

# **Mid-cycle Visiting Committee Report**

**ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS  
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

**FOR**

## **CORDOVA HIGH SCHOOL**

**2239 Chase Drive  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670**

**Folsom Cordova Unified School District**

**Date of Most Recent Self-Study Visit: March 2017**

**Date of Mid-cycle Visit: October 26-28, 2020**

### **Visiting Committee Members**

Dr. Gary Davis, Chairperson  
Governing Board Member, Oxnard Union High School District, Oxnard CA  
Superintendent (retired) OUHSD  
Former Commissioner and Commission Chairperson  
Accrediting Commission for Schools/WASC

Mr. Gary Johnson, Member  
Deputy Superintendent (retired)  
Jefferson Union High School District, Daly City/Pacifica CA

## **Cordova High School – WASC Accreditation History**

Cordova High School's Initial Visit for the consideration of WASC accreditation was held during the 1963-64 school year. Then, the school's first full Self-Study visit occurred during 1966-67 and, since that time, the school has hosted eight additional Self-Study visits, the last in March 2017. Following that visit, the Accrediting Committee for Schools/WASC granted CHS a six-year status of accreditation with a two-day mid-cycle visit. The spring 2020 WASC Mid-cycle visit was rescheduled to October 2020, due to the COVID-19 impact on school operations and to align the WASC accreditation visit with the Multi-Programme (MYP & DP) IB First Evaluation visit for Mitchell Middle School and Cordova High School. In planning the October 2020 visit for the high school, it was agreed that this would be a "simultaneous" IB/WASC visit rather than a "synchronized" visit.

## **The October 2020 WASC Mid-cycle Visit**

Due to travel restrictions and other precautions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the school's leadership and the WASC Commission agreed that this mid-cycle visit would be done virtually, using Zoom or other appropriate online platforms. Preceding the mid-cycle visit, several Zoom meetings were held to develop the joint WASC/IB visitation schedule of virtual meetings. It was agreed that the WASC Visiting Committee members would provide CHS a video self-introduction to be shown to the school's key stakeholders, eliminating the need and time for self-introductions at each virtual meeting during the mid-cycle visit. Also, the school provided the Visiting Committee an excellent video "tour of the campus," showing the significant features on the campus, as well as the facilities modifications and safety measures in place for COVID-19 precautions. The school also provided the WASC VC video self-introductions of members of their leadership team – the Lancer Leadership Council. During the October 26-28 visit, virtual meetings were held with the high school's Leadership Team, parent representatives, student representatives, teacher representatives, the Library staff, Counselors, the District leadership team of Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent-Secondary Education, and Governing Board President, and again with the LLC for the final Exit Report to the school. The WASC VC chairperson also met virtually with the IB team chairperson before and during the three-day visit. The WASC Visiting Committee also joined in on other meeting which were focused on IB areas of inquiry, but which were also relevant to WASC criteria for effective schooling; these included the IB Standard C inquiry and the IB Exit Report.

## **Special Comment on the Implementation of Distance Learning**

Since March 2020, the school's District leadership has implemented distance learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Students and teachers have experienced a huge shift in connectivity with one another, as they face the inability to be on campus and learning face-to-face. Some of the major challenges encountered have revolved around student equity and the unknown impact on the school's special populations, including homeless and foster youth, Special Education students, as well as English language learners. During the spring of 2020, teachers had to adjust their expectations but, with District support, teachers have transitioned and continue to make learning a top priority. CHS started the 2020-21 school year in full distance learning mode.

During these challenging times, the school's staff has continued to focus on their critical needs. Staff focused their PLCs on shared curriculum, assessments, and online engagement, while adjusting expectations to meet the needs of their students. The school's leadership provided all

students with a school-issued device, hot-spots when needed, as well as appropriate textbooks and materials. They also increased offerings of virtual professional development for teachers. The staff continues to ensure that students are focused on the UC/CSU a-g admissions requirements, so that the highest number of students possible are engaged in a rigorous, grade-level curriculum in English, math, science, and social studies.

## **I. SUMMARY**

### **1. General comments about the school, including summary of achievement data**

#### **School Setting**

Cordova High School opened in 1963 and is the only non-charter comprehensive high school in the city of Rancho Cordova, which has a current population of about 75,000. CHS is one of three comprehensive high schools in the Folsom Cordova Unified School District. The other two high schools are in the city of Folsom, approximately 12 miles to the east. Incorporated in 2003, Rancho Cordova is a tightly knit community which is composed largely of retired military veterans who have lived in the community for 30-40 years, middle class families who are drawn to the city by its affordable housing and, most recently, a large influx of immigrants from all over the world, including Mexico, South and Central America, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. As of the 2020-21 school year, 16.5% of CHS students were identified as English language learners, and 48% spoke English as a second language – numbers that continue to grow each year.

Rancho Cordova is home to a large business park, which includes many Fortune 500 magazine top corporations, such as Vision Service Plan, Zurich Insurance, and Health Net. There is a long tradition of community service, and the local Cordova Community Council recently celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as “The Chamber of Commerce for Non-Profits.” The school’s California Partnership Academies (Pre-Engineering, Culinary Arts, Agriculture, Business) and the Construction Pathway have community partners with many of the businesses in Rancho Cordova, including Sacramento Children’s Museum, Rancho Cordova Parks and Rec, Soil Born Farms, and SAFE Credit Union. The school’s clubs partner with the community, as well; Key Club works with Kiwanis, Interact Club with Rotary International, and Friday Night Live partners with Kaiser Permanente. The community is very supportive of the school and almost always passes bond measures on the first attempt.

