SchoolWorks
School Quality Review
Report

Tremont Montessori
December 7-9, 2016

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About the SchoolWorks School Quality Review Process

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) envisions 21st Century Schools of Choice in which students will be challenged with a rigorous curriculum that considers the individual learning styles, program preferences, and academic capabilities of each student, while engaging the highest quality professional educators, administrators, and support staff available. As part of Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools, CMSD has adopted a portfolio district strategy that includes: growing the number of high quality district and charter schools, and closing or replacing failing schools; focusing the district's central office on its role in school support and governance, while transferring authority and resources to schools; investing and phasing in high leverage school reforms across all levels; and increased accountability for all schools in the district through the creation of the Cleveland Transformation Alliance (CTA). CMSD has partnered with stakeholders to create a school performance framework that will be used to provide a comprehensive assessment of the quality of each school in the district. The comprehensive assessment will be an evidence-based process that includes data and information gathered on academic programs and performance, school climate, finance, operations, governance, and stakeholder satisfaction, among other sources.

CMSD has engaged SchoolWorks as a partner in implementing a school quality review (SQR) process aligned to CMSD initiatives and the school performance framework. The SQRs are used as one component of a comprehensive assessment of the quality of each school in the district; they are used to provide formative feedback to schools. Reviews include an action planning process in which the team and the school work together to identify prioritized areas for improvement.

The School Quality Review (SQR) protocol and review process provides a third-party perspective on current school quality for all students. The process will include two days of collecting evidence on site through interviews, classroom visits, and document review. While on site, the team meets to discuss, sort, and analyze evidence it is collecting. The site visit team uses evidence collected through these events to determine ratings in relation to the protocol's criteria and indicators. In addition, the review will include a half-day prioritization session on the third day to assist the school in identifying root causes of opportunities for improvement and identifying which opportunities for improvement are of the highest priority and most likely to impact student achievement. The outcome of the action planning process is a prioritized plan of next steps, including strategies, resources, and timelines to accomplish goals.

The report documents the team's ratings for key questions within each of the four domains identified in the SQR protocol: *Instruction, Students' Opportunities to Learn, Educators' Opportunities to Learn,* and *Governance and Leadership* The final page of the report is used to record the discussion and action plan developed by the team and the school during the prioritization process.

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Domains and Key Questions

Based on trends found in the collected evidence, the site visit team assigns a rating to each key question.

Domains	Rating			
	Level 1: Intensive Support Required	Level 2: Targeted Support Required	Level 3: Established	Level 4: Exemplary

Domain 1: Instruction	
1. *Classroom interactions and organization ensure a classroom climate conducive to learning.*	**Level 2: Targeted Support Required**
2. *Classroom instruction is intentional, engaging, and challenging for all students.*	**Level 1: Intensive Support Required**
3. *Teachers regularly assess students' progress toward mastery of key skills and concepts, and use assessment data to make adjustments to instruction and to provide feedback to students during the lesson.*	**Level 1: Intensive Support Required**
Domain 2: Students' Opportunities to Learn	
4. *The school identifies and supports special education students, English language learners, and students who are struggling or at risk.*	**Level 2: Targeted Support Required**
5. *The school's culture reflects a safe, supportive learning environment that reflects high expectations.*	**Level 1: Intensive Support Required**
Domain 3: Educators' Opportunities to Learn	
6. *The school designs professional development and collaborative support systems to sustain a focus on instructional improvement.*	**Level 2: Targeted Support Required**
7. *The school's culture indicates high levels of collective responsibility, trust, and efficacy.*	**Level 2: Targeted Support Required**
Domain 4: Governance and Leadership	
8. *School leaders guide and participate with instructional staff in the central processes of improving teaching and learning.*	**Level 2: Targeted Support Required**
9. *School leaders effectively orchestrate the school's operations.*	**Level 3: Established**

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Domain 1: Instruction

1. *Classroom interactions and organization ensure a classroom climate conducive to learning.*	**Level 2: Targeted Support Required**

Behavior Expectations			
Ineffective	Partially Effective		Effective[1]
1	2	3	4
12%	24%	24%	41%

