MID-CYCLE VISIT
VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

FOR

SAN PEDRO HIGH SCHOOL

1001 West 15th Street
San Pedro, CA 90731

Los Angeles Unified School District

March 24-26, 2014
March 22, 2017

Visiting Committee Members
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I. Introduction

San Pedro High School is a two-campus, four-year comprehensive high school in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) with 94 teachers and approximately 2500 students. 66% of students are Latino and 61% of students are economically disadvantaged. The original campus (Flagship) campus was opened in 1903 and houses four small learning communities (SLCs): Pedro Action League (PAL), Business, Global, and Pirate Health and Fitness. In the fall of 2012, the San Pedro High School John and Muriel Olguin campus (Olguin) opened and services two magnet small learning communities: the Marine Science Magnet and the Police Academy Magnet. Newcomer English Learners (EL) and special education Intellectually Disabled (ID) programs are located on this campus. 2015-2016 SBAC scores show that 64% of students met or exceeded standards in English, while 25% of students met or exceeded standards in Math. In 2016, 48% of graduates had completed the University of California A-G requirements. The number of AP exams taken in 2016 rose by 200 from the year prior and the percentage of students passing exams with a 3 or higher increased to 56.3%.

A Restorative Justice program has been enacted to enhance the social and emotional climate of classrooms to provide social and emotional support. Discipline is now proactive and viewed in a positive light and noted for its support of the student by providing immediate interventions to help students assess and self-monitor their behaviors. It also allows for time to provide tier 1 localized support between teacher, student and family/guardian accountability before requiring tier 2 and 3 support provided to targeted student populations by staff outside the classroom.

Beginning with the class of 2016, LAUSD Graduation Requirements have changed to allow students to recover credit for classes failed previously when a subsequent course is taken that provides content in the area previously failed. While it does not fulfill UC credit, a grade of D now counts towards A-G graduation requirements. LAUSD has defined preparing students as “college ready” as those students meeting A-G requirements with a C or better. San Pedro High School
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has shown an increase in the percentage of students earning a C or better in A-G class during the past 3 years.

In the spring of 2014, the Los Angeles Unified School District, United Teachers Los Angeles, and the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools entered into the Reed Investment School agreement to provide additional supports to improve staff retention and student outcomes. Reed Investment Schools were identified due to high student dropout rates, high teacher turnover rates, and an API rank of 3 or below.

SPHS has adopted a TLC referral process that allows teachers and other staff members to refer students that they believe are struggling in specific areas to get help in resolving the issues that they may be struggling with. San Pedro High School started with two full-time A-G counselors to work with students not on track to meet graduation. These A-G counselors collaborate with community programs and provide a range of services that address psychosocial/educational needs of at-risk students and students that have dropped out of school. SPHS has two Foster Youth PSA counselors to ensure that all foster youth have individualized graduation plan and provide comprehensive assessments that incorporate attendance, academic achievement, and behavior for all foster youth and provide intensive case management services by monitoring progress, resource coordination, and graduation requirements aligned to AB167/216 and AB 1806. The Student Support and Progress Team is a new district-wide initiative that was also recently implemented and builds upon the foundation of the Coordination of Services Team (COST), Student Study Team (SST) and Language Appraisal Team (LAT). These student review teams have similarities in design, function and purpose, with slight variations in content. SSPT has replaced the COST, SST, and LAT at San Pedro High School.

In 2016, San Pedro High School was awarded the National Math and Science Initiative Grant (NMSI). NMSI’s mission is to improve teacher effectiveness and student performance in the critical subjects of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). NMSI’s College Readiness
Program is partnering with SPHS to increase the number of students taking and earning qualifying scores on Advanced Placement math, science and English exams, while expanding access to rigorous coursework to traditionally underrepresented students.

College Advisory (Homeroom) supports the expectation that all students, regardless of their background and economic status, can become college and career ready. *The Eight Components of College and Career Readiness* from College Board are used in developing a college and career culture for all students. Activities are developed by the Counseling Department to engage students in each of the eight components.

All stakeholders are invited to review student achievement data and contribute to the implementation and monitoring of the schoolwide action plan. School Site Council consists of elected stakeholders and meets monthly and uses SBAC assessment results as well as the School Progress Report to drive budgetary decisions, including purchasing of class size reduction teachers, purchasing technology for students’ use, and additional PSA counselors to target low performing student populations. School Based Management meets monthly and reviews SBAC data, School Report Card data as well as WASC department reflections and includes teachers, administration, parents and students and uses data to drive decisions regarding bell schedules, and calendars. Academic Curriculum Council utilizes student achievement data to drive important curricular decisions which determine necessary Professional Development, including PLC work, (inquiry cycle, data and reflections). School-Wide Positive Behavior and Support Team meets monthly consisting of various stakeholders to build supports for positive behavior intervention and support along with restorative practices to inform school discipline policies. SPHS has also invited the active participation of community members and parents. SPHS has frequently hosted “Coffee With the Principal”, College Prep nights, ELAC (English Learner Advisory Council) meetings, School for Advanced Studies parent meetings, Magnet parent meetings, Open House, and Parent Conferences.