Parents are formally involved with Cordova High School by their participation in the PTSA, Sober Grad Night, the Music Boosters, Football Boosters, and Site Council. The school maintains a website that receives a lot of parent traffic every day, as parents are able to check their students’ grades and attendance online, as well as access all school information, such as calendars, sports schedules, email, and many other helpful resources. The principal uses *Blackboard Connect* to message parents via phone and email. In addition, the principal uses *Peachjar*, an online flier distribution system, which is emailed out to all stakeholder groups and posted on the school website.

#### **Mission and Vision**

Through collaboration with Mitchell Middle School, it became apparent just how important revising the CHS Vision would be to increase articulation and better support students. During 2017-18, the first year of this process, the faculty identified critical components of work to be done during scheduled faculty meeting time and created a

*Vision Board*, on which both the Student Site Council and ASB were tasked with drafting versions of a Vision that was meaningful to students. The drafts were synthesized and reviewed by site leadership to create the CHS Vision Statement, which was presented to staff at the end of the school year and officially rolled out for the 2018-19 school year, and which is now posted in every classroom on campus.

**Mission Statement:** *Cordova High School leads by example – we are citizens of the world and show respect for others through kind words and actions. We put forth our best effort and work hard to achieve academic excellence. We grow by taking risks and learning from our mistakes. We believe laughter is an important part of learning. With courage, this is who we are, especially when no one is looking.*

**Vision Statement:** *Cordova High School is an extension of our community steeped in deep tradition and endeavors to develop intrinsically motivated, compassionate, and resilient learners who understand the importance of advancing their education while embracing diversity through active collaboration to become innovative global citizens of the world.*

### Enrollment Growth and Student Demographics

Year	Enrollment	English Language Learners	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	Foster Youth
2020-21	1958	16.5%	70.2%	n/a
2019-20	1851	14.1%	75.6%	0.5%
2018-19	1855	12.5%	70.2%	0.6%
2017-18	1771	12.5%	68.0%	0.5%
2016-17	1692	13.4%	67.4%	1.2%

Rancho Cordova continues to grow with several new housing developments over the past five years. As an open enrollment district, more students are choosing to stay at CHS. Although the school experienced a slight decrease in enrollment in 2019-20, the overall enrollment numbers continue to climb. The percentage of students in the socioeconomically disadvantaged/low income special population also continues to increase.

Language Acquisition Data				
Year	English Only	IFEP	ELL	RFEP
2020-21	52.6%	2.0%	16.5%	27.9%
2019-20	51.8%	2.1%	15.8%	30.0%
2018-19	51.1%	4.7%	12.5%	34.2%
2017-18	51.2%	2.7%	14.1%	32.0%
2016-17	52.7%	3.8%	13.4%	30.0%

The percentage of English language learners continues to steadily increase. The school's reclassification rates of students transitioning from limited-English speaking to fluent-English

speaking (RFEP) have experienced a slight decline, and this is an area that the school's staff needs to monitor and address.

Year	African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Filipino	Hispanic or Latino	Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races
<b>2020-21</b>	13.3%	1.2%	8.6%	2.9%	36.1%	1.9%	35.3%	7.0%
<b>2019-20</b>	9.6%	0.7%	7.9%	3.2%	37.4%	1.6%	33.3%	6.2%
<b>2018-19</b>	10.6%	0.6%	7.9%	2.8%	35.2%	1.6%	35.4%	6.5%
<b>2017-18</b>	11.0%	0.7%	7.6%	2.3%	36.6%	1.8%	35.0%	4.7%
<b>2016-17</b>	13.0%	0.5%	6.3%	2.3%	34.9%	1.7%	37.4%	3.7%
<b>2015-16</b>	15.0%	0.7%	6.1%	2.1%	32.6%	1.3%	38.6%	3.4%
<b>2014-15</b>	15.3%	0.6%	6.2%	2.5%	31.3%	1.3%	40.0%	2.7%

For the 2020-21 school year, student demographics showed an increase in African American, American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander, White, and multi-racial students, and a slight decrease in Filipino and Hispanic students.

Year	Total Enrollment	Number SPED Students	SPED Percentage of Population
2020-21	1958	340	17%
2019-20	1851	297	16%
2018-19	1855	329	18%
2017-18	1771	275	16%
2016-17	1692	247	15%

Cordova High School continues to see an increase in the number of Special Education students, now comprising 17% of the total school enrollment. There has been a sudden increase in the enrollment of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) from 329 last year to a high of 352 as of September 2020. Special Education students include Severely Handicapped as well as in ED (Emotionally Disturbed), and a range of Mild-to-Moderate classes. Students are mainstreamed as much as possible with in-class support from instructional assistants and Special Education teachers themselves.

For the 2020-21 school year, the leadership staff has added one Independent Living Skill class, bringing the total to five (5) ILS classes – the most in the school's history -- due to an increase of incoming 9th grade ILS students from the feeder middle schools. Also, there has been a very low number of students exiting from the program, and students tend to stay at CHS until they age out (at 22 years old). The growth in ILS enrollment prompted the District and CHS administration to identify a classroom that could be converted into a one in which students can be appropriately taught literacy and life skills to prepare them for employment and long-term independence. This newly converted classroom, equipped with appliances and equipment designed for independence and learning supports, was one of the classrooms featured on the school's virtual "campus tour."