- **While behavior expectations are understood by many students, not all students adhere to stated expectations.** In 41% of classrooms, behavior expectations were effectively communicated to, and followed by, students. In one such classroom, all students were fully on-task throughout all lesson activities without prompting or redirection from the teacher, appearing fully normalized to Montessori classroom expectations. In another, all students worked quietly in collaborative groups to plan their writing, then transitioned to working silently on their writing assignments. Forty-eight percent (48%) of classrooms were characterized by partially effective communication or adherence to behavior expectations. In one such classroom, students were on-task and attentive during a whole-group read-aloud activity, but approximately 50% of students were off task during the independent work that followed. In another classroom, approximately 75% of students were on task throughout the work cycle, but a small group of students were consistently off task (i.e., not completing work, looking at cell phones). In 12% of classrooms, classroom behavior expectations were ineffective. In these classrooms, students did not respond to teachers' redirection, and refused to join group activities when asked; misbehavior stopped instruction, sometimes multiple times. Despite the site visit team's observation of effective behavior expectations in the majority of classrooms, the team observed students not complying with school behavior expectations in hallways and in the cafeteria (See Question 5). Many staff members reported that student behavior is a significant and persistent challenge at the school. Students also reported that the misbehavior of their classmates frequently interferes with instruction and teachers' ability to support them in their learning. Teachers indicated that the school is beginning to implement Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) to improve behavior. The site visit team observed some use of positive narration, but did not observe the consistent use of other PBIS strategies.

Structured Learning Environment			
Ineffective	Partially Effective		Effective
1	2	3	4
24%	24%	29%	24%

- **In a majority of classrooms the environment is structured; however, learning time is not consistently maximized.** In 24% of classrooms, the learning environment was highly structured and learning time was maximized. In these classrooms, teachers were well-prepared with various activities and materials, instruction began immediately at the start of class, and students – appearing to have internalized classroom instructional routines – rotated or transitioned quickly between activities or stations. Fifty-three percent (53%) of classrooms were characterized by partially effective structured classrooms, but learning time was not typically maximized. In one such classroom, classroom routines

[1] Due to rounding, the percentages for a particular indicator may not appear to total to 100%.

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were efficiently known and followed by students for part, but not all, of the lesson. In another, materials were well-prepared, but transitions between activities and stations were lengthy. In another, students were on-task and appeared to understand directions for the first activity at each station, but appeared to be unclear on directions when finished with the first activity, and became off-task. In 24% of classrooms, the learning environment was not structured and learning time was not maximized. In one such classroom, the teacher was unprepared and delayed the start of class. In others, transitions were lengthy and disorderly, in one case taking almost 10 minutes to transition to a reading group. The site visit team observed that classes often started late. In multiple instances, morning meetings extended into work cycle or the scheduled start of academic lessons, sometimes by 10 minutes or more. Due to slow hallway transitions, many classes started later than scheduled.

2. *Classroom instruction is intentional, engaging, and challenging for all students.*	**Level 1: Intensive Support Required**

Instructional Strategies			
Ineffective	Partially Effective		Effective
1	2	3	4
24%	24%	24%	29%

- **A variety of instructional strategies and materials support students' diverse needs in some classrooms.** In 29% of classrooms, students accessed content through high-quality multi-sensory materials for all or the majority of the lesson. Examples observed included the effective and consistent use of manipulatives, including Montessori materials. Site visit team members observed the use of Pink Towers, Number Rods, Movable Alphabet, Stamp Game, Tens Board, and Hundreds Board, among others. In these classrooms, learning tasks also provided students with choices of student grouping (i.e., working alone or with a partner) and learning activities (i.e., choice of various materials to practice math skills), as well as opportunities for self-directed learning. In 48% of classrooms, instructional strategies and materials to support learning were partially effective. In one such classroom, students had choice and leadership in class roles (i.e., taking attendance), but not in their academic learning. In another, some students (those who appeared to be consistently behaving) had choice in activities, while others did not and were assigned activities such as computer program practice. And in another classroom, students chose between various activities, but were able to choose activities that did not appear to further their academic learning (i.e., videotapes in which the connection to academic content was unclear). In 29% of classrooms, instructional strategies and materials did not effectively support the needs of various learners. In one such classroom, students only completed the same worksheets independently. In another, students worked only from a practice workbook with no opportunities for peer interactions.

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Higher-order Thinking			
Ineffective	Partially Effective		Effective
1	2	3	4
53%	35%	12%	0%

- **Instruction requires few students to use and develop higher-order thinking skills.** Effective use of higher-order thinking, in which the majority of students were required to engage in rigorous tasks for the majority of the lesson, were not observed in any classrooms. Partially effective use of higher-order thinking skills, however, was observed in 47% of classrooms. In one such classroom, students rotated through teacher-led stations, during which time they were required to explain their processes for solving challenging math problems. However, during the majority of lessons when students were not with the teacher, students did not engage in challenging tasks. In another class, the teacher circulated and required students to refer to nonfiction texts to support their concept maps for an essay, but not all students were given the opportunity to engage in such questioning. In 53% of classrooms, ineffective higher-order thinking was observed. In such classrooms, content was grade-level appropriate, but lesson activities centered on comprehension or recall questions, or only a small number of students were required to answer higher-order questions. In other classrooms, students were required to complete activities such as identifying grammar mistakes on worksheets; tasks or activities did not provide opportunities for students to write or think critically. Students indicated that they generally feel challenged in some classes (e.g., math, social studies), but not other classes (e.g., English language arts [ELA], science). Some students suggested they feel they should be doing more challenging work than is currently required in order to prepare for high school. Students stated, for example, that they do not consistently read novels or write extended essays.

