

**WASC PROGRESS VISIT
VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

FOR

MARIA CARILLO HIGH SCHOOL

6975 Montecito Road
Santa Rosa, California

Santa Rosa City Schools

March 7, 2017

Visiting Committee Members

Kathleen Ohm

Consultant, Educational Services
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Principal
Retired

I. Introduction

Maria Carrillo High School, located in northwest Santa Rosa since 1996, is recognized as a high-performing, rigorous, academic secondary school. The school received its first Western Association of Schools and Colleges accreditation in 1999.

Academic Highlights

- Maria Carrillo High School is a two-time California Distinguished High School (2009 and 2013).
- MCHS is the highest performing school on the SBAC in the district in both English and Math.
- MCHS has the highest SAT scores in the county with an average score of 1,721 in 2015, well above the 1,473 state average.
- MCHS offers 15 Advanced Placement courses in six subject areas, with the highest exam-participation rate in the district and, at 80%, the highest combined school-wide pass rate in the county.
- Each year MCHS has several National Merit Scholar finalists and semifinalists, with winners in four of the past five years.

Programs for Student Support

- Advocacy class (45-minute classes four times a week) to provide academic and personal support for students.
- Alumni Speaker Series: alumni from a wide variety of professions share their journeys and insights with the current student body during Advocacy.
- Puma Peer Program: A freshman transition program associated with Link Crew that trains upperclassmen to serve as buddies to help incoming freshmen transition to high school.
- Tutoring Program: Certificated teachers from various disciplines provide tutoring during and after school.
- Clubs: 45 clubs for students to select
- Athletics: 47% of the student body competes on an athletic team.
- Martin Luther King Jr. Speech Contest: MCHS students have participated successfully for 13 years.

Department Highlights

- Social Science: offers an integrated Humanities course for all freshmen.
- English: Courses offer rhetorical reading and writing at all grade levels.
- Science: Focus on real-world applications and future job opportunities; students research, interview, and shadow STEM professionals across the disciplines; the department leads the district as early adopters of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).
- Math: The department leads the district in implementation of the Common Core State Standards and has applied common curriculum and assessments.
- Career Technology: An awarding-winning Culinary Arts Program, Automotive Technology, Sports Medicine & Athletic Training, and Translation Services.
- World Language: Students can earn a Seal of Biliteracy on their diploma.
- Performing and Visual Arts: Both the band and choir programs have won awards at numerous local, state and national music festivals and competitions.

Changes/Developments since 2016 WASC Visit

Demographics

Student demographics continue to shift to a more diverse population: 59% white; 23% Hispanic; 8% Asian; 7% other; 3% African American. Staff demographics have not changed.

Staff is offered Unconscious Bias training and Museum of Tolerance training as MCHS recognizes need to teach in a culturally responsive way.

Student Achievement Data

Graduation rates, SBAC results, and AP participation and pass rates continue to be strong overall; however, student achievement data for sub-groups - Hispanic students, EL students, SED students, and students with disabilities - indicate these students are not experiencing the same success as the overall student body.

In response to this data, MCHS will focus professional development on culturally responsive teaching and strengthening pedagogy for instruction to ensure the critical needs of all students are addressed:

- subject-specific academic language frequency
- writing across disciplines
- greater inclusion in advanced classes
- increased access to counseling services

At the start of the 2016 school year MCHS formed new EL clusters in English and Social Science and SPED clusters in Science and 10th grade Social Science, and piloted one co-taught section of World History. They created “A Student Profile for Academic Success” report, and formed an interdisciplinary EL Support PLC (consisting of four English and six Social Science teachers).

The district has asked MCHS to develop a proposal for an Alternative Education Program to present to the Board of Education.

MCHS has created two new programs to address school culture and environment and is engaging with strategies to ensure that both programs are sustainable:

- Safe School Ambassadors - students receive training to diffuse incidents and resolve conflicts at a peer-to-peer level. Ambassadors identify and intervene in incidents of social injustice and exclusion, reducing bullying and hate violence.
- Puma Peer Program - joined the nationally acclaimed Link Crew program. Puma Peers program trains and empowers junior and senior students to aid incoming freshmen with the transition to high school.

Staffing

The interim principal, Vicki Zands, became permanent in late spring of 2016. MCHS has three additional new administrators (the vice principal and two assistant principals), 11 new teachers, two new counselors, one school psychologist, and one campus supervisor. The former WASC coordinator took a “Teacher on Special Assignment” position at the District Office and is no longer part of the school staff and MCHS lost its SOLL (Serve Our Language Learners) counselor. The school’s AC (Advisory Committee) has five new members.

