

HOLLIDAY MONTESSORI: School Readiness Assessment Final Report

Kansas City Public Schools Secondary and Signature School Reviews

Site Visit Date: January 22, 2020

Principal: KaLinda Bass-Barlow

Mass Insight Team: Francina Victoria & Julie Shepherd

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School Readiness Assessment Introduction

School Readiness Assessment Purpose

Kansas City Public Schools (KCPS) has partnered with Mass Insight Education & Research, a national non-profit, to conduct school reviews of all secondary and signature schools. The purpose of these reviews is to:

- Surface individual school successes, challenges, and opportunities to inform continuous improvement efforts; and
- Surface trends across secondary and signature schools to:
 - understand how secondary and signature options contribute to the overall experience and expectation of the KCPS community and help achieve KCPS' 5-Year Strategic Plan goals; and
 - inform the identification of systems-level changes and school supports.

Mass Insight's research-based School Readiness Assessment (SRA) supports and accelerates school improvement by informing the development of strong school improvement plans that address a school's highest needs, as well as informing district-level improvement to better meet the needs of students and schools. In alignment with the Mass Insight theory of action (described on page 4) and based on more than 10 years of national experience and research in the field of school improvement, Mass Insight has identified seven elements that we observe to drive school improvement and school readiness and ensure the success of all students. The SRA is structured to analyze the extent to which these elements are in place.

School Readiness Assessment Process

The school review process follows three phases, including a comprehensive data/document review conducted prior to a campus visit; the on-site campus visit; and finally, analysis and report of findings.

Phase	Potential Activities
Pre-Site Visit <i>(December 2019)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Collect and review campus data and related documents to understand campus context, including principal, staff and student surveys.● Coordinate visit logistics to ensure a successful site visit.
Site Visit <i>(January 2020)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Conduct interviews and focus groups with a variety of campus stakeholders (e.g. teachers, students, administrators, counselors, instructional coaches, families, etc.).● Classroom, hallway, and common space walkthroughs (observations may not occur on the same date as your site-visit interviews and focus groups).
Post-Site Visit <i>(January- February 2020)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The site visit team synthesizes and analyzes visit findings that surface priority focus area recommendations.

Overview of the Findings Report

This report begins with a **Data Profile** - a high level quantitative overview of the school's current demographics, culture and climate indicators, and recent academic performance. Next is a summary of **Strengths and Challenges** - the most salient and resounding headlines from Mass Insight's time on campus. These are not arranged by any particular element and may represent a confluence of factors that can help the school begin to prioritize strengths and challenges to focus on following the site visit. Mass Insight will also provide action-oriented **Recommendations** for how the school can improve and where they might prioritize efforts first. This might also be used to inform the revision or creation of a School Improvement Plan. Finally, the Appendix contains the **School Readiness Assessment Tool**, which provides specific evidence gathered during the review process and a rating (described in the next section) for each feature of each element. This section can be useful for delving into more specific and granular details. Mass Insight does not suggest attempting to tackle every feature all at once.

School Readiness Assessment Evidence and Rating System

Mass Insight's SRA Tool (included in Appendix) is designed to analyze the extent to which a school has elements of our theory of action in place, in relation to an exemplar description of each element (and the features that make up that element) at the highest performing schools. The Mass Insight team will use the SRA Tool to document evidence based on information gathered during the SRA activities to assign a rating for each feature. Ratings are designed to describe the extent to which evidence aligns to the exemplar descriptions at the highest performing schools. The features rated lowest do not necessarily mean that those features are in the most urgent need of attention; the recommendations describe what Mass Insight suggests addressing first.

Rating Level Key:
0: Not Meeting (no, or extremely limited, evidence of this feature; work on this feature has not yet started)
1: Somewhat Meets (some evidence of implementation of this feature)
2: Mostly Meets (considerable evidence of implementation of this feature)
3: Meets (robust evidence of implementation of this feature)

About Mass Insight and Our Theory of Action

Mass Insight is a national non-profit organization committed to transforming public schools into high-performing organizations and closing achievement gaps. Since 2007, Mass Insight has worked with schools, districts, and state education agencies to redesign systems and establish the conditions and capacity for district and school improvement. As part of this work, Mass Insight has conducted numerous School Readiness Assessments (SRAs) across the country.

In 2007, Mass Insight published *The Turnaround Challenge*¹, a nationally-recognized research report and call to action that highlighted the need for intervention in America's lowest-performing schools. Since 2009, Mass Insight has worked with schools, districts, and state education agencies in Massachusetts and across the country to redesign the systems that support chronically underperforming schools and to drive gains in student achievement. Building from our research and more than ten years of experience in turnaround, we recently revisited Mass Insight's theory of action and identified seven theory of action elements that we believe must be in place to ensure schools are successful.

Mass Insight's SRA is structured to analyze the extent to which elements of our theory of action are in place in schools. We seek to understand what student outcome data reveals, analyze evidence and hypothesize why challenges and successes exist, and help schools prioritize where to focus next.

We believe that if schools have:

Conditions: Sufficient school-level control over people, time, money, and program to address the root causes of low performance;

Planning: Evidence-based, actionable improvement plans that address the root causes of low performance informed by a review of existing conditions and input from school, district, and community stakeholders;

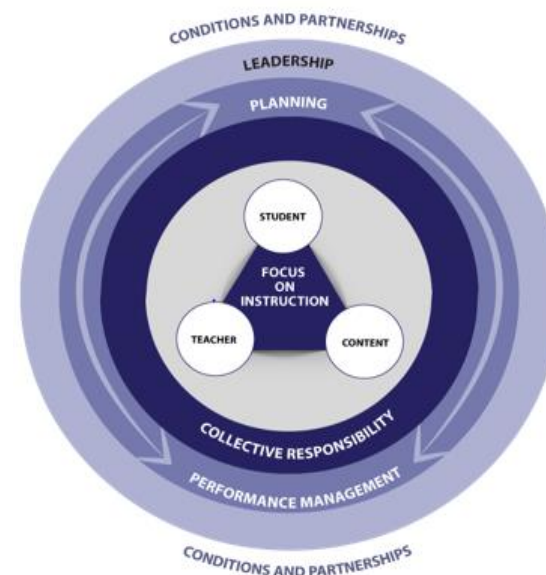
Leadership: A principal who can manage and communicate complexity while maintaining focus on the school's vision and key priorities;

Focus on Instruction: Processes and supports that help teachers work together to constantly improve and refine standards-based instructional practice so that students can engage in deep learning tasks;

Collective Responsibility: The school faculty and staff ensure there is collective responsibility for both the quality of instruction and student learning and success;

