

SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

FOR

PALOS VERDES HIGH SCHOOL

600 Cloyd Road

Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274

Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District

March 25-28, 2012

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Chapter I: Student/Community Profile

Palos Verdes Peninsula

The Palos Verdes Peninsula is located 21 miles southwest of metropolitan Los Angeles. Its neighborhoods are mostly comprised of single-family dwellings, condominiums and apartments are present in some areas. The population, which includes various racial, religious, and ethnic groups, is divided among four cities on the Palos Verdes Peninsula: Palos Verdes Estates, Rancho Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills, and Rolling Hills Estates.

Socio Economic Status

The Palos Verdes Peninsula is primarily an upper middle-class community. The 2010 census reports that 66% of residents over the age of 25 completed at least four years of college. The median family income is above \$130,000.

Palos Verdes High School

The initial owner of the PVHS site was LAUSD, which intended to make it a junior high school. In 1960, PVPUSD purchased the property from LAUSD. PVHS opened in 1961. With declining enrollment PVHS closed PVHS in 1991 to consolidate three high schools. In 2001, enrollment grew and PVHS was reopened.

The school has an API of 898 and continues to receive educational recognition and national rankings from a variety of sources. *The Washington Post* (2011) named PVHS 308th in the nation. The PVHS community, administration, staff, and faculty are proud of the school's academic excellence.

PVPUSD is unique by allowing 8th grade students the opportunity to select which of the two high schools they would like to attend. The open enrollment policy results in varying class sizes and influences the demographics of the school. Students enroll from three different feeder schools. Less than 1% of the enrollment participates in the free and reduced lunch program. There are 21 ELL students. There are 147 students with an IEP, and an additional 104 students with a 504 plan.

80% of PVHS students attend a four-year college or university. The majority of the remaining 20% of students attend a community college.

All at-risk students are supported by an RtI model program in reading and math. There are unique program at PVHS such as Palos Verdes Institute of Technology featuring a series of classes that follows a national curriculum developed by Project Lead the Way. Students also participate in *Live from 205*, the school newspaper, the yearbook, Model UN, Academic Decathlon, Speech and Debate, and Science Olympiad.

PVHS is based on a semester system and block schedule

Cuts to PVHS have resulted in larger class sizes and fewer classified staff. There has been a reduction of one associate principal. Since the re-opening of the school there has only been one principal who retired last year. The new principal was appointed for 2011-2012.

Facilities have been refurbished and portable classrooms replaced with permanent buildings. Athletic fields have been renovated and improved. Although small, the library provides a large collection of books and provides students with resource materials.

WASC Accreditation History

Provisional accreditation was granted 2002-2005. PVHS completed a full self-study during the 2005-2006 school year resulting in a six-year accreditation with a three-year visit. Critical areas identified were:

- Review and revisit the vision, mission, and purpose of the school annually.
- Improve articulation with feeder schools.
- Put in place structure that allows the school to make data driven decisions in relation to staff development and instructional practices.
- Increase departmental and cross-curricular planning to promote research-based student projects.
- Continue to address differentiated instructional needs.
- Improve strategies to meet the needs of special populations and low performing students.
- Analyze and disaggregate state and school test data with additional planning time.
- Improve use of resources for cross-curricular research.
- Enforce consistent school policies and procedures.
- Develop courses, policies, and procedures to address the needs of at-risk students.

School Purpose

The leadership team, composed of administration, faculty, classified staff, parents, and students, meets as the School Site Council to discuss and act upon current and relevant issues facing PVHS. The committee revisits the school's purpose and mission statement each year.

Student Learning Outcomes

Community Oriented Citizenship
Teamwork & Personal Development
Post-secondary Preparedness

Programs of Excellence

Excellent programs abound at PVHS. Programs such as ASB, Academic Decathlon, AVID, mock Trial, Model UN, Palos Verdes International Diploma modeled after the Advanced Placement International Designation, Palos Verdes Institute of Technology, Project Lead the Way (engineering and technology), and Senior Projects exist at Palos Verdes.

Parent and Community Support

Several organizations consisting of the PVHS Booster Club, PTSA, and PEF make annual contributions to the academic arts, and athletic programs serving PVHS students. For the last three years, the PVHS Booster Club raised \$425,000 for various activities.

Peninsula Education Foundation

PEF has pledged to raise \$2,700,000 for the 2011-2012 school year. From this contribution of money into the district's general fund, the school district's governing board determines how it is spent. PEF is the only fundraising group that directly funds salaries. PEF supports K-12 including elementary music, world languages, engineering programs, academic counselors, and helps to reduce class sizes. PEF also provides grants to teachers who request additional educational materials for specific classroom projects. During the summer PEF offers a program for student enrichment.

