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

School: Independence High School	**LEA:** Rio Rancho
School Leader: Jessica Sanchez	**LEA Leader:** Dr. Sue Cleveland
SITM Team Leader: Dr. Matt Williams	**Date:** September 11, 2024

School Description

Independence High School is an alternative high school in Rio Rancho, NM. It is situated on the city's north side and housed in a former call center. The school is inviting to students, providing a feeling of welcome and connectedness.

The school has a diverse population of 176 students. Currently, 69% are identified as Hispanic/Latino, 14% Caucasian, 8% American Indian, and 9% other. Thirty-one students receive special education services; twenty are identified as English Learners (EL). 5% of students are identified through McKenny Vento, but only 1% are served after follow-up by the school.

Although the school is classified as a 9-12, the student body consists of students on a three-, four, five-, and six-year graduation track.

Independence's vision is "*Cultivating an inclusive community that provides individualized support and resources to foster student's academic success and personal growth.*" The mission is dedicated to graduating students who strive, overcome, remain true to their authentic selves, and demonstrate resilience in the face of adversity.

School Successes and Celebrations

The failure rates at IHS have seen dramatic improvement over the past three years in all core subjects. From 2022-23 to 2023-24, English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics have decreased from 46% to 25%; Science from 47% to 22%; and Social Studies from 47% to 31%. The school contributed these improved performance outcomes to implementing a student support system with clear expectations and accountability that has increased student attendance by 10%.

Although the 4-year graduation rate is at 50.2%, the school has experienced an improvement in its 5-year graduation rate from 66% to 73% from 2022-23 to 2023-24.

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) student buy-in, and (3) significant learning gaps over the past 10-12 years of their school experience.

The desired outcomes include:
- 100% of teachers will establish daily routines that support students and maximize their effectiveness so that at least 90% of their time is spent delivering quality direct instruction.
- 100% of teachers will implement differentiation strategies targeting all learning modalities 70% of each ELA class period to meet the unique needs of their students as measured by non-evaluative walkthroughs and lesson plans.
- 100% of teachers will implement culturally and linguistically responsive strategies to support the development of academic vocabulary, and 70% of each class period will meet students' language needs, as measured by non-evaluative walkthroughs and lesson plans.

School Progress

Three-year Data Trends

Graduation
- 4-year
  - 2021-2022 – 35.8%
  - 2022-2023 – 56.2%
  - 2023-2024 – 50.2%

- 5-year
  - 2021-2022 – 67%
  - 2022-2023 – 66%
  - 2023-2024 – 73%

- 6-year
  - 2021-2022 – 71%
  - 2022-2023 – 71%
  - 2023-2024 – 67%

Stanford Achievement Test (SAT)
- ELA Score of 480 and Above
  - 2021-2022 – 13%
  - 2022-2023 – 13%

  o 2023-2024 – 14%

- Math Score of 530 and Above
  o 2021-2022 – 6%
  o 2022-2023 – 8%
  o 2023-2024 – 2%

Course Failure Rates
- ELA
  o 2021-2022 – 45%
  o 2022-2023 – 46%
  o 2023-2024 – 25%

- Math
  o 2021-2022 – 68%
  o 2022-2023 – 46%
  o 2023-2024 – 26%

- Science
  o 2021-2022 – 45%
  o 2022-2023 – 47%
  o 2023-2024 – 22%

- Social Studies
  o 2021-2022 – 49%
  o 2022-2023 – 47%
  o 2023-2024 – 31%

Attendance Rate
  o 2021-2022 – 77%
  o 2022-2023 – 69%
  o 2023-2024 – 78%

Goal Setting Process
The school articulated a thoughtful goal-setting process that began with the School Core Team analyzing student academic and behavioral data. The team analyzed performance metrics, attendance records, and other relevant indicators to identify strengths and areas for improvement. They also analyzed historical test scores to identify common patterns, specific areas where students have consistently underperformed, and trends in subject areas and skills in which students struggled across different cohorts. Additionally, to better understand the

extent of the learning gaps, the team compared IHS student scores with their peers at comprehensive high schools to pinpoint where significant discrepancies exist.