3	*Teachers regularly assess students' progress toward mastery of key skills and concepts, and use assessment data to make adjustments to instruction and to provide feedback to students during the lesson.*	**Level 1: Intensive Support Required**

Assessment Strategies			
Ineffective	Partially Effective		Effective
1	2	3	4
65%	18%	18%	0%

- **In-class formative assessment strategies are infrequently used to reveal students' thinking about learning goals.** Effective in-class assessment strategies, in which teachers systematically check the understanding of the majority of students throughout the lesson, were not observed in any classrooms. Student work plans, for example, were observed being used by some students; however, these served as individualized daily or weekly agendas, as opposed to formative assessments during lessons. In 36% of classrooms, assessment strategies were partially effective. In one such classroom, the teacher circulated and examined students' written responses in a punctuation activity, but examined the responses of only a small number of students. In another, a teacher used a hand sign to check the understanding of all students at once (i.e., "thumbs up if you think this is a square"), but did not observe student responses, instead using this strategy only to increase engagement. In 65% of classrooms, checks for understanding were absent or ineffective. In the majority of classrooms, no systematic checks for understanding were observed (i.e., checking the understanding of multiple students through the use of questioning, circulating, hand signs, choral responses, whiteboards). In some classrooms, teachers circulated, but only to ensure behavior or clarify activity directions, rather

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than to assess student understanding of lesson material. The site visit team also did not observe any instances of teachers using tracking devices (i.e., checklists, recording answers on the Stamp Game) to track students' mastery of academic skills or content.

Feedback			
Ineffective	Partially Effective		Effective
1	2	3	4
53%	24%	18%	6%

- **The use of frequent, specific feedback throughout the learning process to inform improvement efforts is limited.** Effective feedback to inform student improvement efforts was observed in 6% of classrooms. In one such classroom, the teacher circulated, asked students to pronounce sounds, and provided students guidance and required them to pronounce sounds again when they were incorrect. In 42% of classrooms, feedback was partially effective. In one classroom, for example, the teacher circulated and provided grammar feedback during work cycle, but only occasionally, not systematically or for all students. In another classroom, a teacher provided actionable, specific grammar feedback on the use of articles, requiring students to make corrections to his/her work, but the teacher only provided this feedback to three students. In 53% of classrooms, ineffective or no feedback was provided. In the majority of these classrooms, students received no feedback. In others, teachers provided guidance only on activity directions, rather than academics. Similarly, in other classrooms, teachers provided praise for behavior and effort only, rather than guidance to inform students' learning. School leaders and some teachers expressed that the Montessori method of student correction of efforts reduces the need for feedback. However, the site visit team observed few examples of students correcting their own work.

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Domain 2: Students' Opportunities to Learn

4. The school identifies and supports special education students, English language learners, and students who are struggling or at risk.	**Level 2: Targeted Support Required**

