2020 UMSL Annual Review Report: Part 1
North Side Community School

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Evaluation Standards
Ten elements of school evaluation:

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IV. Transformational Curriculum
V. Empowering Culture of Achievement
VI. Transformational Teachers
VII. Engaged Parents and Community
VIII. Comprehensive Student Support System

NOTE:
In the Evidence columns, under Required Documents:

- Documents in bold blue must be submitted to the Charter School Office.
- Documents in bold black must be on hand, but do not need to be submitted to the Charter School Office.
Summary Page

PLEASE NOTE:
1. Due to the pandemic, UMSL was not able to conduct its site visit of North Side’s Middle School. Many, but not all, findings pertain only to the Elementary School. Those that pertain to the Middle School are clearly identified as such.
2. This report was written prior to the change in leadership that occurred in June. Comments in the School Leadership section may no longer apply to North Side’s current situation.

The comments in this report reflect our analysis as of the end of the 2019-20 school year.

1. Areas of Strength
   Here are the top strengths that you can leverage to continuously improve and move you towards your vision.
   - **Vision:**
     - All stakeholders understand, believe in and strive to reach the school’s vision of putting North Side students on pathways to opportunity in their lives.
   - **School Leadership:**
     - The ED holds a strong vision for student academic performance and social behavior. He aligns his decisions to this vision.
   - **Student Achievement - 2019:**
     - Though student outcomes have plateaued or slightly declined the past two years, North Side continues to lead the region in academic achievement of students from subgroup populations attending non-selective schools.
   - **Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment**
     - In general, North Side has a rigorous and engaging curriculum in place that, coupled with a solid assessment plan, informs teacher instructional decision making.
   - **Culture of Achievement:**
     - NSCS is a school where high expectations are the norm and student investment in learning is strong. Classroom observations indicate that at all levels, teachers provide engaging instruction. This is a significant strength.
   - **Teachers:**
     - An experienced, dedicated, caring and stable teaching staff continue to drive student achievement.
   - **Parents and Community**
     - Family support is a significant strength of the school.
   - **Student Support System**
     - North Side’s student support system continues to strengthen, providing more targeted services each year.

2. Areas for Growth
   Here are the key areas for growth that could move you towards your vision.
   - **Vision:**
     - Given that North Side needs to update its strategic plan, it is important that the board reaches consensus on the manner and pace in which the school expands.
• **Board Governance**
  o Strongly consider how to build greater unity within the board and between the board and Executive Director.
  o Revisit the policy manual and bring it up to date.

• **School Leadership**
  o To increase staff and leadership team ownership of and investment in the changes he desires for North Side, the ED should consider how to build greater collaboration and teamwork into the decision-making and planning process for improving student academic performance and social behavior.

• **Student Achievement - 2019**
  o Continue to focus on how to spur student growth and performance in ELA and math.

• **Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment**
  o Continue to build teacher capacity to implement the new ELA and math curricula with fidelity. Related to ELA, address concerns that EL Language Arts doesn’t meet the needs of struggling students.
  o Continue to refine the documented curriculum in ELA and math at the elementary level.
  o Strengthen the documented curriculum in Science.
  o Work on building the documented curriculum for the Middle School.

• **Culture of Achievement**
  o Though suspensions went down, all stakeholders agree that student behavior in some settings declined from previous years.
  o The Restorative Justice approach failed to lift off. Consider prioritizing much greater investment in training and ongoing coaching to support effective implementation.

• **Teachers**
  o Staff morale declined this year. Consider leveraging teacher loyalty and passion for North Side and its mission to rebuild positive staff-leader relations and trust.

• **Student Support System**
  o By statute, the Middle School must conduct dyslexia screening next school year.
  o Consider implementing a bullying prevention program.
  o Consider increasing staff who support students with special needs.
  o Address several SPED compliance concerns raised in *Element VIII* of this report.
  o Consider how to increase nursing services.
## I. Transformative and Innovative Vision

**A transformational school:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Develops a transformational mission and vision for its students and their families.</td>
<td>i. Reaching the vision clearly places students on paths of greater opportunity in life.</td>
<td>Required Documents:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Charter Application: (Met as part of the charter application approval process.)</td>
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<td>• Approved Charter Amendments</td>
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<td>b. Students, parents and staff understand and are invested in the mission and vision.</td>
<td>a) Students, parents and staff can articulate the mission and vision. b) In their classrooms, teachers and students are mission driven as indicated by their enthusiasm, active and consistent participation and task completion.</td>
<td>Required Documents: Other Evidence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Student, parent and staff interviews and survey data</td>
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<td>• Classroom observations</td>
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### Element I: Vision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of strength</th>
<th>Areas for Growth</th>
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<tr>
<td>• All stakeholders believe deeply in the mission of providing a superior education for all children.</td>
<td>• The board is not united around that aspect of the vision dealing with the role North Side Community School should play in the surrounding community and beyond. Some envision slow and steady growth within the area currently served by the school. Others envision accelerated expansion, and possibly, replication, into more distant areas of the city. Reconciling these differences should be a top priority in the year to come. Consider utilizing the strategic planning process to tackle this challenge.</td>
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## II. Responsible Governance

