Washoe County School District

High Desert Montessori

Classification: 2 Star School

ATSI

2026-2027 School Improvement Plan

District Approval Date:
September 10, 2026

Generated by Plan4Learning.com
November 10, 2026 at 01:01 PM

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Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Student Success

Areas of Strength

Positive Trends & Strengths:

2026 SBAC Scores: Elementary's Remarkable Growth:

The Elementary is demonstrating excellent forward momentum,

proudly raising its Overall Star Rating from 1 star to 2. This positive shift is driven by a substantial increase in the Star Rating Index Score, which landed at a 48 for the 2025-2026 school year. This is only 2 points away from a 3 star rating. Such noteworthy advancement highlights the dedicated efforts across core academic disciplines.

Based on 2026 SBAC scores: Strong academic progress:

We are observing highly encouraging development across several

academic metrics. The elementary school achieved exceptional progress in narrowing both math and ELA opportunity gaps, while

effectively doubling its SBAC pooled proficiency score from 8 to 15. Concurrently, the Elementary School achieved a bright spot in

SBAC Grade 3 Reading, with scores elevating from 1 to 3.

Building on Foundational Success:

These positive advancements in SBAC performance at the Elementary School establish a

robust baseline for future growth. They demonstrate that our fundamental instructional methods are yielding results and that

students are successfully mastering critical competencies.

Progress Monitoring:

During the 2025-2026 school year, we saw positive gains in i-Ready scores, indicating students' SBAC

scores should improve if correlations are correct.

In absenteeism:

A major focus in the 25-26 school year was reducing chronic absenteeism. Based on preliminary calculations, the

elementary school reduced chronic absenteeism rates from 23.4% to 5.38%. In the middle school, the rate was reduced from

34.2% to 12.33%.

Areas for Growth

While celebrating our successes, there are obvious opportunities for us to unite and focus our efforts.

Elevate Elementary School's Star Rating:

The elementary school has a clear opening to turn recent trends around. We can look to the successful strategies utilized by the middle school, which drove substantial gains in their index score and academic performance. A unified effort to exchange these proven methods will be essential.

Continue to prioritize student attendance:

Maintaining a strong focus on chronic absenteeism remains a key priority for both the Elementary and Middle School, as recent scores in this metric have dipped. This serves as an ideal moment to introduce a school-wide campaign centered on improving daily attendance. Through creative outreach and student support, we can ensure every child is in class and ready to learn.

Strengthen ELA Growth:

While the middle school is on an upward trajectory across most indicators, ELA MGP scores have recently dropped. This underscores an opportunity to refine our literacy instruction so it mirrors the outstanding growth we are currently witnessing in mathematics and other subjects.

Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	Specific curriculum designed to provide language instruction to ELLs is difficult to justify with such a limited size.	Partnership with WSCD ELL department for curriculum, including ELLevation and Lexia.
Foster/Homeless	Students experiencing foster care or housing instability may face barriers to consistent attendance, academic progress, and a strong sense of belonging at school.	HDMS will Implement a consistent school wide support system that provides foster and housing-insecure students with individualized academic, social-emotional, and basic-needs support. Assign a staff member to monitor attendance, progress, and student needs while coordinating with families and community resources.
Free and Reduced Lunch	HDMS was designated in ATSI school in 2025 for the FRL population in the elementary school, with significant challenges in growth, pulled proficiency, and chronic absenteeism.	Through the MTSS process, we are working to identify students with specific academic needs and designing interventions to help those students. We are working with families to reduce the problem of absenteeism through better monitoring and check ins with families, and working with outside agencies to provide resources to FRL families.

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	Not applicable to HDMS's population	N/A
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Getting the message to families with home languages other than English.	More bilingual staff have been added to address this need. Also, use of AI tools help to translate information to home languages.
Students with IEPs	HDMS experiences difficulty meeting the needs of students with IEPs due to a significant reduction in state funding for special education services, resulting in limited resources and support.	HDMS experiences difficulty meeting the needs of IEP students with a significant reduction in local sped funding from the state. HDMS is actively looking into grants and other funding opportunities to support a diverse population of students with IEP's.