- **The school has a process for identifying struggling and at-risk students.** The Student Support Team (SST) process for identifying struggling and at-risk students is transparent and understood by all stakeholders. Teachers, for example, were able to readily recall the SST process and stated that they received professional development (PD) on the SST process during summer PD sessions (confirmed by summer PD agendas). Teachers also stated that the SST referral process entails completing a referral packet, beginning interventions, a pre-meeting with the SST, a parent meeting, continuing interventions for six weeks, an SST reflection meeting, then deciding on whether to dismiss concerns or begin the appropriate testing. Teachers' descriptions of the SST process were consistent with the referral packet, which teachers and school leaders stated guides the referral process. The referral packet requires teachers to provide multiple forms of data. Completed samples referrals included both behavioral data such as the Functional Behavioral Analysis (FBA), and academic data such as the Kindergarten Reading Assessment (KRA), Northwest Education Association (NWEA), AimsWeb, and STAR data. Teachers reported that the SST meets weekly, and were able to give examples of students they have successfully referred. Staff involved in the SST reported that they have recently streamlined the SST process and have reduced the list of students awaiting referral meetings. Teachers reported that the SST process requires and builds teachers' investment in supporting struggling students from their classrooms.
- **Appropriate supports for the majority of struggling and at-risk students are limited.** The site visit team found that although the school has a clear SST process, the school offers limited additional opportunities for struggling students to receive research-based supports, or tutoring to address academic gaps. School leaders and teachers reported that the school provides literacy pullout intervention for some students, but teachers indicated that the school does not have ample support for the large number of students struggling academically. The site visit team also found that tutoring is not consistently available to students, although teachers reported providing the required additional support in small groups during class time. Teachers and school leaders stated that tutoring is available for pre-K students for 30 minutes three times a week through the Greater Cleveland Achievement Center. Also, some students receive tutoring from retired volunteers, but only a small number of students receive these services. Teachers and school leaders stated that some teachers offer tutoring during lunch, but that lunch tutoring is informally initiated by students or teachers rather than offered systematically or based on data. Some students reported receiving lunch tutoring, but others reported that it is not available. Teachers and school leaders stated that supports for gifted and talented and limited English proficient (LEP) students are provided by part-time district staff, but were not able to describe the types of supports provided by these individuals. Some teachers stated that the nature of the Montessori model (e.g., multi-grade level classrooms, self-guided learning) meet the needs of all students. Others stated that the school does not provide ample supports for struggling students, and that the responsibility of supporting these students falls entirely on classroom teachers.

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5. *The school's culture reflects a safe, supportive learning environment that reflects high expectations.*	**Level 1: Intensive Support Required**

- **Not all stakeholders hold high expectations for academic learning.** Staff indicated that the school does not consistently celebrate academic performance; teachers and students reported varying expectations for students. Some teachers stated that the Montessori model is based on intrinsic motivation and discourages extrinsic rewards and recognition. Others stated that they frequently reward their students with prizes and treats. School leaders reported recognizing character traits, but teachers and students reported that the school does not consistently recognize academic achievement. Teachers, students, and parents reported that the school recently held a Veterans Day assembly, but that the school does not hold ceremonies highlighting academic growth. The site visit team observed Promoting Alternative Teaching Strategies PATHS recognition of character traits and core values in morning announcements, but no examples of academic recognition in classrooms. Students reported that they feel that some of their teachers hold high expectations for all students, but some teachers expect less from their peers who struggle academically. Teachers identified the individual work plan as a system to ensure that the school challenges students. However, students expressed concerns that the school is not challenging students so as to prepare them for success after leaving the school. For example, students reported they are not required to read novels or complete any significant writing products. Teachers also stated that individual goal-setting takes place on students' individual work plans. However, some students stated that they do not have goals. No students were able to state academic goals, NWEA goals, or their progress toward meeting the goals.
- **The school does not fully ensure a safe environment to support the learning of all students.** Specifically, the site visit team found consistent concerns regarding supervision of students in the school's common spaces (hallways, cafeteria), and consistent reports of bullying from various stakeholders. Many teachers expressed concern and frustration with student behavior in the cafeteria, and stated that after lunch, classroom disruptions continue as a result of student conflict from the cafeteria. The site visit team visited the cafeteria multiple times and observed a small number of adults present, disorderly student behavior (i.e., yelling loudly across tables), unclean space (i.e., food left on floors by students), and that adults did not consistently circulate to monitor students or address student misbehavior. The site visit team also observed unsupervised students in hallways. Additionally, the site visit team observed references to, and behavior in alignment with, the Montessori principle of *Grace and Courtesy* in some classrooms, but not in common spaces. Teachers and students also reported consistent bullying at the school. Students reported not feeling safe in hallways and the cafeteria; some teachers stated that fights occasionally take place in hallways and classrooms. Teachers also shared examples of significant student misbehaviors (e.g., fighting) that do not result in consequences. In one instance, the site visit team observed a student calling a peer ugly in front of a teacher during a passing period. The teacher told the student who had been insulted that s/he is not ugly, but did not address the student who made the comment. In another classroom, students were observed laughing at their peers when they answered questions incorrectly. School leaders and teachers acknowledged that bullying is an issue, and is the reason for the school's recent implementation of PBIS and the Not on Our Watch (NOW) anti-bullying program. Parents confirmed that bullying takes place and stated that the school's programs are helping.