The Board of Directors of a transformational school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Operates legitimately and in the best interest of its students and</td>
<td>i. Considers implications of decisions on the mission of the school.</td>
<td>Documents</td>
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<td>mission.</td>
<td>ii. The Board annually self-evaluates using a standardized tool that</td>
<td>• Board Self-Evaluation</td>
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<td>assesses performance based on setting goals, developing policy,</td>
<td>• Insurance Policies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>communication with the school and community and oversight of school</td>
<td>o Directors and Officer Coverage</td>
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<td></td>
<td>leadership.</td>
<td>o General Liability</td>
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<td>iii. Ensures the board and school have all necessary insurance policies</td>
<td>o Professional Liability</td>
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<td>in place.</td>
<td>o Property</td>
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<td>o Workmen Compensation</td>
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<td>o Employee Dishonesty/Crime (minimum $500k)</td>
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<td>Other Evidence</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Observation of board meetings</td>
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<td>• UMSL Sponsor communication with board president and/or directors</td>
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<td>b. Recruits and maintains a strong governing board with diverse</td>
<td>i. Includes individuals who are experienced in managing organizations</td>
<td>Documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>backgrounds and skills sets</td>
<td>and well versed in charter law</td>
<td>• Board Organizational Structure Chart</td>
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<td>ii. Maintains among its Directors a balance of skills and professional</td>
<td>• Board Director Profiles/Contact Information</td>
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<td>expertise (i.e. K–12 education, business, marketing, legal, accounting,</td>
<td>• Assurance of Board Criminal</td>
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<td>fundraising, real estate etc.) necessary to fulfill all Board</td>
<td>Background and FCSR (child abuse registry) Checks</td>
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<td>obligations.</td>
<td>• Board Development Plans</td>
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<td>iii. Provides new board members a formal orientation on the purpose</td>
<td>• Board Member Financial Disclosure Confirmation</td>
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<td>and educational vision of the school, the school’s performance</td>
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<td>objectives, and their roles and legal responsibilities.</td>
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<td>iv. Seeks information and professional development opportunities</td>
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<td>related to charter operation, laws, and effective non-profit board</td>
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<td>work.</td>
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<td>c. Conducts its business in compliance with all state statutes and</td>
<td>i. Meetings are regularly scheduled and appropriately conducted.</td>
<td>Documents</td>
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<td>regulations</td>
<td>ii. Governance records and documentation are appropriately created and</td>
<td>• Board Meeting Agenda</td>
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<td>maintained.</td>
<td>• Board Meeting Calendar</td>
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<td>iii. School business is conducted in a transparent manner subject to</td>
<td>• Board Meeting Document Packets</td>
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<td>the provisions and sections 610.010 to 610.030, open meetings law;</td>
<td>• Board Meeting Minutes - Approved</td>
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<td>free of conflict of interest, and models best practices regarding</td>
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<td>governance roles and responsibilities.</td>
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<td>Other Evidence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Observation of board meetings</td>
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<td>• Board meeting notices and signage</td>
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| **d.** Ensures that policies are complete, regularly reviewed, updated as needed, and followed in a fair and consistent manner | **i.** Develops, adopts, and follows a comprehensive set of bylaws which at a minimum include conflicts of interest policies, meeting protocols and procedures, and formal delineations of roles and authorities within the charter school  
 **ii.** Regularly reviews board policies, updating as necessary.  
 **iii.** Organizes and makes available to the public the school policies utilizing multiple forms of communication | **Documents**  
 • Board Policy Manual and Bylaws;  
 **Other Evidence**  
 • Observation of board meetings  
 • Board meeting agendas and minutes  
 • Evidence in board minutes that check registry has been reviewed and approved by the board. |
| **e.** Employs a clear strategic approach to meeting the school’s vision | **i.** With the school leaders, develops strategic plans that ensure fidelity to the school’s vision by addressing critical issues; including school performance, financial management, human resource management, facilities, and quality improvement  
 **ii.** Monitors progress towards goals identified in the strategic plans | **Documents**  
 • Strategic Plan (same as for School Leader)  
 **Other Evidence**  
 • Observation of board meetings  
 • Board meeting approved minutes |
| **f.** Selects, supports, and annually evaluates the school leader | **i.** Selects a highly qualified school leader and defines the role the leader plays in the overall operation of the charter school  
 **ii.** Supports the administrator’s decision making  
 **iii.** Establishes clear expectations of and assesses the performance of the school leader using a consistent evaluation instrument reflecting the mission and vision of the school, the performance goals set forth in the performance contract, the day-to-day management of the school and progress made on yearly school goals. | **Documents**  
 • Board Evaluation of School Leader (blank template)  
 **Other Evidence**  
 • Chair and Director interviews  
 • Board meeting observations |
| **g.** Monitors the school’s education program, operational procedures, and fiscal health in cooperation with the sponsor. | **i.** Directs the school leader to provide an annual self-evaluation to the sponsor and regular reports of student performance, academic progress, and the school’s fiscal health to the sponsor and to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.  
 **ii.** Monitors student academic performance, curriculum and instruction, and operational procedures, and fiscal management. | **Documents**  
 • School Annual Self-Evaluation (same as for School Leader)  
 **Other Evidence**  
 • Chair and Director interviews  
 • Board meeting observations  
 • Board meeting approved minutes |
| **h.** Fulfills its fiduciary responsibility for public funds by ensuring the school operates in a fiscally sound and appropriate manner. | **i.** Reviews and approves annual budgets, budget amendments, and monthly financial statements.  
 **ii.** Reviews and approves monthly check register.  
 **iii.** Provides oversight of school leader’s handling of cash accounts and credit card accounts. | **Documents**  
 •  
 **Other Evidence**  
 • Chair and Director interviews  
 • Board meeting observations |
iv. Provides oversight of school leader’s handling of attendance reporting.

v. Ensures the board, school leader and staff are adequately covered by ins

i. Fulfills its responsibilities to UMSL’s sponsorship liaison.

- Board meeting approved minutes

Element II: Board Governance

**Recommendation: Board Policy Review**

Our office strongly recommends that each of our boards regularly review board policies to ensure that they are current with Missouri statutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Strength</th>
<th>Areas for Growth</th>
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</table>
| • (a) Operates in best interests of students and mission  
  o The board operates first and foremost with the interests of students and their families in mind.  
| • (b) Recruits and maintains - Diverse backgrounds and skill sets:  
  o The North Side board is diverse and represents important knowledge and experience in business, investment, law, community service, medicine, and educational leadership.  
| • (c) Compliance with state-federal statutes and regulations:  
  o To the best of UMSL’s knowledge, North Side’s board is compliant with state and federal statutes and regulations except where specifically noted in the right-hand column of this report.  |

- (c) Compliance with state-federal statutes and regulations:  
  o There is no evidence that the board has a policy in place required by Missouri’s most recent virtual learning statute ((RSMo: Section 161.670 - MOCAP).  
  **Note:** This statement may be deleted pending Board approval of a policy at its June meeting.

- (d) Policies:  
  o The most recent policy manual in UMSL’s records date from 2016-17 and it appears they have not been updated since. UMSL strongly recommends that the Board prioritizes reviewing and updating the policy manual to ensure they’re in full compliance with state statutes and aligned to best practice.  
  o See comment directly above under (c) Compliance with state-federal statutes and regulations pertaining to MOCAP.
- (e) Strategic approach:
  - North Side is in the middle of a three-year strategic plan. The board has overseen successful implementation of many initiatives in the plan; for instance, development of a middle school, main campus expansion and increased total enrollment.

- (e) Strategic approach:
  - An important piece of the strategic plan involves “Navigating a Leadership Transition” through a leadership team turnover while strengthening organizational culture and communication practices (Slide 14):
    - The board has struggled noticeably in this area. Deep divisions within the board have led to contentious meetings and confrontations with the Executive Director.
    - Most of the confrontations stem from differences of opinion around changes in direction the ED initiated this year as well as decisions the ED has made related to personnel matters. Two contributing factors exacerbate these confrontations:
      1. Lack of agreement within the board and between the board and ED concerning what decisions are exclusively the ED’s to make and what decisions require board involvement.
      2. How board business and meetings are conducted.
    Consider the following to build board consensus and reduce tensions between the board and school administration:
    - Line of Authority between the Board and ED: Clarify what decisions are the sole responsibility of the school administration and what decision areas are the joint responsibility of the administration and the board – and then respect the line.
    - Approval Process for ED Requests: Utilize board committees to resolve disagreements on significant school administration proposals prior to the board meeting. With rare exceptions, proposals should only go before the board if the appropriate committee has reviewed them and recommends approval.
    - Board Meeting Preparation:
      - Distribute the meeting agenda and all committee and executive director documents and reports (the board packet) to board members at least
• (f) School leader relations and evaluation:
  o The board has in place an ED evaluation plan and process. It includes a statement of performance expectations and a review process in calendar format.

• (g) Monitoring responsibility:
  o The board monitors ED performance, student achievement and financials.

• (h) Fulfills its fiduciary responsibility
  o The SLLIS board fulfills its fiduciary responsibility.
  o Refer also to Element X when UMSL’s Charter School Office submits Part 2 of the annual review to the board.

• (i) Responsibilities to UMSL
  o With the exceptions noted in the right-hand column, NSCS fulfills its responsibilities to UMSL, as defined in the contract between the two institutions.

one week prior to the board meeting date. This allows members plenty of time to review and raise questions and concerns before the meeting.

  ▪ Expect board members to send questions or concerns related to business items in the board packet to the Executive Director at least two days prior to the board meeting. This allows the ED to prepare his responses for the meeting or the Board Chair to remove an item from the agenda if it’s clear that it is not ready to come before the board.

  o FY21 will bring the current strategic plan to an end. UMSL recommends preparing a new strategic plan for FY22-24.
    (Refer to comment above under Element I: Vision)

• (f) School leader relations and evaluation:
  o Refer to comment directly above under (e) Strategic Approach

• (i) Responsibilities to UMSL
  o No one on the board completed the board survey.

Board Development and Training
  • The board development plan submitted to UMSL dates from 2019. Other than the UMSL ED’s presentation to the board in September, there is no evidence that the board (collectively or individually) engaged in any training during the 2019-2020 school year.