Problem Statements Identifying Student Success Needs

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	SBAC scores are not growing as fast as we would hope across subgroups	SBAC tests do not align with Montessori Pedagogy
2 ★	School focus on literacy shows great growth in reading but writing is not improving at the same rate. Students are struggling with the writing process specifically within different writing genres. Students are coming into 1st grade with letter and literacy decoding, but encoding into the writing process is lacking	Students do not have access to examples of grade-level writing that meets standards. We do not have a cohesive, vertically aligned curriculum map and Montessori pedagogy can be inconsistent across training centers.
3 ★	Students are low-performing in mathematics, specifically when applying mathematical concepts and procedures.	Students struggle with comprehending real-world mathematical problems (Word Problems) and applying concepts and procedures.

★ = Priority

Adult Learning Culture

Areas of Strength

The majority of our teaching faculty are either fully Montessori certified or actively pursuing their certification, besides holding Nevada state teaching licenses in their respective fields. Any educators who have not yet completed this specialized credentialing are currently participating in a training program or are scheduled to enroll before the conclusion of the current school year. Furthermore, our staff regularly engages in rigorous professional development led by both internal and external experts, and faculty participate in weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings dedicated to collaborative lesson planning and child study.

Our school remains dedicated to fully addressing the diverse needs of all students in alignment with Nevada academic content standards, while firmly maintaining the integrity of our core Montessori principles.

2025 Staff Climate Survey:

Expectations of success: 82%

Fairness and Respect: 73%

Home-School Communication- 90%

Parent involvement- 70%

Quality of WCSD-32%

Safety-84%

Social Emotional Learning- 69%

Staff Collaboration- 73%

Staff-Student Relationships- 89%

Student Behaviors- 82%

Work Stress- 57%

The results of this survey are based on responses from 24 HDMS staff members.

Areas for Growth

High Desert Montessori faculty and staff possess deep expertise and training in Montessori pedagogy and philosophy. They excel at seamlessly integrating this educational approach with the demands and regulations of a public school setting. In light of recent staff turnover, providing dedicated Montessori coaching and mentorship will be essential to guide and support our incoming

educators.

To further aid this transition, HDMS will be implementing a new curriculum developed in collaboration with The California Montessori Project. This curriculum is fully aligned with both Common Core standards and Montessori principles, providing clear, structured guidance for teachers who are still in the process of completing their formal Montessori training.

High Desert Montessori will be collecting Staff Climate Surveys for the 2026-2027 School year in addition to conducting Teacher Exit/Transfer Surveys for the 2026-2027 School year.

Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	More staff need to be trained in ELL but training opportunities are limited and time is a factor with other Montessori priorities	Montessori pedagogy inherently addresses ELL, but we are actively searching for ELL PD opportunities through sources like NASA. PD also needs to be provided for Lexia Learning and ELLevation
Foster/Homeless	Not applicable to HDMS's population	N/A
Free and Reduced Lunch	Identifying ways to target the specific needs of FRL students is difficult with the need to respect privacy	Lesson study and the MTSS process helps teachers to better address the needs of all students, including those with FRL status.
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	Not applicable to HDMS's population	N/A
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	HDMS is continuing to strengthen staff capacity to recognize and address the unique needs and experiences of racial and ethnic minority students and families.	HDMS will provide ongoing professional learning and resources focused on culturally responsive practices, helping staff better understand and address the diverse cultural backgrounds and needs of all students.
Students with IEPs	Teachers looking for additional strategies to address the needs of students with disabilities	HDMS SPED staff will continue to advise regular classroom teachers on strategies to address the specific needs of diverse students on IEPs.