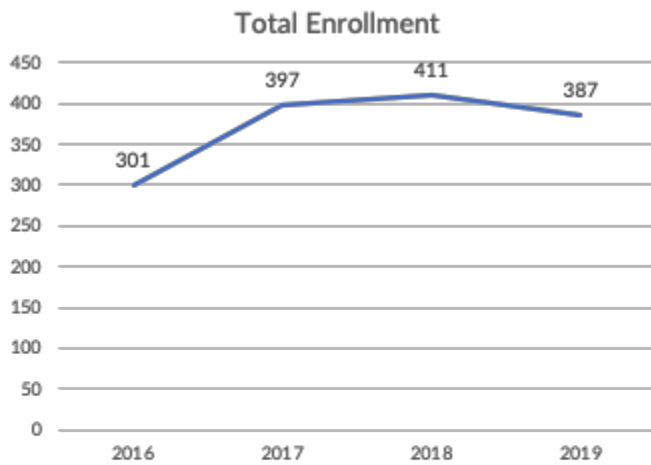
Performance Management: Consistent processes for using data to measure both implementation and outcomes to determine what's working and inform efforts to improve; and

Partnerships: Partnerships that help the school meet the multiple needs of teachers and students, *THEN schools will dramatically improve and student learning will increase.*



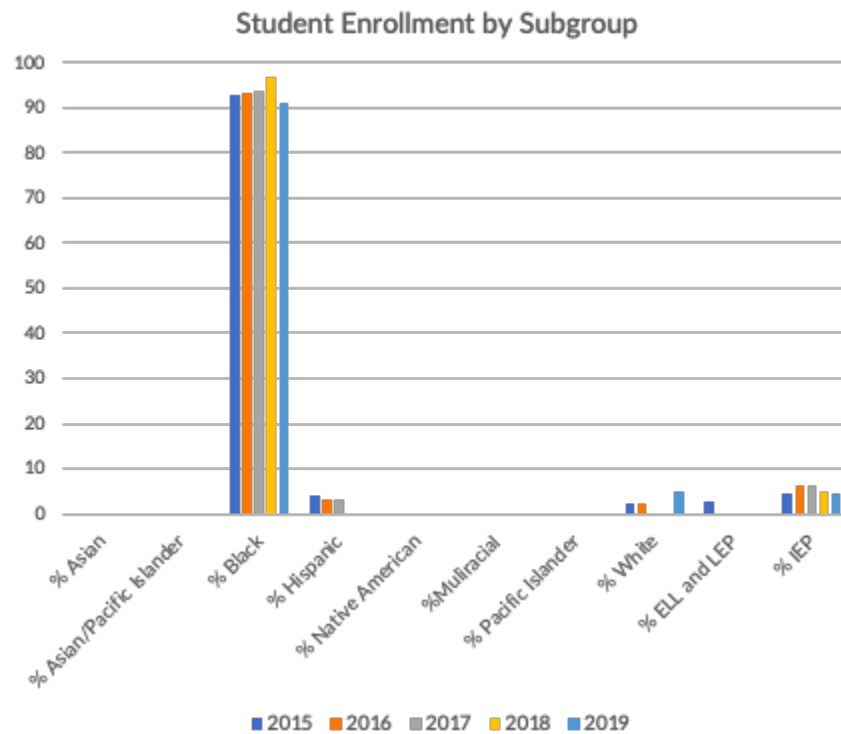
¹ *Mass Insight Education and Research*. Mass Insight Education and Research Institute, Inc., 2007, www.massinsight.org/resources/the-turnaround-challenge/

Student Enrollment and Attendance



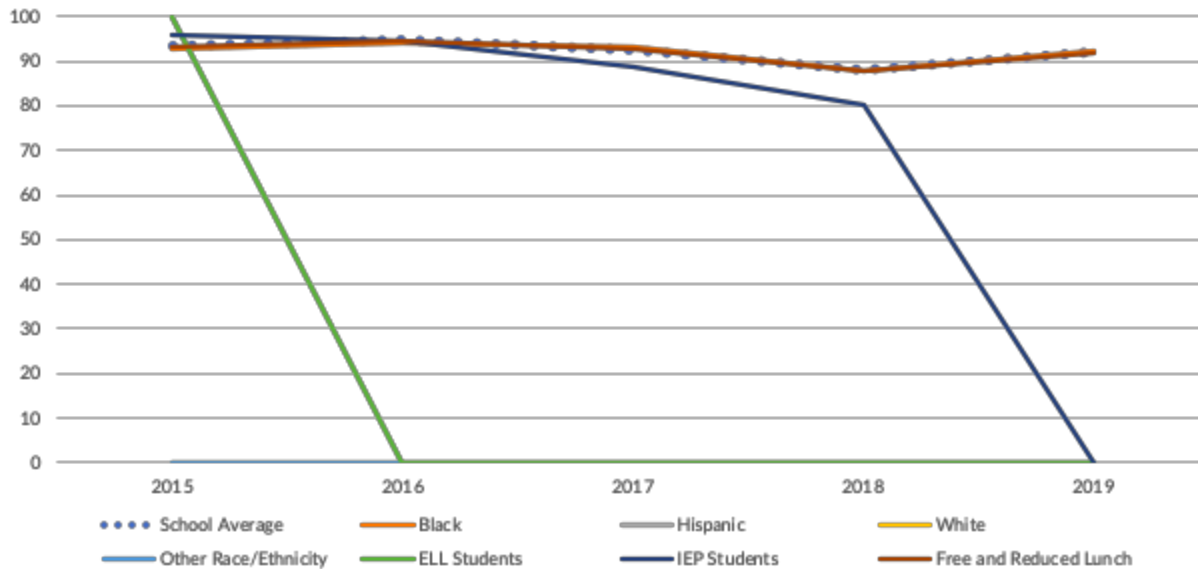
Student enrollment at Holliday Montessori over the last 4 years has increased and was 86 students higher in 2019 than in 2016. Note: student enrollment in 2016-2018 included Montessori and non-Montessori Pre-K classrooms.

The majority of the student population is Black.



² Data contained within this data profile was publicly available on the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s website: <https://dese.mo.gov/school-data>

Student Attendance Trend 2015-2019



The proportional attendance rate for students at or above 90% (displayed in the graph to the left) at Holliday Montessori over the last 5 years has remained consistent around 92%.

The total proportional attendance rate for the last 3 school years at Holliday Montessori was:

- 2017 - 95.7%
- 2018 - 91.7%
- 2019 - 94.4%

which demonstrates a 1.3% decrease in student attendance over the last 3 years.

STUDENT MOBILITY	Fall Enrollment	Additional Enrollment	Transfers	Mobility Rate
2017	196	6	45	22.3
2018	177	1	18	10.1
2019	180	1	24	13.3

K-6 student enrollment at Holliday Montessori has decreased by 16 students over the last 3 years. While a few additional students enroll throughout the year, there are a number of transfers, resulting in mobility rates between 10-23% for the last 3 years.

Note: The state calculates mobility rates based on K-12 enrollment data and does not include PK. Total enrollment in this table does not include PK enrollment.

