

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

School: John Adams Middle School	LEA: Albuquerque Public Schools
School Leader: Ken Merhege	LEA Leader: Dr. Joseph Escobedo
SITM Team Leader: Tiffany Hinsley	Date: November 6, 2024

School Description

John Adams Middle School in Albuquerque, NM, serves a student body that is over 98% Hispanic and is committed to providing engaging, relevant lessons to equip students with academic skills for life beyond high school. Currently, 420 students are enrolled, and a staff that includes 24 educational assistants supports specialized district programs and meets the needs of a diverse student population.

The school hosts two district programs: Social Communication Skills (SCS) for predominantly non-verbal students and the Intensive Global Support program for students with health or intellectual disabilities. John Adams emphasizes inclusion, integrating these students into mainstream classrooms as they are ready.

John Adams continues to face challenges associated with high poverty and high trauma, with many students raised by grandparents. Despite this, the school offers various electives, including MESA, guitar, mariachi, ballet folklorico, and theatre, dedicating much of its budget to staffing and programs that support academic and personal growth.

Led by a principal with seven years of experience and an assistant principal with 15 years of experience, John Adams also benefits from a "Resident Principal" role, which provides a one-year administrative internship. The school's no cell phone and headphones policy has garnered strong parent support, reinforcing a focus on learning.

As a community school, John Adams builds strong family connections and support systems, helping create a welcoming and inclusive environment that meets the diverse needs of its students.

School Successes and Celebrations

John Adams Middle School has achieved notable successes this year, creating a positive, connected, and supportive school culture. Administrators spend 20% of their time in classrooms, emailing feedback to teachers, which has improved instruction and relationships. A proactive approach to discipline, supported by restorative justice training for 14 staff members and a requirement for teacher-parent communication before referrals, has contributed

to decreased referrals.

Celebrations have included a "spooky science" family night, which attracted 157 attendees, and quarterly pep assemblies, recognizing athletes and honor roll students and boosting school pride. They've also launched a Unified Sports program and formed a principal's advisory committee to connect the administration with diverse student voices.

The AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program is progressing well, emphasizing binder organization and note-taking. A robust social-emotional learning (SEL) focus includes weekly advisory sessions, a points-based incentivizing system, and "EARN" time, where students who accumulate enough points can participate in special activities. Staff well-being is prioritized through a mental health newsletter and upcoming visits from therapy dogs and massage chairs. The Dean of Students, now in her fourth year, has strengthened school culture, supported by recent rebranding and the removal of in-school suspension, further decreasing disciplinary issues.

NM DASH Development and Implementation

Process Used to Develop 90-Day Plan

John Adams Middle School developed its 90-Day Plan through a focused, data-driven process to address academic areas needing improvement. They began by analyzing state data from prior assessments and identifying standards that showed lower performance across all content areas. A significant finding was that students struggled particularly with extended responses regardless of their demographic group.

To hone in on critical areas, the school examined trend data from the New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement (NM-MSSA), prioritizing NM-MSSA data over iReady to guide its instructional goals. This approach allowed it to closely align its plan with the state's expectations and effectively address specific learning gaps.

District administration provided robust support throughout this planning process. Together with the school's instructional council, which includes department heads, the team participated in a full-day "retreat" dedicated solely to writing the 90-Day Plan. This collaborative, intensive day enabled the team to draft a comprehensive plan to enhance student performance in the identified areas of need.

Performance Challenges:

Students struggle with extended, evidence-based, constructed response writing assignments in English language arts (ELA), math, and science.

Root Cause Analysis (RCA)

There is a lack of consistency in using a constructed response process in which evidence is used to support a claim and mathematical thinking is demonstrated.

Desired Outcomes:

ELA: 100% of all ELA and social studies teachers will implement and scaffold constructed response process at least once a week as measured by non-evaluative observations, lesson plans, or department meeting minutes. 100% of elective teachers will implement and scaffold a summary response at least once weekly as measured by non-evaluative observations, lesson plans, or department meeting minutes.

Math: 100% of all math teachers will implement and scaffold a constructed response process at least once a week, as measured by non-evaluative observations, lesson plans, or department meeting minutes.

ELP: 100% of ELD teachers will implement and scaffold the constructed response process at least once weekly as measured by non-evaluative observations, lesson plans, or department meeting minutes.

Science: 100% of all science teachers will implement and scaffold a constructed response process utilizing graphs, data tables, and evidence at least once a week, as measured by non-evaluative observations, lesson plans, or department meeting minutes.