Board Survey
  • Refer to comment directly above under (i) Responsibilities to UMSL.
### III. Strong School Leadership and Operations

A transformational school leader:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Standards</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
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| a) Invests students, parents and staff in the mission and vision of the school. | i. Communicates the mission and vision on a frequent basis to students, parents and staff.  
 ii. Monitors students, parents and staff to gauge their understanding of the mission and vision and the extent to which they’re striving to reach it. | Required Documents:  
 Other Evidence  
 • School leader interview  
 • Student, staff and parent surveys and interviews  
 • School publications such as newsletters and announcements |
| b) Employs a clear strategic approach to meeting the goals of improving student academic achievement | i. With the Board of Directors, develops strategic plans that ensure fidelity to the school’s vision by addressing critical issues; including school performance, financial management, human resource management, facilities, and quality improvement  
 ii. Articulates and monitors the goals identified in the strategic plans.  
 iii. Holds him/herself accountable for specific outcomes outlined in the charter and detailed in the school’s performance contract with the sponsor  
 iv. Engages in ongoing relevant professional development  
 v. Utilizes an effective data communication instrument providing consistent, timely data regarding the school’s progress toward meeting agreed upon performance expectations (academic, operational, and financial)  
 vi. Implements the academic program in alignment with the school’s charter and Missouri Common Core Standards  
 vii. Collects, assimilates, and disseminates student achievement data to inform a continuous cycle of school improvement | Required Documents:  
 • School Annual Calendar  
 • Strategic plan  
 • School Leader Mentoring Plan  
 • School Leader Professional Development Plan  
 • Student Assessment Plan  
 Other Evidence  
 • School leader interview  
 • School leadership team interviews  
 • Teacher interviews  
 • Student data analysis plans |
| c) Implements recruitment and enrollment strategies and practices that respect diversity and are consistent with the school’s charter, mission, and vision, as well as federal and state regulations | i. Implements student recruitment strategies that focus on the targeted population stated in its charter and that are inclusive of a diverse range of learners  
 ii. Utilizes a public lottery process for open enrollment  
 iii. Ensures no practices are implemented which may limit the opportunity for students with special needs to enroll  
 iv. Ensures that student enrollment and attendance numbers are in line with the charter agreement, and provide evidence that the school is a viable school of choice for the community. | Required Documents:  
 • Enrollment Application  
 • Marketing/Recruitment Materials  
 Other Evidence  
 • School leader interview  
 • Observation of lotteries  
 • Enrollment and attendance data  
 • Core data |
| d) Develops and sustains a school culture conducive to student learning | i. Maintains a clean and safe environment that supports the educational mission of the school.  
ii. Maintains open, consistent, clear communication among students, staff, parents, and administration  
iii. Maintains a school culture conducive to learning and continuous improvement  
iv. Communicates effectively to all stakeholder groups  
| Same evidence sources as described in Element IV above. Required Documents: |
| --- | --- |
| Other Evidence | - Onsite observations  
- Student surveys and interviews  
- Staff surveys and interviews  
- Student support staff interviews (Counselors, nurses, social workers, School Psychologists)  
- Discipline, suspension and/or expulsion data  
- Parent complaint/grievance records |
| e) Employs qualified staff, provides professional development opportunities to improve their performance. | i. Conducts personnel procedures and practices in a manner that promotes instructional effectiveness and continuous school improvement.  
ii. Conducts personnel procedures and practices in a manner that promotes the recruitment and retention of an effective instructional staff.  
iii. Provides professional development opportunities for all staff members that are aligned to the school’s vision and advances their effectiveness in their roles.  
| Required Documents: |
| --- | --- |
| Other Evidence | - Staff Organization Chart  
- Employee School Handbook  
- Assurance of Faculty/Staff Background Checks (FCSR and fingerprinting)  
- Staff Professional Development Plan and Calendar  
- Staff Mentoring and Coaching Plan  
- Teacher Evaluation Plan (including blank evaluation forms) |
| f) Understands and complies with the laws, policies, and state and federal requirements that govern charter schools | i. Participates regularly in professional development opportunities, which provide insight into the trends, issues, and potential changes in the environment in which charter schools operate  
ii. Allocates resources based primarily on their impact on student achievement, learning, and well-being  
iii. Implements business policies and procedures that promote school sustainability, operational integrity, and a focus on student achievement and learning results  
iv. Establishes programs and policies that enable all students to be served effectively  
v. Ensures timely submission of required data and reporting  
| Required Documents: |

| Health and Safety | - Health Permits (food service)  
- Fire Safety Permit  
- Building Inspection/Certificate of Occupancy  
- Elevator Inspection Certificate  
| Special Education | - SPED Compliance Plans (IDEA & 504)  
- Title I  
| Title I | - Title I Parent Meetings (sign in sheets)  
- HQ Parent Notification Letters |
vi. Ensures that school is in compliance with state and federal laws, policies and requirements and provisions in its contract with UMSL in these areas:
   a. Health and safety
   b. Student records:
      i. Thorough and comprehensive
      ii. Secure and confidential
      iii. Appropriate employee access to the data system
   c. Special Education
   d. Title I
   e. Free and reduced lunch
   f. Homeless and ELL students
   g. Fiscal management
   h. State testing
   i. Other operations

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### Element III: School Leadership and Operations

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<th>Areas of Strength</th>
<th>Areas for Growth</th>
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<td><strong>Executive Director</strong></td>
<td><strong>Executive Director</strong></td>
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<td>• (a) Investment of others:</td>
<td>• (a) Investment of others:</td>
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<td>o The ED holds a strong belief in the school’s mission and holds high expectations for increasing student academic performance and responsibility for behavior. The initiatives he introduced prior to the school year are all tightly aligned to this vision for North Side.</td>
<td>o Multiple elementary staff interviews expressed significant concern that this year has had many changes in core curriculum across multiple subject areas with little if any direct input from them. The consensus thinking from these interviews, aligned with UMSL observations during the year, includes the following:</td>
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<td>o The ED surveys staff to gather input on staff concerns and morale.</td>
<td>• Most of the proposals for change were appropriate, although a few addressed areas where the school was already excelling. This left some staff questioning the initiatives, decreasing investment.</td>
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### Homeless and ELL Students
- ELL Intervention Plan
- ELL Pupil Count/Percentages
- Homeless Student Policy

### Fiscal Management
(Refer to Element IX: Sound Financial Operations below)

### State Testing
- Quality Assurance – Grade Level Assessment Assurance Document
- State Exam Security Policy
- State Exam Testing Calendar

### Other Operations
- Student/Parent Handbook
- Media Policy

### Other Evidence
- School leader interview
- Document/MOSIS submission history with UMSL and DESE
- Interviews with consultants: Shannon Spradling and Thurma DeLoach
- FERPA compliance procedures
- Student record keeping system
(b) Strategic approach towards student achievement:
- The ED uses student data (academic and behavioral) to inform program adjustments that are needed.
- The ED has in place a thorough principal evaluation rubric.
- Teacher interviews indicate that data teams are now playing a useful role in improving teaching and learning.
- The staff survey indicates that:
  - Over 90% are very positive about their coach’s check-ins, feedback, support and caring nature.
  - Responses related to their principal’s interactions and effectiveness were positive and in the 82-96% range.
- Several years. More than one interviewee shared that they had no problem with what they were changing, just how the changes were implemented – too fast and with inadequate preparation:
  - One example: Many interviewees specifically cited the Restorative Justice initiative. They liked the concept, but needed much more training on what it looks and sounds like and how to actualize it. One interviewee stated, “At this point, it feels like a lost cause.”
  - With the exception of Math Stories, professional development for the new curriculum adoption was not adequate enough at the beginning.
  - The administration’s response to expressions of concern were defensive and uncollaborative in nature. One interviewee stated, “We had more voice in the past and this year seems to be more of a ‘this is how it is – deal with it’ response.
  - Revealing a mindset that they have little to no agency, several indicated they feel uncomfortable approaching the ED with concerns.
  - They indicated that the changes significantly decreased their autonomy in the classroom while increasing external micro-management.
  - Related to this, they cited significant increases in demands for paperwork from the administration.
- Finally, they explicitly indicated that staff morale at the elementary school has significantly decreased.

