

SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT
ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS,
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
FOR
WEST PARK CHARTER ACADEMY

2695 S. Valentine Avenue

Fresno, CA 93706

West Park School District

November 6 – 8, 2017

Visiting Committee Members

Patti Wilczek, Ph.D., Chair
Head of School, Helios School

Deanna Downs
Director, Valley Oaks Charter School

Joi Tikoi
Principal, Gateway International School

Madeline Richards
Teacher, Nea Community Learning Center

Preface

- Comment on the school's self-study process with respect to the expected outcomes of the self-study.
 1. The involvement and collaboration of all staff and other stakeholders to support student achievement
 2. The clarification and measurement of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do through schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards (*note the selected schoolwide learner outcomes examined by the school*)
 3. The gathering and analyzing of data about students and student achievement
 4. The assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning in relation to schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and ACS WASC/CDE criteria
 5. The alignment of a long-range action plan to the school's areas of need; the development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the plan.
- Include a copy of the school's schoolwide learner outcomes.

West Park Charter Academy (WPCA) has identified the following as their Expected Schoolwide Learning Results/Outcomes:

EXPECTED SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING RESULTS (ESLRs)

Competent Users of Technology

Utilize technology as a tool for learning, communicating, and conducting research

Use technology to access, manipulate, and produce information

Measurable Indicators can include:

- o Microsoft Office, including Word and/or PowerPoint
- o Research papers and essays done in MLA format
- o Typing test (skills: 25-30 wpm, correct form)
- o Use of Internet to gather information for required course work

Academic Achievers

Act responsibly, honestly, and ethically

Are self-directed learners

Are knowledgeable and prepared to be successful in life beyond graduation

Measurable Indicators can include:

- o Completion of senior portfolio
- o RMA's
- o Completion of courses
- o GPA- 2.0 or above

Responsible Citizens

Follow the rules of the school

Show respect for self and others

Demonstrate personal responsibility and integrity

Measurable Indicators can include:

- o Attendance to labs and weekly appointments
- o Completion of graduation requirements
- o Dress code/rules
- o Assigned work completed each week

Effective Communicators

Collaborate, work effectively, and manage interpersonal relationships within diverse groups and settings

Demonstrate skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing for different purposes and in a variety of situations

Measurable Indicators can include:

- o Balancing school with jobs, community activities, and family commitments
- o Oral and written reports/presentations including question and answer periods
- o Completion of grade-level English requirements

The WPCA WASC process started with the Director reviewing all past self-study and Visiting Committee (VC) report documents, and communicating progress on a regular basis to staff. A review of the 2017 Focus on Learning and the development of a self-study timeline was vetted by staff during Monday Professional Development (PD) meetings. While the bulk of the work generally involved the Superintendent, Director, Counselors and Data Analyst, reviewing progress on Action Items and compiled data involved the staff during WASC related conversations throughout the year, which provided substantial input into the self-study report. No specific focus groups were used for the self-study process, and the final document was reviewed by the district's Board of Directors.

Chapter I: Progress Report (2 pages)

Since the last self-study:

- Comments on the school's major changes and follow-up process.
- Discuss how the school through its action plan has accomplished each of the critical areas for follow-up, including the impact on student learning.

WPCA underwent a change in Director each year during 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17. With the promotion of current Director, Ramiro Elizondo in fall 2016, WPCA has a leader who has been a teacher within the organization for ten years. Mr. Elizondo is dedicated to the school and students, and has a great deal of support from district staff, as well as from the WPCA teachers and support staff. It's believed that since his leadership, substantive change in WASC has been able to occur, with few changes in the five years prior.

As a result of the 2011 WASC visit, the Visiting Committee (VC) identified seven critical areas for follow up. They are:

1. There is a need for ESLRs which are measurable, attainable, and support students in their academic growth.
2. There is a need to increase students' reading and math test scores.
3. There is a need for regular benchmark assessments in core subject areas which measure student mastery of State instructional standards.
4. There is a need to establish consistent grading practices by the teaching staff.
5. There is a need to establish systems for disaggregating and analyzing student data, as well as modifying instructional practice based on data.
6. There is a need to increase the amount of time the school provides for student-teacher interaction, instruction, and tutoring.
7. There is a need to include any necessary staff development and technology plans in the Schoolwide Action Plan, as well as a timeline for reporting progress—for example, monthly,

annually, etc.

In Spring 2014, the mid-term VC identified three areas of priority for the school's ongoing improvement. These are:

1. The Mission Statement needs to be revised and updated to reflect the mission expressed by staff during staff meetings with the Visiting Committee.
2. School goals 3 and 5 need to be re-addressed in light of:
 - a. The failure of Data Director and subsequent implementation of a more workable student data analysis system, and
 - b. The new CCSS and accompanying emerging SBAC assessments.A new set of specific actions needs to be developed for each school goal that enable adaptation of potential solutions to the unique needs of the Independent Study Program.
3. A workable software system needs to be implemented that provides teacher-friendly and timely access to student data that drive instructional change that improves student learning and performance on critical assessments.

The school made progress on their specific goals as follows:

Goal 1: By having the ESLRs measureable, attainable, and support students in their academic growth, teachers and students will become more cognizant of the purpose of the ESLRs as they relate to the students' future endeavors.

- ESLRs/SLOs have been revised with measurable indicators included.
- The Mission Statement has been revised based on an inclusive process involving all staff.
- Work has been accomplished to align curriculum, budget and staff development decisions to school's Mission, SLOs and LCAP.

Goal 2: Strengthening students' reading and math skills.

- Work on this goal wasn't started until 2016-17, with teachers and support staff participating in professional development through Fresno County Superintendent of Schools. The goal was to provide skills and knowledge on how to increase math and reading results. Teachers were also provided opportunities to be trained in new ELA curriculum, online literacy program, and formative assessment strategies.
- PLCs were used in 2016-17 to review student data and discuss strategies to increase skills in reading.
- Staff meets weekly on Mondays for a full day of staff meetings, planning, and professional development. Now that EDAM is in place, staff has the opportunity to review disaggregated benchmark data.
- While staff has had the ability to review student results as well as disaggregated data for Renaissance/STAR testing (which is administered three times per year), this has happened inconsistently over the past several years. Some teachers take the time to use this assessment to inform instruction, while others do so less frequently.

Goal 3: There is a need for regular benchmark assessments in core subject areas which measure student mastery of state instructional standards.

- The first round of benchmark assessments were administered in October 2017. Teachers have yet to review these results.

- Software (i.e., EADM) was purchased in Spring 2017 to help with the creation of benchmark assessments. Teachers will be trained in the fall, with pre-benchmark assessments taking place in October 2017.

Goal 4: There is a need to establish consistent grading practices by the teaching staff.

- Work on this goal started in the 2017-18 school year.
- Core teachers are to work on syllabi for grades 9-12, and weight assignments in core subjects.
- EADMs training will be provided for teachers during the 2017-18 school year.
- Teachers individually create a system of weighting packets and tests, but there is no consistent policy nor expectation in this regard.

Goal 5: There is a need to establish systems for disaggregating and analyzing student data, as well as modifying instructional practices based on data.

- Work on this goal was not started until 2016-17, with teachers working in PLCs to analyze reading assessment data and planning instruction.
- Software to disaggregate data was purchased and will be implemented in 2017-18. With the implementation of the school's first benchmark assessments (October 2017), teachers are expecting to have the opportunity to review these shortly.
- While teachers have had the ability to examine individual students' results and disaggregate data for Renaissance/STAR testing for several years, this hasn't be accomplished in a consistent fashion. Individual teachers take it upon themselves to review test scores, rather than there being a school-wide expectation that this occur after each administration.

Goal 6: Increased time for instruction.

- Required time with students' primary teacher remains one hour per week. Special ed students have an additional 30 minutes required to be on site. Starting 2017-18 students who are 2 or more grade levels behind are also required to have an additional 30 minutes of instruction time.
- Reports of Missing Appointments/ Assignments documents have been created and implemented, resulting in a decrease in the number of students missing instructional time, as well as the rate of incomplete/missing assignments.
- The addition of three paraprofessionals at each learning center (2016-17) has lead to an increase in tutoring services and academic support. While referral for tutoring can be recommended by a student's teacher, there is no means by which it can be required at this time, even for students who are more than two grade levels behind in math or ELA.
- Algebra labs have been created at both centers (2016-17), providing an increase in math support in this course of study. Some teachers report algebra labs are inconsistently effective, given the self-paced nature of independent study. The algebra teacher may be covering a topic on a given day that has no relevance to several students present.

Goal 7: There is a need to include any necessary staff development and technology plans in the Schoolwide Action Plan, as well as a timeline for reporting progress, for example, monthly, annually, etc.

- Staff development and technology plans were shared with staff at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year, though opportunities for input regarding these documents were apparently not provided.

Chapter II: Student/Community Profile (2 pages)

Briefly summarize the most critical information from the student/community profile that impacts the school. Include the following:

- Brief description of the students and community served by the school.
- School's analysis of student achievement data (e.g., *AYP, API, AP, college SAT, graduation rates, and program improvement status*).
- Other pertinent data (e.g., *attendance rates, size of EL/LEP population, teacher credentialing, class size, dropout rates, programs for students*).
- Appropriateness of identified critical learner needs and their linkage to schoolwide learner outcomes.
- **Note:** Show data in chart format and comment. Include sections of the profile that show student achievement findings and interpretations.
- Comment on significant findings revealed by the profile and/or pertinent data that were not included in the profile.