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Domain 3: Educators' Opportunities to Learn

6. *The school designs professional development and collaborative support systems to sustain a focus on instructional improvement.*	**Level 2: Targeted Support Required**

- **The design of PD is beginning to be informed by school improvement goals, and/or identified areas of need.** The site visit team found that PD does not fully address the school's top Academic Achievement Plan (AAP) priorities. However, data are beginning to inform PD, and PD is beginning to support teachers in data use. The school has recently begun to implement more effective PD planning. More specifically, the school's first and second AAP priorities include improving reading and math proficiency. While PD agendas indicate that PD sessions have been offered on data use (i.e., NWEA, teacher-based teams [TBTs]) and literacy programming (i.e., Accelerated Reader), PD agendas do not include any sessions directly related to literacy or math instructional strategies. In reference of data use, school leaders and teachers reported that the decision to focus on PBIS in PD this year was due to a combination of low Conditions for Learning (CFL) safety data and an increase in suspension rates. PD agendas confirmed that PBIS has been addressed in monthly PD each month this year, beginning in August. School leaders and teachers also stated, and PD agendas confirmed, that numerous PD sessions have been offered to support teachers with data use, including sessions related to the school's report card, the TBT data protocol, and multiple sessions on using NWEA assessment data. Additionally, school leaders and teachers reported that the school is now using a new template for planning PD that includes clear goals and objectives, alignment to the AAP, differentiation, research and data, and teacher practice and reflection. Review of documents confirmed that plans for the last two month's PD sessions include the use of this template.
- **Educators are beginning to collaborate regularly to learn about effective instruction and students' progress.** Teachers and school leaders reported (and staff schedules confirmed) that TBTs meet on Tuesdays, committees meet on Thursdays, and that teachers have planning time on Mondays and Wednesdays. Teachers and school leaders reported that all staff – support staff (e.g., intervention teachers, media specialist), specials teachers, and special education teachers – take part in TBTs. School leaders regularly attend and provide oversight of TBTs. Staff also consistently reported (and review of completed TBT notes confirmed) that the TBT protocol is used regularly in TBT meetings. Sample completed TBT meeting protocols include references to standards, unpacking standards, the percentage of students mastering standards (NWEA or Ohio State Test), common student misconceptions, reteaching plans, and SMART goals for mastery. However, completion of all of these portions varied between meetings and teams. Teachers also reported a high level of informal collaboration with their colleagues during shared planning, and stated that schedules have been designed to provide for collaborative planning time. Teachers were able to provide examples of sharing ideas with their colleagues during lunch and common planning time; some identified their peers as their best resource for instructional support. Others stated that they have had opportunities to observe teachers at other Montessori schools, and the school leader confirmed arranging peer visits.

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7. The school's culture indicates high levels of collective responsibility, trust, and efficacy.	**Level 2: Targeted Support Required**

- **Not all educators' mindsets and beliefs reflect a shared commitment to students' learning.** Educators conveyed varying beliefs regarding the school's commitment to ensuring that all students can learn, as well as the school's level of responsibility for inconsistent academic performance. Some staff strongly expressed the belief, in alignment with the school's mission, that it is the school's responsibility to prepare each student for academic excellence. Others, however, expressed that some groups of students do not belong at the school, such as students who did not begin their education in a Montessori setting, students whose parents cannot meet the school's expectations for academic support at home, or students who enter the school lacking academic or social skills. The staff also expressed varying levels of responsibility for areas of low academic performance. When explaining gaps in academic performance, some teachers clearly stated a sense of ownership for the school's performance, stating that the staff, collectively, needs to work harder to meet the needs of all students. Some, however, instead blamed enrollment policies, suggesting that the school's inconsistent academic performance is the result of no longer being allowed to enforce entrance requirements. Others attributed inconsistent academic performance to some parents' lack of willingness to read with students at home. Others attributed the performance to changing state standards and the metrics with which the school is evaluated.
- **The school reflects a safe professional climate for most stakeholders.** Despite varying mindsets and beliefs regarding student learning, the majority of educators described their colleagues as caring and reliable, and conveyed a willingness to share instructional practices and experiment with new teaching strategies. Some teachers, for example, stated that they have observed their peers to learn to better implement Montessori strategies. Staff consistently described the school's culture as very positive, and reported feeling emotionally safe at the school. Some stated that the school's positive culture is due to the school's low teacher turnover; others stated that low turnover is due to strong culture. Others shared that they feel comfortable taking risks by trying new instructional strategies, while others expressed excitement for the Montessori training they are receiving. Some teachers reported that school leaders visit their classrooms frequently, that they are comfortable with school leaders' presence in their classrooms, and that they believe school leaders' presence is primarily focused on providing support rather than just accountability. Other teachers stated that school leaders are approachable and have an open-door policy. School leaders expressed that the majority of teachers are very dedicated to the students and school. Numerous staff members reported having strong communication with their colleagues, and gave examples of speaking regularly with their peers about strategies to address challenging student behavior issues. School leaders stated that they attempt to make teachers feel valued. They presented examples of publicly recognizing staff members who go beyond their required responsibilities for students and their colleagues.