(b) Strategic approach towards student achievement:
- Related to the changes referenced above, multiple staff interviews indicated that professional development was inadequate to fully prepare them for implementation. They felt overwhelmed, especially during the first few months of the year.
- Teacher interviews indicate they do not have enough materials to support the new reading series implemented in some grades.
It is unclear if the coach and principal are separate individuals for each staff member.

- **(c) Recruitment and enrollment strategies:**
  - The ED appeared on several local news shows, increasing St. Louisan’s awareness of North Side Community School.

- **(d) Culture building:**
  - The ED implemented a discipline policy designed to significantly reduce suspensions and expulsions.
    - Prior to the pandemic-related school closure, North Side was on pace to reduce suspensions by 30-40% compared to SY2019. (See also comments related to Restorative Justice in the right-hand column and below under the sub-head: Discipline.)
  - Collaboration among teachers is strong.

- **(f) Compliance with state-federal statutes and regulations**
  - To the best of UMSL’s knowledge, North Side’s administration is compliant with state and federal statutes and regulations except where specifically noted in the right-hand column of this report.

- **Responsibilities to UMSL**
  - With the exceptions noted in the right-hand column, the ED fulfills his responsibilities to UMSL, as defined in the contract between the two institutions.

**Discipline**
- As noted above, the number of suspensions decreased compared to the previous year.

- **The staff survey indicates that 49% or respondents do not agree that the school consistently enforces rules, policies and procedures**

- **(d) Culture building:**
  - Refer to comments in (a) Investment of others above.
  - Teacher interviews indicate they would like to see the ED interact more with the students and staff, and as one stated, “become more a part of the community.”

- **(e) Employment:**
  - A few teacher interviews indicate they would like to see more promotions from within instead of always hiring externally.

- **(f) Compliance with state-federal statutes and regulations:**
  - Related to MOCAP, RSMo: Section 161.670) states: “Availability of the program shall be made clear in the parent handbook, registration documents, and featured on the home page of the school district or charter school's website.” This statement of availability cannot be found in the registration documents.

- **Responsibilities to UMSL**
  - The school struggled to meet deadlines for required document submissions.

**Discipline**
- Many interviews indicate that the Restorative Justice initiative was a worthy pursuit, but weak implementation due to little or no training hampered its launch and undercut its potential. Fidelity to the approach remains a serious concern.
Operations/HR/Facilities
- North Side conducts all state mandated emergency drills.
- North Side limits access to MOSIS data to appropriate staff.
- The school has a system in place and tracks background checks for all staff. Required background checks are in place prior to hiring.
- Teacher certification requirements are tracked and updated as needed.
- North Side met all DESE required data submission requirements on a timely manner.
- The lunch service seems to be operating smoothly and the school is still pleased with the quality of the food offerings.
- Adequate safeguards are in place to handle cash management.
- Little Bits Foundation assists students with uniform needs.
- Sensitive records are secure.

Teacher Evaluation, Mentoring and Professional Development
- The school has in place a thorough teacher evaluation rubric.
- Most teacher interviews indicate that they’re satisfied with the evaluation process.
- The school has a mentoring plan in place and implements the plan for its new and first year teachers.
- The school has a thorough PD plan in place that includes utilization of PLCs.
- Teacher interviews strongly indicate that discipline is still inconsistent when dealing with some students. Some students are punished for certain behavior while others not.
- Teachers and administration would like to see more character development curriculum/activities.
- Staff interviews indicate that some student’s respect for both staff and other students is problematic, particularly during recess.
- Refer to bullet point concerning a staff survey outcome directly above under (b) Strategic approach towards student achievement.

Communication
- The staff survey and multiple teacher interviews indicate that communication is very inconsistent between leadership and teachers and the message can vary from individual to individual. One interviewee stated, “Who does what job, where do you go and whom do you ask is unclear.”

Operations/HR/Facilities
- Some concerns have been expressed by administration concerning the accuracy of attendance reporting.
- Refer to comment above under (f) Responsibilities to UMSL.
- Due to changes in the front office staff, there are still many operational areas being ironed out, leaving concern that some “bases” may not be covered.

Teacher Evaluation, Mentoring and Professional Development
- Although the school has rubric for evaluating teachers in place, there is no evidence that it has a clearly defined and written process in place.
- The staff survey indicates that only 45% of respondents find the PD Thursday sessions to be helpful.
  - Staff interviews indicate many teachers feel that the topics this year didn’t apply to their specific needs and prefer more
individualized or grade-level based PD. One staff interviewee stated, “It’s a lot of busy work. Teachers want more time to plan with their teammates – less time doing busy paperwork type stuff”

- Interviews indicate that the PLC system for PD was jettisoned to grow capacity for PD related to the new curriculum changes.
### IV. Transformational Curriculum

#### A transformational school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Curriculum and instruction are aligned to the mission, vision and</td>
<td>i. Curriculum scope and sequence provide opportunities for students to reach the school’s mission and vision.</td>
<td>Required Documents: * Schoolwide Curriculum Scope and Sequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>educational philosophy of the school.</td>
<td>ii. Instructional practices provide opportunities for students to reach the school’s mission and vision.</td>
<td>Other Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. Curriculum and instruction are aligned to the educational philosophy of the school as described in the charter.</td>
<td>• Classroom observations – including SPED and Title 1 programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Provides a challenging, engaging, coherent, transformational</td>
<td>i. Implements curriculum that clearly identifies and builds essential and enduring knowledge.</td>
<td>• Student and staff interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>curriculum that meets the academic needs of all students</td>
<td>ii. Structures a curriculum scope and sequence aligned to Missouri’s Common Core Standards.</td>
<td>• Sample unit and lesson plans</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii.Ensures that the curriculum invests and prepares students to extend their learning and be successful beyond the classroom and beyond their school career (life-long learning, career readiness, college readiness, active citizenship).</td>
<td>• Student work</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iv. Uses a variety of instructional techniques to enhance content acquisition and meet the needs of a diverse student population.</td>
<td>• Same as above</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>v. Develops and implements clearly defined strategies to meet the needs of a diverse student population.</td>
<td>Other Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vi. Utilizes high quality instructional materials, including technology, to support the curriculum.</td>
<td>• Same as above</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• MSIP-5 student achievement, attendance and retention data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Curriculum alignment to vision and philosophy:</td>
<td>(b) Challenging, engaging and coherent:</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Interviews from all stakeholders indicate that one of North Sides’ most significant strengths is the high expectations for academic performance and behavior that staff have for all students.</td>
<td>o There is no evidence of a documented curriculum for the Middle School.</td>
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<tr>
<td>o The curriculum aligns to North Side’s vision with its concentration on building strong skills in ELA and math.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(b) Challenging, engaging and coherent:</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Teacher interviews indicate they are confident that school offers a much more rigorous educational opportunity for the school’s students compared to other public schools across the city.</td>
<td>o Multiple teacher interviews indicate concern that the new EL program does not work well for struggling readers who are not at grade level. Several expressed a specific concern that it lacks a phonics component.</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Teacher interviews indicate that the new EL program and math stories are very rigorous.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ One interviewee stated that EL “hits all the standards”.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Assessment Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>o North Side has a thorough and comprehensive student assessment plan in place that includes a variety of assessment instruments, including but not limited to NWEA, NSGA Running Records – Richardson Kit, and Dibels.</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Teacher interviews indicate the ANet assessment is helpful in identifying specific skills students are not mastering.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
V. Empowering Culture of Achievement
A transformational school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| a. Supports students in a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment that invests them in achievement, builds character, increases responsibility, fosters inclusion and inspires joy. | i. Creates a school environment conducive to learning and growth.  
ii. Maintains a safe school environment free of violence and the threat of violence.  
iii. Implements processes to promote student health and wellness.  
iv. Ensures that students feel supported and respected by teachers and staff.  
v. Communicates and consistently implements a comprehensive student discipline policy that complies with the Missouri Safe School Act and the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. | Required Documents: |