WPCA is in the Central San Joaquin Valley, in rural Fresno County. Consisting of two learning centers, in Fresno and Hanford, this K-12 independent study program is a dependent charter school of the West Park Elementary School District. In fall 2017, enrollment was 102 for K-8, and 226 in grades 9-12.

Student demographics are as follows:

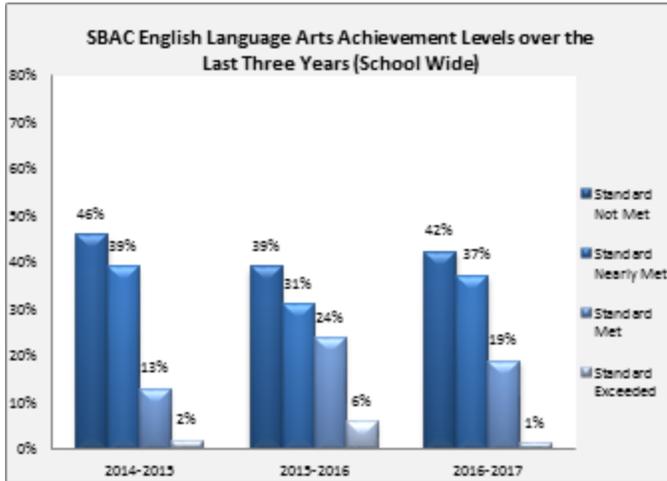
- Parent Education: (2016-17) nearly 60% are high school graduates or less; 17% have some college, with 7% having graduated from college. These percentages are consistent in the two previous years.
- Free and Reduced Lunch Students: During 2015-16 and 2016-17, 15% and 13% did not qualify for FRM.
- Socio-Economically Disadvantaged: During 2015-16 and 2016-17, 88% and 89% of enrolled students were Disadvantaged.
- Gender: (2016-17) The student body is 61% female and 39% male, proportions which have been consistent over the prior two years.
- Ethnicity: The largest ethnic group being served is Hispanic (77%, 76% and 79% for the past three years), with the next largest being White (13%, 15%, 13% for the past three years).
- Primary Language: (2016-17) 54% are English primary, 42% have Spanish as their home language, and 4% speak Armenian at home. These proportions have been consistent over time.
- English Language Fluency: (2016-17): CELDT results indicate that 56% were English Only, 1% were IFEP, 20% were RFEP, and 23% qualified as EL. Proportions haven't changed substantially during the past three years.

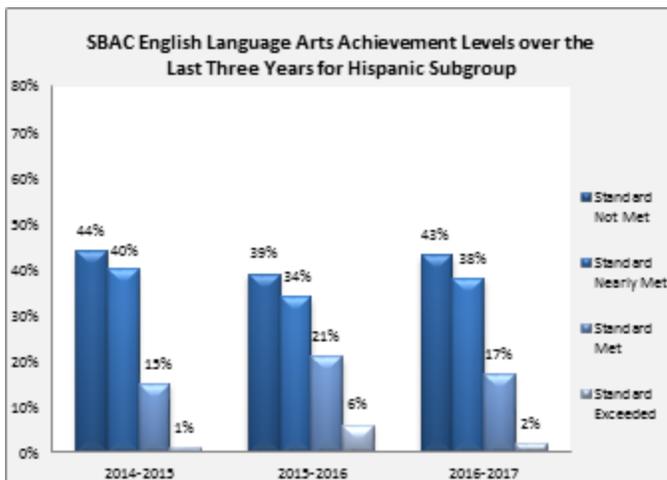
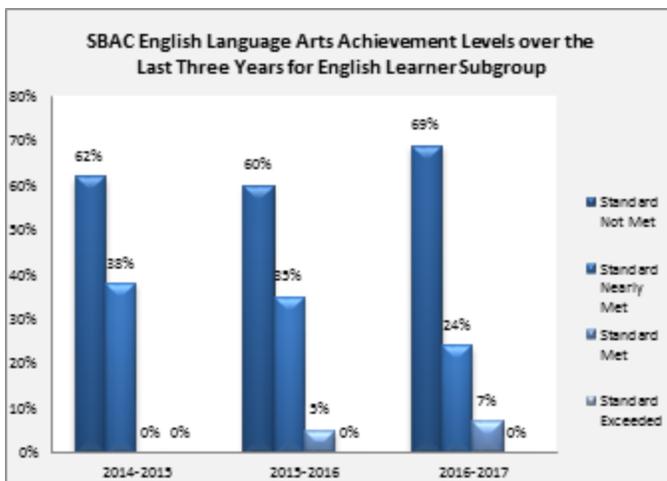
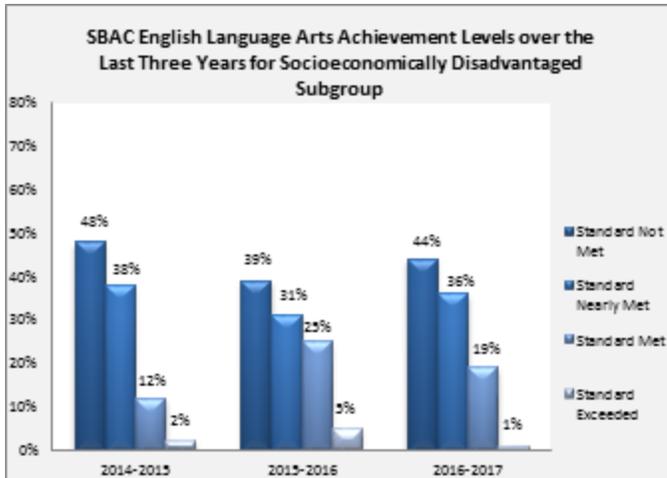
WPCA teachers are all fully credentialed. Teaching staff (2016-17) is predominantly female (13 versus 5 males), and 50% White. Of the remaining 9 teachers, 6 are Hispanic, 2 are Asian and 1 is African American. All six paraprofessionals employed in 2016-17 met ESSA requirements. Teacher retention for the past three years is as follows.

School Year	Baseline Teachers	New Hires	Baseline Teachers Exited	New Hires Exited	Teachers at the end of the School Year	Original Baseline Teachers Still Employed
2014-15	13	1	5	0	9	9

2015-16	9	5	1	1	12	8
2016-17	12	3	1	2	12	7

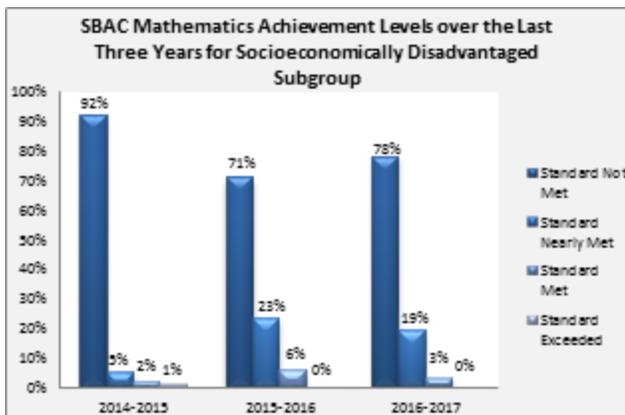
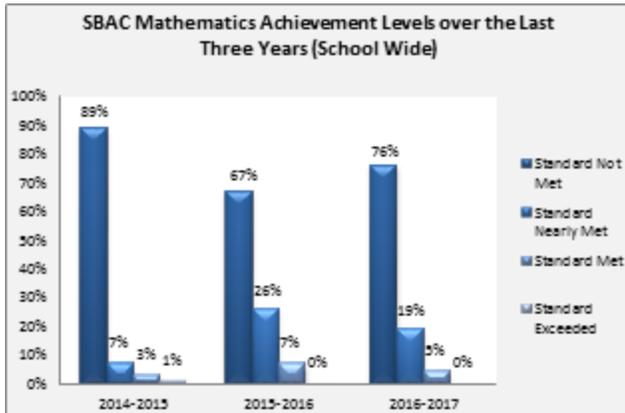
Smarter Balanced Assessment Results: English Language Arts Performance Levels.

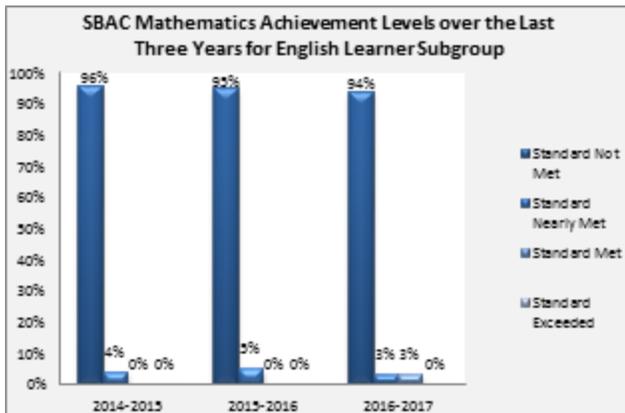
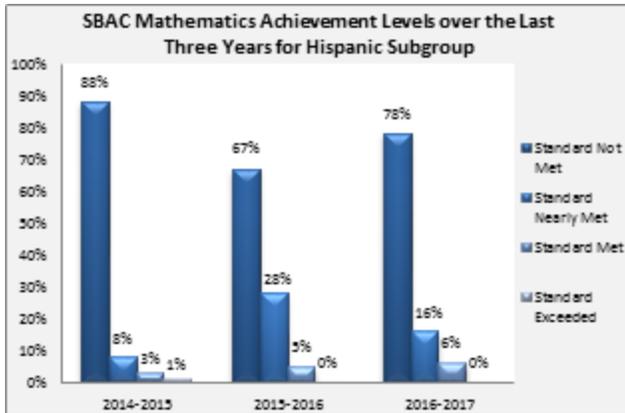




In analyzing SBAC results for ELA and math, WPCA has acknowledged that “there is a great need to improve student proficiency” in both areas. There have been no significant gains in students scoring as proficient in ELA since 2014-15, with some slight decline in the EL subgroup. In all three years, the Schoolwide, Socio-economically Disadvantaged, and Hispanic subgroups have generated similar results, highlighting for the school staff the need to provide additional support and interventions.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Results: Mathematics Performance Levels.