Staff

	2009-2010		2010-2011		2011-2012	
Teachers	79		79		75	
Administrators	3		3		3	
Pupil Services	10		10		10	
Total	92		92		88	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
Paraprofessionals	0	21	10	10	12	13
Office/Clerical Staff	9	3	11	2	10	2
Other Staff	15	8	15	6	15	6
Total	56		54		58	

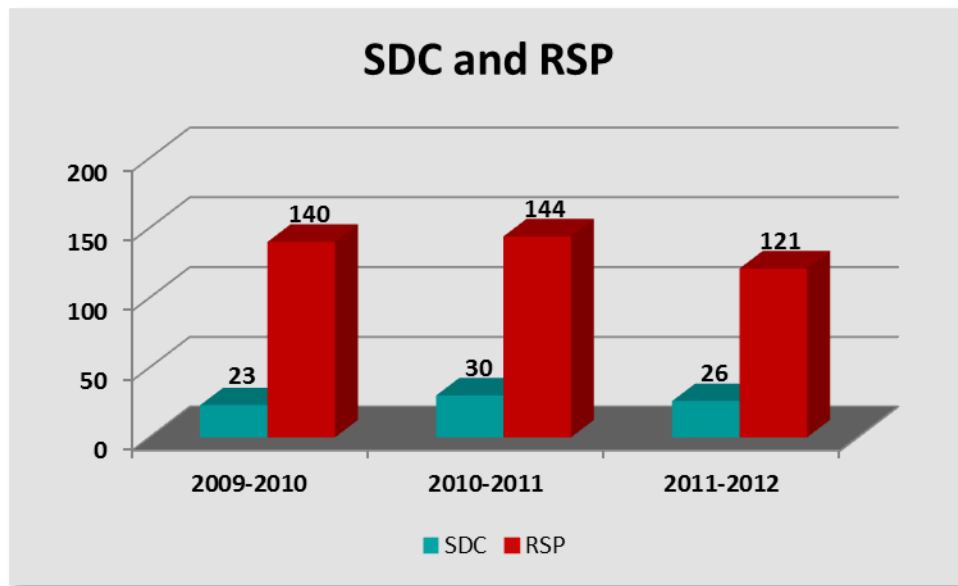
Enrollment

2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
1839	1822	1697

Enrollment by grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Grade 9	480	486	386
Grade 10	405	471	486
Grade 11	503	379	457
Grade 12	451	486	368

Enrollment by ethnicity	2011-2012
American Indian/Alaska	2
Asian	224
Pacific Islander	12
Filipino	17
Hispanic/Latino	135
African American	28
White	1279
Multiple/No Response	0

English Language Learners	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Limited Proficiency	21	25	21
Fluent	59	79	80



504 Plans	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Limited Proficiency	91	101	104

Truancy Rates 2008-2009		2009-2010		2010-2011	
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
843	45.87%	945	51.39%	970	53.24%

Expulsions by Code					
Code		2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
48915(c)(1)	PDS-Related to possessing, selling, or otherwise furnishing a firearm	1	0	0	0
Total		1	0	0	0
Suspensions by Code					
Code		2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
48900(a)(1)	Related to physical injury to another person	0	3	0	0
48900(a)(2)	Related to use of force or violence	12	0	4	8
48900(b)	Related to firearms, knives, explosive devices, etc.	0	0	1	1
48900(c)	Related to possession or sale of controlled substances, alcohol, or intoxicants	16	19	18	9
48900(f)	Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property	0	0	2	0
48900(g)	Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property	0	3	2	2
48900(h)	Related to possession or use of tobacco products	0	4	0	0
48900(j)	Related to possession or sale of drug paraphernalia	4	0	1	1
48900(k)	Related to disruption of school activities or willful defiance	55	0	8	15
48900.4	Related to harassment, threats, or intimidation	4	1	1	1
Total		91	30	37	37

Student Achievement

Subgroup	2011				2010				2009			
	2010 Base	2011 Growth	Target	Met Target	2009 Base	2010 Growth	Target	Met Target	2008 Base	2009 Growth	Target	Met Target
All Students	848	898	0	Y	865	848	0	Y	854	864	0	Y
Asian	922	942	0	Y	934	919	0	Y	920	931	0	Y
White	841	898	0	Y	857	839	0	Y	846	855	0	Y
Students With Disabilities	620	672	7	Y	664	620	7	N	662	660	7	N

PVHS is a high-achieving school as evidenced by their API scores. Even with a decline two years ago, faculty and staff took active steps to ensure success and growth for all students last year and succeed in increasing their API by 50 points.

