

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

School: Polk Middle School	LEA: Albuquerque Public Schools
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SITM Team Leader: Tiffany Hinsley	Date: October 22, 2024
School Description	
<p>Polk Middle School in Albuquerque’s South Valley is a dual-language community school committed to environmental and agricultural education, emphasizing multicultural and bilingual learning. As a magnet school, "Sustaining the Future," Polk integrates agricultural sciences and recycling with a strong focus on sustainability. Recognized as a National Green Ribbon School in 2024, Polk has secured funding for environmental initiatives, including 150 fruit trees, energy audits, and water conservation projects. The school’s 20-acre campus features drought-tolerant plants, well water for agriculture, and acequia rights for irrigation, creating a valuable resource for cross-curricular projects and community events.</p> <p>Polk serves a predominantly Hispanic student population, with a high percentage of students from low-income, multi-generational households. Its dual-language program has been recognized for excellence, enhancing Polk’s role as a welcoming, supportive community hub. The school also emphasizes academic rigor and has strong community partnerships, with teachers engaging in consistent, collaborative planning to support student achievement. Despite some infrastructure challenges, Polk’s innovative programs and community focus highlight its dedication to building a sustainable future for all learners.</p>	
School Successes and Celebrations	
<p>Polk Middle School has achieved significant successes this year, driven by strong community partnerships and a commitment to sustainability. Through support from the Environment Protection Act, they received \$6,500 to plant 150 drought-resistant fruit trees, and the Southwest Organizing Project provided scholarships for student internships, allowing ten current students and five former students to earn stipends for summer work in the school garden. Mural projects throughout the school, informed by community input on local values, further contribute to Polk's rebranding around sustainability.</p> <p>As a first-year magnet school, Polk offers Project Lead The Way electives focused on agriculture and sustainability, with eighth graders studying green architecture, sixth grade exploring Energy in the Environment, and seventh grade engaging with the Science of Technology. They also have aquaponics and hydroponics systems, supported by a teacher with plumbing expertise who is developing a composting curriculum through a partnership with NM Highlands.</p>	

Last year, the U.S. Department of Education announced that Polk Middle School had been selected as one of its Green Ribbon Schools. The national award is given to schools for their innovative efforts to reduce environmental impact and utility costs, improve health and wellness, and offer effective sustainability education. This is a tremendous achievement.

Polk's Dual Language Academy is a source of pride, recognized with a legislative award and twice nominated for excellence in dual language. Through partnerships, they've expanded dual language programming and increased bilingual staffing. The school's principal advisory council of nine students meets regularly with the principal, fostering student voice and leadership in school initiatives.

NM DASH Development and Implementation

Polk's 90-Day Plan addresses low student performance in students with disabilities (SWD) and English learners (ELs).

Process Used to Develop 90-Day Plan

Polk Middle School's 90-Day Plan development process is led by content leads on the leadership team, who commit to overseeing the plan. To address the expanding requirements, including components added by their Vistas designation, the team meets frequently to work on and update the plan. They consult with a certified district representative who reviews the plan and offers feedback. Using a 90-Day Plan tracker, Polk monitors progress and holds check-ins at the 30, 60, and 90-day marks, allowing for ongoing assessment and final reflection on goals and outcomes.

Performance Challenges include:

- Students struggle with oral language, reading literary and complex texts.
- Students struggle with problem-solving, critical thinking, and reasoning skills.
- Students struggle with correlating data given to them and making predictions or conclusions based on the evidence.
- Students struggle with speaking skills

Root Cause Analysis (RCA)

- Teachers need to provide vocabulary acquisition activities and opportunities for speaking practice.
- Teachers need to provide consistent problem-solving scenarios and strategies along with every grade level standard and intervention.
- Teachers need to provide consistent practice with practical applications and real-life data.
- Teachers need to provide opportunities for speaking practice.

Desired Outcomes include:

- English language arts (ELA)- 100% of teachers will implement opportunities for vocabulary acquisition and collaboration among students 90% of the time as measured by formative assessments presented via collaboration.
- Math- 100% of math teachers will introduce one critical thinking problem at least once a week, as measured by documentation from the department's Google Drive.
- Science- 100% of science teachers will implement at least one active listening activity once per week, as evidenced by exit tickets.
- English language proficiency (ELP)- 100% of teachers will implement oral language practice to build holistic linguistic repertoire among students 90% of the time as measured by collaboration meeting notes.