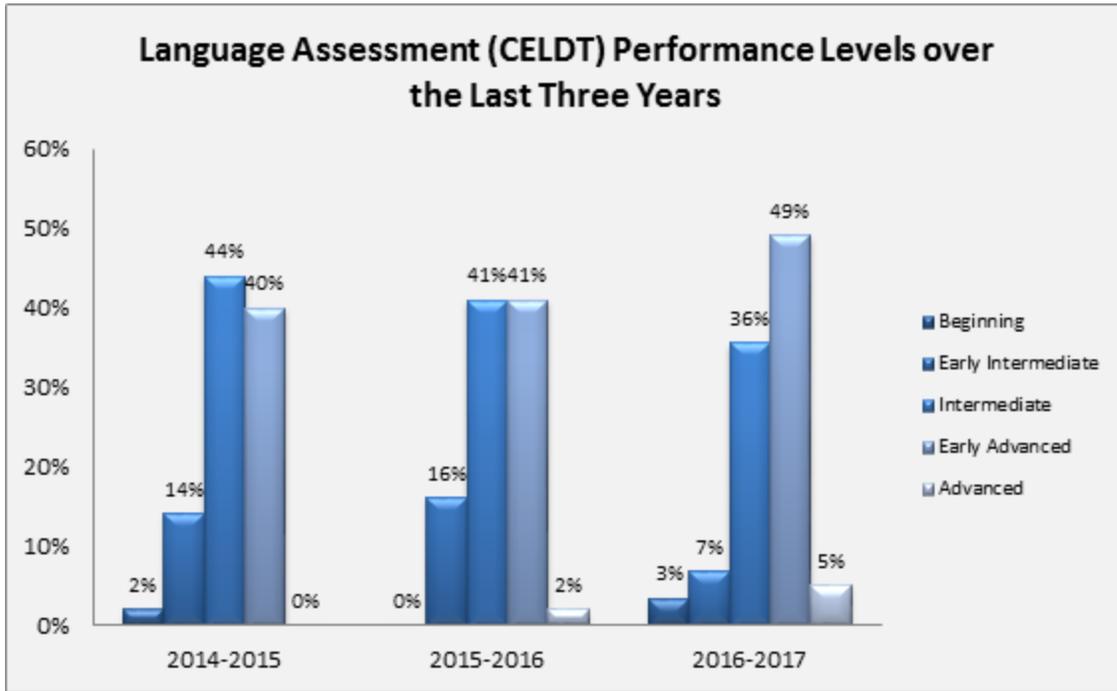




WPCA staff acknowledge that there is a need to increase math proficiency. While the percentages of students scoring in the “Standard Not Met” category decreased by a minimum of 10 points between 2014-15 and 2016-17, the percentages remain quite high. Furthermore, 94-96% of EL students over the same three years have scored as not having met standards in math.

While the VCs from 2011 and 2014 both identified increasing ELA and math results as a critical area of follow up for WPCA, little demonstrable progress has been made to date. It is of concern to this VC that the self-study report lacks a sense of urgency in this regard.

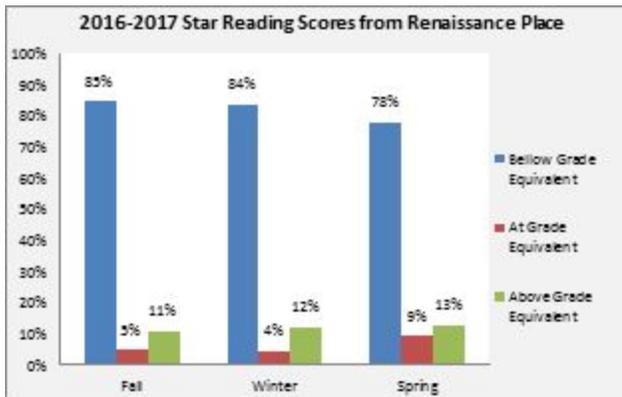
CELDT Performance Levels 2014-2017



WPCA has not reclassified a single EL student in the past three years due to a lack of clearly established criteria for doing so. The self-study report indicates a commitment to create reclassification criteria during 2017-18, the work of which has started by the time of our WASC site visit.

Renaissance-STAR Reading Results

WPCA's STAR Reading scores have not changed significantly in the past three years. Results for 2016-17 are as follows:

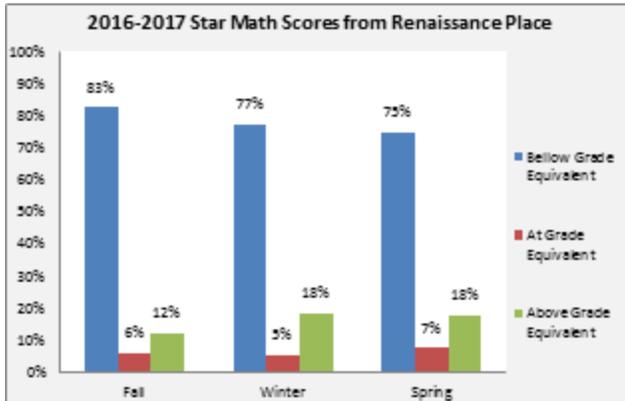


Results indicate that the majority of WPCA students (i.e., 85%, 84%, 78% for 2016-17) are reading below their grade level equivalent, with minimal progress being made throughout the school year. Scores for

2016-17 are consistent with results from the prior two years, as well. WPCA students are not advancing in their reading levels to any significant degree.

Renaissance-STAR Math Results

WPCA’s STAR Math results have not changed significantly in the past three years. Results for 2016-17 are as follows:



Results indicate that the majority of WPCA students (i.e., 83%, 77%, 75% for 2016-17) perform in math below their grade level equivalent. Majority of students are not advancing in their math skill development to any significant degree.

Report Card Analysis: Percentages of Ds and Fs

The self-study report includes percentages of D and F grades earned by WPCA students for three semesters, as follows:

Semester	% A-C Grades Earned	% D Grades Earned	% F Grades Earned
Spring 2016	89%	2%	9%
Fall 2016	90%	3%	7%
Spring 2017	90%	2%	8%

While the self-study report indicates correctly that WPCA students receive a high percentage of A-C grades, and low percentages of Ds and Fs, it also notes the disconnect between this high rate of strong grades and the majority of students who are performing below grade level equivalents. Based on SBAC and Renaissance/STAR testing results, one would expect a far larger number of earned grades to be in the D-F range. It is of concern, therefore that current grading systems and expectations have resulted in an inflated, far more positive outlook than standardized assessment results reveal.

Chapter III: Quality of the School's Program

Based on the school's self-study and visiting committee findings, for each criterion in the following categories:

- A. Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership, Staff, and Resources
 - B. Standards-based Student Learning: Curriculum
 - C. Standards-based Student Learning: Instruction
 - D. Standards-based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability
 - E. School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth
- Summarize an analysis of what currently exists and its impact on student learning
 - Highlight the areas of strength (if any)
 - Highlight the key issues (if any)
 - List important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues.

Note: When writing the analytical summary for each criterion, use the indicators as a guide to ensure that all important aspects of each criterion are addressed (see the *ACS WASC/CDE Accreditation Status Determination Worksheet*).

CATEGORY A. ORGANIZATION: VISION AND PURPOSE, GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, STAFF, AND RESOURCES

A1. Vision and Purpose Criterion

To what extent a) does the school have a clearly stated vision and mission (purpose) based on its student needs, current educational research, the district LCAP, and the belief that all students can achieve high academic levels?

To what extent is the school's purpose supported by the governing board and the district LCAP further defined by schoolwide learner outcomes and the academic standards?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Vision – Mission – Schoolwide Learner Outcomes – Profile: The school has established a clear, coherent vision and mission (purpose) of what students should know and demonstrate; it is based upon high-quality standards and is congruent with research, practices, the student/community profile data, and a belief that all students can learn and be college and career ready.

Development/Refinement of Vision, Mission, Schoolwide Learner Outcomes: There are effective processes in place to ensure involvement of all stakeholders in the development and periodic refinement of the vision, mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes.

Understanding of Vision, Mission, Schoolwide Learner Outcomes (SLO's), District LCAP: Students, parents, and other members of the school and business community demonstrate understanding of and commitment to the vision, mission, the schoolwide learner outcomes, and the district LCAP.

The school has clear mission and vision statements. The mission, vision, and schoolwide learner outcomes are aligned. The school requires 220 credits to graduate which is more than the state mandated requirement. The school uses state adopted curriculum for core subjects based upon California Common Core State Standards. The mission statement was revised two years ago, and more accurately reflects the student and community profile and work the school does on a daily basis.

The SLO's are clear and meaningful, with explicit measurable indicators. The school might consider academic achievement goals in the SLO's that are more rigorous than the requirement of a 2.0 GPA, and reflect goals correlated with assessment data.