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The preparation for the mid-cycle report was initiated by the Academic Curriculum Council and looked to analyze what part of the action plan has been implemented, what has yet to be implemented, along with new significant initiatives that were outside the purview of the School Wide Action Plan. The findings were presented to Content Department teams for feedback, which was brought back to ACC for another round of analysis. This led to an initiative for Department teams to reflect on four specific areas that were professionally developed in the past few years; Close Reading, Implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS)/Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), Writing, and Structured Engagement Activities.

A WASC Writing Team was assembled, consisting of administrators, teachers, coaches, and special education support providers. Parents were not directly involved in the writing of the mid-cycle report. In interviews, several parents expressed a strong interest in becoming more involved in the Focus on Learning process. The WASC Writing Team synthesized all the information to inform the mid-cycle report by using data and findings from the work of the ACC, along with the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), school-wide action plan, original self-study, SBAC data, LAUSD’s School Report Card, and School Experience Survey.

II. Progress on Critical Areas for Follow-up/Schoolwide Action Plan

Goal #1: Improve Student Achievement: Assist students in seeing the link between instruction, assessment, and demonstration of proficiency in Common Core State Standards in order to increase grades of C or better in A-G courses, in all subgroups.

The 2016 SBAC scores showed improvement from the previous year. Students that achieved proficiency (Standard Exceeded and Standard Met categories) in ELA went from 43% in 2015 to 64% in 2016. Students that achieved proficiency (Standard Exceeded and Standard Met categories) in Mathematics went from 11% in 2015 to 25% in 2016. The school attributes these
increases to using CCSS aligned textbooks, focusing on Writing Across the Curriculum, using the inquiry cycle, and Close reading training. The school examined data relating to graduation rates, SBAC tests scores, and EL data in measuring this action plan goal. The graduation rate increased from 70% in June 2014 to 86.1% in June 2016. The causes of this steady increase can be attributed to four areas: the opportunity for credit recovery classes both during and after school using Edgenuity, consistent in-seat attendance rates supported by PSA counselors, staff professional development such as Reed Training and Kagan Training, and support counseling including A-G counseling.

Data from 2015-2016 for English learners show that 30% of EL students are scoring Early Advanced or Advanced on the CELDT, 65% are passing ELA classes with a C or better, but 94% of EL students scored in the Nearly-Met and Not-Met groups on the ELA portion of the SBAC. Advanced EL classes have been consolidated, more preparation is given to the students before taking the CELDT, and tutoring specifically for ELs is available. The ELA teachers are targeting reading skills for all students with the programs “Read 180” and “Accelerated Reader.”

The mid-cycle report was silent on how student work and formative assessment play a role in improving student achievement at SPHS. Classroom visits and speaking with teachers and administrators revealed that the examination of student work is an institutionalized practice at SPHS. The visiting committee saw ample evidence of student work informing the PLC process.

**Goal #2: Create a Culture/Climate of Student Achievement:** Connect all state, district, school initiatives and plans to create a seamless instructional and learning focus.

Addressing this action plan goal has centered on addressing Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, LAUSD’s English Language Learners Master Plan, and the CA English Development Standards. Writing across the curriculum, close reading, and Depth of
Knowledge trainings have provided the faculty with strategies to develop more purposeful lessons that engage the students in learning while better preparing them for SBAC and the California Science Test (CAST). The faculty has been trained on this new format and how it differs both cognitively and structurally from the CST. ELA and Mathematics teachers have had trainings that go deeper into the components of the test; understanding how the Claims and Targets of the test relate to the CCSS standards and the expectations and scoring of the Performance Tasks. With more technology available teachers are starting to feel more accustomed to using technology not only to test, but also to enhance the interactivity of their lesson plans. There were several professional development trainings for faculty on the rolling out of LAUSD’s English Language Learners Master Plan and the new California English Language Development Standards.

SPHS is promoting college for all students by holding parent meetings during Back to School Night and Open House to describe the AP Courses and inform parents of the importance of the PSAT test all 10th grade students, inform parents about financial aid (FAFSA) and other relevant information, and using College Advisory homerooms to explain college options. The College Center provides “College Apply Day” sessions, SAT prep sessions, and support for students in writing personal essays. Other college support at SPHS includes the USC/Southern California College Advisory Corp., the Boys & Girls Club’s College Bound program, and Marymount College to offer college credit for AP courses taken at SPHS.

