



New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Charter Schools

TEAM CHARTER SCHOOLS

Collection of Best Practices

Name of Charter School: TEAM Charter Schools (KIPP New Jersey)

About the Charter School (Mission / Key Design Elements):

TEAM Charter Schools strives to instill in our students the desire and ability to succeed in college in order to change the world. TEAM is committed to supporting our students to and through college and careers. We believe our promises to students and families are sacred and we do whatever it takes to empower our students to achieve successful academic and life outcomes.

Best Practice Topic(s) / Performance Area within Organizational Framework: School Culture and Climate

Summary:

A few years ago, TEAM set out to formalize the definition of a great school. Reflecting on how great schools are usually defined - either 100% based on test scores, or entirely on proficiency – a group of TEAM staff set out to use the metrics available (and find some not available) that would best describe the health of a school and help us answer the question: “What would we want in a school for our own kids?” We landed on something called the School Performance Index (SPI).

The goal of the SPI is to: (1) put a stake in the ground about what constitutes a great TEAM school, (2) help manage growth, and (3) help improve our schools.

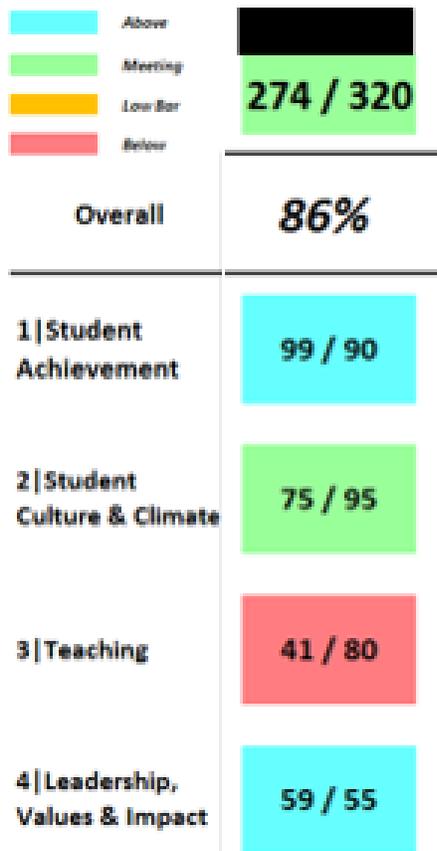
In its current form, the SPI is a measure that rolls up all of the available data about school performance, weight it according to importance, and produce a single number by which to evaluate our schools. The measure looks at four domains: (1) Student Achievement, (2) Student Culture and Climate, (3) Teaching, and (4) Leadership Values and Impact.

More specifically, each domain is broken out into specific indicators.

| ↓ Strands | Indicators → | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| 1) Student Achievement <i>(Description)</i> | MAP SGP, % meeting growth goals, equity/IEP | NJASK Median SGP, % proficient | GPA/Academic Standing GPA Benchmarks, % On Track | Work Hab homework/st extracur leader |
| 2) Student Culture and Climate <i>(Description)</i> | Student & Parent Satisfaction Student/Parent surveys, interviews | School Environment School inspections | Student Attrition | Well-rounded offerings (e etc) Variety and particip |
| 3) Teaching <i>(Description)</i> | Strong instruction Classroom observations aligned to KIPP f/w | Instructional Culture Using TNIP insight survey | Strong relationships/ advisory From parent/student survey | |
| 4) Leadership, Values, and Impact <i>(Description)</i> | Kids who need us Attrition and demographics | Great place to work Using Q12 and KIPP Surveys | Mission/impact in Newark Staff surveys and interviews | |

An example of SPI results are below.

¹ In future years, NJASK will be replaced with PARCC.



One key feature of the performance index is an internal walk-through process designed specifically to evaluate School Climate and Instructional Delivery. Rather than conducting one summative end-of-year site inspection, walk-throughs are designed to be short (half-day) events occurring several (3-5) times each school year.

Walk-through teams are made up of members of school leadership teams (Principals, APs, Deans, Grade Level leads) and support staff from the shared service team. Similar to a “peer review,” this structure gives principals the opportunity to both give and get feedback during the year.

The walk-through produces quantitative data (using a rubric for instructional delivery and a rubric for school climate), and qualitative data in the form of a memo summarizing the feedback and offering suggestions for school improvement.

Partner(s): N/A

Dates: 2013 to present

School Contact:

Laura Mendelsohn, <mailto:lmendelsohn@kippnj.org>

Resources:

[School Culture Rubric](#)

[Classroom Rubric](#)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | Y | N |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|---|---|
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If you saw new material/instruction, think about the questioning strategies used.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Cold Calls | Brings all students into the activity by cold calling. Does not take raised hands. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Evidence | Demands evidence from text and other source data and/or encourages students to justify thinking. Uses how or why questions. Students do the heavy lifting. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Question Quality | Starts with open-ended, high-level questions, and scaffolds as needed. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Follow-up and Response | Listens and responds to student responses with appropriate follow-up questions and comments. | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Did you see guided practice or independent practice?

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Grade Level Expectations | Utilizes demanding independent practice that positions students for mastery of grade-level standards. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Criteria for Success | Establishes and communicates clear criteria for success to students -- mastery expectations are explicit, above and beyond mere completion of the task. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Individual | Collects and provides feedback during paired and independent work (verbal or written), when assessing student mastery during the lesson. | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Did you see the close of the lesson?

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Daily Mastery | Teacher assesses mastery on an exit ticket or some other form of end-of-lesson assessment in order to inform past and future instruction. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Were you able to ask a student about the lesson/class?