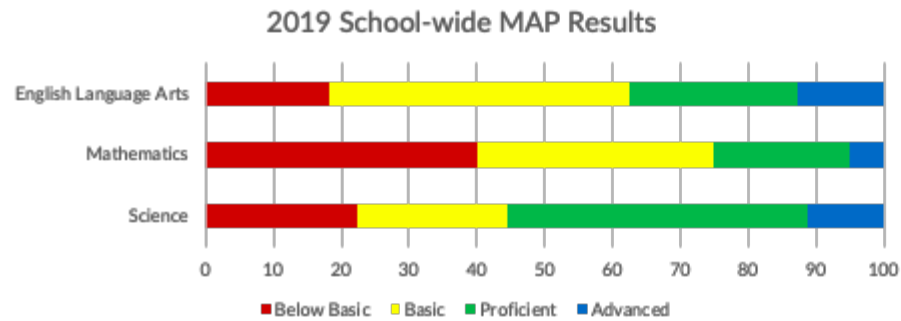
Student Discipline

DISCIPLINE RATES	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Enrollment	287	227	196	177	180
Total Number of Incidents	1	0	0	0	0
Incident Rate (per 100 students)	0.3	0	0	0	0
Type of Removal					
In-School Suspension (number rate)	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0
Out of School Suspension (number rate)	1 0.3	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0
Expulsion (number rate)	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0
Length of Removal					
10 Consecutive Days (number rate)	1 0.3	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0
More than 10 Consecutive Days (number rate)	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0

The incident rate has decreased over the last 5 years and was at 0% during the 2019 school year. The out of school suspension rate has decreased to 0% in the last 5 years, as well as the rate of students removed for 10 or more days.

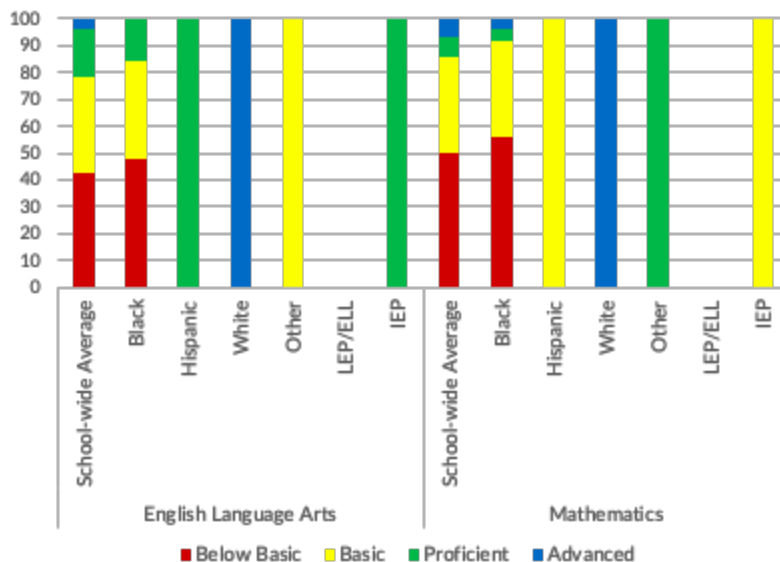
Note: The state reports discipline incidents for K-12 enrollment and does not include PK. Total enrollment in this table does not include PK.

Student Academic Performance



School-wide performance on MAP tests in 2019 showed 37.6% of students were proficient/advanced in English Language Arts, 25% were proficient/advanced in Mathematics, and 55.5% were proficient/advanced in Science.

3rd Grade 2019 MAP Proficiency Rates

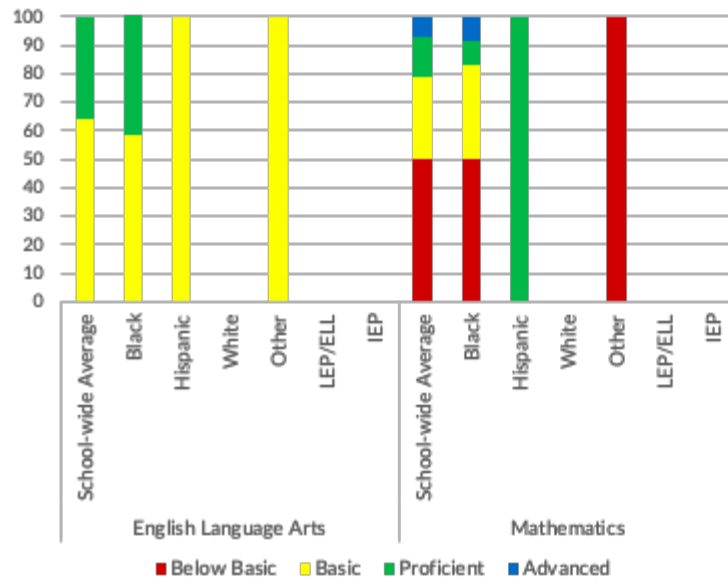


3rd grade ELA MAP exams in 2019 showed 21.5% of students were proficient/advanced. 16% of Black students, 100% of Hispanic students, 100% of White students were proficient, and 100% of students with IEPs. No other students were proficient.

3rd grade Mathematics exams in 2019 showed 14.2% of students were proficient/advanced. 8% of Black students, 100% of White students, and 100% of other students were proficient. No Hispanic students or students with IEPs were proficient.

Note: the "other" descriptor refers to a racial or ethnic subgroup or combined subgroup of fewer than 10 students.

4th Grade 2019 MAP Proficiency Rates

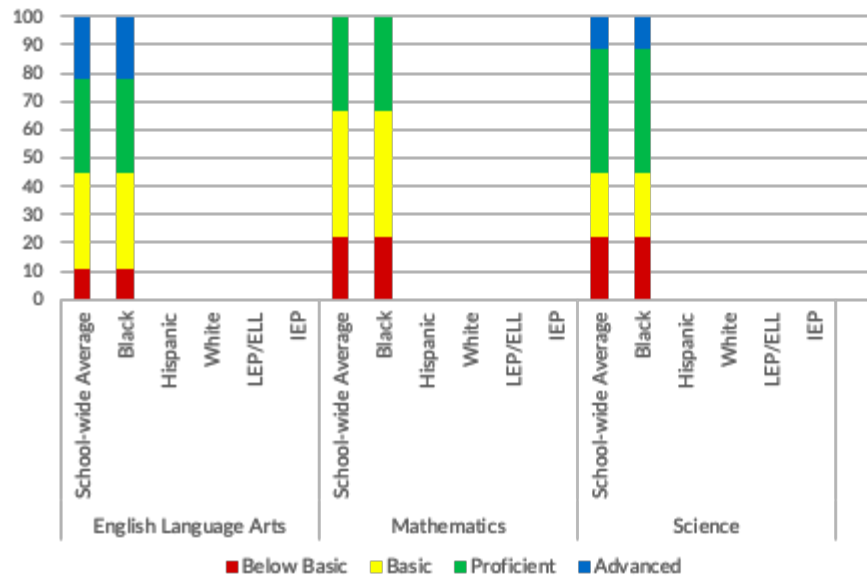


4th grade ELA MAP exams in 2019 showed 35.7% of students were proficient/advanced. 51.7% of Black students were proficient. No Hispanic or other students were proficient.

4th grade Mathematics MAP exams in 2019 showed 21.4% of students were proficient/advanced. 16.6% of Black students and 100% of Hispanic students were proficient. No other students were proficient.

Note: the "other" descriptor refers to a racial or ethnic subgroup or combined subgroup of fewer than 10 students.