SPHS teachers took National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) courses in mathematics, ELA, and science. This enabled SPHS to hold NMSI Saturday sessions that gave students an introduction to professionals in high-tech fields and offered advanced learning opportunities. SPHS is the only school in the South Bay area chosen to participate in the NMSI program. Another professional development for the faculty to increase student achievement through engagement was centered on Kagan Strategies. Kagan Strategies give teachers the tools to create structured cooperative activities for increased student engagement and community building.
The faculty has also reviewed LAUSD grading practices standards, worked on aligning grading within a subject (PLC work and common assessments), and considered the detrimental effects of zeros on student grades. This past summer school, teachers were asked to undergo a four hour online professional development on alternative grading practices and students being given opportunities to showing mastery. The summer-school teachers then had to commit to trying any three ideas from this training. These teachers then brought their experiences and the implications of these practices to their departments and to ACC for consideration.

**Goal #3 Equity and Access: Provide Social-Emotional, and Cultural-Climate to lowest underperforming subgroups.**

Much work and professional development has and is being done to identify and support SPHS’ lowest underperforming subgroups. ELA, Mathematics, and Resource teachers have attended professional development trainings for co-teaching and differentiated instruction. Early Reed professional development trainings focused on understanding the circumstances and challenges that high-need students face and how the teacher and school can help them. The remainder of the Reed professional development trainings demonstrated how teachers could infuse the Habits of Mind into their lesson plans to motivate and nurture resilience in all students. SPHS continues to use Title I funds to fund the PSA counselor. Reed money has funded the Intervention counselor, two part-time school psychologists, and both Special Education Coordinators. The induction of two A-G Counselors has allowed the counseling staff to identify and focus on students with 3 or more fails in their A – G classes.

Restorative Justice is the new approach to student discipline and is used to create a community in the school with the staff, faculty, and student body treating each other with respect and implementing clearly stated rules and guidelines. More teachers have started to embrace Restorative Justice.
Goal #4: Unifying Two-Campuses: A focus on integrating the Flagship Campus and Olguin Campus is so that students feel a unified sense of belonging to one San Pedro High School.

Unifying the two campuses is still an issue that SPHS is finding to be a complex challenge to address but progress has been made in diminishing misconceptions among some stakeholders. A portion of the PAL SLC students were assigned classes at the Olguin campus and some students and teachers expressed dissatisfaction with being disconnected from the rest of the PAL house and inconvenienced by having to commute between campuses. The ACC offered to students who wanted to remain at Olguin a lottery to fill open spots. This accommodation allowed some of those students that were not in the Magnets but wanted to be at the Olguin campus to remain there. Other actions to unite the two campuses have been made through class offerings and the scheduling of classes, as well as the sharing of assemblies, staff meetings and staff-mixers on both campuses. The offering of classes is such that there are a variety of AP classes and athletic programs available on both campuses. If a student must travel between campuses, school counselors accommodate this by scheduling two concurrent classes so that students can take the buses at nutrition and lunch to minimize the inconvenience of commuting to the other campus. Assemblies, such as the African American Assembly and Respect-Peace-Tolerance Day that traditionally were held at the Flagship campus are now concurrently held on the Olguin campus. School clubs are open to both campuses and each SLC House has its own leadership team. Teachers’ professional development is also alternated between being held at the Olguin campus and the Flagship campus to create more equity of movement while also encouraging staff to become more familiarized and feel a sense of shared ownership of both campuses. A magnet for gifted students will begin next fall at the Flagship campus. This is an addition to the successful SAS program for advanced studies. More students will now have the opportunity to fill their schedules with Advanced Placement and Honors courses on both campuses.
Students were recently surveyed about the two campuses; 12% of students responding felt comfortable at both campuses; 4% felt comfortable at the Flagship campus; and 5% felt comfortable at the Olguin campus. 71% of responding students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they have friends on both campuses. 28% of responding students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that both campuses offer the same opportunities. And 64% of responding students agreed or strongly agreed that they know where to go to get information about campus events and news, for both campuses.

III. Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations:

- SPHS has significantly raised student achievement by improving instruction as evidenced by an increased graduation rate, improved SBAC scores, and English Learners moving up in levels.

- SPHS has made purposeful and thoughtful efforts to integrate state, district, and school initiatives to maximize resources and improve teaching and learning.

- SPHS has made a serious effort to address the socio-emotional and cultural-climate needs of students by adding PSA and A-G counselors and by committing to a restorative justice discipline program.

Recommendations:

- Continue monitoring action plan progress and incorporate the regular examination of student work. The examination of student work is an institutionalized practice at SPHS but its use was not described in the mid-cycle report. The visiting committee saw ample evidence of student work informing the PLC process.

- Continue efforts to unite the Flagship and Olguin campuses. Progress has been made in this area but students, parents, and staff reported that issues still remain that need to be addressed.

- Continue to involve parent groups in the WASC Focus on Learning process. The parents interviewed by the visiting committee expressed a strong interest in the process and are committed to improving the learning experience at SPHS for all students.