Problem Statements Identifying Adult Learning Culture Needs

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Students, specifically in the elementary did not perform well in state standardized tests in the area of science and scores in reading and math are lower than expected	Montessori pedagogy and philosophy do not easily align with Common Core and Next Generation science standards
2 ★	Montessori curriculum delivery is inconsistent across the staff at High Desert Montessori and levels	The level of training and specific training institutions are different among staff members at all levels.
3 ★	Lack of clear understanding of academic expectations for advancement to the next level (primary to lower el, lower el to upper el, etc.)	Focus for PLC and vertical teams on this important subject has been lacking

★ = Priority

Connectedness

Areas of Strength

High Desert Montessori maintains a deeply rooted focus on social and emotional development through our Montessori foundation. Our experienced mental health professional and school counselor continues to provide essential support to our students and families, ensuring social-emotional learning remains integrated into our daily practice. This commitment reinforces our school's enduring culture of community, which serves to uplift and support our families, faculty, and students alike.

Heading into the new year, we continue to prioritize highly transparent and consistent parent communication. We utilize a variety of modern tools, including Transparent Classroom, our regular school newsletter, an active social media presence, and direct text blasts, to ensure our families stay fully informed about upcoming events, community activities, and individual student progress.

Areas for Growth

High Desert Montessori remains dedicated to building meaningful connections with our families, recognizing that our vibrant community is our most valuable asset. Moving forward into the new school year, we will actively encourage parent volunteerism both inside the classroom and during community-wide events. To make participation as accessible as possible, we are focused on optimizing our event scheduling to accommodate busy family calendars. Additionally, we will be implementing translation services at all parent outreach events to ensure inclusivity, while simultaneously expanding our parent education opportunities to better support our families.

Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	Bilingual communication with families who do not speak English is difficult	We have been able to utilize bilingual staff, as well as technological tools including AI to bridge this gap.Additionally, in 25-26 as well as 26-27, we have added a number of bilingual staff to help bridge this gap.
Foster/Homeless	Not applicable to HDMS population	N/A

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Free and Reduced Lunch	Parents needing resources outside the school to help meet the needs of their children.	We have made partnerships with the family resource center and children's cabinet to address those family's needs.
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	Not applicable to HDMS population	N/A
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Bilingual communication with families who do not speak English is difficult	We have been able to utilize bilingual staff, as well as technological tools including AI to bridge this gap.Additionally, in 25-26 as well as 26-27, we have added a number of bilingual staff to help bridge this gap.
Students with IEPs	In the area of connectedness, all families of students regardless of disability are receive the same communication and volunteer opportunities as every other family.	N/A

Problem Statements Identifying Connectedness Needs

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Many parents still do not know how to support their children both in school and at home.	Parents are not provided with consistent information and resources to help their child at home
2 ★	Confusion exists about what is expected of students at our school and how home can support the student	Students and parents are not provided with clear expectations of what a Montessori curriculum entails

★ = Priority

Priority Problem Statements

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	SBAC scores are not growing as fast as we would hope across subgroups	SBAC tests do not align with Montessori Pedagogy
2 ★	School focus on literacy shows great growth in reading but writing is not improving at the same rate. Students are struggling with the writing process specifically within different writing genres. Students are coming into 1st grade with letter and literacy decoding, but encoding into the writing process is lacking	Students do not have access to examples of grade-level writing that meets standards. We do not have a cohesive, vertically aligned curriculum map and Montessori pedagogy can be inconsistent across training centers.
3 ★	Students, specifically in the elementary did not perform well in state standardized tests in the area of science and scores in reading and math are lower than expected	Montessori pedagogy and philosophy do not easily align with Common Core and Next Generation science standards
4 ★	Students are low-performing in mathematics, specifically when applying mathematical concepts and procedures.	Students struggle with comprehending real-world mathematical problems (Word Problems) and applying concepts and procedures.
5 ★	Montessori curriculum delivery is inconsistent across the staff at High Desert Montessori and levels	The level of training and specific training institutions are different among staff members at all levels.
6 ★	Many parents still do not know how to support their children both in school and at home.	Parents are not provided with consistent information and resources to help their child at home