School Goals

Graduation

- Summative: Increase our 4-year cohort graduation rate to 70% for SY2024-25.
- Benchmark: By December of 2024, at least 70% will be on track to graduate with their 4-year cohort based on credits earned and current grades. English Language Proficiency

ELA

- Summative: By the end of SY2024-25, we will see a 10% increase in the students scoring in Levels 3 and 4 as measured by the SAT School.

SAT Day Assessment

- Benchmark: By December 2024, the number of students passing common district assessments will increase by 5% over SY23-24.

Math

- Summative: By the end of SY2024-25, we will see a 10% increase in the students scoring in Levels 3 and 4 as measured by the SAT School Day assessment.
- Benchmark: By December 2024, the number of students passing common district assessments will increase by 5% over SY23-24.

Science

- Summative: By the end of SY2024-25, we will see a 10% increase in the students scoring in Levels 3 and 4 as measured by the SAT School Day assessment.
- Benchmark: By December 2024, the number of students passing common district assessments will increase by 5% over SY23-24.

English Language Proficiency

- Summative: By the end of SY24-25, all English Language Learners will meet their growth-to-proficiency target.
- Benchmark: By December 2024, all English Language Learners will perform on end-of-course exams at the same level as their English-only peers.

Root Cause Analysis (RCA)

The root causes identified by the school are outside the school's locus of control, and they may and should be refined to focus on causes within their control. Below are the current root cause statements.

Graduation:

- When students enroll at IHS, they have learning gaps in foundational math skills that make it difficult to access the grade level standards for the high school courses needed to earn credit for graduation.

- When students enroll at IHS, they have gaps in basic academic skills and habits that are not conducive to successful learning in science content and do not see the value of science courses in their life post-graduation.
- When students enroll at IHS, they have established poor attendance habits (often beginning as early as elementary school) and do not understand the value of regular school attendance on their graduation requirements.
- When English Language students enroll at IHS, they have not had the opportunity to develop the academic vocabulary necessary to perform successfully in courses required for graduation.

Actions to Reach Graduation Goals
- All teachers must turn in a Week at a Glance on Fridays with their plans for the following week.
- Daily objectives and class agendas are posted on a whiteboard with specific criteria, including a warm-up and daily assessment activity.
- Dr. Sharroky Hollie training with staff to equip teachers with the tools to build students' academic capacity while affirming and validating their home culture.
- Bring in high-interest guest speakers bi-weekly to show students potential future job opportunities they may not have considered (examples: military, therapy dogs, finance, cosmetology, etc.)
- Provide food, resources, access to mental health support, and student interest clubs to support consistent student attendance.

Actions to reach ELA, Math, Science, and English Language Proficiency Goals
- One-on-one coaching for teachers on specific instructional strategies for differentiation practices while reinforcing the culturally and linguistically responsive strategies learned through work with Dr. Hollie.
- Dr. Sharrkoy Hollie training on how to support students with cultural and linguistic instruction. This work will be integrated into the 3rd party instructional coaching.
- All teaching staff will participate in weekly PLCs to discuss planning around ELA, Math, and Science and differentiation strategies for specific students.
- Daily objectives and class agendas are posted on a whiteboard with specific criteria, including a warm-up and daily assessment activity.
- Lead team meetings with instructional leaders bi-weekly to review schedules, classroom practices and procedures, staff expectations, and implementation of new academic initiatives.
- Lead team meetings biweekly to review EL student data with all students.

The school leadership is working on becoming clearer when identifying measures and how they express data as they monitor progress toward their desired outcomes and goals. The school is in the process of clarifying its root cause and thus will be better able to define measurements to collect and determine progress monitoring methods.