5th Grade 2019 MAP Proficiency Rates

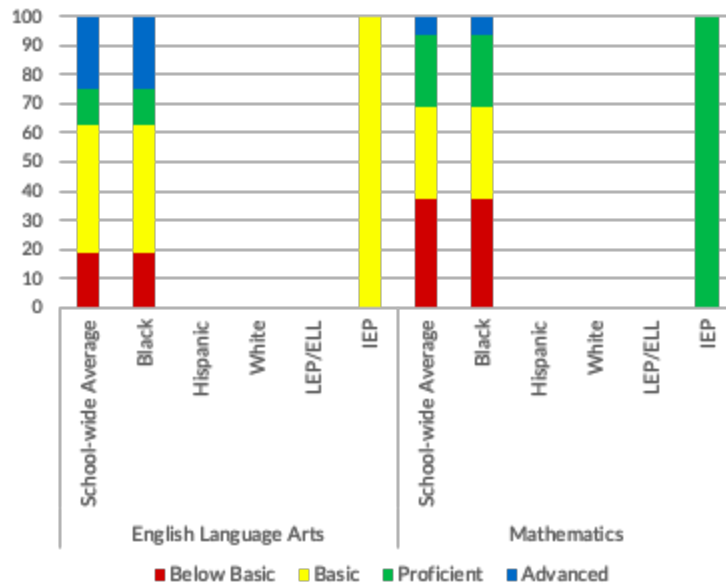


5th grade ELA MAP exams in 2019 showed 55.5% of students were proficient/advanced.

5th grade Mathematics MAP exams in 2019 showed 33.3% of students were proficient/advanced.

5th grade Science MAP exams in 2019 showed 55.5% of students were proficient/advanced.

6th Grade 2019 MAP Proficiency Rates



6th grade ELA MAP exams in 2019 showed 37.5% of students were proficient/advanced. 37.5% of Black students were proficient, while no students with IEPs were proficient.

6th grade Mathematics MAP exams in 2019 showed 31.3% of students were proficient/advanced. 31.3% of Black students and 100% of students with IEPs were proficient.

Strengths

- **The school staff is engaged and involved in the betterment of student learning.** School goals uphold the Montessori model, its core values, and its focus on a conducive student learning environment. Leadership's intentional focus to build community among staff has helped build a collaborative approach to grade-cluster work as they work to incorporate various practices designed to help students grow academically. Additionally, teachers' training in the Montessori model and the principal's guidance around standards alignment has been helpful in ensuring students perform at grade-level on district and state assessments.
- **Staff, students, and families are supportive of the school's community-building efforts.** Students and families share a sense of safety and support in the classroom. Classrooms are representative of this nature, as students report feeling supported and challenged by their teachers and their peers. They attribute this positive shift to the administration's efforts in building comradery amongst students and families. There is a true Montessori approach to engagement and collaboration with the school community and neighborhood. Many made mention of the multiple partnerships with outside enrichment programming and community organizations and volunteers.
- The intended direction of the school is to improve student learning and performance. **Teachers understand the importance of monitoring students performance and are shifting their thinking on data and its part in student success.** Although assessment data is not yet driving instructional decisions, there was an appreciation for tracking student benchmarks. The increase of data and emphasis on improving student learning has also expanded opportunities for struggling students with the PST and tutoring services. Staff acknowledge that the amount of testing required by the district is overwhelming but are not opposed to aligning the standards to their curricular and instructional approach.

Challenges

- **Increase opportunities for vertical alignment conversations, as well as opportunities for different grade-level bands to team build.** Teachers expressed that there are limited opportunities to have these conversations and would benefit from an overview of incoming student needs and expected outcomes for the new transferring grade level. Student feedback mirrors these teacher concerns, as a majority of students in the focus group express a desire for more challenging classwork.
- **Increased communication with families from teachers and administration.** Families shared that an increase in the frequency of communication would help them be more knowledgeable of school happenings, student progress, and needs. When asked about their students' academic standing, families were unaware of how they were performing in class and in state assessments. Families also expressed an inconsistency between teachers and found it difficult to track the needs of all their enrolled children. Although families asked for more information directly from the school and their students' teachers, they expressed satisfaction with the communication from the PTA.

Recommendations

- 1. Strengthen the PLC and leadership team structure to enhance cross-level collaboration and communication.** Teachers note that they have trusting relationships with members of their grade-level PLCs but do not share the same sentiment for the entire building. There is a division between the Children's House, lower, and upper grades that is impeding staff from working collectively to share grade-to-grade information. Building some time to strengthen whole building culture and learning opportunities can form new lines of communication among staff. Flexible Wednesdays and partial day professional development sessions can be particularly useful in creating a sub-team that is across grades and contents. Not only will staff benefit from making a new connection, but they will also be able to share cross-level and content information to see all students through their time at Holliday. Additionally, defining the role of the leadership team in relation to the PLC structure can increase ownership of defining the alignment of standards and the Montessori model. The leadership team can serve as a resource in providing peer-to-peer feedback and ensuring assessment results are successfully implemented into instruction.
- 2. Intentional focus on the integration of standards to Montessori instruction.** Some teachers struggle to find the relationship between the Montessori model and the importance of standards to help students reach mastery. Rigor, through a modified lens, can be achieved to support student growth and mastery of standards. By exposing teachers to other successful public Montessori models will help shift the current view of standards impeding student access to a self-paced and independent learning environment. As noted in the school improvement plan, an enhanced relationship with neighboring public Montessori schools will support teacher development. With a set of visits and defined observation goals, teachers can learn to incorporate various instructional practices to support student growth and progress monitoring. The results from such visits can be discussed during PLCs and guide in-school professional development.

Appendix: School Readiness Assessment Tool

Mass Insight's SRA Tool is designed to analyze the extent to which a school has elements of our research-based theory of action in place, in relation to an exemplar description of each element (and the features that make up that element) at the highest performing schools. The Mass Insight team uses this SRA Tool to document evidence and analysis based on information gathered during the SRA activities to assign a rating for each feature. Ratings are designed to describe the extent to which evidence aligns to the exemplar descriptions at the highest performing schools.

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Element	At Highest Performing Schools	Rating	Discussion of Evidence
<p>Focus on Instruction: Processes and systems help teachers work together to constantly improve and refine standards-based instructional practice, ensuring students engage in deep learning tasks.</p>	<p>School Model and Instructional Vision <i>Signature schools:</i> The school implements a clearly defined and observable school model that meets student interests and demand.</p> <p><i>Secondary schools:</i> The school implements clear pathways for student progression through high school to college and careers.</p> <p>There is a clear instructional vision that aligns with the district-wide framework for critical thinking, problem-solving and cultural responsiveness for 21st Century learning, and the school model. It focuses on the success of all students, aligns with standards, and helps build an understanding of the actions that educators must take to accelerate student learning. The vision is widely understood and drives school decision-making. All teachers and administrators can describe how their work moves the school closer to meeting the vision.</p>	2: Mostly Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Harold L. Holliday, Sr. Montessori School is one of the two Montessori signature programs in KCPS; as such, it implements the Montessori curriculum and uses its accompanying instructional methods and resources. ● The school operates with the instructional vision of becoming a quality public Montessori school that adheres to standards and competes with its private counterparts. ● As an AMI-USA, Holliday uses its vision to uphold Montessori values and create a developmentally appropriate and self-paced environment where students are independent and have the freedom to be self-motivated learners. ● The entire school now operates under the Montessori model. Through 2018, the Children's House included both Montessori and non-Montessori classrooms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2018 - 40 students ○ 2017 - 80 students ○ 2016 - 100 students ● The model is understood by all staff and there is a consensus of instructional direction and alignment to district standards.