Element V: Culture of Achievement

Areas of Strength

- Staff and students express that the staff have very high expectations for all students’ academic and behavioral performance. This is a significant strength of the school.
- Students feel safe at the school this year.
- Many faculty and staff express that school thrives on a strong community of teachers and staff.
- Teachers really appreciate the support of the principal.
- High reading growth expectations are placed on all students beyond their intended grade level measures.
- Teachers express that they feel that the academics at NSCS are at a higher standard than those offered at neighboring public schools.
- The school continues to maintain and thrive on small class sizes.
- The Family Panorama survey indicated the following:
  - School Climate, at 78% favorable, fell into the second-fifth percentile compared to others nationally.

Areas for Growth

- Related to concerns raised under “Discipline” in Element III: School Leadership above, teachers and administration interviews indicate that implementing character development into daily curriculum could curb some of the behavior issues.
- Middle school students would like to see more extra-curricular opportunities.
- The Family Panorama survey indicated the following:
  - School Safety, at 77% favorable, fell into the 40th-59th percentile compared to others nationally. It would be interesting to know how this compares to schools serving populations with similar demographics.
## VI. Transformational Teachers

A transformational teacher:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| a. Understands and believes in the vision and innovative identity of the school. | i. Develops an ambitious, measurable and inspiring course vision and goals aligned to the school’s vision and innovative identity.  
ii. Provides students with a clear picture of what reaching the vision and goals looks like. | Required Documents:  
Other Evidence  
- Teacher and student surveys and interviews  
- Classroom observations |
| b. Takes responsibility for investing students in reaching their academic and personal growth goals. | i. Believes that all students can learn.  
ii. Holds high expectations for all students  
iii. Inspires and motivates students to reach the vision and goals.  
iv. Builds a strong culture of achievement where the classroom environment is conducive to learning and growing.  
v. Builds strong, trusting relationships with students and their families.  
vii. Is passionate about the content of the curriculum and conveys that passion to students. | Required Documents:  
Other Evidence  
- Teacher surveys and interviews  
- Classroom observations  
- Student and parent surveys and interviews  
- Course scope and sequence, unit and lesson plans |
| c. Develops and/or implements curriculum that is strongly aligned to student academic achievement and personal growth goals | i. Designs a course scope and sequence that is tightly aligned to the vision and goals.  
ii. Designs a course that engages students in both critical thinking and meaningful discourse around enduring understandings and essential questions.  
iii. Designs units and lessons that:  
- Are tightly aligned to course learning objectives and desired student outcomes.  
- Build on what students already know and do and provide the scaffolding they need to reach the level of success commensurate with the vision and goals.  
- Engage students with thought-provoking and ambiguous texts/materials that challenge their thinking and feelings.  
- Give students opportunities to conduct research to answer a question, explore and take a stand on an issue, or develop solutions to a problem.  
- Use writing to communicate their reflections and understandings.  
- Incorporate a variety of teaching methods that meet the needs of diverse student learning styles. | Required Documents:  
Other Evidence  
- School leader/Curriculum leader interview  
- Teacher surveys and interviews  
- Classroom observations  
- Course scope and sequence, unit and lesson plans  
- Assessment plans/performance tracking systems  
- Student performance data (including state, formative and internal benchmark assessments) |
### Element VI: Teachers

#### Areas of Strength

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belief in the vision:</th>
<th>Student investment:</th>
<th>Curriculum development and implementation:</th>
<th>Instructional practice:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o School leader interviews indicate that one of North Side’s significant strengths is the talent and dedication of its teaching staff.</td>
<td>o As stated in Element V: Culture of Achievement above, staff and students express that the staff have very high expectations for each students’ future.</td>
<td>o Most classrooms have exemplary classroom management and it is very clear routines and procedures are in place.</td>
<td>o Observations indicate:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Teachers hold high expectations for their students; with equal emphasis on academics and social skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Staff interviews indicate that collaboration is strong among the teaching staff.</td>
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</table>

#### Areas for Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belief in the vision:</th>
<th>Student investment:</th>
<th>Curriculum development and implementation:</th>
<th>Instructional practice:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o The ED and teachers share a passion for North Side’s mission. Consider how to leverage this common belief to improve morale.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o The administration would like to see data teams focus more on using collected data to inform instructional decisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**d.** Employs best instructional practices to engage students in learning and raise academic achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i. Keeps instruction student centered and inquiry oriented</th>
<th>ii. Continually orients students to content</th>
<th>iii. Continually orients students to each other</th>
<th>iv. Continually checks for student understanding and makes appropriate adjustments as necessary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Required Documents:**

**Other Evidence**

- School leader/Curriculum leader interviews
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

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**e.** Tracks student progress towards academic and personal growth goals and makes adjustments as necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i. Uses multiple forms of assessment, including growth-measures assessments, to inform instructional decision-making.</th>
<th>ii. Evaluates students’ progress towards meeting course and school performance goals and modifies goals, as needed, to improve student achievement.</th>
<th>iii. Tracks and disseminates growth data for students over time using both norm referenced measures and state assessments.</th>
<th>iv. Builds student skills in tracking their own progress and motivates them to take charge of their own academic and personal growth.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v. Pursues professional development opportunities to address areas for growth in their own teaching.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Required Documents:**

**Other Evidence**

- School leader/Curriculum leader interviews
- Classroom observations
- Teacher surveys
- Course scope and sequence, unit and lesson plans
- Assessment plans/performance tracking systems
- Student performance data (including state, formative and internal benchmark assessments)
- Teachers employ a wide variety of grouping modes including whole group, small group, and independent work.
- Kids seem familiar with classroom expectations and procedures. Pacing is good and student time on task is high.
- Walls are very print rich.
- Lessons in classrooms involving younger children are very tactile (clapping and stomping).
- Teachers take advantage of technology by integrating it into their lessons.
- Anchor charts are prevalent in almost all classrooms.
- Classrooms have word walls organized by subject.
- Some classrooms have small F/P leveled libraries to support guided reading instruction.
- The posted schedule provides time for whole group and guided reading instruction.