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Goal/Objective | Student knows exactly what the class is working on, and can explain how it fits into yearly goals. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mastery Awareness | Students can articulate their level of mastery on today's objective, and how they know what mastery looks like. | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Student Observables

Mark "10" for all students, "8" for most (70-90%), "5" for half, "3" for some (10-40%), "0" for no students, "NA" for can't tell.

Do a head count to see who is on-task. Note levels of engagement/interest.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| On Task | Students are visibly on task (completing work, thinking, responding, asking questions). | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Students Engaged | Students are visibly engaged, interested, or curious in their behaviors and/or affect. "Do kids want to be here?" | | | | | | | | | | | |

Think about classroom management:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 100% | Students meet 100% of stated and implicit behavioral expectations. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Quiet for Adults | Students are quiet for staff during instruction/when directions are given. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Speed & urgency | Students get to work "right away, all the way," without reminders or additional redirection from the teacher. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Effective Redirections | Estimate the share of class time devoted to instruction (vs. behavior management). 10 = 100% instruction. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Small-group/blended | Students are cognitively engaged, productive, and on-task when teacher is working with small groups. Blended learning, when utilized, is strategic and content-related. | | | | | | | | | | | |

Observe the way students interact with each other:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Peer Interactions | Students engage in productive, positive interactions with one another. Students help and encourage each other. | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Common Space/School Culture Rubric

10=Yes/100%, 8=Most/70-80%,
5=Somewhat/50%
3=Some/30%, 0=No/0%

Physical Surroundings

| | | | Notes |
|-----------|---|--|-------|
| Hallways | Hallways are well maintained, clean, and uncluttered. | | |
| Bathrooms | Bathrooms are well maintained and clean. | | |

Student Engagement

| | | | |
|-------------|--|--|--|
| Main Office | Main office is well maintained, uncluttered, and welcoming to parents/guests. | | |
| Respect | Students are treated with respect by adults, using 'warm/demanding' tone. Staff do not yell/raise their voice at students. | | |
| Character | Uses start of the day/non instructional time to name, model and reinforce character excellence. | | |
| J-Factor | Students are treated warmly by adults - 'J-Factor' visible in tone, adult/student interactions. | | |
| Engaged | Students seem happy to be here. Evidence of genuine relationships between students/staff. | | |

Recognition

| | | | |
|----------------|--|--|--|
| Student Work | Current (~past 30 days) student work is consistently visible in common spaces. | | |
| Mission/Vision | School mission/vision is prominently posted and visible. | | |
| Celebrations | Celebrations, recognitions or shoutouts are prominently posted and visible. | | |

Expectations/Rules

| | | | |
|------------------|--|--|--|
| Common Spaces | Common spaces are, on the whole, calm and orderly; students are respectful to staff and one another. | | |
| Dress Code | Student dress code is followed in common spaces. | | |
| Quiet for Adults | Students are quiet for adults when directions are given. | | |
| Food/Gum/Candy | No food, gum or candy visible in common spaces. | | |
| Cell Phones | No student cell phones visible in common spaces. [ES: Mark NA] | | |

Transitions

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|--|
| Transition Time | Transition/passing time is, on the whole, calm and orderly. | | |
| Arrival/Dismissal | Arrival to/dismissal from the building is, on the whole, calm and orderly. | | |

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| Arrival/Dismissal | Arrival to/dismissal from the building is, on the whole, calm and orderly. | | |

Classroom

| Element | Definition/Description | # No | # Yes | # NA |
|---------|------------------------|------|-------|------|
|---------|------------------------|------|-------|------|

Physical Surroundings

| | | | | |
|--------------|---|--|--|--|
| Clean | Classroom is well maintained, clean, and uncluttered. | | | |
|--------------|---|--|--|--|

Expectations/Rules

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Cell Phones | No Cell Phones are visible. | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|--|

Engagement

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Warm Demanding | Sense of 'warm demanding' evident, 'J-factor' visible in teacher/student interactions. | | | |
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Investment

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|----------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Goals Present | Long-term classroom learning goals ("Big Goals") are present and visible. | | | |
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| Goals Connected | Long-term classroom learning goals ("Big Goals") are connected/made relevant to the day's activities. | | | |
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Rituals and Routines

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| Objective/Aim | Objective/Aim for lesson is posted and prominent. | | | |
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| Homework | Day's homework is posted and prominent [ES - mark as NA]. | | | |
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| Directions | Directions are specific, observable, concrete and sequential. | | | |
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Instruction

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| Checks for Understanding | Frequent and effective checks for understanding observed. | | | |
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| Questioning | Frequent, varied and effective questioning strategies observed. | | | |
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| Criteria for Success | Criteria for success for lesson's activities are established and clear. | | | |
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| Ratio | Uses a variety of ratio strategies to increase thinking and talking done by students. | | | |
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Student Observables

| Element | Definition/Description | # No | # Yes | # NA |
|---------|------------------------|------|-------|------|
|---------|------------------------|------|-------|------|

Expectations/Rules

| | | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Dress Code | Student dress code is followed in classroom. | | | |
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| Students Quiet for Adults | Students are quiet for staff during instruction or when directions are given. | | | |
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|-------------|---|--|--|--|
| 100% | Students meet stated and implicit behavioral expectations ("100%"). | | | |
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| Work Fast | Students get to work fast. | | | |
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Engagement

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|-------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Students Engaged | Students are visibly engaged in the class's activity. | | | |
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| Notes | # No | # Yes | # NA |
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If you saw new material/instruction, think about the questioning strategies used.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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Were you able to ask a student about the lesson/class?

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