School Progress

Trend Data

ELA

- 2021-2022: 10.5%
- 2022-2023: 19.0%
- 2023-2024: 24.3%

Math

- 2021-2022: 7.8%
- 2022-2023: 10.8%
- 2023-2024: 9.0%

Science

- 2021-2022: 16.7%
- 2022-2023: 15.2%
- 2023-2024: 20%

Goals

ELA Benchmark Goal

- The percentage of students at Polk MS scoring at or above grade level on the iReady reading assessment will increase 10 percentage points from MOY during the 2023-2024 school year to MOY during the 2024-2025 school year.
- ELs: The percentage of ELs at Polk MS scoring at or above grade level on the iReady reading assessment will increase 10 percentage points from MOY during the 2023-2024 school year to MOY during the 2024-2025 school year.
- SWD: The percentage of SWD at Polk MS scoring at or above grade level on the iReady reading assessment will increase 10 percentage points from 2023-2024 MOY to 2024-2025 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 Polk MS earning a score of proficient or higher in English language arts as measured by NM-MSSA will increase between 3.6 and 3.9 percentage points, depending on grade level, from the 2023-2024 school year to the 2024-2025 school year.
- ELs: In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the rate of non-proficiency by half over 10 years, the percentage of ELs at Polk MS earning a score of proficient or higher in English language arts as measured by NM-MSSA will increase from 12.4% during the 2023-2024 school year to 16.7% during the 2024-2025 school year.
- SWD: In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the rate of non-proficiency by half over 10 years, the percentage of SWD at Polk MS earning a score of proficient or higher in English language arts as measured by NM-MSSA will increase from 8.7% during the 2023-2024 school year to 13.3% during the 2024-2025 school year.

Critical Actions to Reach ELA Goals Include

- All teachers will use eMINTS inquiry-based experiential learning activities at least once a week to build community among students.
- All teachers will use vocabulary-building activities using prefixes, suffixes, and root words to develop academic vocabulary in context.
- All students: All teachers will reflect on vocabulary formative assessments completed by students during collaboration.
- NM Designation Grant money will be used for Student Support Systems Professional Development.
- SWD: All teachers will use student data to provide targeted interventions for SWD
- ELs: All teachers will structure collaborative/cooperative oral practice through collaboration and group work during class.

Math Benchmark Goal

- The percentage of students at Polk MS scoring at or above grade level on the iReady math assessment will increase 10 percentage points from MOY during the 2023-2024 school year to MOY during the 2024-2025 school year.
- ELs: The percentage of ELs at Polk MS scoring at or above grade level on the iReady math assessment will increase 10 percentage points from MOY during the 2023-2024 school year to MOY during the 2024-2025 school year.
- SWD: The percentage of SWD at Polk MS scoring at or above grade level on the iReady math assessment will increase 10 percentage points from MOY during the 2023-2024 school year to MOY during the 2024-2025 school year.

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 Polk MS earning a score of proficient or higher in mathematics as measured by NM-MSSA will increase between 4.3 and 4.7 percentage points, depending on grade level, from the 2023-2024 school year to the 2024-2025 school year.
- ELs: In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the rate of non-proficiency by half over 10 years, the percentage of ELs at Polk MS earning a score of proficient or higher

in mathematics as measured by NM-MSSA will increase from 3.4% during the 2023-2024 school year to 8.2% during the 2024-2025 school year.

- SWD: In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the rate of non-proficiency by half over 10 years, the percentage of SWD at Polk MS earning a score of proficient or higher in mathematics as measured by NM-MSSA will increase from 2.9% during the 2023-2024 school year to 7.8% during the 2024-2025 school year.

Critical Actions to Reach Math Goals Include:

- All math teachers will implement critical thinking problems in their classrooms to raise student engagement, perseverance, and problem-solving skills.
- All math teachers will focus on the math standard of practice, teaching students to "Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others" when sharing responses to problems.
- SWD: All teachers will use student data to provide targeted interventions for SWD
- ELs: All teachers will structure collaborative/cooperative oral practice through collaboration and group work during class.