Responsive Action

Responding to these changes, and the WASC mid cycle recommendations the first semester was focused on the following: (1) re-establish and share the vision for the school; (2) synthesize the district and site goals; and (3) build a sustainable improvement process that supports a professional and reflective school culture. The work action products that semester included the following, and led to further focused reflection and action that continues.

- MCHS Vision Framework: A one-page document illustrating vision and mission
- “Engaging our WHY” - The Year of the Powerful Producer: school-wide focus/theme for the year connected to school-wide learning objectives
- Graduate Profile Continuum: ongoing work in implementing and assessing student achievement

- Collaborative Leadership Teams: A breakdown of the shared responsibility for implementing and monitoring the school-wide action plan, equity and access for all students.

MCHS created Self-Study Groups in an attempt to validate staff-generated areas of interest or passion. All groups consist of a minimum of five staff members who share a common passion for cross-curricular collaboration. Groups met monthly for the first semester and determined 1) desired outcomes, 2) challenges, 3) ways to support powerful producers, and 4) ways to address EL, SPED, and Low SES. Given the number of new staff members, this was an effective way for people to engage with other departments in interdisciplinary teams.

MCHS created a teacher survey to determine what instructional strategies staff felt they needed to be successful with the changing student population. Using results of the survey, MCHS established the Maria Carrillo University (MCU). On the first Monday of each month, staff are offered three to four sessions of professional development built into the instructional day. The vice-principal works with staff, the district, the Sonoma County Office of Education, and other organizations to build a schedule of workshops, which teachers can elect to attend. MCU has attracted 125 participants to 12 professional development sessions. In an annual survey, staff rated the on-site professional development offerings above average and helpful, while the district offerings were viewed as moderately helpful. MCHS recognizes the need to be even more strategic and systematic in developing MCU offerings to reflect all of the goals of the School-wide Action Plan and match the needs identified in the Performance Indicators data.

Because differentiation had been identified as a critical area of need, the vice-principal and Social Science department chair are working with Anna Benton-Williams, a local, nationally recognized differentiation expert, to assist the Social Studies department in developing differentiation strategies and plans for phasing out the department's survey-level courses.

A team of teachers participated in the day-long California Association of Bilingual Educators Institute: Moving from "Knowing About" to "Knowing How": Integrated ELD Across the Content Areas. The EL Cluster teachers will eventually become trainers in our MCU, thus building capacity within our staff.

In February a team of teachers (two Special Education and two Social Science) and an administrator attended the Co-Teach SMART Seminar, a one-day training on co-teaching. Participating teachers are intended to become trainers in MCU to build capacity for co-teaching.

The MCHS Instructional Leadership team, with the support of its Innovate ED facilitator, is committed to further developing and sustaining a system of professional development focused on improving student achievement, and providing equity and access for all students. Training covers: Keys to Effective Teams, Setting Norms, Stages of Group Formation, Leading the Cycle of Inquiry, Depth of Knowledge Questions, and Teaching & Learning Frameworks. A survey conducted after the initial training reveals almost all participants - 95% - found the professional development valuable for their department and school, and 92% understand how the PD relates to our school goals/vision.

MCHS vice-principal has been a participant in the National Equity Project Fellowship, learning tools and strategies to address unconscious bias, equity, and building a clear vision for all learners. A team of department chairs - World Language, Social Science, English, and Counseling - is participating in a two-year study of Cultural Responsive Teaching.

The district continues to provide opportunities for staff to attend the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles and participate in unconscious bias training. Forty-two MCHS staff members have attended.

- **Comment re the school's follow-up process. Include a description of the committee that has been responsible for overseeing the progress of the school's action plan and the preparation for the visit.**

The follow up process was catalyzed by the new principal and administrative team, and proceeded to unfold both organically and holistically. Initially, teacher leaders were selected, who committed to work on the Action Plan and WASC VC recommendations. However, the WASC Coordinator moved to another school and with administrative turnover, the need for a greater sense of shared responsibility became readily apparent. After securing the new administrative team, the principal and vice-principal organized a vision workshop before the start of school.