<p>Focus on Instruction, continued.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In the past three years, Holliday has welcomed a new leadership team and set of teachers who are trained in the Montessori model. ○ Teachers are working to incorporate standards into their instruction and use the Montessori albums as a guide. ● 100% of surveyed staff feel that the school has an instructional vision (or vision for high-quality instruction) that defines the actions educators must take to accelerate student learning. ● The Montessori classroom model is based on three grade bands: P3-K, 1-3, and 4-6.
	<p>Readiness to Learn The school implements consistent, equitable, and asset-based policies, procedures, and practices that foster positive learning school experiences that validate all students' social-emotional and cultural identities. As a result, students feel safe, valued, cared for, challenged, and supported at school. Student and family needs are identified and connected with resources and services to ensure all students can self-regulate and engage in learning with agency. The school has programs, structures, and extracurricular activities (such as looping, advisory, morning meetings, intramurals, clubs) to expand and nurture students' sense of belonging and ensure that every student has enriching experiences and strong relationships with adults.</p>	<p>2: Mostly Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Montessori model relies heavily on developing a sense of community within each classroom and within the school. During the Children's House grade band, students begin learning how to direct and manage their own learning, as well as how to mediate interactions with their peers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Montessori learning environment is open and embraces student choice and freedom, creating a sense of ownership within students. ● Social grace and care of self are other core components of the Montessori philosophy that students learn early in the program. Older peers and teachers help younger and new students understand the rules and procedures that guide the Montessori learning experience. The focus group students shared feeling safe, supported, and culturally included. ● The school offers an open floor plan and a welcoming environment for students. There are building practices, such as morning meetings, that help build classroom culture. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students share that they feel supported and have a sense of belonging at the school. ○ Families also share that the school is inclusive of their needs and they feel welcomed by staff. Many report feeling part of the neighborhood community, although they do not reside in its proximity.

<p>Focus on Instruction, continued.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Although there aren't any building-wide behavior policies, students share that the majority of teachers implement classroom guidelines that are equitable for all. Behavior at the school is not an issue and teachers have the support of the PST and the administration, should disciplinary actions need to be taken. ● 92% of survey participants strongly agree or agree that policies and practices are consistently and equitably implemented for all students. ● In addition to the PST, the school uses district clinicians and counselors to connect families with needed resources and partners such as LINK (Communities in School Program), one of the leading partners. ● The school, as a whole, partners with neighborhood groups and highlights their gardening and music programs as key in student enrichment.
	<p>Teacher Development & Feedback There are systems, structures, and practices that prioritize teacher development based on data and district priorities including trauma sensitive strategies. There are feedback cycles and follow-up. All teachers describe receiving frequent, consistent, coherent, and coordinated high-quality feedback on teaching that is grounded in an instructional vision and that will lead to accelerated learning for all students.</p>	<p>1: Somewhat Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professional development for all staff takes place on Wednesday for about 60 minutes, most of which is spent sharing district and school updates. The time limitation prevents the leadership from creating a schedule of instructionally- focused PD that builds on one another. ● The teacher development process includes classroom visits (evaluative), walkthroughs (non-evaluative observations), and evaluation feedback. Staff share that during the 1st semester, principals were required to complete five walkthroughs per week. ● Teachers received twenty walkthroughs during the first semester; yet it is not clear to what extent walkthroughs follow up on past feedback to provide clear feedback cycles. ● Teachers share that they welcome feedback, and the majority of survey participants agree or strongly agree that they receive frequent, clear, and actionable feedback about their instructional practice that helps them improve. ● It is not clear the extent to which received feedback is implemented to improve practice.

<p>Focus on Instruction, continued.</p>	<p>Teacher Collaboration (PLCs) Teachers working in teams have time, systems and structures to maximize collaborative time in instructional teams (such as by grade level or content area). Teachers work towards commonly set and motivating goals that help all students progress towards the highest priority academic standards and improve critical thinking skills; these teams receive high-quality feedback and enjoy a trusting culture that includes open and constructive dialogue.</p>	<p>1: Somewhat Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weekly PLC meetings take place among teachers and are led by the principal and/or vice principal. ● During PLCs, the teams focus on Montessori practices and share that during the first semester, they discussed backward planning, common formative assessments, instruction, pre-and post-tests, analyzed student data, and identified skills needed by students. ● The opportunity to connect as small teams has helped build a trusting culture and sharing of resources amongst grade-band teachers. This is particularly true for the Children’s House, as they attribute their communication and progress to the shared team. ● Teachers share that an increase of discussions and sharing of best practices relating to the Montessori model would help them develop their practice. Additionally, many asked for the review of schedules to accommodate longer PLCs and cross-grade level communication. ● It is unclear if the frequency and current structure of the PLCs is supportive of effective standard integration and student interventions.
	<p>Curriculum, Standards & Assessment Instructional work is guided by curricula and instructional resources (including technology) aligned to standards and aligned across and between grade levels. It is responsive to students’ cultures, experiences, needs, and interests. Formative and externally-developed summative assessments are aligned with both standards and the sequence of instruction. These assessments yield frequent, accurate, and actionable data about student progress towards the highest priority standards.</p>	<p>1: Somewhat Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instruction is and has traditionally been rooted in the Montessori approach and resources. Recently, the district has required the school to integrate standards-based instruction into K-6 classrooms at Holliday. This has been a challenge for teachers at the school, as they struggle to successfully include non-Montessori instructional methods and resources into their planning. ● Teachers share that the need to integrate traditional school practices- such as lesson planning, assessment of student mastery of standards and assessments- with the Montessori model has been challenging and that it takes away from students learning at their own pace. ● Teachers share that their required 3-hour block of morning work is repeatedly interrupted for student testing. The high number of assessments administered by staff and their frequency contradicts the Montessori model and its roots to develop learning proportionate to the student.