Similarly, an 0.5 FTE for Specialized Academic Instruction has been added in response to additional students who are in the Resource Specialist Program category. This increase in mild-to-moderate SAI students has also been attributed to the growing number of students who have been identified in their elementary grades due to their reading and writing deficiencies. As a result, those deficiencies have been used as measures to link them to specific learning disabilities. The District's Special Education Department has been working closely with CHS, as well as with the elementary and middle schools, to help identify intervention plans and supports and help mitigate any over-identification of students for the Special Education program, especially at the elementary level. The Mid-cycle Visiting Committee encourages the District and MS/HS leadership teams to continue to re-evaluate these Special Education identification procedures. Currently, the CHS staff is also mainstreaming a record number of students in ELA, social studies, and science in an effort to provide all students access to grade-level curriculum and an opportunity to earn UC/CSU a-g course credits.

## **School Achievement Data Analysis**

### **GROWTH TRENDS**

While overall enrollment continues to increase over the last five years, the African American percentage has declined from 15.3% to 13.3%. The White percentages have declined from 40% to 35.3%. Hispanic population has increased from 31.3% to 36.1%, and those reporting "Two or more Races" increased from 2.7% to 7%. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students have increased from 67.4% to 70.2%. This shift in demographics will continue to challenge CHS to narrow the achievement gaps over time and ensure that all students have an equal chance at success.

## **CALIFORNIA ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS (CAASPP)**

### **English Language Arts**

The California School Dashboard rates CHS in the Yellow (Average) category for 2019. While 49% of the students tested met or exceeded the standard, an increase of 5% over 2018, there was significant improvement in the percentage of students in the bottom category overall (-6%), for EL (-8%), Students w/Disabilities (-15%) and Economically Disadvantaged Students (-5%), over the previous year. For English Learners, 52.1% were making progress toward EL proficiency.

### **MATH**

The California School Dashboard rates CHS in the Orange (Below Average) category for 2019. CHS scored 86.7 points below standard in 2019, during which 20.4% Met or Exceeded the standard along with 52.69 % in the lowest category. This area continues to be a struggle, considering the new math curriculum and which the school's mid-cycle report indicates that the PLCs have a limited the amount of time to address this area of need.

### **SUSPENSION & EXPULSION DATA**

While the overall suspension rate continues to rise, the number of students who have been suspended continues to drop. This implies an underlying problem with a smaller number of students who continue to face suspension. Some strategies and interventions seem to make

a difference, particularly with Special Education students. The California School Dashboard has colored CHS either Yellow or Orange for the past several years.

Expulsion rates have continued to fall due to the administration choosing to suspend rather than expel. The expulsion rate has fallen from a 0.53% in 2016-17 to 0.21% in 2019-20.

## **GRADUATION RATES**

Graduation rates at CHS have consistently been in the low 90% range for several years. While the number of students graduating with a-g credits is steadily increasing, there are a number of students joining the military or workforce after graduation. The California School Dashboard rates CHS Orange (Below Average) as a school, with Special Education Red, and White students in the Yellow category. The Dashboard shows that 32.5% are Prepared for College (met a-g course admissions requirements) after graduation.

## **CTE / ACADEMY GROWTH**

The Academy enrollment has remained steady and still growing to more than 50% of the total student population (927 of 1851 students). For 2019-20, the CTE/Academy enrollments were Construction (195), Engineering (124), Culinary (131), Business (154) and Agriculture (323).

## **The School's IB Programme**

Because this was a simultaneous WASC/IB visit, the WASC Visiting Committee had the opportunity to sit in on the IB "Exit Report" to the school's leadership team. Among the strengths and development needs noted for the IB program, the IB Visiting Team noted the following:

- There has been significant collaboration between the leadership teams and IB staff at Mitchell Middle School and Cordova High School;
- The District office staff and Governing Board support the IB programme;
- The attributes of the IB *Learner Profile* are being infused into the culture of CHS;
- The CHS staff should increase their attention to attracting even more students to the IB Diploma Programme;
- There was concern if one IB Coordinator could serve both the middle and high schools;
- The school's staff is working to infuse "global mindedness" throughout the curriculum;
- The school's staff does need to develop even more interdisciplinary units;
- The school's staff needs to develop more service-learning opportunities for students;
- The school's leadership staff needs to increase parents' understanding of the IB philosophy.

## **2. School's follow-up process and process used to prepare the mid-cycle report**

Cordova High School has taken several steps to involve all stakeholder groups in developing an update to the Action Plan that remains aligned to the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA). A new WASC Coordinator used the Critical Academic Needs (CANS) and the SPSA and requested input from department leads and teacher groups to solicit feedback on how the CANS were being addressed.

In early spring 2020, the IB Coordinator and the WASC Coordinator met to create focus groups that were aligned to concentrate on standards and practices related to both WASC

goals and the IB/DP categories. Once CHS moved to distance learning, three virtual committees were formed to tackle each of the Critical Academic Needs and provide feedback on an updated Schoolwide Action Plan. The results were shared with all staff as well as parents and students.

Each department has completed an Action Plan Worksheet, discussing various goals and listing professional development and curriculum updates.