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Domain 4: Governance and Leadership

8. School leaders guide and participate with instructional staff in the central processes of improving teaching and learning.	**Level 2: Targeted Support Required**

- **Some stakeholders have a shared understanding of the school's vision and goals.** On multiple occasions, the principal referred to the school's vision of becoming an exemplary Montessori school, but not all staff demonstrated alignment with that vision. For example, the principal and teachers reported that all pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers are Montessori-certified, or are in the process of becoming certified. However, some teachers expressed no interest in certification. The school's staff roster and data shared by the principal indicated that approximately 60% of grade-level or content classroom teachers are Montessori-certified or in the process of becoming certified. However, the principal indicated that a small number of teachers are certified in different grade bands than what they teach. The school leader stated that she actively seeks opportunities to develop her knowledge of Montessori, such as participating in the local Montessori principal leadership group and formal Montessori trainings, but is not currently seeking Montessori certification. Adherence to Montessori techniques (classroom structure, activities, and culture) were not observed in some classrooms. Similarly, references to the school's mission and core values were observed in morning announcements and school documents (i.e., parent and staff bulletins) but few classrooms. The site visit team also found that staff were not able to consistently state the school's goals. Different teachers identified different school goals. Although the goals referenced by teachers (e.g., increasing Ohio State Test [OST] scores, decreasing suspensions, increasing attendance) are reflected in the school's AAP, teachers did not consistently state the same goals or school priorities. Neither teachers nor school leaders were able to recall specific academic achievement goals for the school or for individual grade levels. Students were not able to describe their goals for the year.
- **School leaders provide conditions that support a school-wide data culture; however, its impact on teaching and learning is limited.** School leaders and teachers reported that staff have access to varied instructional data, including NWEA, STAR, AimsWeb, KRA, and OST data. Teachers and school leaders also shared that data are used in various school processes – TBT meetings, SST, and instructional observations – and that PD increasingly focuses on data use. Both teachers and school leaders shared the example of two PD sessions offered in the Fall regarding the NWEA Learning Continuum. School leaders stated that the goal of this PD is to help teachers identify individual student needs and to group students for small group instruction. Weekly bulletins were also found to sometimes include data, such as instructional observation summaries (i.e., the percentage of classrooms in which objectives are posted). The school's committee list indicated that the school also has a data committee, whose stated duties include assisting teachers in obtaining, maintaining, disseminating, interpreting, and displaying data. Despite various forms of data in various school processes, the site visit team did not find that the data regularly inform classroom instruction. Some TBT meeting notes, for example, included next steps for instruction based on data analysis, while others did not. Some support staff reported using NWEA data to determine the groups of students to whom they provide services, but many teachers did not.; the site visit team observed only one reference to data in classrooms. Although school leaders and staff mentioned that PD has been offered on the NWEA Learning Continuum, few teachers indicated that they use this in their classrooms. School leaders acknowledged that the school is in the process of increasing data use and is not yet using data as deeply or consistently as they would like.

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9. School leaders effectively orchestrate the school's operations.	**Level 3: Established**