<p>Focus on Instruction, continued.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students share that there are too many tests and that they often don't feel prepared to tackle the tested content. The Montessori classroom structure does not allow for student-specific modifications and quiet testing settings. Many students shared that peer behavior and testing set-up impedes them from concentrating on their assessments. ● Holliday has a diverse student population and utilizes geography units from the Montessori albums to expose students to a multitude of cultures. In addition to geography and history, teachers incorporate diverse authors as part of their book selection for students. ● Students would like to see more cultural representation and noted that the constant change in class content makes it difficult to have a follow through and exposure.
	<p>Data-Driven Decision-Making for Classroom Instruction The academic progress of all students is monitored by teachers and students. Systems, structures, and processes support teachers—individually and in teams (such as the Problem Solving Team (PST))—to frequently and routinely use a variety of student data, including disaggregated academic data, to pinpoint class and student needs. Data inquiry cycles drive on-going instructional decisions, including grouping, differentiation, enrichment, intervention, and personalized plans for meeting graduation requirements.</p>	<p>2: Mostly Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Montessori model relies heavily on teacher and support staff observation of student learning and progress. The school has implemented district-wide assessments this year to also support standard master progress monitoring. ● Assessments are an indicator and monitored to track student progress and school priorities. However, it is unclear to what extent all of the state-required testing such as iReady and Achievement Series are used to discuss and guide classroom instruction at Holliday. Teachers describe student progress monitoring through the lens of the Montessori model, mainly relying on observation and student self-evaluation of their progress. ● School staff shares that there are inconsistencies in teacher mindset and experience gathering and tracking student data. Some have not yet incorporated the traditional approach. ● Consultants have been brought to the school to develop teacher understanding of data monitoring and its correlation to student success. Some shifts have occurred and teachers share the importance of tracking student progress. ● The state and district assessments, such as iReady and the Achievement Series, are used to monitor student mastery of standards. One of the priorities of the school is to increase

<p>Focus on Instruction, continued.</p>			<p>math and ELA results. Students needing additional support are tracked, reviewed, and provided assistance through the school's PST process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students learn of their progress and standing by checking the TYLER Student Information System (SIS) and observing their personal chart. They also have multiple check-ins with the teacher and frequently ask about their standing in class.
	<p>Rigorous Classroom Practice All students describe, and are observed, learning high-level and grade-level appropriate knowledge and skills in classrooms where each student is challenged; teachers are observed bringing the school's instructional vision to life in their classrooms. All students demonstrate progress toward stated learning objectives through their work or responses.</p>	<p>1: Somewhat Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Montessori model does not approach instruction with a lens of rigor; instead, instruction is about meeting the individual learning needs of each child. This approach includes extensive teacher monitoring of student progress in order for small group or individual student lessons for students when students are ready or request them. ● In the Montessori model, students free-write with no feedback from peers or teachers, so students do not know how well they are writing. If questions arise, connect with their small group before connecting with the teacher. ● In observations 75-100% of students were seen engaged with the learning process, tasks, materials and their teachers. ● It was clear in every classroom observed that this was a Montessori classroom – self-directed students, small groups, individual/partner work, teachers providing small group instruction or individual feedback. ● Some students share that they feel ready to move on to the next grade, while others don't think the coursework is preparing them. There is mention of lessons changing daily and students not being able to follow the progression of the content.

<p>Focus on Instruction, continued.</p>	<p>Supports for Special Populations There is a strategy in action for ensuring that special populations of students—including students with disabilities and ELLs— are accurately identified, and receive integrated, inclusive, and high-quality instructional support. Students’ progress is monitored to ensure that they are moving expediently towards success in an inclusion environment. A variety of models and supports, including interventions, ensure students are adequately challenged and ultimately successful.</p>	<p>2: Mostly Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Montessori model is inclusive of students with disabilities and recognizes it as a founding pillar. Classes in this model offer small groups, self-paced learning and tailored instruction. ● Staff share that the SPED student population receives the indicated IEP support in the classrooms, in addition to direct services from the district assigned SPED educator. Additionally, the co-teaching model ensures that students needing additional support have an adult in the room to share additional resources. ● The school reports a low number of ELL students, eliminating the need for direct in-school services for this population. ● Staff share that there are a number of students that do not progress due to the Montessori setting, but remain enrolled in the school by parent choice.
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Element	At Highest Performing Schools	Rating	Discussion of Evidence
<p>Collective Responsibility: The school faculty and staff ensure there is collective responsibility for both the quality of instruction and student learning and success.</p>	<p>Systems and Structures for School-wide Continuous Improvement Leadership effectively implements systems and structures to cultivate shared ownership for school-wide continuous improvement for both the quality of instruction and each students’ learning. A representative group of building leaders, teachers, and staff (e.g., ILT) takes ownership for implementation and progress monitoring of school improvement.</p>	<p>1: Somewhat Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are two leadership teams; one is for the lower grades P3-3rd and the second 4-6th. The leadership team for the upper grades is new and was formed in January. The groups, lower and upper are scheduled to meet monthly. ● Staff share that the lower grades’ leadership team has a consistent meeting schedule and purpose that makes them strong. In contrast, the upper grades are unclear why they were selected to partake in the role and its intended purpose. ● The team acknowledges this is a development year for the team as they determine their purpose and want to be advocates for their fellow educators.

<p>Collective Responsibility, continued.</p>	<p>School-wide Beliefs and Trust Staff have, and inculcate in students, the belief that all students can and will learn. This motivates all to continuously improve teaching and learning. Staff demonstrate individual and collective responsibility for student learning and behavior that extends beyond individual classrooms or departments and permeates the school. Staff intentionally promote the success for all students, which results in all students feeling valued, supported, and challenged to learn in and out of school.</p> <p>Interactions between adults in the building are positive and supportive, resulting in a sense of trust and partnership among staff. Staff own the success of all students. And there is a shared culture of continuous improvement for all students, staff, and schoolwide success.</p>	<p>2: Mostly Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The culture among staff and students is positive. ● Teachers and staff, from the Children’s House to 6th grade, share a deep commitment to student learning. They report holding themselves accountable for the success of students, although they recognize that the model does not meet the needs of all students. ● Staff share that the leadership team creates enthusiasm and collective responsibility by keeping students at the center. ● Teachers express some concerns with the increase of traditional school practices but recognize the need to incorporate standards and help students acquire mastery. ● Students shared that teachers support and push them to push beyond their limits. One student shared that “Teachers say they don’t want us to be perfect; they want us to be okay failing and help us get it right.”
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Element	At Highest Performing Schools	Rating	Discussion of Evidence
<p>Planning: <i>Evidence-based, actionable improvement plans that address the root causes of low performance, informed by a review of existing conditions with input from school, district, and community stakeholders.</i></p>	<p>Planning Processes School stakeholders are actively engaged in evidence-based processes to identify and analyze root causes of low performance. These processes include honest conversations about how the school works and an examination of data, including disaggregated data. The processes produce no more than four major improvement strategies that planning participants believe can be implemented and will lead to substantial improvement.</p>	<p>2: Mostly Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The principal at Holliday uses the Title 1 school improvement form and template to identify priority areas for an annual action plan. ● The development team for the school improvement plan is representative of the school’s stakeholders. Stakeholders involved in the planning process include the principal, vice principal, Children’s House guide (P3, P4, K Teacher), lower elementary guide (1st – 3r Grade Teacher), encore teacher, special education teacher, and parent. The plan was completed in collaboration with stakeholders at various points in its development. ● The priorities identified are academic performance in the areas of reading and math. In addition, quality Montessori practices and resources were identified through a staff

Planning, continued.			<p>data gathering process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff share an understanding of the priorities and their impact on alignment to district standards, but believe that there is a disconnect from the Montessori model.
	<p>The School Improvement Plan The school has one evidence-based, equity-focused actionable school improvement plan that addresses the root causes of low performance. The school plan focuses the school's energy and resources on no more than four strategies that will impact the instructional core and increase student learning. The plan identifies a set of action steps for each strategy, and, for each action step, assigns responsibility, provides a timeline, and identifies critical milestones. Teachers in the school can describe the school improvement strategies and explain how they expect the strategies to lead to improvement.</p>	2: Mostly Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school's priorities are centered around the integration of state standards while honoring the Montessori principles. The prioritized needs for the building were outlined in the School Improvement Plan as; Continued Quality Montessori Practices Continued Investment of Quality Montessori Resources Academic Foci(s): Reading and Math. ● The priorities shared by the principal are around academic achievement, building relationships with parents, and increased focus on math and reading scores. ● Teachers and school staff were able to identify the school's priorities and their correlation to student success and overall school improvement.