The Lancer Leadership Council (LLC) has continually discussed and analyzed data, as well as helping to make site decisions and bring concerns from their respective departments to be discussed. In preparation for the mid-cycle report, administrators and teachers participated in Learning Walks and Professional Learning Communities. In moving forward with their PLC vision, teacher teams are creating common formative and summative assessments, looking at data, and analyzing ways to reteach what was not learned.

### **3. Significant changes and/or developments and their impact on the school**

**Administrative Changes:** The administrative team at Cordova High School has changed since the 2017 WASC visit. In 2017, an Assistant Principal moved to a different high school within the FCUSD, and the current (2020-21) Principal was brought in as a new AP from a neighboring district. The new Principal came to CHS with AP experience and a history of serving in diverse school communities. In 2018, the CHS Principal made the decision to spend his last two years before retirement as the Principal of Mitchell Middle School, and Mr. Jerad Hyden was chosen as Principal of CHS. That same year, a new Assistant Principal was hired, who was formerly an English teacher and ELD and department lead at the feeder Mills Middle School. As of the beginning of the 2020-21 school year, the CHS administrative team will have made no changes for three years – a trend the staff hopes to see continue.

**Other Personnel Changes:** In 2019, both the long-term attendance clerk and registrar took positions at the District office. Filling both positions with the right candidates took time, particularly with the attendance clerk position, and the school did not have a solid, permanent attendance clerk until the second semester of the 2019-20 school year. In 2020, the school's long-time counselor passed away unexpectedly, which had a huge impact on many students and families. A full-time, permanent counselor was hired.

**Counseling & Support Staff:** CHS currently has five (5) full-time counselors, an increase since the last WASC accreditation visit. The school currently has two (2) full-time mental health professionals, plus for the 2020-21 school year an additional professional from the Sacramento County Office of Education is on staff.

The academic support coach, who also served as the school's ELD monitor, ELA Department chair, and teacher, moved out of district at the end of the 2018-19 school year. Her positions were filled by separate assignments; an English teacher with experience in adult education and a strong knowledge of PLCs became a full-time academic coach; a veteran teacher took over as English Department chairperson, and a person who has been with the district for almost 20 years took over as ELD program monitor.

**College & Career Office:** The staff welcomed a new college and career clerk in 2019, who speaks fluent Spanish and has been reaching out to the school's large Spanish-speaking student population.



**IB/MYP Programme:** The IB Coordinator who served as the MYP Coordinator as well as the administrator over all IB matters and who also served as the IB administrator at the feeder MYP Mitchell Middle School beginning 2020-21 school year was appointed the Principal of that middle school. Her duties at CHS have been absorbed by the Cordova High School DP Coordinator, academic coach, and administration.

One area of focus within the MYP is to strengthen the capstone experience, which is the 10th grade Personal Project. Over the last few years, the IB staff has used both *Google Classroom* as well as a *Google Site* to provide support and guidance. Teachers of IB have also used their vertical articulation time with Mitchell Middle School to collaboratively grade the projects, which has increased both awareness and promotion of the project.

In the fall of 2018, a new person joined the CHS faculty as DP Coordinator and quickly became an integral part of the pedagogical leadership team. She facilitated the creation of SMART Goals for the DP faculty, which brought a new sense of cohesion to the group. In the spring of 2019, CHS became authorized to offer the IB Career Related Programme (IB CP).

To further support faculty development, in 2019 the IB Coordinator allocated funds to acquire a compendium of over 100 professional development “eTitles” for staff use. They cover such topics as assessments, classroom management, flipped learning, and Special Education. Teachers have reported that many are using the e-Titles; additionally, several were referenced by teachers over the summer as they participated in virtual professional development to support student learning.

**CTE:** The CHS staff has made several changes over the last few years with the school's CTE program. Business classes made a change from an IT/CS focus to more business finance, due to the overlapping of pathways with the Engineering Academy. Initially, the District wanted the business classes to be a pathway focused on business technology/app development, supporting the Information Communications Technology CTE sector. However, once the pathway started the staff found that there was too much overlap with other classes and there just weren't enough students for both. The school then partnered with SAFE Credit Union; so, the classes moved to Business and Finance and Marketing and Sales Sector.

The staff established a partnership with SAFE Credit Union, which will be used to teach financial literacy and allow students to open accounts. SAFE Credit Union also supplies academies with guest speakers and summer internships. In addition, students are able to participate in a reality fair hosted by SAFE Credit Union.

**Science:** There have been several on-going developments in adopting a new curriculum and classes in science over the past three years. The 2017-18 school year was the last year of Physical/Earth Science in 9th grade and Biology in 10th grade; now, 9th graders enroll in Biology, and 10th graders are in either Chemistry or Physics. This year also marked the so-called District Wide Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum meetings to clarify what is taught in each course in the three-course NGSS model. Several teachers are using local grant funds to develop inquiry-based lessons aligned with NGSS.

**Mathematics:** The Math Department added foundation classes in 2017 to better serve students, as well as a concentration on IB Program development. The department adopted the “Big Ideas” math curriculum for all IM 1, 2, 3. Teachers began to work on establishing Google classrooms and Illuminate for testing and data collection in 2018. The Math Department has employed an intervention teacher since 2015, who supports the needs of the

intensive Foundation-level courses and provides collaboration with math teachers through small group pull-outs and formative assessments.

**World Languages:** The leadership staff added a *Spanish for Spanish Speakers* course sequence to support native and heritage speakers – a major segment of the school's diverse population of students. In 2020-21, the third course in this sequence has been added with a full class enrollment of 28. The World Languages Department has also worked on developing a more aligned curriculum from middle school up through CHS in order to support incoming students.