- **School leaders ensure effective communication and are initiating opportunities for shared decision making.** School leaders reported sending weekly teacher bulletins (Panther Proclamation); teachers referenced the bulletin. The bulletin was found to include announcements, staff recognition, upcoming events, and instructional strategies (i.e., suggestions for the use of Montessori materials and strategies). A number of teachers also reported that school administrators are approachable; some stated that communication at the school is a strength. School leaders also provide opportunities for teachers to have input in decision making. For example, school leaders stated (and a committee list confirmed) that the school has various active committees, including an SST committee, attendance committee, discipline committee, corporate sponsor committee, social committee, parent committee, safety committee, arts committee, and open house committee. Teachers confirmed taking part in various committees, and were able to give examples of committees' activities (e.g., designing a float for a community parade). Some teachers, however, expressed that they would like greater input in school decisions. School leaders stated that they have recently begun holding monthly building leadership team (BLT) meetings, and hope to increase BLT meeting's frequency, participation, and effectiveness moving forward. BLT meeting agendas confirmed that this group met for the last two months, and teachers confirmed that they have participated in these meetings. School leaders also stated that they have recently begun to collect staff input to inform PD, and gave the example of offering additional PD related to the NWEA Continuum of Learning after requests from staff.
- **The principal engages parents and community members in the educational process.** The site visit team found numerous examples of parent and community engagement in support of both academics and school culture. Parents reported taking part in an open house, parent conferences, fathers' events (a fathers' walk and Donuts for Dads), and literacy night, among other events. Review of sign-in sheets found that approximately 600 family members signed in for the Fall open house this year. The majority of parents interviewed reported attending conferences. The school's parent newsletter states that attendance at parent conferences increased from 82.9% last year to 94.5% this year. The parent newsletter also provides parents with dates for upcoming events and testing, updates on school initiatives (e.g., the school's anti-bullying program), and provides an overview and rationale for selected Montessori instructional strategies (i.e., Number Rods). School leaders and parents reported that the school has an active parent organization, and reported that the parent organization has led events such as a workshop to help parents support their students' academic work at home. All stakeholders also provided examples of partnerships with other organizations, including PNC Bank (volunteer tutors), Tremont Development Corporation (donations of school supplies and funding for space for basketball incentive program), Merrick House (space for basketball incentive), Playhouse Square (violin classes), Cleveland State University (classroom interns), the Natural History Museum, and the Art Museum. The school leader also stated that the school partners with other local Montessori Schools (e.g., Ruffing West, Montessori Children's House). Teachers reported observing classrooms and receiving Montessori PD with these organizations. Parents and students confirmed that students take part in, and are excited about, various programs, including the music and lunch basketball programs.

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Prioritization Process

The site visit team met with the Tremont Montessori School's leadership team to review its findings, discuss the school's areas of strengths and areas for improvement, prioritize areas for improvement, and discuss ways to address the identified areas for improvement.

School leaders and the site visit team agreed that there are significant strengths present in the school. Areas of strength the team discussed included the school's increasing use of data. The site visit team also noted the following areas for growth: higher-order thinking, classroom structure, and instructional feedback to students.

The group identified higher-order thinking as the area for growth to prioritize. The group identified the following priority within this Key Question as having the most potential impact on the success of the school as a whole: *Instruction requires few students to use and develop higher-order thinking skills.*

The team then developed the following goal, success measure, and action plan:

Goal: Instruction requires most students to use and develop higher-order thinking skills.

Measure of Success: Instructional Observations (monthly in January, February, March).

Actions	Target Dates	Champions
Communicate SQR findings and selection of goal to staff by email.	Dec 9	Principal
Identify group of teachers to design PD on higher-order thinking skills, establish meeting structure and schedule.	Dec 9	Grade band leads
Plan higher-order thinking PD.	Complete by Jan 9	Grade band leads
Deliver higher-order thinking PD.	Jan 9	Grade band leads
Distribute information to staff regarding higher order thinking skills (e.g. Depth of Knowledge Wheel).	Jan 9	Grade band leads
Teachers create pilot higher-order thinking materials and practice their use.	Jan 9 to Feb 10	Grade band leads
Include higher-order thinking as ongoing topic in TBT.	Ongoing after Jan 9	Grade band leads
Include higher-order thinking as regular item in monthly PD.	Ongoing after Jan 9	Grade band leads
Include higher order-thinking in school wide instructional observations.	Ongoing after Jan 9	Grade band leads

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Appendix A: Site Visit Team Members

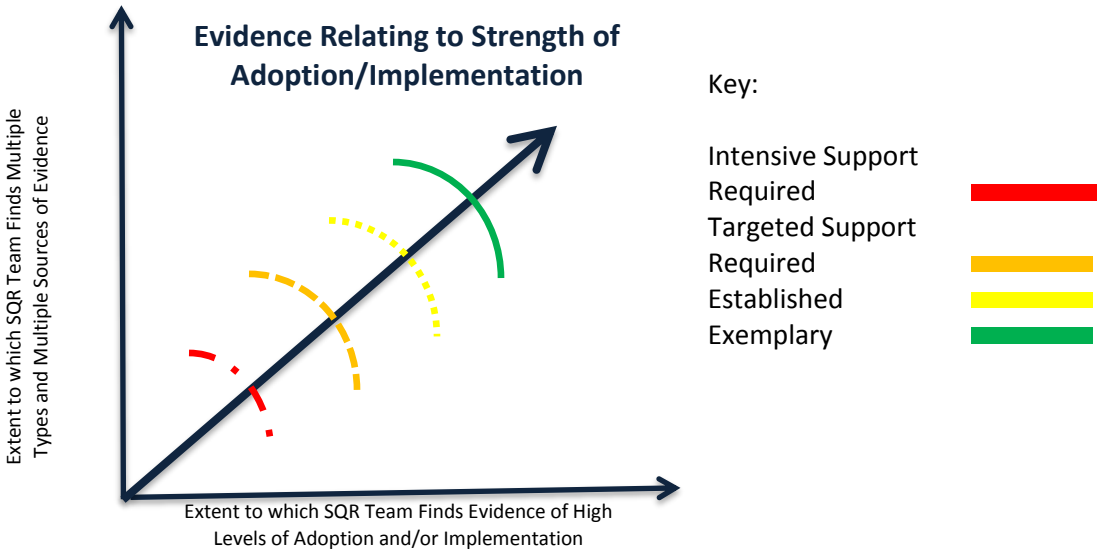
The SQR to Tremont Montessori was conducted on December 7-9, 2016 by a team of educators from the CMSD and SchoolWorks, LLC.