7 ★	Confusion exists about what is expected of students at our school and how home can support the student	Students and parents are not provided with clear expectations of what a Montessori curriculum entails
8 ★	Lack of clear understanding of academic expectations for advancement to the next level (primary to lower el, lower el to upper el, etc.)	Focus for PLC and vertical teams on this important subject has been lacking

★ = Priority

Data Documentation for CNA

Data Documentation for CNA

The following data were used to verify the comprehensive needs assessment analysis:

Student Success

- [x] **Criterion-Referenced Test in Science**
- [x] **Curriculum Based Measures**
- [x] **Early childhood literacy and math data**
- [x] **Early reading assessment results**
- [x] **Grades**
- [x] **I-Ready**
- [x] **MAP Growth Assessment**
- [x] **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)**
- [x] **MyPath**
- [x] **Nevada State Performance Framework (NSPF)**
- [x] **Smarter Balanced (SBAC)**
- [x] **Student Climate Survey, Student Voice**
- [x] **Tier I Instructional Materials Assessments**
- [x] **WIDA ACCESS for ELLs**
- [x] **Other**

Adult Learning Culture

- [x] **Administrator evaluation**
- [x] **Class size averages by grade and subject**
- [x] **Communications data**
- [x] **Evaluation(s) of professional development implementation and impact**
- [x] **Lesson Plans**
- [x] **Processes and procedures for teaching and learning, including program implementation**
- [x] **Professional Development Agendas**

- [x] **Professional learning communities (PLC) data/agenda/notes**
- [x] **School department and/or faculty meeting discussions and data**
- [x] **Staff surveys and/or other feedback**
- [x] **State certified and high quality staff data**
- [x] **Student Climate Survey**
- [x] **Study of best practices**
- [x] **Teacher evaluation**
- [x] **Teacher retention**
- [x] **Teacher/Student Ratio**

Connectedness

- [x] **Attendance**
- [x] **Behavior**
- [x] **Community surveys and/or other feedback**
- [x] **Demographic data**
- [x] **Enrollment**
- [x] **Enrollment trends**
- [x] **PBIS/MTSS data**
- [x] **Perception/survey data**
- [x] **School safety data**
- [x] **Social Emotional Learning Data**
- [x] **Volunteer opportunities, attendance, and participation**

Inquiry Areas

Inquiry Area 1 Student Success

SMART Goal 1

For the SBAC testing season 2026-27, HDMS will increase the Adequate Growth Percentage (AGP) by at least 3% for all students in both Math and ELA.
Student achievement on SBAC and WIDA will improve by 3% AGP for all grade levels and sub-groups.

Formative Measures: i-Ready scores for the Fall and Winter will allow the school to predict SBAC scores and adjust curriculum and intervention strategies accordingly.

Improvement Strategy 1

MTSS

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	Introduce methods of Tier II and Tier III interventions that more closely align with SBAC formats using i-Ready and test-taking strategies	Principal, Assistant Principal, Interventionist	SY 2026-27	

Position Responsible: Principal, Assistant Principal, Interventionist

Resources Needed: N/A

Evidence Level

Level 2: Moderate:
MTSS

Problem Statements: Student Success 1, 2, 3

Status Checks

November	February	May

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements Identifying Student Success

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	SBAC scores are not growing as fast as we would hope across subgroups	SBAC tests do not align with Montessori Pedagogy
2	School focus on literacy shows great growth in reading but writing is not improving at the same rate. Students are struggling with the writing process specifically within different writing genres. Students are coming into 1st grade with letter and literacy decoding, but encoding into the writing process is lacking	Students do not have access to examples of grade-level writing that meets standards. We do not have a cohesive, vertically aligned curriculum map and Montessori pedagogy can be inconsistent across training centers.
3	Students are low-performing in mathematics, specifically when applying mathematical concepts and procedures.	Students struggle with comprehending real-world mathematical problems (Word Problems) and applying concepts and procedures.