(e) Student progress-tracking:
- Most classrooms have student progress trackers on the walls
- Teacher employ a variety of formative assessments – in addition to schoolwide instruments such as ANet – to track student progress.
- Teachers celebrate individual achievements of students.
### VII. Engaged Parents and Community

A transformational school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Engages parents and community stakeholders in the vision and mission of the school</td>
<td>i. Develops and implements an effective communications plan consistently engaging the community in becoming educated regarding quality education and developing support for their charter school</td>
<td>Documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Ensures the active engagement of administrators, board members, parents, and staff in communication and outreach planning and implementation</td>
<td>Other Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. Communicates and engages all stakeholders in the mission and vision of the school</td>
<td>• Parent interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iv. Involves students, parents, and community members as part of the school’s support system.</td>
<td>• Parent and community communication/involvement plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>v. Fosters strong relationships between school staff and parents.</td>
<td>• Data on parent and community participation in school events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent-teacher contact data</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Newsletters and other communications</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Parent survey data</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Board meeting agendas, notices, minutes and supporting documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Seeks input from relevant, critical, impacted stakeholders</td>
<td>i. Establishes regular opportunities and methods of communication among the stakeholders, administration, and the board</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Conducts its meetings regularly and in an open, organized, and effective manner</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>iii. Operates within the requirements of the Missouri Sunshine Law ensuring board meeting agendas and meeting minutes are posted in a timely manner for broad public review and all state non-profit requirements are met</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Element VII: Parents and Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Strength</th>
<th>Areas for Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Parent and community engagement:</td>
<td>(a) Parent and community engagement:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Multiple staff interviews cite family support as a significant strength of the school.</td>
<td>o The Panorama survey indicated the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Teachers use a variety of methods to communicate with families—social media, email, phone calls, etc.</td>
<td>▪ Barriers to engagement, at 77% favorable, fell into the bottom-fifth percentile compared to others nationally – but it would be interesting to know how this result compares to schools serving populations with similar demographics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Teachers use class dojo to communicate with parents.</td>
<td>(b) Input from stakeholders:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The Panorama survey indicated the following:</td>
<td>o The Panorama survey indicated that a significant number of respondents are interested in taking adult education classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Family Engagement, at 36% favorable, fell into the top-fifth percentile compared to others nationally.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o North Side administered a survey of all families provided by Panorama.</td>
<td>o The Panorama instrument is very useful, but UMSL recommends administering a separate survey to families that seeks input on other facets of North Side’s program, including questions on such topics as school leadership, curriculum and instruction, student support, teaching staff, discipline, transportation, food service and communication.</td>
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</table>
## VIII. Comprehensive Student Support System

The support staff of a transformational school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| a. Develops and utilizes a comprehensive, developmental student support system that proactively assists all students to develop and apply skills for maximum academic, career, and personal/social growth during the school years. | i. Collects and uses academic, behavior and attendance data to: o Plan appropriate programs for students both individually and collectively. o Monitor student performance and provide appropriate interventions in cooperation with all stakeholders for student success. ii. Assists all students with developing academic, career, and personal/social skills; helping them to utilize reasoning, understand connections and make complex choices. iii. Uses a variety of activities, resources and strategies; including individual and group counseling, classroom presentations, academic advising, parent education and other responsive services. | Required Documents:  
• SPED Compliance Plans (IDEA & 504)  
• ELL Intervention Policy  
• Title I Needs Assessment and Plan  
Other Evidence  
• Student support team interviews  
• School leader interviews |
| b. Advocates for students and provides professional expertise to help school personnel, parents/guardians and community members to increase the effectiveness of student success. | i. Proactively facilitates communication and collaboration within and among the school, home and community to promote and build trust, understanding and partnerships with all segments of the school community. ii. Seeks solutions and provide referrals to overcome barriers to effective involvement in education and success of students. | Required Documents:  
Other Evidence  
• Student support team interviews  
• School leader interviews  
• Staff, student and parent surveys |
| c. Develops and implements policies and procedures to ensure that all children with disabilities are identified and evaluated; and if eligible, receive services that meet their specific needs. | i. Ensure that teachers have the expertise to identify students who may have special needs and communicates regularly with teachers to share concerns. ii. Follows protocol related to parent concerns in a timely manner. iii. Develops and implements a system (internal or external) to evaluate students. iv. Develops and implements appropriate services that meet each student’s individual needs. v. Is in compliance with all special education statutes and procedures. | Required Documents:  
Other Evidence  
• Student support team interviews  
• School leader interviews  
• DESE CAPs  
• Staff, student and parent surveys |
| d. Develops and implements policies and procedures to ensure that all children who qualify as homeless receive all necessary | i. Develops and implements a plan that’s in compliance with state and federal guidelines that ensures homeless students have an equal opportunity to a public education. | Required Documents:  
• Homeless Student Policy  
Other Evidence  
• Student support team interviews |
services and support to meet their specific needs.

| e. Develops and implements policies and procedures to ensure that all children who qualify as ELL receive necessary services and support to meet their specific needs. | i. Develops and implements a plan that’s in compliance with state and federal guidelines that ensures ELL students receive necessary services and support to meet their specific needs. | Required Documents:
• ELL Intervention Plan

Other Evidence
• Student support team interviews
• School leader interviews
• DESE compliance reports
• Staff, student and parent surveys

Element VIII: Student Support System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Strength</th>
<th>Areas for Growth</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Some teachers expressed concern that North Side needs a data system for SPED to track student progress.</td>
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</table>

Dr. Thurma DeLoach’s Review

Dyslexia Screening and Supports

• As of August 2019, all MO public schools are required to annually screen students for potential reading challenges related to dyslexia. Screening results are reported to DESE as part of the June MOSIS data collection cycle. The law applies to all students in grades KG-3 and for all students known to have reading deficits in grades 4 through high school.
  o The elementary principal coordinated dyslexia screening for the elementary campus. Dibels screening tools were used to screen all students in grade 1 through 4 in September and KG-4 in December/January. Additional screening is planned for the spring 2020. Classroom teachers conducted the screenings.
  o Grade level teams (KG-grade 4) met after the fall screening cycle to review screening results and to identify students to participate in the Sonday Reading Intervention.
  o Elementary teachers reported they found the Dibels screening results to be helpful in figuring out which students needed additional intervention and in understanding the key components of literacy that students were struggling to acquire (e.g. specific phonemic competencies).
• The Sonday Reading program was purchased in the prior school year as a Tier 3 intervention for students with significant delays in reading. Elementary Instructional Assistants implement this program for small group intervention. Instructional Assistants are coached by a retired

Dyslexia Screening and Supports

• North Side Middle School did not conduct dyslexia screening this fall or winter. Last year this process was coordinated by the middle school special education teacher; however, a new person is now in this role and was unaware of this requirement.
  o It is recommended that a middle school staff person be assigned to coordinate dyslexia screening for grades 5-8 annually, e.g. one of the ELA teachers, the special education teacher or the instructional coach (planned for 2020-21 SY). Middle School ELA teachers are capable of administering the assessments.
  o Middle School ELA teachers should review dyslexia screening results after each screening cycle (fall, winter, spring) to determine which students require additional intervention or supports and which students are making appropriate progress in reading development.
  o The results of MS screening should be shared with all content teachers and in-class supports/accommodations provided as needed.
• Parent notification of the screening results is required by DESE. Parents of elementary students were not notified of the screening results this year.
  o It is not too late to send parents written notifications/letters with the winter and spring screening results for their children.
teacher on implementation of Sunday. Teachers reported they like this program and that many students appear to be making progress.

- Additional Tier 2 reading intervention is provided through small guided reading groups and PALS strategies in elementary classrooms. Teachers reported that special education teachers sometimes help them figure out additional reading supports.
- Elementary principal expressed interest in additional training in research-based literacy instruction. North Side might consider sending a team of primary grade teachers, the special education literacy teacher, and the elementary principal to LETRS training offered through St. Louis RPDC.
  - LETRS is recommended and supported by DESE for intensive teacher development in the teaching of reading. This training focuses on how children develop literacy competencies and use of science-based instructional practices to teach young children. LETRS is not specific to any commercially published reading program.

