

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

School: New America School – Las Cruces	LEA: State Charter
School Leader: Margarita Porter	LEA Leader: Margarita Porter
SITM Team Leader: Andrea Fletcher	Date: October 14, 2024
School Description	
<p>New America School – Las Cruces (NASLC) aims to provide ninth through twelfth graders with a supportive learning environment that fosters academic excellence and personal growth. Its mission empowers students to reach their full potential while promoting inclusivity and diversity. The student body is made up of a varied demographic, including newcomers, English learners (ELs) at all levels, economically disadvantaged students, students experiencing homelessness, students over the age of 22, and students with disabilities. Despite the challenges of serving a transient population, the school invests in all students' success. The school enrolls 220 funded students and 46 who are overage and unfunded.</p> <p>NASLC's mission: <i>To empower all students, especially the academically underserved with the educational support they need to reach their potential, succeed in life and realize the American Dream.</i></p>	
School Successes and Celebrations	
<p>This year, NASLC celebrated several key successes. Their Vistas score increased by 23 points, reaching 45, and their four-year cohort's Vistas score improved by 16%. The school's graduation rate also increased, with their EL graduation rate surpassing the overall rate. They successfully implemented capstone projects, which have energized students by making learning more engaging and providing an additional pathway to credit recovery. These projects follow rigorous standards, and students must master each power standard to earn credit.</p> <p>An Innovation Grant allowed them to hire a graduation/capstone teacher, expanding the program and growing their internship opportunities from 11 students last year to 20 this year. Part of the grant's \$20,000 was also directed toward enhancing their internship program. They established a robust CTE (Career and Technical Education) program with a new teacher focused on health occupations. They introduced an Early Childhood Pathway linked to their Graduation, Reality, And Dual-role Skills (GRADS) program.</p> <p>NASLC graduated 12 students, over the age of 22 last year, the oldest being 34 along with 35 traditional students. NASLC brought in an instructional coach to support students with transcript understanding and graduation readiness and to support instructional strategies in the classroom. Their attendance also improved from 31% to 39%, though they recognize that their special education and first-year students still need additional tailored support. This year has</p>	

been marked by increased student engagement, innovative learning, and expanded opportunities.

NM DASH Development and Implementation

NASLC worked on the 90-Day Plan with all teachers. Each team (English language arts, math, science, etc.) worked on their goals and data during many different meeting times and devised a robust DASH plan to implement for the next 90 days. The team will review throughout the ninety days and make changes as needed.

The school has set a graduation goal of increasing 5% from 45% to 50% for the 2025 cohort. By Middle of the Year (MOY), they expect to see 95% of twelfth graders on track to graduate.

Because many students at NASLC have experienced trauma, the desired outcome established for graduation is that 100% of instructional staff will participate in professional learning on trauma-informed instruction. The school has just signed up for video coursework that teachers will watch in groups and share with the rest of the staff.

Each teacher has reviewed the graduate profile and discussed ways to incorporate the seven areas (Sense of Self, Financial Literacy, Community, Social Justice, Dependability and Reliability, Integrity, and Communication) into their content. Incentivizing student attendance was a critical action in their plan, and they have offered extended lunches to students with good attendance and alternative finals for students with good attendance and passing grades. Recognizing that attendance is still an issue, the school plans to hire an attendance coordinator.

School Progress

Graduation Data Trends:

2020 29%

2021 23%

2022 45%

Root Cause Analysis Summary:

NASLC believes several key elements affect graduation rates: students not being aware of graduation requirements, meager attendance due to other priorities such as work, and inconsistent engagement with teachers.

The Actions to Impact Graduation:

The school hopes to increase attendance from the current average rate of 33.8% to 40% by the middle of the year (MOY) by creating an attendance monitoring system, which a new attendance coordinator will oversee. Teachers will make phone calls to all students who miss three days, and the administration will monitor to ensure this happens at least 50% of the time. The school attributes using the Zen Den to keeping students who need time to refocus on campus. To fully understand the impact, the school will collect data on using the Zen Den and any potential impact on attendance.

NASLC will monitor students on track for graduation in the middle of the year, with an expected 95% of seniors on track. After the first term, any senior with a failing class will receive a graduation intervention, with the school team meeting with the student, teacher, and family. The school expects 80% of seniors receiving a graduation intervention will graduate.

The school will establish baseline data on passing rates overall and by teacher and subject to identify additional ways to support teachers and students. The administration believes math is an area that is frequently a barrier to graduation. One suggestion to consider in the future is adopting a math diagnostic screener to pinpoint particular skill gaps to be addressed in interventions.

Four of ten certified teachers are new this year, and seven are Level 1 teachers. To support new teachers in creating connections with students and improving the quality of instruction, the administration will provide each teacher with two walkthroughs a week with email feedback. Face-to-face feedback will be provided at least once every two weeks.