This was step one: engage staff in work needed to combine the School-wide Action Plan and the SPSA into one document so that could be monitored and maintained. Participants included department chairs and teacher leaders. The theme for the year, "Engaging Our Why: The Year of the Powerful Producer" emerged. This clarified focus allowed administration, faculty, and staff to develop Student Learning Objectives into a Graduate Profile, of which Powerful Producer was the first of four elements. Each student, by the time s/he graduates, will be a Powerful Producer, Universal Citizen, Masterful Communicator, and Active Learner - a PUMA. To help understand how to make this happen in teaching, learning and on campus, the school committed to (1) continual development of cross-curricular study groups, (2) provide in-house profes-

sional development, and (3) examine their work to ensure rigor and relevance while building healthy, strong relationships with students and each other.

The Self-Study follow-up team (principal, vice-principal, co-self-study coordinator, data coach/co-coordinator, and administrative assistant) worked to synthesize the various goals and objectives of the SPSA, District LCAP and WASC School-wide Action Plan, which they presented during the September 2016 staff meeting and parent association meeting.

During October, the staff used a half-day of release time to examine Goal 2 of the School-wide Action Plan: Implementation of the SLOs/Graduate Profile. As a whole, staff identified and mapped the necessary skills to master the Graduate Profile, thus creating the Puma Continuum, a progression of identifiable skills from 9th through 12th grades (Appendix A). Departments then continued to revise the skills and brainstorm ways in which the skills are taught within their respective curriculum, with this year's focus on Powerful Producer.

The Self-Study leadership team shared the MCHS Vision document at the November staff, Parent Association and ELAC meetings, where members had the opportunity to ask questions and offered suggestions. Feedback was incorporated, and the 13 Collaborative Leadership Teams worked collectively to support and implement the vision.

The Self-Study team developed (1) an organization chart that demonstrates how they will organize the flow of work and information ensuring accountability for each goal area and (b) a calendar system to ensure data and progress are reviewed on a regular basis.

Before the prior WASC visit a year ago, MCHS lacked any systematic data review, and many of the leadership teams worked in isolation. As a result of the vision work and input from the school's data coach, the MCHS now has a working loop of analysis and reflection. Each of 13 Collaborative Teams has an identified purpose, aligned Action Plan goals, and data list to help measure progress. Through the work of the data coach, the school now has a comprehensive list of Data Reports available to assess and monitor Action Plan progress. The school asserts it understand the importance of disaggregated data, in particular for their identified special populations, and each report contains highlights and implications/areas of concern. MCHS expresses, a renewed commitment to use summative assessment data in conjunction with formative assessments through the MCHS Student Evidence Analysis Protocol (Appendix F) and a four-week cycle of inquiry, to ensure students are progressing towards completion of Graduate Profile.

During December, the Self-Study Committee, with input from the Advisory Council, created a student survey aligned with the Graduate Profile and major school-wide goals to

be disseminated annually at the start and end of the second semester. The Advisory Council has baseline data from the initial staff survey and continues to refine it. The Parent Association, with the Advisory Council, updated a previous parent survey. All three surveys are now part of the school's data gathering, analysis, and reflective loop. The data is disseminated to the appropriate Collaborative Leadership team and used to monitor, assess, and refine goals as needed.

Collaborative Committees review the Action Plan during January and February and report progress on goals. March is reserved for revising the Single Plan for Student Achievement, allocating funds and adjusting the School-wide Action Plan as needed. Work conducted on the school-wide goals is celebrated during the Student Achievement Showcase planned for April. This year will highlight the Powerful Producer section of the Graduate Profile (SLOs).

Process used to prepare the progress report

The progress report was written by the Self-Study Leadership team that began meeting at the start of the school year and continues to hold weekly check-in meetings. The time is used to review and plan the necessary steps to implement our school vision and goals. The principal is the holder of the vision and ensures the school works within the coherence framework (based on Michael Fullan's work): Fostering Direction, Creating Collaborative Cultures, Deepening Learning and Securing Accountability. Each team member has specific outlined responsibilities; together this cohesive group is dedicated to establishing a constant cycle of inquiry tied to the school's mission and goals.

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

The school-wide action plan incorporates all critical areas for follow up in a clear, thoughtfully designed, coherent set of one-time and recurrent tasks that includes: identification of persons responsible, resources/funding, means to assess, timeline, reporting mechanisms and frequency. The school has made substantive and substantial progress on three of the four critical areas for follow up and has completed critical area #4 through its action plan 4.

Critical Area #1: Increase and expand targeted interventions for students with disabilities, English Language Learners, foster youth and those that are socially/economically disadvantaged.

