students build life skills, such as organization and resume writing, while they work toward earning their credits online.

### **NM DASH Development and Implementation**

The school's 90-day plan addresses graduation, academics, and attendance.

The school has identified three contributing factors to low graduation rates. (1) Poor attendance, (2) a system for tracking students on courses for graduation, and (3) a lack of standards-based teaching.

The desired outcomes include:

**Graduation** - 100% of teachers will celebrate students for academic improvement/success once a week as measured by the 90-Day Plan Reflection Form.

**ELA** - 100% of teachers will provide students with opportunities to practice reading, comprehension of complex grade-level text, and writing skills once a week as measured by department meeting reflection notes Google Form.

**Math** - 100% of teachers will promote a growth mindset by encouraging students to adopt a more positive, resilient attitude towards math 100% of the time, as measured by teachers earning a three or higher in Elevate NM Domain 2C (Establishing a Culture for Learning).

**Science** - 100% of teachers will support students in tracking progress and creating data-driven academic goals at least once a week, as evidenced by walkthroughs or department meeting notes.

**ELP** - 100% of teachers will support English Learners by providing them with strategies and opportunities to increase English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing 100% of the time, as measured by teachers earning a three or higher in Elevate NM Domain 3A (Communicating with Students in a Manner that is Appropriate to their Culture, Language, and Level of Development).

## School Progress

### Current Three-year Data Trends

#### Graduation

##### 4-year

2021-2022 – 62%

2022-2023 – 62%

2023-2024 – \*\*%

##### 5-year

2021-2022 – \*\*%

2022-2023 – 72%

2023-2024 – \*\*%

##### 6-year

2021-2022 – \*\*%

2022-2023 – 84%

2023-2024 – \*\*%

### 2025 Graduation Goal -

- In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the percentage of students not earning a diploma within four years by half over ten years, the four-year cohort graduation rate at Rio Grande HS will increase from 63.0% during the 2022-2023 school year to 66.7% during the 2024-2025 school year.
- At the end of the Fall 2024 semester, 66.7% of 12th-grade students in the four-year graduation Cohort of 2025 at Rio Grande HS will be on track to earn their diploma by May 2025 as measured by credits earned.

### Stanford Achievement Test (SAT)

#### ELA Score of 480 and Above

2021-2022 – 27.6%

2022-2023 – 12%

2023-2024 – 17%

#### Math Score of 480 and Above

2021-2022 – 7.7 %

2022-2023 – 10%

2023-2024 – 7%

### 2025 ELA Goal

- In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the rate of non-proficiency by half over

ten years, the percentage of students at Rio Grande HS earning a score of Proficient or higher in English Language Arts as measured by the SAT will increase from 21.5% during the 2023-2024 school year to 25.5% during the 2024-2025 school year.

- The percentage of 11th-grade students at Rio Grande HS who earned a C or higher in their core English Language Arts class will increase ten percentage points from the first semester of the 2023-2024 school year to the first semester of the 2024-2025 school year.

### **2025 Math Goal**

- In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the rate of non-proficiency by half over ten years, the percentage of students at Rio Grande HS earning a score of Proficient or higher in Mathematics as measured by the SAT will increase from 3.7% during the 2023-2024 school year to 8.5% during the 2024-2025 school year.
- The percentage of 11th-grade students at Rio Grande HS who earned a C or higher in their core Mathematics class will increase by ten percentage points from the first semester of the 2023-2024 school year to the first semester of the 2024-2025 school year.

### **Science ASR**

2021-2022 – 15.6%

2022-2023 – 17.9%

2023-2024 – 22%

### **2025 Science Goal**

- In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the rate of non-proficiency by half over ten years, the percentage of students at Rio Grande HS earning a score of Proficient or higher in Science as measured by NM-ASR will increase from 22.1% during the 2023-2024 school year to 26.0% during the 2024-2025 school year.
- The percentage of 11th-grade students at Rio Grande HS who earned a C or higher in their core Science class will increase by 10 percentage points from the first semester of the 2023-2024 school year to the first semester of the 2024-2025 school year.