Suicide-bullying Policy and Prevention/Intervention Procedures
- Starting in July 2019, all MO public schools are required to have board adopted policy and procedures for suicide and bullying prevention/intervention. Although this requirement may not apply to public charter schools, best practice supports schools developing prevention/intervention/post-vention procedures for this significant mental health issue in youth. The North Side Board adopted this policy in January 2020. The policy draft was included in the Parental Handbook.
- The elementary principal and Educational Support Counselor trained the elementary staff on the suicide policy in October 2019.
- The ESC is identified as the person responsible for responding to any reports of suicide ideation. She is responsible for suicide risk assessments and follow up with parents. As a BJC employee, she is expected to follow the BJC protocol for suicide assessment and follow up.
- North Side Community School—Middle School campus has a full time clinical social worker on staff. The social worker provides crisis intervention and support for several middle school students who have experienced suicidal ideation.

- Information about the dyslexia screening requirements could be included in the parent handbook including how North Side will implement the requirements of the MO law.
- Staff interviews suggested that the current literacy program may not incorporate sufficient explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics. If these are not strong components in the primary grades, consideration should be given to implementing additional phonemic awareness and phonics instruction for all students or for those whose screening results showed deficits in these fundamental area (e.g. Michael Heggerty’s Phonemic Awareness program)
- North Side does not currently have a literacy specialist /instructional coach on staff to coach classroom teachers or to guide/provide intervention for students who need more than core literacy instruction.
  - It is recommended that North Side determine if funding could be allocated in the near future to add a K-8 literacy specialist to the instructional leadership team. This staff person could lead the screening process, develop the screening calendar, review screening data with teachers, identify evidence-based interventions for use in the classroom as well as provide pull-out intervention for students with the greatest needs.

Suicide-bullying Policy and Prevention/Intervention Procedures
- Several students were reported to be thinking about self-harm during the school year. Written procedures for documentation of suicide and bullying reports as well as the actions taken to protect the students involved are needed.
  - NSCS Middle School may consider providing “Trusted Adult” training for teachers. This is a 2-hour training offered through CHADS Coalition with a goal of helping adults develop strong listening, relationship and coaching skills for students who are struggling with social-emotional issues.
- A school-wide approach to bullying prevention has not been adopted at North Side. Teachers are aware bullying behaviors (e.g. dominance and aggression) occur among some students.
  - Specific training on recognizing bullying behaviors and what staff need to do when they see something is recommended.
Responsive Support Services for Students with Social-Emotional-Behavior (SEB) Challenges

- School administration and teachers recognize that North Side students experience frequent SEB challenges. The elementary principal convened a work group in June 2019 to begin discussions on Tiered Supported and Interventions for SEB needs. Several recommendations from this work group have been implemented this year
  - The elementary principal and student support staff (special education teachers and Educational Support Counselor) meet quarterly with each grade level team to discuss individual students who are experiencing social-emotional-behavioral challenges. The team problem solves interventions and supports to assist the student. Special education teachers and the ESC work with classroom teachers to implement identified interventions. Notes are kept and progress is reviewed at follow up meetings.
  - The assistant principal and educational support counselor are collaborating on developing restorative options in lieu of OSS including restorative projects and anxiety reducing supports for students. The assistant principal limits the assignment of out of school suspensions days when possible.
  - The assistant principal facilitates a character education program—utilizing a North Side Knights character word of the month (e.g. Just, Unapologetic, Self-disciplined, Tenacious, Inquisitive & Courteous, Considerate, Enthusiastic) and weekly classroom lessons are taught during morning community meetings.
  - The assistant principal visited several area schools that use restorative practices, sensory-motor, and behavioral support programming. He also participated in Character Plus workshops on restorative practices. He is using these models to help develop behavior intervention and supports appropriate for North Side.
  - 2nd Step was identified as a possible school-wide Social-emotional Learning Program. NSCS was identified as a partner with CHADS Coalition to implement 2nd Step in the fall 2020, pending Spirit of St Louis grant funding.

- Staff training on de-escalation techniques is scheduled for March 20, 2020. (Note: This was postponed after school closure due to the pandemic; it should be re-scheduled for the start of school in the fall)

Responsive Support Services for Students with Social-Emotional-Behavior (SEB) Challenges

- Regular collaboration between the elementary ESC and MS Social Worker is recommended to:
  - promote sharing of resources
  - provide consistency of procedures (e.g. suicide/bullying interventions and documentation, trauma training, de-escalation training, SRSS administration and review)
  - support collaborative problem solving for students with challenging needs.

- Consideration should be given to hiring a behavior specialist to develop and implement evidence-based behavior support services responsive to the North Side students and families. This person could:
  - Work directly with administration to create/implement a school-wide framework for Tier 1 and 2 SEB supports for students
  - Collaborate with the ESC on Tier 3 interventions
  - Conduct Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs),
  - Develop behavior improvement plans (BIPs)
  - Provide social-emotional-behavioral interventions (e.g. self-regulation strategies, sensory/motor interventions for anxiety etc.)

- The North Side school community is at high risk for trauma-related issues. On-going training and support in the area should be a high priority for annual staff PD.

With the addition of a middle school social worker, the active caseload for the elementary ESC has been reduced to a more manageable
number—30- to 40 students. She meets regularly with the assistant principal and her BJC supervisor to review caseload needs, interventions, and supports. Administration reports improved ESC communication this year.

- The reviewer observed classroom behavioral routines being taught/reviewed in several classrooms. These routines support student engagement and provide clarity about expectations for behavior during partner work, transitions, independent work time, clean up etc.
- Buddy rooms are used for students who need a “short time away” from the classroom. This appears to be a helpful behavior intervention,

**Special Education**

- The Special Education coordinator is responsible for monitoring and ensuring North Side meets all DESE compliance requirements.
  
  - The special education coordinator manages all referrals for special education evaluation including conducting the Review of Existing Data meetings, time-line documentation, and eligibility staffing—evaluations are provided through contract with a private provider.
  
  - The special education coordinator schedules, facilitates and writes all IEPs. Special education teachers participate in this process—providing input on appropriate goals and progress monitoring data. Teachers report they like this structure as they are able to focus on instruction.
  
  - Four Individual student files were reviewed during this spring review—2 initial evaluations and IEPs and 2 transfer files. All files were found to be in good order with all required documentation available for review.

- The North Side special education staff is comprised of 2 elementary and one middle school teachers. Speech/Language and OT services are provided through contract with a private agency
  
  - Elementary services are provided through classroom pull out in a small separate building away from the general education classrooms.
  
  - Both elementary teachers serve all grade levels—one teacher focuses on reading and the other on writing, math, and social skills.
  
  - Collaboration with general education teachers is conducted through email and text messages primarily. Collaboration through face to face meetings has not been possible due to

**Special Education**

- As a public charter school, North Side must accept and be prepared to serve all students who reside within the North Side Community School service area—regardless of disability or special needs. Earlier in the year, staff expressed concern about administrative screening of applications and discouraging enrollment of students with IEPs or other identified special needs.
  
  - Enrollment procedures need to be clarified in writing. Enrollment secretary should review all applications for any indication of IEP or special needs and immediately notify the special education coordinator, ESC, school nurse or principal to follow up on the individualized planning or services to support the student’s participation at North Side. Disability or special needs status cannot influence enrollment decisions.
  
  - The Executive Director and Board of Education should be informed of enrollments that may require individualized planning or re-allocation of resources; however, responsibility for determining and providing these services resides with the student’s IEP or student services team.

- Numerous staff expressed concern about the need for additional student support staff at both campuses. Special education caseloads are large due to the intensity of need among the students served through IEPs. Elementary services are provided as pull out lessons—because there is not sufficient teaching staff to provide push-in or co-teaching support in the general education classroom. No supports are available at the Early Childhood center for Pre-Kg or KG students with IEPs or special needs.
  
  - Consideration should be given to adding a 3rd special education teacher to the elementary campus and assigning special education teachers to grade level teams—Pre-K/KG,
the full teaching schedule of the spec ed teachers and the remote location of their classrooms.