MCHS has begun to address critical area #1 through the following school-wide action plan Goal #1: Increase and expand targeted interventions for students with disabilities, English Language Learners, foster youth and those that are socially/economically dis-

advantaged.

- In spring 2016, the school moved to create a cluster program for designated EL students in Social Science and English to increase academic language frequency to improve CELDT scores and re-designation rates. A cluster program for dually identified EL/Special Education students was created in Physical Science and Biology, with 6-10 such students within a class of thirty (reduce isolation, scaffolding, other). create a cluster program for designated EL students in Social Science and English, as well as a cluster program for dually identified EL/Special Education students in Physical Science and Biology. both co-teachers and EL cluster teachers are scheduled to attend professional development conferences in January and February, designed to help teachers incorporate specific strategies for both populations, including scaffolding instruction and differentiation, and the administration has scheduled monthly on-site professional development focused specifically on differentiation for the entire Social Science department.

An online collaborative "Student Profile for Academic Success" profile tool is used by EL cluster teachers to review performance indicators, including CELDT, SBAC, and LGL scores, and to set targeted learning goals for each student. The form also documents important factors such as known home supports, classroom interactions, willingness to engage in class and complete work, peer interactions and growth mindset. initial data suggests some improvement in both English and Social Science, but also highlights continued needs in Math and Science for our clustered EL students. Our next steps include using the Student Profile for Academic Success within our Special Ed clusters and our 9th- and 10th-grade English support courses.

Currently, the one-period on-site data coach helps to both identify students and track progress by gathering, compiling, and uploading specific formative data such as GPA, A-G Completion, and tutoring participation rates to the Student Profile for Achievement online folders. Cluster teams then have this data available to set goals for each student. The creation of a Master Schedule Team in collaboration with the counseling staff ensures proper placement of students and courses to maximize student support and success. The district plans to roll out 2nd implementation phase of Illuminate Ed, which should make identification and monitoring of students easier.

Getting meaningful data into the hands of support and cluster teachers as well as the Master Schedule team is paramount for the school. The cycle of inquiry focus is strengthening and administration and support teachers must clearly articulate the purpose of each course and the measurable outcomes by which the program will be assessed. The current philosophy for English support classes suggests the courses are designed to increase academic success in 9th- and 10th-grade English. The philosophy for our new long-term EL Support class focuses on increasing CELDT levels and re-designation rates, and have now included success in all core classes. Recent CELDT data shows as the number of EL students increases, the rate of proficiency demonstrated on the CELDT also increases. 94% of test takers maintained or raised their CELDT scores in one year and both AMAO 1 and 2 targets were met in 2016. At this point, the

site is using first- and second-semester grades as another indicator of achievement and has plans to begin using programs such as Let's Go Learn to track progress more frequently and to identify the specific skills needed to improve overall student achievement.

Semester-one data established baseline data for the EL clusters, SPED clusters, and Dual Identified Clusters, as well as for the co-teaching team. 91% of EL-clustered students passed their Social Science, 81% with a C or higher. All of them passed their English course, 85% with a C or better. The Science clusters consisting of EL/SPED/Dually Identified students passed at a rate of 85%, and 80% with a C or better. Semester-one data established baseline data for our co-teaching section. 70% of the clustered SPED students passed the academic world history course, with 20% earning a C or better.

More than 80% of students in ELA support classes are passing their academic English classes (86% of 9th, 82% of 10th). If the lens is expanded to include passage of all academic classes, only 20% of 9th graders and 45% of 10th graders in the support classes are passing. Rates drop further for support students passing their academic classes with a C or better, to 7% of 9th graders and 13% of 10th graders. This data will be used to examine the focus of our support courses and the additional supports necessary for greater success. As the school moves forward, it intends to apply the Student Profile for Academic Achievement protocol to the 9/10 support and EL/SPED/Dually Identified clusters, as a tier-2 intervention in which the teachers meet quarterly to analyze data and set goals. For example, when the support teacher gives the Let's Go Learn assessment to students in the support class and discovers a student reading below grade level, the information is shared with other core teachers so they may scaffold accordingly. Additionally, members from the Math and Science departments will now attend the professional development series with the EL cluster teachers. Overall, the data is helpful in setting next steps for the staff and targeting professional development needs.

Critical Area #2: Develop into a functional Professional Learning Community that works together on a common single interdisciplinary focus for each year.

Action Plan Goal 2 addresses this critical area: "Work collaboratively across disciplines to implement the school-wide learning objectives.