**ELA:** There have been many positive changes in English language arts, as staff strives to address the gap between chronically low readers, a high ELL population, and a high population of Special Education students. Beginning 2017-18, the ELA Department started to develop a district wide guaranteed and viable curriculum. All high schools in the District piloted two exams, and teachers have been using these exams to guide teaching since that time with plans to continue using similar common assessments at every grade level.

The role of the ELD monitor expanded in 2019-20. The coordinator now has more time to dedicate to the position and has been able to meet with EL students throughout the year. She meets them to discuss grades, tardies, absences, and the importance of the ELPAC test. This work continues during distance learning.

A new *Designated English* course was implemented to bridge the gap with the lowest readers and ELL population. This class serves as a second English course in addition to grade-level English.

During the 2020-21 school year, the staff is moving a record number of students out of the foundation courses and into *StudySync*. In order to address the need for more students to access grade level curriculum and help them graduate with a-g course completions, the staff has implemented the District's Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum plan by identifying students who would be able to receive instruction using the General Education curriculum, StudySync. Multiple measures of data, including iReady, CAASPP, ELPAC, students' grades, district writing assessment, and teacher recommendations were used to identify qualified students. Those students have also been enrolled in one period of Specialized Academic Instruction (SAI) Strategic Intensive Intervention English class for support. In the late spring this year, the academic coach and the English Language Arts division leader worked together to evaluate the GaVC units of instruction and StudySync curriculum, in order to identify the main components of the instructional plan for the school year 2020-21. The plan was rolled out to all English Language Arts and SAI English teachers a few weeks before the school year ended. During the last Special Education Department meeting in May 2020, all SAI English teachers deliberated together, analyzed and evaluated all assessment data for all students who are enrolled in level 10 SAI classes (mild to moderate), and made their recommendations. The Special Education division leader also provided support by identifying General Education classes that would require co-teaching with SAI teachers or provided the much-needed instructional assistants for classes that co-teaching was not possible due to scheduling conflicts.

**Library:** A District Librarian, who is an accredited Teacher-Librarian, was hired in August 2018. This position is integral to the IB programme, specifically pertaining to the research components (Personal Project, Extended Essay, and Reflective Project).

Since the last accreditation visit, the school has new adoptions in math and social science and has created the Patient Care Pathway in IB. Many new materials have been purchased to support these new developments. The school has also added titles in professional development for the staff and Gale research databases for students. In addition, the librarian has been building the collection of books in students' home languages and other interactive learning materials. Recently, the library secured grant funding to upgrade library furniture, acquiring new sofas, stools, and tables. Additionally, the school has received grant money to purchase more non-fiction.

During the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years, a late-night library was offered, during which a classified staff member kept the library open for an extended three-hour period after school two nights a week. However, due to funding restrictions the school was not able to resume that program in 2019-20. Then, sports coaches took it upon themselves to replicate this study time for athletes in the school's small gym.

**Credit Recovery:** During the 2019-20 school year, FCUSD began discussing the reduction of summer school due to budget constraints. CHS immediately began to consider how this would impact students – many depend on summer school to make up credits in order to graduate. The staff considered alternative ways students could recover credits. The decision was made to pilot an after-school credit recovery program for two English courses, two math courses, and US History. The plan predominantly targeted juniors and seniors who would not be able to fit an extra class in their future schedules and would risk not graduating; in the end, the staff did invite some 10<sup>th</sup> graders to make up math credits. To be eligible, a student needed to have at least a 40% in the class failed.

Students attended class for one hour after school 3-5 days a week, with the goal to get students through the program in less than six weeks. The program was successful; staff was able to retain a number of students who were struggling in classes for a variety of reasons. Students received specialized assistance with the small class sizes and also gained skills needed to complete their 2<sup>nd</sup> semester in those classes. The staff hopes to offer this opportunity every January to help those students who do not pass some of their core classes during the first semester. This should help improve graduation numbers, keep summer school numbers down, and keep students engaged.

The school has also offered credit recovery through APEX for several years as a form of credit recovery with classes based on students' needs, but ranging from history, economics, government, all four years of ELA, and health.

**Summer School:** Starting in the 2019-20 school year, summer school went through major changes due to budget cuts and the social distancing regulations due to COVID-19. Classes moved over to APEX, providing students with virtual classes.

**Equity Leaders:** During 2019, 20 certificated personnel throughout the District were chosen to work as Equity Leaders, including three from Cordova High School. Equity Leaders went through Training of Trainers in order to provide District staff professional development on cultural competence. Training included race relations, culturally relevant pedagogy, and language and social justice. After completion, Equity Leaders received a Cultural Readiness Certification from EPOCH Education.

**PBIS:** In 2019 PBIS expanded – adding a school counselor, behavior specialist, instructional assistant, and students. Staff and student connectivity activities have been at the forefront of their work. They have analyzed the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) results and have been

reworking the school/class expectations and the behavior matrix. Major goals now include the restructuring of student and staff handbooks and having more uniformity overall in policies for behavior intervention and discipline. Unfortunately, the restructuring of the student and staff handbooks project has been delayed due to a focus on distance learning and norming student expectations in the online environment. The staff hopes to return to this project later this school year in collaboration with the PBIS team and leadership group; it remains one of the school's key goals to support student learning once the school returns to some form of in-person learning.