### **Interim Assessment Rates**

#### **ELA - pSAT**

2021-2022 – 31%

2022-2023 – 20%

2023-2024 – 19%

#### **Math -pSAT**

2021-2022 – 7%

2022-2023 – 7%

2023-2024 – 2%

*Horizon - ELA & Math Baseline data will be collected in October 2024 for the 9th grade. This data will be added to the 90-day plan.*

### **Course Failure Rates**

#### **ELA**

2021-2022 – 48%

2022-2023 – 38%

2023-2024 – 32%

#### **Math**

2021-2022 – 39%

2022-2023 – 40%

2023-2024 – 37%

#### **Science**

2021-2022 – 42%

2022-2023 – 34%

2023-2024 – 26%

#### **Attendance Rate**

2021-2022 – 85%

2022-2023 – 86%

2023-2024 – 89%

### **2025 ELP Goal**

- In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the percentage of English Learners not meeting their annual ACCESS growth targets by half over ten years, the percentage of English Learners at Rio Grande HS meeting their annual growth targets on ACCESS will increase from 1.7% during the 2022-2023 school year to 6.6% during the 2024-2025 school year.
- The percentage of English Learners at Rio Grande HS who earned a C or higher in their four core content area classes (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies/History) will increase by 10 percentage points from the first semester of the 2023-2024 school year to the first semester of the 2024-2025 school year.

### **Goal Setting Process**

The Rio Grande High School leadership team received district training, led by Brian Laurent, on creating the 90-day plan, focusing on SMART goals and critical action steps. This information was shared with the Rio Grande Instructional Council (IC), responsible for writing

the plan. During an IC retreat, Logan Whitney guided the team through updates to the 90-day plan. The IC reviewed school data to identify root causes and began drafting the plan, incorporating input from staff and department discussions on critical action steps. The district reviewed the draft; updates were made to the wording and performance measures to align with the 30-day, 60-day, and 90-day framework. However, the core content created by the IC remained unchanged.

### **Root Cause Analysis (RCA)**

RCA is being worked on with the district and has some influence on the school's locus of control. Based on school leader findings, it may need to be refined to focus on causes.

### **Actions to Reach Graduation Goals -**

- Regular celebrations of our students' academic/attendance success are held at public presentations by departments.
- All departments will collaboratively plan at least one student/family engagement event with another department during the semester.
- All teachers will communicate student progress and academic goals to families at least once a month through Synergy progress report.
- Teachers will be trained in eMints to focus on engagement and inquiry-based strategies to utilize in their classroom.
- Identify students with AP potential through PSAT results in alignment with APS Goal 3 College and Career Readiness.

### **Actions to Reach ELA Goals -**

- ELA Teachers will consistently practice writing skills in daily classroom instruction and through assessments.
- Teachers will allow students to read complex grade-level texts and ensure they comprehend through questioning.
- Create an opportunity for students to process their learning through writing at least once a week. (AVID Goal)

### **Actions to Reach Math Goals**

- Modeling and Scaffolding: Model problem-solving strategies and provide scaffolding for difficult tasks, gradually removing support as students become more confident & proficient.
- Practice and Repetition: Provide ample opportunities for practice and repetition to build confidence and competence in tackling challenging work in all content areas.
- Teachers will discuss Growth Mindset with parents/guardians during an open house and SLCs to help them change their mindset and encourage their students to grow in math.

**Actions to Reach Science Goals -**

- Develop a Claim, Evidence, & Reasoning (CER) format for all science teachers.
- Develop Sentence starters to help scaffold conclusions for all science students.
- Develop a Claim, Evidence, & Reasoning (CER) rubric that all science teachers will utilize.

**Actions to Reach ELP Goals -**

- Teachers will display and reference academic language per the lesson/unit.
- Teachers will allow students to utilize academic vocabulary through listening and speaking.
- Teachers will identify their ELL students to ensure they provide them with the necessary support.

Although not formally documented in the 90-day plan, several key initiatives actively support instructional improvement and contribute to higher graduation rates. These initiatives include-

- eMints professional development program
- Horizon interim assessments in ELA and Math for 9th graders
- A credit recovery class that teaches organizational skills while allowing students time to complete online coursework
- Agriculture magnet school.

Additionally, the school is in its second year of implementing the “3 Before the Dean” office referral system. It has significantly reduced discipline referrals by empowering teachers to address issues using restorative justice practices.

School leadership is working on collecting data to monitor progress toward their goals, including analyzing the implementation of professional development through walkthroughs (Google document for Domain 2C - Establishing a Culture for Learning and 3A- Communicating with Students). It will also track student movement across different levels on Horizon and pSAT in ELA and Math (Beginning Of Year, Middle Of Year, & End Of Year). The leadership assesses their attendance weekly and closely monitors the number of students on track for graduation by course completion (9-12).