School Progress**Trend Data****ELA**

- 2021-2022: 20.8%
- 2022-2023: 19%
- 2023-2024: 16.9%

Math

- 2021-2022: 17.8%
- 2022-2023: 6.1%
- 2023-2024: 4.7%

Science

- 2021-2022: 10.8%
- 2022-2023: 7.7%
- 2023-2024: 19.6%

Goals:

ELA Benchmark Goal:

The percentage of students at John Adams MS scoring at or above grade level on the iReady reading assessment will increase ten percentage points from BOY during the 2024-2025 school year to MOY.

ELA Summative Goal:

In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the rate of non-proficiency by half over 10 years, the percentage of students at John Adams MS earning a score of proficient or higher in English language arts as measured by NM-MSSA will increase between 4.0 and 4.2 percentage points, depending on grade level, from the 2023-2024 school year to the 2024-2025 school year.

Focus for Improvement:

- AVID focused note-taking will be taught and practiced in all subjects, and it will be ongoing.
- Social studies, ELA, and elective departments will choose and implement a constructed response rubric.
- Departments will meet to assess constructed responses and discuss the data. This information will be tied to grade-level Multi-Layered System of Supports (MLSS) discussions.

Math Benchmark Goal:

The percentage of students at John Adams MS scoring at or above grade level on the iReady math assessment will increase ten percentage points from MOY during the 2023-2024 school year to MOY during the 2024-2025 school year.

Focus for Improvement:

- District math content specialists will come every 7-10 days.
- They will observe math teachers and provide feedback by meeting with each teacher for 15 minutes.

Math Summative Goal:

In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the rate of non-proficiency by half over 10 years, the percentage of students at John Adams MS earning a score of proficient or higher in mathematics as measured by NM-MSSA will increase between 4.5 and 4.9 percentage points, depending on grade level, from the 2023-2024 school year to the 2024-2025 school year.

Focus for Improvement:

- The math department will meet to assess constructed responses and discuss the data. This information will be tied to grade-level MLSS discussions.
- The math department will choose and implement a constructed response rubric.
- AVID focused note-taking will be taught and practiced in all subjects, which will be ongoing.

Science Benchmark Goal:

In alignment with the Science and Engineering Practice of Using Math and Computational Thinking from the NM STEM Ready! Science Standards, the percentage of 8th-grade students at John Adams MS scoring at or above grade level on the iReady science assessment will increase ten percentage points from BOY during the 2024-2025 school year to MOY during the 2024-2025 school year.

Science Summative Goal:

In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the rate of non-proficiency by half over 10 years, the percentage of students at John Adams MS earning a score of proficient or higher in science as measured by NM-ASR will increase from 19.6% during the 2023-2024 school year to 23.6% during the 2024-2025 school year.

Focus for Improvement:

- The science department will choose and implement a constructed response rubric
- The science department will meet to assess constructed responses and discuss the data. This information will be tied to grade-level MLSS discussions.
- Administrators will use their walkthrough data (in ELA and math) to track extended response data in science.

ELP Benchmark Goal:

The percentage of English learners (ELs) at John Adams MS who earned a score at or above grade level in the domain of vocabulary on the iReady reading assessment will increase from 9% at MOY during the 2023-2024 school year to 19% at MOY during the 2024-2025 school year.

ELP Summative Goal:

In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the percentage of ELs not meeting their annual ACCESS growth targets by half over 10 years, the percentage of ELs at John Adams MS meeting their yearly growth targets on ACCESS will increase from 2.4% during the 2022-2023 school year to 7.3% during the 2024-2025 school year.

Focus for Improvement:

- Social studies, ELA, and elective departments will choose and implement a constructed response rubric.
- Departments will meet to assess constructed responses and discuss the data. This information will be tied to grade-level MLSS discussions.

Actions to Measure MOY:

- By MOY, 100% of the teachers will be teaching extended response instruction, as evidenced by walkthrough data, teacher agendas, and the extended response check-in data sent to teachers on October 13, 2024.
- By MOY, administrators will meet with the science department to discuss a system for monitoring students' progress more frequently.
- By MOY, administrators will explore the assessments built into StemScopes.

- By MOY, 100% of all departments will use a similar rubric to grade extended response work.
- By MOY, administrators will have looked for extended response practice and exit tickets during their walkthroughs, as evidenced by their observation/feedback shared form.
- By MOY, 100% of departments will consistently use the RACE (Restate, Answer, Cite, and Explain) formula for paragraph writing.
- The district has purchased IXL for math, Lexia for ELA, and Illustrative for math, but teachers are not looking at reports to guide instruction and provide interventions. They will discuss including this in their Spring 2025 90-Day Plan and provide professional development on reading reports and looking at their data.
- Ongoing- All walkthrough information and data will be shared and discussed with staff.
- Ongoing-Administrators recently sent a survey ("check-in") to monitor extended response proficiency. This was their 60-Day check-in on their 90-Day plan, which they just completed and will continue to send out for staff input.