Parent surveys were used to gather input when revising the school mission and vision. Parents were also given updates, and had opportunities to provide input at monthly board meetings and ELAC meetings. Teachers were given the opportunity to provide input at staff meetings.

Upon enrollment, parents attend a WPCA orientation where they receive explanations, and are provided copies of vision, mission, and SLOs. Students are given an initial writing task to complete that incorporates the information from these documents. Students receive 2.5 credits toward graduation for completing this writing task.

The district board and Superintendent demonstrate strong support for the school's mission and vision and seeks to serve the community. The LCAP supports the goals of the vision, mission, and SLOs.

The Director reports that the site has flexibility and autonomy in making financial and program decisions with the oversight of the board and district staff. The Director further indicated that the emphasis for 2017-18 has been literacy, rigor, and parent involvement, which is in line with the LCAP and SLOs.

A2. Governance Criterion

To what extent does the governing board a) have policies and bylaws that are aligned with the school's purpose and support the achievement of the schoolwide learner outcomes and academic, college, and career standards based on data-driven instructional decisions for the school?

To what extent does the governing board delegate implementation of these policies to the professional staff?

To what extent does the governing board monitor results regularly and approve the single schoolwide action plan and its relationship to the Local Control and Accountability Plan?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Governing Board and District Administration: The district policies and procedures are clear regarding the specific duties and roles of the governing board and district administration in their relationship to the school and staff.

Understanding the Role of Governing Board: There is clear understanding about the role and responsibilities of the governing board and the professional staff.

Governing Board and Stakeholder Involvement: Parents, community members, staff, and students are engaged in the governance of the school.

Board's Evaluation/Monitoring Procedures: There is clarity of the evaluation and monitoring directed by the governing board and carried out by the district administration.

Complaint and Conflict Resolution Procedures: The established governing board/school's complaint and conflict resolution procedures as they apply to the school's stakeholders are effective.

District policies are clear and provide support for ongoing school improvement. The board and Superintendent are enthusiastic supporters of the charter school and take great pride in its success.

Staff reports that WPCA only enrolls students with an IEP if they are in grades 7-12. Due to staffing, SPED enrollment is limited to 20 students. A waitlist of SPED students has been created, while a waitlist for general education students is non-existent. This practice has also resulted in elementary students (K-6) being turned away from WPCA. The school might reconsider this enrollment practice, scrutinizing the extent to which it is legal and ethical.

The hiring process for teachers starts with postings to EdJoin and includes screening applicants for state requirements and an interview by a panel. The Superintendent participates in interviews for teachers.

The staff understands the role of the board members and interacts with them occasionally on site. The Board members visit each campus and attend school events.

Stakeholders and parents are given the opportunity to address the governing board at monthly board meetings. WPCA has a functioning ELAC committee.

The board reviews data and parent survey results to evaluate program effectiveness. The Director of WPCA attends and reports monthly at the school board meetings. The Director meets twice a month with the district administration, including the Superintendent and CBO.

WPCA has a published Uniform Complaint Procedure in the Parent/Student Handbook and reports they have not received any formal complaints.

A3. Leadership: Empowerment and Continuous Planning and Monitoring Criterion

To what extent based on student achievement data, does the school leadership, parent/community, and staff make decisions and initiate activities that focus on all students achieving the schoolwide learner outcomes and academic, college, and career standards?

To what extent do the school leadership and staff annually monitor and refine the schoolwide action plan and make recommendations to modify the LCAP based on analysis of data to ensure alignment with student needs?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Broad-Based and Collaborative: The school's broad-based, collaborative planning process is a continuous improvement cycle that a) assesses data to determine student needs, b) collaboratively determines and implements strategies and actions and c) monitors results.

Single School Plan for Student Achievement Correlated to Student Learning: The school's Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) is directly correlated to and driven by the analysis of student achievement data.

Staff Actions/Accountability to Support Learning: The school leadership and staff demonstrate shared decision-making, responsibility, and self-reflection on actions and accountability for implementing practices and programs that support student learning.

Internal Communication and Planning: The school has effective existing structures for internal communication, planning, and resolving differences.

The school has staff meetings and professional development every Monday. That said, despite having the ability to review Renaissance/STAR (both individual student's results and disaggregated data) for several years, this has only reportedly been completed by individual teachers and without consistency. Benchmark tests were administered for the first time in October 2017, the results of which have not been shared with teachers thus far.

The VC is concerned about the minimal work completed in moving toward data driven decision making, and in using data to inform instruction over the past six years. While the 2014 VC reinforced from the 2011 VC report the importance of this as a means of improving ELA and math performance, goals related to this have only seen progress since 2016-17. While it's clear that the high rate of turnover in the Director's position over the past several years has yielded low rates of progress toward meeting WASC goals, a school-wide sense of urgency is needed to insure substantial progress during the next period of accreditation. That said, the VC has seen clear indications that the teachers and new director have a positive working relationship and a common interest in pursuing WASC goals in earnest.

The WPCA self-report states that the Director has 'Wolf Chats' with teachers regarding student data. A few teachers reported that they did not discuss data at their talk at the beginning of the year. The teachers did report that they have access to online data and conducted targeted meetings with below grade level students.

The school maintains a Faculty Advisory Council that serves to represent the teachers and advise administration on program decisions. Some teachers feel they do not have freedom to openly share ideas for school improvement without fear of reprisals.

The school does not receive federal Title I monies and therefore is not required to write a SPSA.

A4. Staff: Qualified and Professional Development Criterion

To what extent does a qualified staff facilitate achievement of the student academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes through a system of preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development?

To what extent is there a systematic approach to continuous improvement through professional development based on student performance data, student needs, and research?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Qualifications and Preparation of Staff: The school has procedures to ensure that staff members are qualified based on staff background, training, and preparation.

Staff Assignment and Preparation: The school has a process to assign staff members and provide appropriate orientation for all assignments, including online instruction and focused programs, to maximize the expertise of the staff members in relation to impact on quality student learning.

Defining and Understanding Practices/Relationships: The school implements a clear system to communicate administrator and faculty written policies, charts, and handbooks that define responsibilities, operational practices, decision-making processes, and relationships of leadership and staff.

Support of Professional Development/Learning and Measurable Effect on Student Learning: The school effectively supports professional development/learning with time, personnel, material, and fiscal resources to facilitate all students achieving the academic, college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes.

Supervision and Evaluation: The school implements effective supervision and evaluation procedures in order to promote professional growth of staff.

All teachers at WPCA are credentialed and highly qualified. Most have a single subject credential with a few having a multiple subject credential. The single subject teachers are required to teach and assess in all subject areas. This brings up a need for teachers to receive professional development in all subjects. Teachers expressed a need for further development of best practices regarding all content areas. It's also evident that a higher level of collaboration is needed, especially regarding data analysis and the cycle of inquiry to improve student learning.

Monday is always reserved for full-day professional development where both sites meet together and start the day with a staff meeting. Information regarding policies and procedures are given at this time, with the rest of the day reserved for training, grading packets and planning. Some teachers report this training is helpful and supportive to school goals, others report that the trainings are largely geared toward the classroom setting and are not widely applicable to the independent study setting.

Teachers have a general sense that the online programs are supportive to student learning but need more support and structure around accessing data reports in order to apply results to teaching. It's also reported that the number of online resources on-boarded in the past two years is overwhelming some with the amount of training needed. It's clear that school leadership needs to create a process and timeline to effectively bring all of the new tools into full use, determining effectiveness of each over time.

A5. Resources Criterion

To what extent are the human, material, physical, and financial resources sufficient and utilized effectively and appropriately in accordance with the legal intent of the program(s) and LCAP to support students in accomplishing the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Allocation Decisions and Their Impact: There is a relationship between the decisions about resource allocations, the school's vision, mission, the schoolwide learner outcomes, the critical learner needs, the district's LCAP and the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), the academic standards, and the college- and career-readiness standards. The school leadership and staff are involved in the resource allocation decisions.

Practices: There are processes operating in relationship to district practices for developing an annual budget, conducting an annual audit, and at all times conducting quality business and accounting practices.

Facilities: The school's facilities are adequate to meet the students' learning needs, support the educational program (i.e., accomplish the vision, mission, and the schoolwide learner outcomes) and are safe, functional, and well-maintained.

Instructional Materials and Equipment: The policies and procedures for acquiring and maintaining adequate instructional materials and equipment, such as textbooks, other printed materials, audio-visual, support technology, manipulatives, and laboratory materials are effective.

Well-Qualified Staff: Resources are available to enable the hiring, nurturing, and ongoing professional development of a well-qualified staff for all programs such as online instruction and college and career.

Long-Range Planning: The district and school's processes for regularly and effectively aligning the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) with site resource decisions ensures the continual availability and coordination of appropriate funds to support students' achievement of the critical learner needs, the academic standards, college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes.

The school has recently made program purchases that align with the school goals and WASC action plan. For example, they purchased Lexia and Reading Plus to support student literacy and chromebooks to support technology goals for students. Staff has set a priority of reaching 1-to-1 capacity with laptops, and increasing IT staffing would allow for greater support at the two sites.

The Director has monthly meetings with the CBO and aligns expenditures with the LCAP and school goals. The Superintendent recently made a decision, along with the board, to restructure the school and cap enrollment at 450 students. They believe this is more manageable for future operations.

Both facilities, Shaw and Hanford, are organized in an orderly and safe manner and sufficient for instruction. They have space for small group tutoring and individual work time. The staff expressed they are able to request and order any additional materials they need. There is a curriculum room at both sites and there are bookshelves around the site stocked with novels and books for students.