Element	At Highest Performing Schools	Rating	Discussion of Evidence
<p>Performance Management: Consistent processes for using data to measure both implementation and outcomes to determine what's working and inform efforts to improve.</p>	<p>Plan Implementation & Management A team of school leaders meets frequently and regularly to manage plan implementation and impact with a focus on the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have we done what we said we would do in the plan? If not, why not? ● Is it making a difference? What's the evidence? ● What do we have to do differently? 	1: Somewhat Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The principal and vice principal share constant updates with staff regarding progress and make necessary interventions to remain on track. ● It is unclear if a team supports plan implementation and management. ● Staff do not share examples of how they have adjusted plan implementation based on data mid-year or the continued monitoring process.

<p>Performance Management, continued.</p>	<p>Monitors Key Indicators to Inform Decisions and Actions The school identifies and monitors a limited number of leading and lagging indicators to measure schoolwide progress, early warning signs, and/or plan next steps. Data is relevant, timely, accessible, accurate, and disaggregated by subgroup. There are clear roles and responsibilities for data collection and reporting. Teams regularly analyze data to identify disproportionality, identify root causes, establish key actions, and track progress of action items for continuous improvement.</p>	<p>2: Mostly Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school leadership team monitors the following indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attendance - Holliday closely tracks attendance and utilizes it as an additional school benchmark to track school progress towards 96.6% daily average. The school leaders monitor attendance and use the data to plan parent communication and tailor student support. They contact families via phone or home visits and engage them to ensure regular school attendance. Although the school rarely demits students, attendance monitoring helps ensure students are not severely impacted by the loss of content. ○ Test results- As required by the state, all students starting in grade 3 receive assessment in math and language arts (iReady, MAP and Achievement Series). ○ Behavior- Administrators and teachers monitor behavior to ensure the safety and progress of each student. Students placed on a 20-day plan are closely monitored to establish testing, out of class support and other required interventions. Families are connected to the appropriate resources and notified of any outstanding behavior concerns.
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Element	At Highest Performing Schools	Rating	Discussion of Evidence
<p>Partnering: <i>Partnerships that help the school meet the multiple needs of teachers and students.</i></p>	<p>Family and Community Engagement The school operates with the understanding that students' most important influencer and advocate are their families. The school intentionally builds community and family partnerships that honor and recognize families' existing knowledge and skills. The school connects with and engages families through intentional programming (e.g., series of family nights), regular two-way dialogue in family accessible languages, and capacity building (e.g. Parent Liaisons and Parents-as-Teachers program) designed to strengthen family-school partnership and further student learning including in the creation of student academic, college, and career plans. Staff have respect and knowledge of cultural norms and act in ways that are welcoming and responsive to students and their families.</p>	2: Mostly Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relationships built by the administration with families have contributed to an increase in parent engagement. It is reported that over 20 families attend and participate in the PTA. ● There are monthly activities organized by the PTA and quarterly opportunities for families, teachers and students to engage. ● Although Holliday is a neighborhood school, many families travel from out of the area and are not able to participate in the school day activities. ● The school communicates with families on a monthly basis, which includes updates from the principal, activities, and general school information. ● Teachers communicate with families via TYLER System (SIS), email, and phone. ● Families express a desire for additional communication, specifically pertaining to student academic performance and school events. ● There is an acknowledgment among staff that communication is an area of growth for the school.
	<p>Strategic Partnerships The school has a limited number of community and business partnerships that support specific school and student needs, such as providing students with real-world application opportunities, college and career exploration, and rewards for positive student behavior. Students have equitable access to resources and partnerships. The school regularly reviews the effectiveness of partnership programs and makes changes as needed to meet student needs. Partnerships are actively managed to streamline efforts and impact.</p>	2: Mostly Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school has partnerships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce ○ KC Can Compost ○ Score 1 for Health KC ○ KC Pet Project ○ LINK (Communities in school program) ○ Nelson Museum ○ Nature Center ○ Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts ○ KC Community Gardens ● The school also has volunteers who come from the neighborhood, local businesses, families, and alumni.

Element	At Highest Performing Schools	Rating	Discussion of Evidence
<p>Conditions: Sufficient school-level control over people, time, money and program to address the root causes of low performance to ensure all students can succeed.</p>	<p>Larger systems, structures, and practices (e.g. district, union, state, etc.) enable school-level control of conditions necessary to implement the plan and address the root causes of low performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People ● Time ● Money ● Program <p>The district recognizes that the school is the unit of improvement and allows for flexibility in the use of people, time, funding, and program so that the school can meet the needs of all students. Systems and structures are clear and aligned so that principals can focus on the success of all students. The district provides school leaders with the necessary support and ongoing capacity-building to achieve school priorities.</p>	<p>1: Somewhat Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school leader receives guidance and support from the principal supervisor in developing the Montessori model at the school and newly hired teachers. Those without a Montessori background or training are connected with coursework and schooling to further their practice. ● District-led principal PLCs are not tailored to the Montessori approach or Holliday’s signature model, making participation and applicability challenging. ● Additional district-level curriculum and assessment support is desired to integrate the state standards into the Montessori instructional approach. ● Encore staff struggle to understand the Montessori model because they have received no training.
	<p>Sufficient school leader authority over conditions to implement the plan and address the root causes of low performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People ● Time ● Money ● Program <p>The principal has the authority to create staff configurations and work assignments in alignment with the school’s instructional model, design the right positions, and fill positions with the right people to do their most effective work. The principal has the authority to make changes to the school schedule such as PLCs, interventions, and/or other school-based professional</p>	<p>3: Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In the last three years, the principal at Holliday has assessed staff, filled open positions and hired a vice principal. When it comes to general school staffing, the principal has the autonomy to hire needed staff but encounters obstacles with regards to staff’s Montessori training. ● Due to costly Montessori resources, there are no additional funds available for a reading program, which is needed to increase reading performance but is not part of the Montessori model. ● There is limited flexibility with the schedule as the Association Montessori Internationale requires a 3-hour morning work block in order to be an accredited Montessori school. This is complicated by the district’s schedule for shared Encore staff and the needed time for grade-band PLCs.