- One of the special education teachers maintains a “Share Folder” of strategies and resources for students with IEPs for classroom teachers.
- General education teachers report that students with IEPs are getting the services they require and are making progress.
- Middle school special education services are a combination of pull out and push in. Instructional minutes for middle school students with IEPs are significant and do not allow time for face to face collaboration or intervention support for students without IEPs. Teachers collaborate informally.
- Special education teachers report the Special Education coordinator provides appropriate staff support and appreciate that she takes the lead for monitoring compliance requirements, allowing them to focus on teaching. Elementary special education teachers work closely with the coordinator to problem solve specific student needs. They appear to have a strong collaborative team.
- IEP goals and instruction are loosely based on grade level expectations and instructional goals. There is strong interest among special education staff and NSCS administration in moving to standard-based IEPs. St. Louis RPDC offers this training.

- NSCS no longer requires students be retained for a year prior to evaluation for special education. This is a significant and necessary change.
  - It is recommended that specific referral procedures be written that include a multi-disciplinary team review of the referral concerns and available data to determine if a disability should be suspected. The building administrator, classroom teacher, and special education coordinator are the recommended team for making this decision. Team decisions should be documented.
  - These new procedures should be shared with teachers at the start of the new school year.

School Health/Nursing Services
- North Side applied for and received a grant to fund a full-time school nurse through Children’s Hospital—Healthy Kids, Healthy Minds starting in the 2019-20 SY. A full time HKHM nurse supervised by Children’s Hospital is now on campus.

1st/2nd grade, 3rd/4th grade. As active grade level team members—these teachers could work directly in the classrooms with students with IEP or other special needs as well as provide resource minutes. They could focus on current grade level curriculum and learning goals—assisting caseload students to meet higher level expectations. Research demonstrates that students achieve better outcomes when supports and services are provided in the general education classroom via push-in or co-teaching models.

- Targeted training on push-in and co-teaching practices should be provided for special education and classroom teachers who have clusters of students with IEPs in their classrooms.

- Requiring students with IEPs to walk across campus or move from the Early Childhood Campus to receive special education services is contrary to inclusionary expectations for students with IEPs. Opportunities for face to face collaboration and in class support are severely limited by the physical distance between special and general education.
  - Re-locating special education services back into the elementary school buildings should be considered by the administrative team.

- Concerns were expressed that the IEP team is not empowered to consider a full range of placement options—e.g. para-professional support in the general ed classroom, co-teaching or push-in special education services.
  - Para-professional support will be necessary for some students with disabilities. North Side Administration should allocate funds as part of the annual budget to provide such support when the IEP team determines this support is necessary.
  - The administrator serving in the role of LEA representative at the IEP meeting is responsible for committing necessary NSCS resources. Whoever is in this role needs to be trusted and empowered to make these decisions.

School Health/Nursing Services
- Access to the school nurse is very limited at the Middle School Campus. Staff expressed concern that as the middle school campus grows to include students in 8th grade, student health and personal hygiene needs cannot be addressed adequately by a part time nurse on this campus.
Health room is accessed through the gymnasium. It is well equipped—including access to water, a refrigerator, and a near-by restroom.

- Several health clinics were offered this year including hearing, vision, asthma.
- A system for students to receive daily medication and asthma inhalers is in place.

- The nurse stated that she feels supported and valued by the NSCS staff and families.
- Teachers expressed appreciation for access to a full-time nurse on the elementary campus.
- The nurse identified priorities for next school year:
  - Health and hygiene education for students
  - Immunization clinic
  - Self-care training for students with chronic health conditions
- NSCS administration is considering a future partnership with Affinia Health—a federally qualified health care center— that would provide on campus health care for students and possibly families free of charge. North Side will need to allocate appropriate space and utilities for a clinic.

- Consideration should be given to staffing a full-time nurse for the middle school campus. The health and hygiene needs of these students increase as they get older and access to a full time health resource on campus would provide timely assistance to these students.
- Some staff expressed the importance of greater visibility of the nurse throughout the school day. The location of the health room is within the gymnasium and this location makes it difficult for students and staff to see or interact with her regularly.
  - The nurse should routinely visit each building on campus and touch base with students and staff outside of the health room.
  - Classroom lessons on hygiene and other common wellness themes—diet, exercise, sleep, mental health—provided by the school nurse would help develop more collaborative relationships with the teaching staff, students, and families.
- The school nurse is a key contact for parents on all health-related issues and topics. Consideration should be given to offering health related workshops and/or health fairs for families on an annual basis. Children’s Hospital would be a strong partner in providing these resources for parents.
- The school nurse and social workers should encourage and assist all families to determine Medicaid eligibility. Medicaid enrollment in Missouri has been challenging for families this year and many children have been dropped from the eligibility. Medicaid enrollment assistance could be included during start of the year parent involvement activities or as part of enrollment. The NSCS enrollment application could include questions to determine if students have private health insurance, are insured through MO HealthNet (Medicaid) or have no insurance.
- Some confusion was expressed about whose role it is to contact parents when a child’s medication needs to be re-filled for administration at school.
- Monitoring of medication needs and communication with families about prescription refills at school is typically the role of the school nurse.

Other
- An annual calendar of required staff training should be developed and staff responsible for providing/arranging for the training identified. Required annual training specifically related to student support services includes:
  - Dyslexia training—2 hours minimum annually
- NSCS does not currently have any students identified as ELL. The enrollment form does include the required home language survey questions to assist in identification of ELL students. However, specific procedures for what the school will do when a student is identified through the home language survey are not in place. An ELL policy
- De-escalation techniques used when students start to escalate behaviors
- Initial or re-fresh physical restraint training for staff members authorized to restrain students who have escalated to the point of being a danger to self or others
- Suicide/bullying awareness and procedures
- Child abuse or neglect awareness and reporting

Consideration should be given to re-establishing a partnership with UMSL or Webster University school psychology departments to provide year-long internships. This is a training partnership that typically costs the school ½ of other instructional support positions. School psychologist interns are trained to provide a variety of student support service functions including:
- Dyslexia screening, data-review, and intervention planning with teachers or grade level teams
- Special education evaluation—including referral, Review of Existing Data, assessment, meeting facilitation, report writing
- Data-based problem solving, interventions and progress monitoring
- Academic (reading, writing, math) interventions
- Social-emotional-behavioral (including executive functioning) interventions,
- Functional behavioral assessments
- Behavior improvement planning.

Continuity of Instruction During School Closure: Student Support Services

- Student Support Services staff (special education, social work and mental health counseling) planned for continuity of services during the unanticipated school closure in March 2020. Services are provided via a variety of virtual supports --Google Classroom, FaceTime, Zoom, email, phone contact. Printed work packets were also sent home. As needed, Chromebooks and Hot Spots were provided to students.
  - Special education and classroom teachers collaborate to support students with IEPs to access classroom instruction virtually. Special education teachers sometimes join Google classroom lessons to provide direct support.
  - All student special education instructional sessions and parent contacts are documented.
  - OT and Speech Language services were initially delayed; however, planning for provision of these services is underway.
  - Student participation and progress on IEP goals is monitored.
o Evaluation timelines may not be met due to social distancing requirements. All pending evaluations will be conducted when face to face assessments can be conducted.

o Annual IEP reviews due this spring will be conducted virtually.

• Educational Support Counselor and School Social Worker are contacting families regularly to assist with resources and supports during school closure. Caseload students receive counseling supports via phone, email, FaceTime etc.

• The School nurse with support from Children’s Hospital is available during this school closure to assist families. Per her Children’s Hospital supervisor, she is at the school site daily to take temperatures as a screening for potential covid-19 symptoms.

• The responsiveness and flexibility of North Side’s student support staff during this unprecedented and challenging pandemic is to be commended.