A6. Resources Criterion [Charter Schools only]

To what extent has the governing authority and the school leadership executed responsible resource planning for the future?

To what extent has the school developed policies, procedures, and internal controls for managing the financial operations that meet state laws, generally accepted practices, and ethical standards?

Is the school fiscally solvent and does it use sound and ethical accounting practices (budgeting/monitoring, internal controls, audits, fiscal health and reporting)?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Long-range Financial (and Other Resources) Plan and Stakeholder Involvement: The school regularly involves stakeholders in the review of its long-range plan/capital needs (and other resources) in relation to the school's vision, mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes. Decisions about resource allocation are directly related to the school's vision, mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes.

Regular Accounting and External Audit Procedures: The school has written policy that defines internal controls, contracts, regular accounting, and external audit procedures.

Processes for Implementation of Financial Practices: The school employs accountability measures to assure that personnel follow fiscal policies and procedures.

Budgeting Process — Transparency: The school develops and monitors its annual budgeting process to ensure transparency and stakeholder involvement.

Adequate Compensation, Staffing, Reserves: The school governing body provides adequate compensation to faculty, administrators, and staff; adequate staffing for the school's program; and reasonable accumulation of reserves.

Marketing Strategies: The school has marketing strategies to support the implementation of the developmental program, including research and information to help develop future planning.

Informing the Public and Appropriate Authorities: The governing authorities and school leaders inform the public and appropriate governmental authorities about the financial needs of the organization.

WPCA conducts an annual independent audit of financial records and have had no findings in recent years. As a dependent charter school, the school follows purchasing protocols established by the district.

Annual budget development starts with the Director, Superintendent and CBO meeting to review and discuss WASC and LCAP goals and financial resources needed to move initiatives forward for the coming year. Teachers are surveyed annually as a means of gathering their wish lists, which are then incorporated into the budget to the extent that they align with annual goals and financial resources. Each teacher is allocated \$1,000 to spend on materials and supplies as s/he sees fit.

The Superintendent reports that the district is on the lower end of the pay scale in relation to surrounding school districts. The district might consider how they could provide a more competitive salary to support teacher and administration quality and retention.

CATEGORY A: ORGANIZATION: VISION AND PURPOSE, GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, STAFF, AND RESOURCES

Areas of strength for Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership, Staff, and Resources (if any):

1. WPCA has a passionate, dedicated staff who work hard to meet the needs of their students.
2. Long-term staff have helped pull the school through challenging times, when school's leadership was unstable with high turnover rates.
3. The new Director is a committed school leader who brings integrity and genuine caring for students and staff. He has the support of staff, who are encouraged by what he's brought to the school in terms of structure and positive forward movement toward goal attainment.
4. WPCA has the strong support of district administration and School Board.
5. The school has a new mission statement which aligns with vision.
6. Financial resources are sufficient to support the program and support and maintain professional facilities.

Key issues for Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership, Staff, and Resources (if any):

1. There is a need for relevant professional development that serves the needs of teachers within this independent study model of education.
2. There is a need for increased collaboration among staff, such that they can share ideas and discuss how to best meet the need of individual students.
3. Staff input around school improvement ideas is not frequently sought, leading to reluctance by some to do so.
4. There is a substantial amount of staff overwhelm due to the amount of paperwork required. Staff are eager for more hands-on contact time with students.
5. Core and independent study teachers are required to grade all subject content in students' packets, even in areas for which they haven't had any training.

6. Wait lists for special education students exist, while no such obstacles to enrollment exist for general education students. Re-examine allocation of funds and enrollment policies to meet the needs of all students without discriminating based on IEP status.

Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

- Self-study report
- Policy manuals
- Parent/Student Handbook 2017-18
- Staff Handbook
- LCAP
- Student transcripts
- Interviews with administrative staff, teaching and support staff, students and parents

CATEGORY B. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: CURRICULUM

B1. Rigorous and Relevant Standards-Based Curriculum Criterion

To what extent do all students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes?

To what extent through standards-based learning (what is taught and how it is taught), are these accomplished?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Current Educational Research and Thinking: The school uses current educational research related to maintain a viable, meaningful instructional program that prepares students for college, career, and life.

Academic and College- and Career-Readiness Standards for Each Area: The school has defined academic and college- and career-readiness standards for each subject area, course, and/or program.

Congruence: There is congruence between the actual concepts and skills taught, the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes.

Integration among Disciplines: There is integration and alignment among academic and career technical disciplines at the school and where applicable, integration of outsourced curriculum into the program so that curricular integrity, reliability, and security are maintained.

Articulation and Follow-up Studies: The school articulates regularly with feeder schools, local colleges and universities, and technical schools. The school uses follow-up studies of graduates and others to learn about the effectiveness of the curricular program.

WPCA provides a standards-based program that strives to set students up to succeed and plan for life after high school. Staff participates in ongoing professional development to help with mastery of academic standards, especially in the areas of ELA and mathematics - though teachers report that the relevance of this PD is often lacking. Students are expected to use academic standards when completing coursework and while attending lab classes. College and career readiness standards are embedded in the state-approved curricula that WPCA utilizes. Additionally, a variety of online programs are available and help with the integration among disciplines. Opportunities are given to students to help with preparing for life after high school, including post-secondary visits and college and career days. Further, counselors and support staff ensure that student credits are documented correctly on transcripts to help with any transfers to feeder schools and/or colleges. WPCA made an effort to offer CTE courses, but this was limited and without much success. There is a need to implement this with integrity in alignment with their mission.

B2. Access to Curriculum Criterion

To what extent do all students have equal access to the school's entire program and are provided assistance with a personal learning plan to meet the requirements of graduation and to prepare them for the pursuit of their academic, personal, and career goals?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Variety of Programs — Full Range of Choices: All students are able to make appropriate choices and pursue a full range of realistic college and career and/or other educational options based on their academic needs. The school provides for career exploration, preparation for postsecondary education, and pre-technical training for all students.

Accessibility of All Students to Curriculum, including Real World Experiences: A rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum that includes real world applications is accessible to all students through all courses/programs offered at the school.

Student-Parent-Staff Collaboration: Parents, students, and staff collaborate in developing and monitoring a student's personal learning plan and their college and career and/or other educational goals. (This includes the evaluation of whether online instruction matches the student's learning style.)

Post High School Transitions: The school implements strategies and programs to facilitate transitions to college, career, and other postsecondary high school options and regularly evaluates their effectiveness.

WPCA students have access to a wide variety of courses and online programs and resources. After attending an orientation, students meet with a credentialed teacher to select appropriate courses and schedule future weekly meetings. These meetings are scheduled to assist students with academic needs, future goal setting, and to celebrate student achievements. Teachers and students report that this relationship adds to the success of the student in the program. Additionally, students work closely with academic counselors and meetings are held a minimum of once per semester, or as needed. Counselors create opportunities for students to research careers and make plans for life after high school. The school has recently added CCGI to their college and career counseling repertoire. Outdoor field trips and activities are also used to enhance student learning at WPCA. A High School Enrichment Program is available to students, which offers an opportunity for 11th and 12th grade students with a GPA of 2.5 or higher to take college courses, while attending high school. Finally, WPCA uses different means of communication when working with students and parents. Parent Square has been implemented to help with this communication and it provides a tool for WPCA to advertise different post-secondary opportunities. Parents are involved with student course placement, are contacted when questions or concerns arise, and receive communication from school and their child's teacher as needed.

For physical education, students are required to complete an activity log to meet state requirements. It would benefit students if they had some type of opportunity for hands-on physical activity and instruction. This would prepare them better for the Physical Fitness Test. The VC notes that WPCA administers the Physical Fitness Test, as required, in grades 5, 7, and 9.

CATEGORY B: STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: CURRICULUM

Areas of strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: Curriculum (if any):

1. Highly relational staff who understand the need for establishing strong bonds with their students in order to facilitate success.
2. Standards-based curriculum is available to all students.
3. Students and parents are engaged with and supportive of the program.
4. High school juniors and seniors have opportunities for dual enrollment in community college classes.
5. Teachers and counselors support the career/college process, both informally and formally, as students move through high school.
6. Counselors have implemented the CCGI program and are tracking where students attend after they leave WPCA.
7. School Pathways is an effective tool for assigning work to students throughout the school. The school has created modules of work for every subject.

Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Curriculum (if any):

1. There is a need for collaboration among teachers regarding best practices for assigning work and consistent grading across the content areas.

2. There is a need to create a quality, hands-on CTE program that prepares students for careers after high school.
3. Fully implement the online resources for intervention and track their short and long term effectiveness as it relates to individual students and standardized testing.

Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

- Self-study report
- Pacing guides
- Student packets
- Parent/Student Handbook 2017-18
- Student transcripts
- Interviews with administrative staff, teaching and support staff, students, and parents

CATEGORY C. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: INSTRUCTION

C1. Challenging and Relevant Learning Experiences Criterion

To what extent are all students are involved in challenging and relevant learning experiences to achieve the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Results of Student Observations and Examining Work: The students are involved in challenging and relevant work as evidenced by observations of students working and the examination of student work.

Student Understanding of Learning Expectations: The students understand the standards/expected performance levels for each area of study.

Differentiation of Instruction: The school's instructional staff members differentiate instruction, including integrating multimedia and technology, and evaluate its impact on student learning.