Behavior intervention and discipline remain a work-in-progress, but the staff's goal is to ensure that all teachers are taking the same approach to discipline while teaching and using strategies that keep students in the classroom. A group of teachers and administrators were supposed to go through RTI training right at the onset of the pandemic, but that has not yet been rescheduled. However, the conversation has begun, and the staff continued to address SEL strategies at the beginning of this school year by working them into every class during the first weeks of school. The leadership and PBIS team continue to share SEL lessons with teachers to use during the Monday advisory period. Additionally, a number of teachers (some who are also a part of the District Equity Team), plus the academic coach, attended a PD course on *Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning* during September, which addressed a culturally responsive approach to discipline and restorative justice practices. The academic coach and ELA Department lead, who are also a part of the Expert Teacher Team at the District, intend to present PD to the staff at CHS in November.

**4. Evaluation of progress on implementation of the schoolwide action plan that addresses student learner needs, school needs, and critical areas for follow-up.**

The March 2017 Self-Study Visiting Committee Report concurred with the school staff's findings of three critical growth needs and added three areas which needed to be strengthened.

**PROGRESS REPORT -- FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
FROM THE 2020 MID-CYCLE VISIT**

***1. Student performance across all subject areas will be measured and the data used to ensure improved performance.***

Student performance continues to be measured by California State Assessments (SBAC & ELPAC), District Writing & Reading Assessments, and iReady. Departments continue to refine formative and summative assessments and develop rubrics to standardize the levels of student performance. The Lancer Leadership Council (LLC) provides the best vehicle for sharing student performance data across disciplines. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) provide the best opportunity for departments to share and discuss student performance. CHS shows evidence of improved student performance, moving away from California Dashboard "RED" categories. While the percentage of students "meeting standards" has not appreciably increased, the focus of moving the bottom tier "up a notch" has been successful.

**Visiting Committee Comments:**

It will be difficult to determine the impact of distance learning on students' academic achievement. In the meantime, Cordova High School will need to accelerate the PLC work started in 2018-19 and provide data that validates meaningful progress. The IB and Academy programs are definitely providing a quality educational experience and developing marketable skills. Hopefully, this continues to result in student performance growth as well.

**2. All students are in the MYP which will build a foundation for success in all A-G courses.**

One area of growth noted in the school's Action Plan in 2017 was increasing the number of students meeting UC/CSU a-g admissions course requirements. The 2020 Visiting Committee understands that this growth need was stated in reference to the school's IB/MYP courses serving as the foundation for that goal. At the time of the mid-cycle visit, approximately 80% of Grade 9-10 students were participating in the IB/MYP program. Also, data provided in the mid-cycle report showed some improvement in the percentages of graduates completing UC/CSU a-g course admissions requirements except for the most recent graduating class.

- 28.9% Class of 2017
- 31.6% Class of 2018
- 32.5% Class of 2019
- 24.4% Class of 2020

The school's leadership team intends to continue efforts to increase the number of students participating in the IB/MYP and also the percentages of graduates earning a "C" or better grade in a-g courses annually.

**Visiting Committee Comments:**

The mid-cycle VC and Lancer Leadership Council (LLC) agree that this statement does not need to continue as a stand-alone critical growth need. However, the need to continue efforts and increase percentages of CHS graduates completing a-g courses continues as a priority need.

**3. Continue to work on increasing stakeholder participation in all areas of school.**

The 2020 Visiting Committee and school leadership team (the LLC) understood this critical growth need to focus specifically on students as the "stakeholders" mentioned by the 2017 VC, and not parents, teachers, or community members. The school's staff has given appropriate attention to increasing student participation and engagement.

In order to reduce the numbers of student suspensions annually, the staff continues to implement programs that address social and emotional learning. They are also implementing new strategies to assist students with decision-making and self-control. The staff also continues to implement procedures to increase the numbers of students participating in extracurricular activities.

PBIS started new programs in the 2019-20 school year, but the outcomes of those programs will not be assessed until 2020-21 at the earliest, since the staff does not have accurate numbers for the shortened 2019-20 school year. Positive school culture is promoted through Link Crew and the schoolwide expectations of PBIS. The PBIS team worked on how to re-establish a schoolwide behavior expectations matrix. In 2019, the leadership staff also established a peer leadership class. Rallies, lunch-time activities, food days, and “club rush” have also helped to establish a positive school culture. A student *Lancer of the Month* is identified based on the IB Student Learner Profile.

#### **Visiting Committee Comments:**

The staff intends to continue their focus on improving the connectivity and engagement of students in all aspects of school life, as soon as COVID-19 precautions make it possible. However, it was agreed that this critical growth need from 2017 does not need to continue as a stand-alone statement.

#### **4. Identify and implement effective instructional strategies that increase student engagement for all students in all courses.**

Some of the responses to this critical growth need relate to the discussion in #3, above. PBIS started new programs in the 2019-20 school year and, again, the outcomes of this program will be better understood later when schools return to some form of in-person instruction.

The staff continues to reach out to incoming 9th graders to ensure they know about the school's many opportunities, including academies, CTE, and IB. Counselors meet one-on-one with 9th graders to prepare a 4-year plan for each student. A freshman counselor makes classroom visits to present information about the school's programs. Changes have been made to the IB/DP recruitment process to include broadcast segments and presentations in more English classes. The school's leadership team also continues to offer increased training in differentiating instructional strategies for both new and returning teachers.

