

# Pioneer High School

Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)  
Visiting Committee Report  
2016

# Progress on Critical Areas for Follow Up and School Wide Action Plan

## ***1. The District, administration and staff develop an on-going process to improve internal and external communication among all stakeholders to support and increase student achievement.***

- In 2013-14 Pioneer High School established a site Leadership Team that met twice a month, composed of the principal, vice-principals, team leaders, WASC coordinators and unofficial department representatives. In 2014-15, official department chairs were restored to the team.
- In 2013-14, advertising of parent and student use of the School Loop resulted in increased parent enrollment in the School Loop. 65% of parents are registered with the School Loop. The school's parent group and the student group enthusiastically endorse the usefulness of the School Loop to monitor grades and attendance.
- In 2015-16, the principal implemented a weekly all-call announcement to all parents in English and Spanish regarding campus events and issues. The parent group praised the all-call announcement initiative for providing them with timely campus updates. The School Loop and all-call appears to be the main form of communication with parents.
- At district level, a universal district strategic plan was developed. The teachers reported that the strategic plan was not shared at the site level. However, the district administrators report that the Strategic Plan has been available on the Internet.
- The district administrators report that the district provides support to the school personnel through literacy and numeracy trainings to enhance Common Core implementation. However, only 50% of the faculty have participated in these training opportunities.
- Communication between all stakeholders needs to continue to improve.

# Progress on Critical Areas for Follow Up and School Wide Action Plan (con'd)

***2. The administration and staff develop and utilize a schoolwide systematic assessment program to collect, analyze, and interpret the data needed to make decisions about curriculum, teaching practices, staff development and program effectiveness.***

- In 2013-14, all core academic departments were trained on Common Core Standards and all staff were trained on Illuminate for data collection and assessment. Teachers reported that they are still in the implementation stages in several departments. Not all elective departments have undergone Common Core Training. The school's leadership team reports that by 2017-2018, all common core training will be complete and assessments will be in place.

# Progress on Critical Areas for Follow Up and School Wide Action Plan (con'd)

## ***3. The staff and site administration needs to implement established school norms for classroom student expectations in order to increase student engagement in all curricular areas.***

- In 2013-14, the student handbooks/planners were revised with BEST practices embedded into the school routines. The student group share that they are aware of revised academic and behavioral expectations.
- To help support behavioral expectations, the school is implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) approach.
- The school's Leadership Team reports that due to the implementation of BEST, PBIS and Restorative Justice initiatives, the school's expulsion and suspension rates have decreased. However, the school report shows that while the Out of School Suspensions have decreased, the In School Suspensions have increased. Tardy rates have also increased. The Leadership team also shared
- that student behavior has become more positive as a result of initiatives such as the Youth Development Institute trainings. This improved behavior was also observed by the Visiting Committee.

# Progress on Critical Areas for Follow Up and School Wide Action Plan (con'd)

***4. The site administration and staff will create a long-range, comprehensive staff development plan focused on strengthening the rigor of the curriculum and the academic performance of all students to support the transition to Common Core Standards and to align with the critical schoolwide areas for follow-up.***

- In 2013-14, all core academic departments received training on Common Core curriculum. Although some elective departments have not completed Common Core training, the school's Leadership Team reports that all Common Core training will be completed by 2017-2018.
- The Curriculum Focus group created a teacher survey of Common Core needs list for 2014-15. It also created an "Expert Teacher" document generated from teacher feedback to help in the creation of a master schedule. The Expert teacher document has not been utilized in all departments.
- The Curriculum Focus Group created a staff needs survey to determine training and materials needs for professional development in support of the successful implementation of Common Core. The integration plans, created on a departmental basis, ranged from highly structured guidelines to more generalized guidelines.
- For 2014-15, all Common Core and professional development opportunities were scheduled and implemented at the District level while individual departments have started to address student achievement, a schoolwide staff development plan is not in place.
- Student group reports that generally, the 'regular classes' are not challenging and the rigor of the courses depend on the instructor's teaching those courses. Also, the student group reports that the AP and Honors courses are challenging (e.g. the Virtual Stock Market project in the AP Economics/Government class).

# Progress on Critical Areas for Follow Up and School Wide Action Plan (con'd)

## ***5. The staff and administration develop a plan to continue to build trust, respect, cohesiveness and professionalism amongst the staff in order to foster a more positive climate on campus.***

- In 2013-14, the leadership team created a Wednesday collaboration calendar to facilitate staff meeting outside of their curricular areas.
- The school culture group planned a carnival with community members to occur in the spring in place of the Open House. The event was put on hold and is planned for 2015-16.
- As a result of the school climate survey, the ice breaker activities at monthly staff meetings were cancelled for 2014-15.
- The school is now supporting new teachers by partnering them with volunteer experienced teachers.
- In 2015-16, over 10% of the teaching faculty are scheduled at 120% with the majority of the affected staff being in the Mathematics department. Not all teachers
- were pleased to teach at 120%. The 2015-16 administration is making steps to avoid these practices for 2016-17.
- Most efforts to address school culture have been lost during the transition from one principal to another.

# Progress on Critical Areas for Follow Up and School Wide Action Plan (con'd)

- ***6. The staff and administration will continue to provide guidance services and programs that include a five-year plan that is reviewed annually, to better inform students of course selection and post-graduation planning beginning in the 9th grade, thereby not only increasing student completion of A-G requirements but also providing opportunities for career pathways, goals and objectives.***
  - In 2013-14, the school administration and site leaders created a 5 year school Advisory program to implement in Fall 2014. In 2014-15, the Woodland Joint Unified District discussed implementation of a district strategic plan that involves implementation of 5 year plans across the district for all high school students. To ensure that the site plan would be congruent with the district plan, the site based plan was put on indefinite hold.
  - Based on feedback from counselors, AP applications, were viewed as a possible hurdle, and have been eliminated to encourage student enrollment. Both the parent group and the student group state that this change is not an issue because students receive information about AP class enrollment through the counselors and the teachers. However, although the enrollment in AP classes has increased, the percentage of those tested has declined.
  - It is an expectation of WASC that all students have a four-year plan that begins in the eighth grade and is reviewed annually. During the 2013 WASC visit, it was determined that four-year plans were not in place and low student performance indicated a need to include the 5th year to support student plans after high school.

# Progress on Critical Areas for Follow Up and School Wide Action Plan (con'd)

***7. Administration and staff participate in writing an annual progress report that addresses each of the WASC Critical Areas for Follow-Up, addresses each section of the action plan, includes steps to become familiar with all expectations of WASC and is shared with all stakeholders.***

- The above Critical Area for Follow Up was not written as an action plan item. It was left out of all of the Self Study Mid-Term Progress Report reviewed by the Visiting Committee.
- The Critical areas for follow-up in the schoolwide action plan are not complete. Sections of each critical area were generally addressed but did not include concrete steps to meet WASC expectations. The school's staff did not include Goal #7 in the report.



# Commendations

- The new Administrative staff is dedicated to student centered education
- The teachers support students
- Principal's Sunday Night All-Call
- The use of School Loop to inform parents of grades and attendance
- The students, staff, and parents value and respect the principal
- Positive campus culture is evolving

Thank You!