In the Learning Centers, the VC observed students working independently from textbooks and computers, meeting in small groups or individually with teachers, and learning in a classroom setting for Spanish, ELD, and Algebra Labs. Students appeared engaged in their studies and with their teachers, whom the students praised highly to the VC.

Assessment tools (i.e., Renaissance/STAR, writing task) and transcript review both assists in initial course selection and placement. The teacher of record works with the student and parent in the selection of an individualized curriculum for each student. Given the overall lack of using data to inform instruction and help determine best-fit levels of appropriate rigor and placement over time, it's unclear the extent to which students are provided a truly rigorous program. Furthermore, as discussed earlier, significant discrepancies between earned grades and outcomes on SBAC and Renaissance/STAR make it further unclear if student work is appropriately rigorous.

Students expressed to the VC that high expectations are set for all students, and teachers indicated that they differentiate ongoing work/assignments based upon the extent to which assignment packets are completed accurately. Once again, given the high rate of A-C grades earned, and the low rate of students who meet grade level expectations on standardized tests, it is clear that the situation needs to be studied and analyzed to determine where the discrepancy lies and how to make corrections to ensure students are being graded appropriately - and that those grades accurate reflect movement toward mastery.

The school requires students that are two or more grades below standard to attend 30 minutes of instructional time in addition to their weekly one hour appointments. Additionally, all students are given the opportunity to sign up for tutoring on a volunteer basis. Students also have to opportunity to attend the Algebra labs at their own discretion or upon recommendation from their teacher of record. The school might consider other ways to build upon this for more students and an even greater amount of instruction time. The parents expressed a desire to have tutoring from more qualified tutors.

The VC learned of the common practice of allowing students to test out of electives and receive full credit for them. Students may do this for up to 40 credits per year their junior and senior years. This practice calls into question the integrity of the diploma offered by WPCA.

Students were very proud of their passing grades and early graduation. But the external assessments do not correlate to the high level of passing grades. This leaves one to wonder if the students have a true understanding of their abilities and skills. Students should understand grade level expectations and what

student work at those levels looks like. To allow them to test out of electives and earn credits for minimal work, does them a disservice when they move on from high school. The VC has concerns about students earning 2.5 credits for completing an essay and study skills packet upon enrollment.

C2. Student Engagement Criterion

To what extent do all teachers use a variety of strategies and resources, including technology and experiences beyond the textbook and the classroom that actively engages students, emphasizes higher order thinking skills, and helps them succeed at high levels?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Current Knowledge: Teachers are current in the instructional content taught and research-based instructional methodology, including the integrated use of multimedia and technology.

Teachers as Coaches: Teachers facilitate learning as coaches to engage all students.

Examination of Student Work: Students demonstrate that they can apply acquired knowledge and skills at higher cognitive levels to extend learning opportunities.

Students demonstrate higher level thinking and problem solving skills within a variety of instructional settings.

Students use technology to support their learning.

Students use a variety of materials and resources beyond the textbook.

Real World Experiences: All students have access to and are engaged in career preparation activities.

Due to the nature of independent study, varying strategy and resources for instruction is exceptionally difficult as is the incorporation of real world experiences to the curricula. However, the primary role of the independent study teacher is often as coach rather than direct instructor.

With the help of professional development provided by Fresno County of Education, WPCA teachers are exposed to instructional content and strategies (especially in the areas of ELA and mathematics) that apply to a traditional classroom setting. Teachers report, however, that much of the content in these trainings are not translatable to an independent study model, and are therefore not particularly helpful in furthering their practice.

WPCA's mission is to provide all students with an individualized curriculum based on student's respective assessment results and evaluations. Teachers engage all students during weekly individual meetings. These weekly meetings foster an environment of learning where academic strategies can be used to enhance student learning. Students becoming independent problem solvers is the goal of all teachers. Additionally, students use technology to support and demonstrate their learning style. A variety of materials and online resources are used in addition to the textbook to enhance student learning. Students also have access to and are engaged in college/career preparation activities, including college visits and meetings with the counselor. Finally, students have access to work experience opportunities and a High School Enrichment Program, which allows students to earn college credits during high school.

CATEGORY C: STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: INSTRUCTION

Areas of strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: Instruction (if any):

1. Students are provided access to technology that supports and enhances their learning.
2. Students have access to different opportunities to help with life after high school, including work experience, college and career level classes, and field trips.
3. Students are encouraged to become responsible for their own success and become independent problem solvers.
4. All teachers and staff work hard to engage every student.
5. Teachers provide an individualized plan of learning for each student.

Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Instruction (if any):

1. Professional development needs to be relevant to an independent study program and tailored to meet the current and changing needs of teachers.
2. Develop a collaborative process whereby teachers and staff have input into the development of the annual Professional Development plan.
3. Examine and analyze the appropriateness of current grading standards and practices, such that students who are not meeting grade level expectations on standardized tests are not also consistently earning grades in the A-C range.
4. Offer elective programs and classes with integrity, increasing required time on task.
5. Algebra labs are inconsistently helpful in providing academic support to students in this subject. The goals of this intervention should be re-evaluated, as students' needs may be better met by increasing the number of tutors on site.

Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

- Self-study report
- Transcript review
- Teacher, staff and administrative interviews.
- Student interviews.
- Observations of student-teacher interactions.

CATEGORY D. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

D1. Using Assessment to Analyze and Report Student Progress Criterion

To what extent does the school use a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, analyze, and report student performance data to the school staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Professionally Acceptable Assessment Process: The school staff uses effective assessment processes to collect, disaggregate, analyze, and report student performance data to all stakeholders.

Monitoring and Reporting Student Progress: The school informs and creates understanding through effective processes in order to keep district, board members, parents, and the business and industry community informed about student progress. Growth towards achieving the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes is shared with all stakeholders.

Monitoring of Student Growth: The school has an effective system to determine and monitor all students' growth and progress toward meeting the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes. This includes a sound basis upon which students' grades are determined and monitored.

WPCA adheres to the state mandated testing schedule and indicates in the self-report that they disseminate the data from state testing to faculty/staff during staff meetings and PLCs. Analysis of the data is the responsibility of individual teachers for their own students. Additionally, WPCA uses the Renaissance program in ELA and Math to collect assessment data three times per year. This data is used inconsistently to inform instruction and measure student growth throughout the year, on an individual basis by the teachers. To date, disaggregated data has not been examined by staff.

Teachers report implementing benchmarks for the first time this fall. There is no evidence for how data from benchmarks will be disaggregated or disseminated. Teachers have not received benchmark results by the time of the VC visit, and teachers have yet to be informed about how or when they will have an opportunity to examine, analyze, and collaborate about results.

Assessment results for state testing are mailed home to families. Additional testing information is available on the school's website and at board meetings and presentations. Progress reports are sent out once per semester to keep parents informed of student progress. Additionally, assessment of progress towards Career and College Readiness and Schoolwide Learner Outcomes appear to be based entirely within the interactions between students and teachers during the weekly meetings. The visiting committee found an overall lack of evidence for assessing progress towards these goals.

WPCA uses a variety of assessment tools to monitor student progress. The Renaissance/STAR assessment is administered three times per year to measure student growth and progress in Math and ELA. Also, WPCA recently purchased iO online program as an additional assessment tool. Further, School Pathways platform provides real-time information on current grades and helps to provide additional resources for students who are failing various skills sets. Teachers also use work completion, tests, and quizzes to monitor student progress in coursework. It is important to note that teachers are

feeling overwhelmed with the various online and software packages onboarded over the past 18 months. Administration should consider slowing the process of bringing on new tools, to insure these are not only fully implemented, but that staff have time and bandwidth to be adequately trained in a way that can enhance and support learning.

Grading is an area of concern identified by the large gaps in performance on SBAC testing and the percent of students receiving A-C grades. The grading system is not standardized in terms of weighting of assignments. Teachers have discretion in how they input point values for various assignments. Markers for grade inflation are present and this inconsistency reflects a core concern of the VC.

Course mastery by students is established through work completion and chapter tests. Teachers use discretion as to whether students take assessments on site or at home. The majority of the teachers reported that they have students test on site, but others reported that they allow students to test at home. This raises concerns about the integrity of those assessment outcomes and whether there needs to be clarity among staff regarding overall accountability of student work. There is a large discrepancy between the percentage of students receiving A-C grades and the number of students who are testing at grade level for math and English. Assessment data from state testing does not appear to be informing instruction or curriculum pacing significantly.

D2. Using Assessment to Monitor and Modify Learning in the Classroom Criterion

To what extent do teachers employ a variety of formative and summative strategies to evaluate student learning?

To what extent do students and teachers use these findings to modify the learning/teaching practices to improve student learning?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Appropriate Assessment Strategies: Teachers consistently use appropriate formative and summative strategies to measure student progress, reevaluate curriculum objectives, and guide individual instruction.

Demonstration of Student Achievement: Teachers use the analysis of assessments to guide, modify and adjust curricular and instructional approaches.

Student Feedback: Student feedback is an important part of monitoring student and classroom progress over time based on the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes. Interviews and dialogue with representative students inform the degree to which learning experiences are understood and relevant in preparing students for college, career, and life after high school.

A variety of student assessments are used and may include interactive notebooks, quick writes, and chapter quizzes and tests. Additionally, Renaissance assessments are used triannually and displays academic growth of each student. Teachers check in with students during weekly meetings and review work completed in order to guide next steps and check for the need for reteaching. There is some reported inconsistency regarding where assessments are completed. Some teachers reported allowing students to take assessments off-site. The VC did not find evidence that teachers are required to use state and online assessment data for course progress assessment.