Inquiry Area 2

Adult Learning Culture

SMART Goal 1

Teachers will identify holes in their practice and Montessori pedagogy that will increase the pass rate on SBAC and Science CRT tests by 3% AGP across all grades and subgroups.

Formative Measures: School-wide focus on Grace and Courtesy lessons as developed by the American Montessori Society and the Association Montessori International. School will implement the use of the Common Core/Montessori Curriculum Alignment through guidance with our partners at The California Montessori Project. School will continue to implement intervention and instruction in Numeracy and Fractional Reasoning through Numeracy Consultants.net.

Implement interventions through the science of reading with school-wide professional development in its implementation.

Improvement Strategy 1

SEL and PLC's

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	Create a rotating Grace and Courtesy schoolwide focus with expectations for writing and reflection in classes. School Counselor creates groups and individual counseling sessions. School Counselor will develop and implement a school-wide SEL program that is aligned with Montessori ideals. Train the trainer model of instruction in numeracy and fractional reasoning with the school academic coach attending training.	Principal, Assistant Principal, Counselor, Communications Coordinator	SY 26-27	

Position Responsible: Principal, Assistant Principal, Counselor, Communications Coordinator

Resources Needed: N/A

Evidence Level

Level 2: Moderate:
PLC SEL

Problem Statements: Adult Learning Culture 1, 2, 3

Status Checks

November	February	May

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements Identifying Adult Learning Culture

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Students, specifically in the elementary did not perform well in state standardized tests in the area of science and scores in reading and math are lower than expected	Montessori pedagogy and philosophy do not easily align with Common Core and Next Generation science standards
2	Montessori curriculum delivery is inconsistent across the staff at High Desert Montessori and levels	The level of training and specific training institutions are different among staff members at all levels.
3	Lack of clear understanding of academic expectations for advancement to the next level (primary to lower el, lower el to upper el, etc.)	Focus for PLC and vertical teams on this important subject has been lacking

Inquiry Area 3

Connectedness

SMART Goal 1

By May 2027, High Desert Montessori will increase parent engagement and volunteerism by 20% compared to the previous year by implementing an inclusive, accessible community-outreach framework. This will be achieved by offering translation services at 100% of parent events, hosting at least 2 parent education workshops with , and utilizing digital tools to streamline volunteer sign-ups.

Formative Measures: To monitor progress toward this goal, High Desert Montessori will conduct quarterly reviews of volunteer logs, event attendance, and family feedback. We will continuously verify that 100% of parent events offer translation services. These regular checkpoints will allow us to assess engagement levels in real time and adjust our outreach strategies to ensure we meet our end-of-year target.

Improvement Strategy 1

HDMS will be returning to the 2 hour volunteer pledge. This was a requirement for attendanse at HDMS for many years.

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	Advertise the 2-hour pledge, in both English and Spanish, thorough our wensite, newsletter, and other outreach venues.	School Principal and Vice Principal with help from the communications director	August 10-September 15.	

Position Responsible: Administration and Communications director

Resources Needed: Web master services, and message development through the communications director

Evidence Level

Level 1: Strong:
Family Engagement

Problem Statements: Connectedness 1, 2

Status Checks

November	February	May

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements Identifying Connectedness

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Many parents still do not know how to support their children both in school and at home.	Parents are not provided with consistent information and resources to help their child at home
2	Confusion exists about what is expected of students at our school and how home can support the student	Students and parents are not provided with clear expectations of what a Montessori curriculum entails

Community Outreach Activities

Activity	Date	Lesson Learned
AKC Scent Dog Trials	09/19/2026	K-9 Service dogs
HDMS Fall Festival	10/24/2026	Fall Season
Montessori Through My Eyes	04/22-2027	Montessori Philosophy through the eyes of children
Kids on Big Rigs	05/01/2027	Heavy equipment