<p>Conditions, continued.</p>	<p>development activities so that the school can meet the needs of all students. The principal has the authority to align the school's financial resources with school plan priorities. The principal has sufficient authority to shape teaching approaches and related services around the school's mission and the needs of all students.</p>		
	<p>Enrollment and Configuration School configuration and/or application and student enrollment processes enable equitable access to a complete feeder. Families have data and access to make informed choices regarding the school/program that best meets their students' needs and interests. Principals have the ability to recruit students to their school and recruitment processes are equitable. The district and school principal cultivate a distinct, consistent brand presence for the school, resulting in positive stakeholder perceptions.</p>	<p>2: Mostly Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enrollment at Holliday is high for the P3-K grade level as it offers a free preschool-age opportunity to families. There is an extensive waitlist for admittance. ● The trend of families leaving prior to or in kindergarten is declining according to retention records. Staff shared that the increasing awareness of the Montessori model and administrative push to build a positive school culture are contributing factors in this shift. ● The families who remain in the school do so because of the proximity to their home, investment in the Montessori model, and accessibility to a public Montessori school. ● The school staff share that an increase in the enrollment of more affluent families from outside of the neighborhood is cause for concern about changing student demographics. ● Outreach to families in close proximity to the school has been intentionally planned and executed to ensure there is a diverse student population representative of the community served. ● Although enrollment as a whole for the school has remained consistent, there is a significant decrease in the retention of grade 6 students, who are leaving to attend other signature school programs. It was shared that there were six students enrolled in grade 6 and on the track to graduate. Many of the students who departed after 5th grade did so to apply and attend Lincoln MS or alternative private schooling. ● Families express frustration with the application process, specifically that it operates on a first-come, first-serve basis. The families interviewed also shared that although

Conditions, continued.			<p>the application process was complicated and posed obstacles, they felt informed about the Montessori model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students cannot join the Montessori program beyond kindergarten if they have not previously attended a Montessori school. ● Some students shared that they feel ready to move to a middle school setting, while others don't feel like their learning is aligned to that of other schools.
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Element	At Highest Performing Schools	Rating	Discussion of Evidence
<p>Leadership: Principal who can manage and communicate complexity while maintaining focus on the school's vision and key priorities.</p>	<p>Stakeholder Investment and Mobilization Principal effectively constructs and adapts communication and actions to inspire and invest diverse stakeholders in a clear, compelling, and inclusive vision for change. Staff receive timely and transparent updates on progress toward the vision. Staff understand the vision, their role in the vision, and rationale for changes. Principal builds a culture of collective responsibility for the success of every student by mobilizing and empowering teams that support and sustain the vision over time.</p>	<p>3: Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff at Holliday are invested in the Montessori model and see the educational benefits of incorporating standards to support student learning. Many shared that the accessibility of the public Montessori school model was what first attracted them to the school. ● Families, like students, are also invested in the school model and actively participate in school gatherings and volunteer opportunities. ● Communication is shared by the principal in various forms to convey updates, goal progression, attendance, and student performance data. Staff receive updates via emails, weekly staff meetings, and grade-level PLCs. ● The role of the leadership team has not yet been defined but it is intended to play a significant role in the sharing and implementing priorities set by the principal. ● The newly formed LT is composed of a lower and upper-grade staff meet monthly to lead the discussion on standard implementation and represent the teacher voice with a Montessori lens.

Leadership, continued.	<p>Sustained Focus on Results Principal models and sets clear expectations for all staff, creating a culture of accountability for the learning of all students. Principal prioritizes efforts that advance progress of all students and school goals. Principal effectively advocates for the school needs with the district and reaches beyond the building to pursue needed resources and bring in best practices in order to meet the needs of all students.</p>	2: Mostly Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At the beginning of every academic year, each teacher is provided with a published list of school-wide goals and non-negotiables. These are created by the principal and the school's leadership team. They are intended to hold all school staff accountable and build knowledge around expectations. The expectations are led by the Montessori principles, data and student support/development. ● The school has developed opportunities for outside collaboration and increased student access to resources. There are neighborhood gatherings, attendance, and academic field trips, and school gatherings where these partnerships are most prominent. ● The principal and administrative team work to align the school's Montessori model and the district standards during PLC and PD allocated time to define the most instructional approach. ● The school has utilized resources such as the Montessori albums, traditional lesson plans and practices to enhance the schools' commitment to student learning. ● Although the school is an AMI-USA member, there has been a conscious effort to obtain Montessori accreditation for the entire school and build a culture of collective responsibility.
	<p>Talent Management Principal works with the district to forecast staffing needs and recruit quality, diverse candidates. Principal implements formal and rigorous staff selection, hiring, and induction processes. Hiring and assignment processes match staff to specific positions based on skill. Positions have clear roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations that align with the school's mission and plan, and hold staff to the success of all students. All teachers receive accurate and specific feedback through the evaluation process. Principal is intentional about</p>	3: Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As a Montessori school, Holliday has the training requirements to adequately fill staff positions. ● The principal has built a strong relationship with the HR team and principal practitioner, which has facilitated the understanding of the schools' staffing needs and requirements. ● The HR office has been supportive of the school's needs and attempts to screen candidates to fulfill the language and content requirements. For candidates that do not have Montessori certification, the district has provided the option of the school year and summer training at no additional cost. This has been particularly helpful for

<p>Leadership, continued.</p>	<p>retaining high-performing staff and designing and implementing staff succession plans.</p>		<p>Holliday, as they had a large teacher turnover in recent years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The administration has been able to identify qualified staff and uses an autonomous hiring process. Those candidates that have applied are invited to interview, hear about the school and are provided with the school commitments. In addition, teachers who have/are in the training program are provided with transparency about the school model. For those considered for hire, there are complete classroom visits and observations. ● To meet Montessori requirements, incoming staff are trained and onboarded to the school and district's evaluation guidelines. Although roles are clearly outlined upon hire, there are some unnoted duties such as testing translations being completed by staff. ● Staff share that forecasting for openings is difficult and planning is done in 5-year increments. ● The staff at Holliday are required to follow the district's teacher observation schedule and online feedback process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First and second-year teachers are to be evaluated at least one time per semester by a designated administrator. ○ The third and fourth year of service in the district shall be evaluated at least one time each school year.
	<p>Resource Maximization Principal is adept at maximizing resources to meet the needs of all students and accomplish school goals. Principal demonstrates persistence, ingenuity, and resourcefulness in identifying untapped resources in the areas of time, money, programs, and partnerships. Those resources advance outcomes for every student.</p>	<p>3: Meets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The administration at Holliday has intentionally approached resource allocation creatively to meet school needs. The funds to outsource teacher training for the Montessori model. ● The school uses the support of the community to bring additional resources into the school, such as gardening and music programs. ● There is an internal budgeting process used by the administration to dedicate sufficient funds to the sustainability of student activities. ● Students shared having access to art, music, science, iSpark, physical education, dance, and theater. Students

**Leadership,
continued.**

interviewed like having access to elective courses and attribute their positive experience in school to these options.

- The school benefits from access to culture building and celebratory activities.
- There is a great emphasis on student attendance and reaching the school's goal of 96% average, which is rewarded with field trips and in school activities.