The school's leadership team is especially proud of the so-called “A-Team Learning Walks” -- visiting classrooms and seeing teachers in action, which has become a weekly occurrence at CHS. Starting in the 2018-19 school year, the administrative team, along with the academic coach and ELD monitor, began dedicating more time to informal but strategic observations. Every Tuesday morning, the team visits as many classrooms as possible, with a specific theme aligned with the *Learning Walk Rubric* (themes from *Teach Like A Champion* by Doug Lemov) that includes student engagement, high academic expectations, lesson planning and delivery, and strong classroom culture. Teachers, in turn, receive prescriptive feedback centered on effective instructional strategies. After the Learning Walks, the team gathers to share observations. These discussions drive decisions on professional development, the focus of staff meetings, and school goals. During the 2018-19 school year, the A-Team made 503 informal classroom visits, and the “glows and grows” were shared weekly with the staff. During the 2019-20 school year, the A-Team was able to complete 329 classroom visits before the school had to move to distance learning due to COVID-19 precautions.

Now that CHS has a full-time academic coach, all teachers have the opportunity to participate on guided learning walks during their prep periods. Several teachers took part

in these classroom observations in the 2019-20 school year, and the focus was left up to the teacher; these ranged from seeing classroom management styles, observing specific student groups, and analyzing student engagement across the curriculum.

Even during distance learning, the A-Team made the transition and has started virtual learning walks. Many teachers switched platforms (from MS Teams to Zoom) after the start of the school year; so, gathering classroom codes to visit virtual classes has been a challenge. However, the A-Team members now have codes to drop in on classes, as well as codes to visit Google Classrooms. Getting into Google Classrooms is an added bonus, as it provides an opportunity to see what students are working on and to witness some "flipped-classroom" strategies. The A-Team intends to use the information gathered to guide student learning until students and teachers return to campus and the school returns to traditional classroom visits.

#### **Visiting Committee Comments:**

First, the VC commends the A-Team for implementing Learning Walks and the teaching staff for their participation in these procedures. The Learning Walks appear to have great potential to help all staff continue their focus on effective instructional practices. Also, the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) provides another opportunity for staff collaboration, analysis of student achievement data, and sharing of best practices and difficulties. With the implementation of Learning Walks and PLCs, the Visiting Committee believes that this critical growth need is being addressed and will continue as the entire staff focuses on the improvement of all students' academic achievement.

#### ***5. Develop authentic teacher teams to use diagnostic, grade, and assessment data, including IB DP/MYP, to drive instructional decisions that improve student learning.***

The school's assessment model -- the multiple measures used to assess students' academic achievement -- includes the following indicators:

- For Grade 11 students – the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) in English/Language Arts and Math
- For English Language Learners – the state's ELPAC assessment and the tracking of reclassification rates (limited-English proficient to fluent-English proficient)
- Student Suspension and Expulsion rates
- Grade 12 Graduation Rates
- Percentages of graduates completing UC/CSU a-g course admissions requirements
- The percentage of students enrolled in the school's Academies
- International Baccalaureate Diploma Program enrollment and exam results
- The Grade 9 Physical Fitness assessment (if and when this assessment continues after COVID)
- Student performance on the District writing assessment

The Visiting Committee recommends that the LLC implement a Graduate Follow-up Study, whereby a sample of graduates or their parents are contacted during the year after graduation from CHS, asked what the student is now doing regarding education, work, or otherwise, how well the student was prepared for this state of life, and what else the school could have done to help prepare the student for their post-secondary experience. Also, the VC recommends that the LLC implement annually or bi-annually some type of school satisfaction surveys to staff and parents, the results of which would also be included in the school's assessment model; the school already has data from the bi-annual *California Healthy Kids Survey*, which should also be considered a part of the school's assessment model.

Since the 2017 Self-Study accreditation visit, the Lancer Leadership Council (LLC) has continued to discuss and analyze student assessment data as well as the school's progress on addressing their critical growth needs. The LLC includes several key staff members, including the entire administrative team, department heads, the head counselor, the academic support coach, the ELD program monitor, and rotating members of the school's PBIS team. The LLC meets once a month during the school year and once again prior to the start of the school year. LLC members keep teachers in the subject-area departments aware of any changes or opportunities that may affect them in their daily teaching.

**Professional Learning Communities:** With the change in the administration team and the addition of a full-time academic support coach, the staff started the year with a commitment to PLC work, including set days for teams to meet and collaborate throughout the year. Prior to the start of the 2019-20 school year, teachers were offered two days of professional development dedicated to starting the year of PLC work with quality time to make PLC work more meaningful. Teacher teams have been tasked with creating common formative and summative assessments, looking at data from those assessments, and analyzing ways to reteach what was not learned well. At the end of every meeting, PLC teams fill out a matrix summarizing their work and future tasks. The academic coach compiles the input monthly, and this is discussed at administrative team meetings. The staff, then, has been able to use PLC data throughout the year to look at trends in teaching and learning and to consider the goals of the schoolwide Action Plan. The LLC is very confident that PLC efforts will increase once the school returns to some form of in-person teaching, leading to more common formative and summative assessments, more widespread guaranteed and viable curriculum and, in turn, increased student achievement.

#### **Visiting Committee Comments:**

The 2020 VC is satisfied that this growth needs has been adequately addressed and will continue as a top priority for the school. Appropriate teacher teams are in place and functional; the emphasis now should shift to the use of assessment data to drive instructional methodology, allocate resources, and improve student learning.