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Appendix B: Implementation Rubric

The site visit team will use the following guidance to select a performance level for each key question. Note that the quality standard for each implementation level is based on the extent to which the site visit team finds multiple types[2] and multiple sources[3] of evidence related to the adoption and/or implementation of a practice or system and the extent to which the site visit team finds evidence of high levels of adoption and/or implementation of a practice or system.



Rating	Implementation Level	Quality Standard
1	**Intensive Support Required**	Evidence indicates that the key question is not a practice or system that has been adopted and/or implemented at the school, or that the level of adoption/implementation does not improve the school's effectiveness.
2	**Targeted Support Required**	Evidence indicates that the key question is a practice or system that is developing at the school, but that it has not yet been implemented at a level that has begun to improve the school's effectiveness, OR that the impact of the key action on the effectiveness of the school cannot yet be determined.
3	**Established**	Evidence indicates that the key question is a practice or system that has been adopted at the school, and is implemented at a level that has begun to improve the school's effectiveness.
4	**Exemplary**	Evidence indicates that the key question is a practice or system that has been fully adopted at the school, and is implemented at a level that has had a demonstrably positive impact on the school's effectiveness.

[2] "Multiple types of evidence" is defined as evidence collected from two or more of the following: document review, stakeholder focus groups and/or interviews; and classroom observations.

[3] "Multiple sources of evidence" is defined as evidence collected from three or more stakeholder focus groups and/or interviews; two or more documents; and/or evidence that a descriptor was documented in 75% or more of lessons observed at the time of the visit.

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Appendix C: Summary of Classroom Observation Data

During the site visit, the team conducted 17 observations, representing a range of grade levels and subject areas. The following table presents the compiled data from those observations. *Note: Due to rounding, the percentages for a particular indicator may not appear to total to 100%.*

	Indicator	Distribution of Scores (%)			
		Ineffective	*Partially Effective*		*Effective*
		1	2	3	4
Common Core Alignment	**1a. Common Core Literacy Alignment (for all classes other than math)** Alignment to content standards Alignment to instructional shifts N = 14	**64%**	**29%**	**7%**	**0%**
	1b. Common Core Math Alignment (for math classes only) Alignment to content standards Alignment to instructional shifts Alignment to standards for mathematical practice N = 3	**33%**	**33%**	**33%**	**0%**
Classroom Climate	**2. Behavioral Expectations** Student behavior Clear expectations Consistent rewards and/or consequences Anticipation and redirection of misbehavior	**12%**	**24%**	**24%**	**41%**
	3. Structured Learning Environment Teacher preparation Clear agenda Learning time maximized	**24%**	**24%**	**29%**	**24%**
	4. Supportive Learning Environment Caring relationships Teacher responsiveness to students' needs	**6%**	**29%**	**35%**	**29%**
Purposeful Teaching	**5. Focused Instruction** Learning objectives High expectations Effective communication of academic content	**41%**	**24%**	**18%**	**18%**
	6. Instructional Strategies Multi-sensory modalities and materials Varied groupings Student choice and leadership	**24%**	**24%**	**24%**	**29%**
	7. Cognitive Engagement Active student participation Perseverance	**12%**	**41%**	**24%**	**24%**
	8. Higher-order Thinking Challenging tasks Application to new problems and situations Student questions Metacognition	**53%**	**35%**	**12%**	**0%**
In-Class Assessment & Adjustment	**9. Assessment Strategies** Use of formative assessments	**65%**	**18%**	**18%**	**0%**
	10. Adjustments to Instruction Adjustment of instructional Strategies Adjustment of content Adjustment of organization of students	**88%**	**6%**	**6%**	**0%**
	11. Feedback Feedback to students Student use of feedback	**53%**	**24%**	**18%**	**6%**

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