Teachers, staff, and students unanimously praised the Reading Plus program which was introduced during the 2016-17 school year. This program gives regular and specific feedback that has been fostering significant student growth in reading.

Weekly individual meetings are used to monitor students and target any areas of need. Teachers use assessment data at their discretion to inform course load and pacing for students. Target Meetings are additional meetings that are mandated for at least five of the lowest performing students on each teacher's roster. These meetings are aimed at catching up those students who are falling behind and include additional instructional time (30 min). Target Meetings are mandatory for any student two grade levels or more behind average.

Weekly meetings with independent study teachers are the main source of student feedback and reflection time. Students are required to complete an essay and questionnaire on graduation requirements as part of their orientation. Ongoing meetings with the Independent Study teacher and the school counselor help inform students to make decisions about post-high school trajectories.

D3. Using Assessment to Monitor and Modify the Program Schoolwide Criterion

To what extent does the school, with the support of the district and community, have an assessment and monitoring system to determine student progress toward achievement of the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes?

To what extent does the system drive the school's program to continually improve and to allocate resources to effectively meet student needs?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Schoolwide Assessment and Monitoring Process: The following stakeholders are involved in the assessment and monitoring process of student progress: district, board members, staff, students, parents, and the business and industry community.

Curriculum-Embedded Assessments: The school regularly examines and analyzes standards-based curriculum-embedded and standardized assessments for ELA and mathematics.

Schoolwide Modifications Based on Assessment Results: The school uses assessment results to make changes in the school program, provide professional development activities, and resource allocations, which demonstrates a results-driven continuous process. The school periodically assesses its curriculum and instruction review and evaluation processes. Lastly, security systems are implemented to uphold the integrity of the assessment process.

Stakeholders are provided assessment results during staff and board meetings. Annual surveys assist with the schoolwide assessment and monitoring process. IT department meets with the District regarding annual testing requirements. There is no evidence that stakeholders have influence over the schoolwide policies regarding assessment. Aside from state and online platforms for assessment, the assessments do not appear to be governed by strict code or policy.

Teachers use chapter tests in all subject areas to drive instruction. Pacing of courses for each student are guided by analysis of the assessments. During the 2016-17 school year, Reading Plus and IXL programs were introduced to supplement curriculum and provide focused assessments. These are being implemented on a schoolwide basis and are providing valuable feedback in ELA. Feedback in Math has been discussed less frequently with the VC and there is no evidence for significant gains or forward progress with Math assessments and data driven change in curriculum.

Recent changes in the program include the addition of Reading Plus and IXL programs as assessment and growth tools. The Reading Plus tool has been reported to the VC as very successful in moving students toward competency in reading comprehension, but there is not yet enough data to confirm that. The VC is concerned that these changes were recommended six years ago at the last WASC site visit and that WPCA has only just now implemented changes in the program to address that concern.

Regular staff meetings and professional development time are dedicated to trainings in new technology and current teaching methods. Many staff report that professional development sessions provided by the district are minimally relevant to their work with independent study students.

Overall, the process of curriculum and program review based on assessment data appears to have just begun recently. It can not yet be deemed a “continuous” process but has the potential to be.

The program criteria has remained unchanged until recently and the addition of the aforementioned programs for assessment. Administration has indicated intent to review the program and implement change based on assessment data, but a concrete plan to do so has not been presented.

District test coordinator attends annual trainings for test administration security. These methods are disseminated to the staff and implemented for state assessments. In terms of other assessments, there is no clear evidence that security or accountability is maintained in any way. Some individuals reported to the VC that assessments were sometimes permitted to be taken off-site, while others reported that they were always taken on site. Administration shared that all assessments are supposed to be taken on site, but that enforcement has not been consistent.

CATEGORY D: STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Areas of strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability (if any):

- Renaissance program is utilized frequently by the teachers in order to guide curriculum pacing and course load.
- Implementation of Reading Plus and IXL programs shows promise for assessment driven changes in student learning format.

Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability (if any):

- Significant inconsistencies in accountability are present, specifically regarding chapter tests and quizzes and the location in which they are taken.
- Assessment data is available, but the VC did not find evidence that teachers are required to utilize the data in any specific way.
- A large discrepancy still exists between those students performing below grade level on state assessments in ELA and Math and the percentage of students who are receiving A-C grades in ELA and Math.
- The VC is concerned with the timing of program changes in relationship to the WASC visit, specifically with the delay in action since the last visit.

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

- **Student work sample packets**
- **Sample student data from Renaissance, Reading Plus**
- **Review of School Pathways grading and module systems**
- **Interviews with teachers and students**
- **WPCA Self Report**

CATEGORY E. SCHOOL CULTURE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

E1. Parent and Community Engagement Criterion

To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to encourage family, business, industry, and community involvement, especially with the learning/teaching process?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Regular Parent Involvement: The school implements strategies and processes for regular parent involvement of all stakeholder support groups in the learning/teaching process, including parents of non-English speaking, special needs, and online students.

Use of Community Resources: The school uses community resources to support student learning. School sponsored activities involving community members are planned and made available to students.

There is a strong open line of communication between staff, students, and parents. All new students and parents attend an orientation. Resources, including Parent Square, monthly newsletters, and parent/teacher conferences are used to enhance communication and parent involvement.

WPCA also utilizes connection with the community for job fairs, career days, local field trips, and community outreach. The counselor and the district social worker help families access community resources as needed. The VC notes that there are some additional community opportunities that would benefit WPCA.

E2. School Environment Criterion

To what extent is the school a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning?

To what extent does the school have a culture that is characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Safe, Clean, and Orderly Environment: The school has existing policies and regulations and uses its resources to ensure a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning, including internet safety.

High Expectations/Concern for Students: The school demonstrates caring, concern, and high expectations for students in an environment that honors individual differences and is conducive to learning. Expectations for a safe environment are based on respect and professionalism.

Atmosphere of Trust, Respect and Professionalism: The school encourages an atmosphere of trust, respect, and professionalism. Preventing conflict, being successful in your learning environment, and following school expectations are a few topics that are shared with parents and students by the school.

WPCA implements safety regulations through consent to comply with safe technology use policies and school behavior policies. Technology is filtered through a server to prevent students from visiting inappropriate websites. The WASC self report indicated regular emergency drills; however, anecdotal evidence supports perhaps one fire drill per year, and no lockdown drills are conducted each year. Drills and emergency procedures are not communicated with students and parents who are not on site at the

time of the drills. Additionally, the Fresno Center is missing a panic bar on the entrance door, which could help facilitate lockdown procedures. The physical locations for both sites are clean, well maintained, and professionally appointed with furniture and equipment.

Caring and concern for students is demonstrated on a regular basis by staff through weekly meetings, special events, field trips, and celebrations of success. Standards are maintained for work completion and behavior/attitude at both sites is a positive one. Students, staff, and parents all report an open and safe environment at both learning centers. VC observed and incredible connection between members of the learning community at both learning centers.

WPCA creates and maintains an atmosphere of trust, respect, and professionalism through weekly staff meetings and other opportunities for collaboration, professional dress code, and mandatory trainings on workplace safety.

E3. Personal and Academic Support Criterion

To what extent do all students receive appropriate academic support and intervention to help ensure school, college, and career success?

To what extent do students with special talents and/or needs have access to a system of personal support services, activities, and opportunities at the school, and how are they enhanced by business, industry, and the community?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

Adequate Personalized Support: The school has available and adequate services to support student's personal needs, including online resources and two school counselors.

Support and Intervention Strategies Used for Student Growth/Development: Strategies are used by the school leadership and staff to develop and implement personalized approaches to learning and alternative instructional options when needed.

Support Services – Interventions and Student Learning: The school leadership and staff ensure that the support services and related activities have a direct relationship to student involvement in learning based on the academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes. Additional support, for all students, including the EL, GATE, special education, and other programs is available.

Equitable Academic Support to Enable All Students Access to a Rigorous Curriculum: Through the use of equitable support, all students have access to a challenging, relevant, and coherent curriculum. Alternative instructional options are made available to all students to ensure a personalized approach to learning is used.

Co-Curricular Activities: The school ensures that there is a high level of student involvement in curricular and co-curricular activities that link to the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes.

Students' individual needs can be met with a referral to the school counselor, social worker, or the district psychologist if necessary. Students use online programs to explore their post-secondary options, and teachers discuss these options with students on an informal basis. Additionally, counselors meet with students once per semester and are available as needed for additional consultation.

Students at WPCA are assigned courses and curriculum based on their progress in previous courses and curriculum. By remaining with the same Independent Study teacher throughout their entire tenure, teachers are better able to assign appropriate course load and pace out curriculum accordingly. Teachers can also recommend extra hours with a tutor or small group classes.

At orientation/induction students are asked to take an assessment used for placement. Incoming students are assessed through online assessment programs and placement is based on pre-existing documents (such as IEP/504). Students on IEPs are assigned to the special education teacher and given hours requirements according to their support minutes. Students have access to computers and Chromebooks on site. For students that do not have internet access at home, they must complete all of their online work at the learning centers.

Students are assigned to teachers according to their grade level and personal preferences. Evidence supports consistent high standards of work completion, but varied standards for personal growth and knowledge retention based on anecdotal evidence. Teachers have discretion as to which parts of a particular curriculum are assigned and how those parts are weighted for the grade. The VC has concerns about the rigor associated with this lack of standardization. The students do, however, appear to have equal access to support from paraprofessionals on site.