#### **6. Establish a clear process to communicate with all stakeholders for general school activities.**

Through emails, *PowerSchool*, and surveys, the staff is attempting to increase communication and participation among all stakeholders. There has been an increase in



communication with parents by making it easier for them to check on their students' grades and assignments through the use of the Parent Portal in *PowerSchool*. Also, the implementation of Google Classroom district wide has enabled parents to see what is happening in the classroom. During 2019-20, the school's Academic Support Coach contacted hundreds of parents in order to support student success.

There has been an increased accessibility of translators available to improve communication with parents of English Language Learners. Teachers are increasingly using *Language Line*, which provides live translation services in dozens of languages. The ELD monitor constantly updates the school's ELD website and shares information in other languages when possible. The staff invites ELD parents to the ELAC meetings (held three times per year) along with translators, and they ensure that the meeting agenda is translated into multiple languages. The staff also invites all EL parents to the "Parent Summit," and the invitation is made available in Spanish, Russian, Farsi and Pashto.

**Visiting Committee Comments:**

It appears that the school's staff is appropriately addressing this critical growth need, and that this does not need to continue as a stand-alone recommendation for the school.

**II. Schoolwide Areas of Strength and Critical Areas for Follow-up**

**1. List the schoolwide areas of strength identified during the current progress visit.**

1. Support of Parents and the Community
  - a. Partnership with SAFE Credit Union
  - b. Parent Support through PTSA, Sober Grad Night, Music and Sports Boosters, School Site Council
  - c. Inclusion of stakeholders in revision of Mission & Vision statements
2. Support for IB
  - a. Authorization for IB Career Related Programmes
  - b. Increase in counseling support
3. Dedication of teachers, staff and administration
  - a. Efforts to engage students in distance learning
  - b. Commitment to PLC work
  - c. Implementation of "Learning Walk" procedures
  - d. Support from both the District Librarian and Site Librarian
4. The CHS students themselves, who appreciate the many opportunities offered at CHS, the caring support given by their teachers, and the diverse student body.

**2. List the critical areas for follow-up that have not yet been completely addressed. These new and/or continuing critical growth needs must be addressed in the school's updated and revised Action Plan.**

1. Implement procedures which will result in the overall improvement of student achievement, as measured at least by these indicators:
  - a. Percentage of students meeting and exceeding proficiency levels in English language arts and math standards on the Grade 11 California Assessment of Student Progress and Performance
  - b. The percentage of CHS graduates completing UC/CSU a-g course admissions requirements with a grade of "C" or better
  - c. English language learners' (ELLs) performance on the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC)
  - d. The percentage of English Language Learners who are reclassified annually as fluent-English proficient (RFEP), with special attention to Long-term English Learners (LTELs)
  - e. The percentages of students participating in the IB program, with special attention to the numbers who become candidates for the IB Diploma
  - f. Student performance on the District's writing assessment
  - g. Grade 9 student performance on the state's Physical Fitness Test
  - h. Feedback from annual survey instruments given to parents, teachers, and students.
2. Increase the attention given to disaggregated student achievement data, which identifies achievement gaps between the norms of academic achievement of the school compared to that of such special subgroups as low income/socio-economically disadvantaged students, ELLs, students with disabilities (especially mild to moderate), foster youth, and the increasing numbers of African American, Asian, and Hispanic students, and implement procedures to narrow achievement gaps over time.

**3. List any additional new critical areas for follow-up identified during the current progress visit, if applicable.**

There was only one additional new area for follow-up identified by the 2020 Mid-cycle Visiting Committee – under the leadership and direction of the LLC, the staff needs to implement an annual Graduate Follow-up Study.

**4. Identify other areas for improvement and follow-up which the school's key stakeholders are encouraged to address, although these recommendations do not necessarily need to be included in the school's Action Plan.**

- A. The District leadership will need to devise a plan to assess the degree of student learning loss due to COVID-19 school closure and distance learning, and then support efforts at the school to remediate students, as needed.
- B. The District's leadership should reevaluate the allocations of LCFF Supplemental Grant funds to meet the academic and learning needs of the school's special populations; it was reported that, for CHS, these funds are

used primarily to support the implementation of the IB program and the appointment of an academic coach.

- C. With District staff assistance, the middle and high schools should implement procedures to mitigate any over-identification of students for the Special Education program, in reference to the reported growing number of students who have been SPED-identified in their elementary grades due to their reading and writing deficiencies.
- D. Related to student behavior and intervention, the school's LLC, in collaboration with the teaching staff, should ensure that all teachers are taking the same approach to discipline while teaching.
- E. As the LLC reviews its Assessment Model – the multiple measures used to assess student achievement – they should add student attendance rates (ADA) as well as information gleaned from survey data (parent, teachers, California Healthy Kids, Graduate Follow-up Study) to that Assessment Model.
- F. Continue efforts to restructure the student and staff handbooks -- a project which has been delayed due to the school closure and distance learning.
- G. The school's LLC, in collaboration with the teaching staff, should continue efforts to provide focused professional development based on information from the Learning Walk data.
- H. With staff and parent input, seek ways, through appropriate accommodations, to enable more students to enter into and succeed in IB coursework.
- I. Seek ways to infuse the 10 attributes of the IB *Learner Profile* campus wide and cross curricular, and not only within IB coursework.
- J. Prepare well for the 2022-23 WASC Self-Study visit.