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 Polk MS scoring at or above grade level on the iReady math assessment will increase 10 percentage points from MOY during the 2023-2024 school year to MOY during the 2024-2025 school year.
- ELs: 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 ELs at Polk MS scoring at or above grade level on the iReady math assessment will increase 10 percentage points from MOY during the 2023-2024 school year to MOY during the 2024-2025 school year.
- SWD: 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 SWD at Polk MS scoring at or above grade level on the iReady math assessment will increase 10 percentage points from MOY during the 2023-2024 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 Polk MS earning a score of proficient or higher in science as measured by NM-ASR will increase from 20.0% during the 2023-2024 school year to 24.0% during the 2024-2025 school year.
- ELs: In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the rate of non-proficiency by half over 10 years, the percentage of ELs at Polk MS earning a score of proficient or higher in science as measured by NM-ASR will increase from 8.3% during the 2023-2024 school year to 12.9% during the 2024-2025 school year.
- SWD: In alignment with the long-term goal to reduce the rate of non-proficiency by half over 10 years, the percentage of SWD at Polk MS earning a score of proficient or

higher in science as measured by NM-ASR will increase from 4.8% during the 2023-2024 school year to 9.5% during the 2024-2025 school year.

Critical Actions to Reach Science Goals Include

- All science teachers will use project-based learning and real-life data to construct and read graphs to make predictions or draw conclusions.
- All science teachers will implement an exit ticket for each active listening activity to measure student engagement and reflection on implementation.
- All science teachers will implement at least one active listening unit/lesson plan on an increasing basis guided by 90-Day Plan progress indicators.
- SWD: All teachers will use student data to provide targeted interventions for SWD.

English Language Proficiency (ELP) Benchmark Goal

- The percentage of ELs at Polk MS who earned a score at or above grade level in the domain of Vocabulary on the iReady reading assessment will increase from 2% at MOY during the 2023-2024 school year to 12% 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 Polk MS meeting their annual growth targets on ACCESS will increase from 6.7% during the 2022-2023 school year to 11.4% during the 2024-2025 school year.

Critical Actions to Reach ELP Goals Include

- ELs: All teachers will use student data to provide targeted interventions for ELs.
- ELs: All ELD teachers collaborate to design and implement at least one oral formative assessment to support student language acquisition during the first 90 days.
- ELs: All teachers will structure collaborative/cooperative oral practice through collaboration and group work during class.
- ELs: All teachers will incorporate social-emotional learning (SEL) practices to support a sense of belonging and community to boost confidence in speaking skills.

Actions to measure MOY

- Administrators will use their classroom walkthroughs to provide feedback, which will increase rigor in instruction
- EWS (Early Warning System) Intervention teams will have developed plans for all SWD and ELs.
- Students who have been in Reading Intervention class since the beginning of the year will show an increase in reading proficiency
- Data from skills, habits, and mindsets will be disaggregated to examine SWD and EL students.
- 90% of students will have consistent Lexia usage, as evidenced by the Lexia dashboard
- Administrators will seek information from Lexia experts to learn more about using Lexia data to determine growth and need.

Method for Measuring Middle-of-Year Progress

- 100% of teachers will have received a classroom walkthrough with actionable feedback at least once per month, as evidenced by Google form responses/data
- By MOY, they will have disaggregated skills, habits, and mindsets data and have baseline data for SWD and ELs
- Lexia dashboard will show 90% consistent usage.
- Administrators will show evidence that they met with the Lexia team to increase knowledge around using data to determine what growth the students using Lexia are making.

Polk Middle School is enhancing student achievement through strategies aligned with their Vistas designation. With a focus on inquiry-based and experiential learning, the school integrates hands-on activities tied to its magnet theme. It uses farm space for increased rigor, team problem-solving, and engaging, technology-driven eMINTS strategies to build a collaborative classroom community.

Polk employs a structured observation and feedback cycle to support instructional quality. Walkthroughs are conducted via NM Elevate and a custom Google form, where teachers receive feedback on required elements such as focus boards, objectives, standards, and engagement metrics based on the RACEE rubric. Teachers reflect on feedback within three days, fostering rapid improvement. Rigor and student engagement are top priorities, focusing on reducing passive seatwork.

Polk has established a paid tutoring system to support targeted students, prioritizing SWD and ELs. Teachers analyze iReady data, develop individualized support plans, and collaborate with students and parents through contracts that outline goals and commitments.

Additionally, Polk is exploring the integration of attendance, academic, and health and wellness teams to streamline support for students. As a small school, combining these teams allows for a unified approach, often involving the same students, enhancing coordination, and maximizing resources for student success.