WPCA provides opportunities for field trips and community interaction. Field trips include college tours, academically related outings, and a 8th/12th grade end of the year trip. WPCA also hosts a few different clubs and is looking to grow the number of clubs available to students.

CATEGORY E: SCHOOL CULTURE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

Areas of strength for School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth (if any):

1. WPCA provides a warm and welcoming environment to all students, parents, faculty, and staff
2. Faculty and Staff make a concerted effort to create opportunities and experiences in the real world for the students (field trips, career days, college nights etc.)
3. The learning centers present as highly professional environments with ample learning resources

Key issues for School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth (if any):

1. Inconsistencies among teacher implementation of curricula may be impeding the academic growth of students.
2. Many students expressed a desire for increased social activities and opportunities (such as ASB, prom, clubs, etc.)

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

- Interviews with students, teachers, parents and staff (counselor)
- Field trip participation data
- Student handbook and orientation packet
- Posters and student work displayed on walls

Chapter IV: Synthesis of Schoolwide Strengths and Critical Areas for Follow-up

Synthesize schoolwide areas of strengths and list numerically. Be sure that these can be documented by other sections of the report.

Schoolwide Areas of Strength (list numerically)

1. WPCA has a dedicated, passionate, deeply caring professional staff.
2. District support staff, the Superintendent and School Board are supportive of the school and ongoing school improvement.
3. The school's new Director brings a determination to drive the WASC process and improve learning for all students.
4. The school's facilities are well maintained and appointed, providing professional and welcome learning environments for students.
5. Financial resources are sufficient to support the educational program.
6. Technology is available for student use.
7. Students feel safe, understood, and cared for by their teachers.
8. Leadership has made substantial investments in the past two years in online resources to improve learning and facilitate data tracking and analysis.
9. Professional development is available to teachers to foster ongoing learning.
10. Paraprofessionals work hard to provide academic support to students who need remediation.
11. School counselors care deeply about supporting students toward and through the college and career identification processes even after graduation.
12. Recently adopted curricula are aligned with Common Core in ELA and math.
13. Teachers differentiate to provide an individualized learning experience for each student.

Synthesize schoolwide critical areas for follow-up and list numerically. Be sure that these can be documented by other sections of the report.

- **Ensure that all Critical Areas have a "who," "what," and a "why" in relation to the impact on student learning**
- **Confirm areas already identified by the school in the action plan sections**
- **Confirm areas to be strengthened within the already identified areas**
- **Identify any additional areas to be added to the action plan that have been identified by the visiting committee. This includes areas related to student achievement and other profile data, the school program and operation, and the action plan.**

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-Up

(list numerically; include who, what, why, and the impact on student learning)

The visiting committee concurs with the school's identified critical areas for follow-up that are outlined in the schoolwide action plan. These are summarized below:

1. **Increase student proficiency on local and state ELA and Math assessments.** With essentially no progress made in this area since both the 2011 and 2014 WASC site visits, forward movement in this area is essential to insure students are college and career ready. Teachers and administration, with support of the district staff need to drive a program of support that scaffolds skill building and understanding of academic content. In addition to state and Renaissance/STAR testing, benchmark, formative and summative assessments need to be utilized to reinforce learning, inform instruction, and determine efficacy of program. Professional development relevant to an independent studies program needs to be provided. Also, training in newly adopted online resources, to insure effective teaching, data analysis, and application to instruction needs to be provided.

- 2. Enhance, develop and organize programs that better prepare students for college and career.** WPCA provides excellent quality counseling that facilitates college and career readiness. Edmentum, an online resource, was adopted last year as a means of providing CTE courses to all students. It seems that use of this program has tapered off from the initial year, and the school's initial examination of effectiveness of this with the population served by WPCA has not been conducted. Students are provided opportunities to tour local college campuses, and are exposed to local businesses through informal school-business partnerships. The administration and teachers, however, need to increase students' exposure to real-world situations, developing projects and experiences that foster critical thinking, higher levels of engagement in their own education, and expand perspectives beyond home and their independent study school. Creating increased opportunities for socialization with peers will allow for greater comfort when interacting with a wide range of individuals.

In addition, the visiting committee has identified critical areas for follow-up that need to be addressed:

(Note: Show the relationship to what the school has already identified, if possible.)

1. There is a significant discrepancy between grades earned and standardized assessment results. The school has identified the need to increase math and ELA skills, while also drawing a connection between grades that present an overly positive perspective, and the sizeable majority of students who are performing below grade level on SBAC and Renaissance/STAR testing. More accurate calibration between grades and assessment results is needed, as are consistent grading weights, rubrics, and expectations across the teaching staff.
2. Junior and senior high school students are able to "test out" of electives at a rate of two per semester, for a total of up to 40 credits per year, as a means of more quickly allowing students to earn credits toward graduation. Review packets that prepare students to test out of these classes require substantially less time than course work would require. In addition, newly enrolled students are asked to complete a writing task and study packet for which they are granted 2.5 credits toward graduation. While the school offers electives, the content of which is considered important for students to know, they permit the testing out for such courses and Careers, and Life Skills. This disparity should be examined in light of what is best for students. In addition, the notion that students can gain 10 credits per "test out", for up to 40 credits per year calls into question the extent to which relevant and rigorous credit recovery is being offered.
3. Teachers frequently permit students to complete chapter tests, quizzes and non-standardized tests at home as part of their homework. This calls into question the integrity of those assessment results. Such a practice needs to be re-evaluated, with clear expectations and accountability created to insure the accuracy of all testing results.
4. Students with IEPs are not allowed to enroll in WPCA's kindergarten through 6th grades. Special education enrollment at the 7th through 12th grades is currently capped at 20 based on staffing. The practice of excluding special education students from the elementary program, turning them back to their home school, needs to be re-evaluated from the lens of discriminatory practices. WPCA's charter indicates that all California students may enroll in the school. As such, they may not differentially enroll based on special education versus general education status, and as such students are being denied access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education in a California public school.
5. With no EL students having been reclassified for at least the past three years, the school has to move urgently toward creating a set of criteria for reclassification. It was unclear whether this was because of the transition in state testing from CELDT to ELPAC or because no student actually qualified. Staff reported both reasons.

6. WPCA needs to create a structure and process to insure and track progress on WASC action items.

Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement (1–2 pages)

- Include a brief summary of the schoolwide action plan

The school has addressed two critical areas of follow-up within their action plan. They want 2-3% increase of students meeting proficiency in each goal. The action plan consists of two main goals;

1. Increase student proficiency on local and state ELA and Math assessments.
 - Implementation of Common Core State Standards and curriculum.
 - Conduct professional development related to Common Core State Standards.
 - Increase instructional time through labs and tutoring.
 - Utilize assessments and programs to identify growth for Reading and Math.
 - Targeted meetings with students who are two or more grade levels behind.
 - Create common benchmarks.
 - Increase technology access and usage.
 - Standardize and utilize formative and summative data to guide instruction.
 - Hire paraprofessionals/tutors to provide additional support time for students.

 2. Enhance, develop, and organize programs that better prepare students for college and career.
 - Submit course work for Science, ELA, and Math for A-G approval.
 - Expand opportunities for students to visit colleges and universities.
 - Conduct workshops for parents and students regarding career opportunities and post-secondary education and training.
 - Increase CTE/ROP course offerings and participation.
 - Create work experience opportunities for students.
 - Support students with California Colleges Guidance Initiative.
 - Create CTE pathways and use CCR indicators more effectively.
- Comment on the following school improvement issues:
 - ✓ Adequacy of the schoolwide action plan in addressing the identified critical areas for follow-up
 - Do the action plan sections address the critical areas for follow-up?
 - Will the action plan steps enhance student learning?
 - Is the action plan a “user-friendly” schoolwide action plan that has integrated all major school initiatives (e.g., *II/USP*, *technology plan*, *staff development plan*)?
 - Is the action plan feasible within existing resources?
 - Is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, schoolwide and systemwide?
 - Is the schoolwide action plan aligned to the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)?
 - ✓ Existing factors that will support school improvement
 - ✓ Impediments to improvement that the school will need to overcome
 - ✓ Soundness of the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan.

The action plan addresses the first two identified areas of critical need that the VC and school are in concurrence about. It does not address the following areas; common grading practices, integrity of granting credits for electives, best practices for curriculum assessments and academic honesty, English learner reclassification, and accountability for school improvement process.

The school's current action plan does not sufficiently support student learning because key pieces are left out of it. The action plan is user-friendly but more detailed deadlines should be added to keep the school focused and accountable.

The staff demonstrates commitment to school improvement and resources are available to implement the action plan. The critical areas of need support the LCAP goals. WPCA has a well-established board and experienced superintendent that are committed to creating a quality school option for students. The Director has the vision and relational capacity to lead staff through the change process. The staff demonstrates the grit and care necessary to support the at-risk youth served by WPCA. These are the positives that will contribute to meaningful growth.

The challenge will be creating the sense of urgency for change and creating expectations that are meaningful and realistic. These are true for staff and students alike. Many of the teachers have been with WPCA for many years and have been using the same practices with very little change for the duration of their tenure. Perhaps the largest challenge facing the WPCA is the reality of raising academic rigor and implementing staff-wide grading standards. The process will initially lower the passing rate of students, and thus success and enthusiasm rates among the students. For a staff that is dedicated, caring, and connected to a student body, this can be a very difficult transition. Teachers and staff will need to find a way to communicate the change in rigor to their students and manage student expectations for their own performance. The path to improvement should be dotted with accountability and celebrations along the way.