The shift in the majority of administration positions and the critical needs identified in the WASC report highlighted the need to revisit our shared vision and the driving forces behind what the entire school staff does and why; hence the creation of our school-wide theme: Engaging Our Why: The Year of the Powerful Producer. The previous visiting committee commended the work done on updating our School-wide Learning Outcomes, but recognized the need for a systematic implementation protocol. The decision to focus on only the Powerful Producer section of our Graduate Profile for the school year illustrates our dedication to building a strong foundation for a professional learning culture.

Within the first few months of school, began the process of analyzing the Graduate Profile to drive teaching and learning. Subsequently, the self-study committee created a template for the Puma Continuum, a map of essential skills needed to complete the graduate profile before graduation. The entire staff did the initial work of identifying skills from 9th through 12th grade. Departments then continued to revise the skills and brainstorm ways in which the skills are taught within their respective curriculum. This is a work in progress and a time-intensive endeavor, but the staff remains committed. The next step asked teachers to submit evidence of student work exhibiting the Powerful Producer criteria from the first semester. The submissions were then used to share a protocol for examining student work, one example of the several steps in development of a system to analyze site-generated student achievement data.

The administration then led the staff in setting meeting norms and modeled the Student Work Protocol. Our next two-hour release period in February for WASC is dedicated to the use of protocols in examining student work within our respective PLCs, and setting performance indicators and developing common formative assessments for student work that align with the Graduate Profile. The Instructional Leadership Team is scheduled to meet again with our Innovate ED facilitator in February and April, when they have and will look at ways to build teacher leadership capacity, deepen understanding of data, and examine the Instructional Design Protocol. (Appendix X) MCHS sees this as critical work in laying the foundation for a sustainable professional learning community; their goal is to ensure the staff experiences all elements of the cycle of inquiry by the end of the school year, and begin the 2017-18 school year with the process embedded, and staff ready to move on completion of the remaining three Graduate Profile areas.

Critical Area #3: Formalize the informal systems for Professional Development.

is addressed via School-wide Action Plan Goal #3: Create a system for professional development focused on improving student achievement, and equity and access for all students.

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Critical Area #4: Integrate the Action Plan and SPSA into one plan that can be monitored and maintained. Complete.

The entire Action Plan underwent significant revisions in order to

- 1) incorporate the Critical Areas for Follow-up,
- 2) better reflect the vision and mission of the school,
- 3) identify measurable outcomes, and
- 4) use supporting data and growth targets to assess progress.

Objectives, goals, and tasks from the previous Action Plan and SPSA have been refined in the new School-wide Action Plan to reflect better a focus on student achievement, — something lacking in the previous plan. The Data Coach worked to include and align district growth targets to the school Action Plan goals. This document clearly reflects “our why”: Ensuring all students graduate prepared for postsecondary pursuits and life.

III. Commendations and Recommendations

A. Commendations:

- The quality and degree of progress in one year. Creating a system of action and decision-making based on data with an extraordinary high level of commitment among staff to (a) build shared understanding and accountability; (b) develop deeper levels of professionalism; (c) achieve higher levels of success for students.
- Effective integration of SPSA and WASC to create one cohesive, focused action plan, with accountability based on data and frequency of reporting in the early stages. “For the first time, it [school plan] makes sense. It is not more work. It is more meaningful work. Accountability is real. It is not checking the box.” — Leadership Team member
- The new administrative team, working in conjunction with the WASC Self-Study and Leadership Team has created a clear organizational chart that involves multiple stakeholders in thinking and decision-making that supports ongoing inquiry, reflection and a system of accountability horizontally and vertically. Teachers are experiencing renewed energy for their work and deepened commitment to success for all students.
- New pilot programs (e.g., clusters and co-teaching) are providing interventions aimed building increased success for targeted population. Along with MCU professional development and differentiation, these programs are showing both commitment to success of these students and willingness to experiment to achieve this

outcome. Along with this has come an increase in participation in ELAC by parents, who spoke enthusiastically about the change.

B. Recommendations:

- Build on the incipient college and career center; create protocols or practices that enable students beginning in grade 9 to assess their strengths and interests and know requirements for admission to postgraduate learning — from junior college to elite universities and other career or work training — and be able to complete the steps for such entry.
- Build on the promising results of pilot programs, continue to assess efficacy, and expand demonstrably effective interventions for targeted student populations; continue professional development especially on differentiation strategies; strengthen collaboration among teaching teams, and timely analysis of student data to assess the effectiveness of piloted programs
- Continue efforts to bring Latino students into leadership positions within the school

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