The overall excellence of the school is demonstrated in the individual CST exams charted below.

ELA: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	49.68%	49.25%	49.93%	59.46%
Proficient	29.94%	28.17%	26.23%	24.90%
Basic	13.84%	15.05%	14.26%	11.44%
Below Basic	4.29%	4.87%	6.17%	3.04%
Far Below Basic	2.25%	2.65%	3.42%	1.17%
Total Students	1423	1395	1346	1285

93% proficient in ELA

Mathematics: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	18.08%	18.80%	18.35%	27.06%
Proficient	25.09%	25.36%	23.91%	33.23%
Basic	29.52%	24.20%	27.52%	22.98%
Below Basic	20.23%	23.76%	22.48%	13.29%
Far Below Basic	7.08%	7.87%	7.74%	3.44%
Total Students	1399	1372	1330	1249

60% overall proficiency in mathematics

General Math: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	0%	0%	0%	9.09%
Proficient	5.88%	0%	7.69%	18.18%
Basic	52.94%	42.86%	15.38%	36.36%
Below Basic	35.29%	42.86%	30.77%	36.36%
Far Below Basic	5.88%	14.29%	46.15%	0%
Total Students	17	7	13	11

Only 11 students taking the General Math CST.

Algebra I: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	0%	4.48%	0%	15.79%
Proficient	7.91%	17.16%	12.50%	28.95%
Basic	48.92%	32.09%	30.47%	31.58%
Below Basic	35.97%	35.07%	43.75%	21.05%
Far Below Basic	7.19%	11.19%	13.28%	2.63%
Total Students	139	134	128	114

44% proficient-continual increases

Geometry: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	24.57%	24.64%	22.95%	32.27%
Proficient	27.17%	25.36%	26.81%	37.30%
Basic	28.48%	23.70%	31.88%	20.14%
Below Basic	16.74%	22.04%	15.94%	8.70%
Far Below Basic	3.04%	4.27%	2.42%	1.60%
Total Students	460	422	414	437

Non-proficient bands are decreasing. School working on strategies for students that do not start Geometry until 9th or 10th grade.

Algebra II: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	13.40%	14.92%	13.32%	23.37%
Proficient	25.53%	22.49%	23.73%	27.64%
Basic	25.96%	22.94%	23.73%	25.63%
Below Basic	20.85%	24.50%	23.49%	16.33%
Far Below Basic	14.26%	15.14%	15.74%	7.04%
Total Students	470	449	413	398

51% proficiency in Algebra II

Summative High School Math: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	24.68%	22.50%	25.97%	29.41%
Proficient	30.13%	32.50%	25.41%	37.02%
Basic	26.60%	23.06%	26.24%	19.72%
Below Basic	16.67%	20.28%	20.99%	12.11%
Far Below Basic	1.92%	1.67%	1.38%	1.73%
Total Students	312	360	362	289

67% proficiency in Summative Math

World History: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	42.69%	53.23%	44.19%	56.30%
Proficient	28.54%	23.06%	28.22%	27.25%
Basic	14.62%	12.07%	14.11%	12.08%
Below Basic	6.73%	3.88%	5.19%	1.80%
Far Below Basic	7.42%	7.76%	8.30%	2.57%
Total Students	431	464	482	389

83% Proficiency in World History

United States History: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	42.69%	52.27%	44.07%	53.57%
Proficient	28.54%	22.95%	28.27%	28.85%
Basic	14.62%	12.50%	14.14%	12.91%
Below Basic	6.73%	4.09%	5.20%	1.92%
Far Below Basic	7.42%	8.18%	8.32%	2.75%
Total Students	431	440	481	364

81% proficiency in US History

Science: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	34.55%	35.50%	35.81%	49.74%
Proficient	30.83%	28.59%	31.07%	27.78%
Basic	23.24%	25.22%	19.79%	17.09%
Below Basic	6.12%	6.67%	6.95%	3.59%
Far Below Basic	5.27%	4.02%	6.38%	1.79%
Total Students	1291	1245	1223	1170

77% proficiency in 10th grade science

Biology: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	46.39%	48.06%	44.37%	62.64%
Proficient	31.02%	26.54%	30.80%	26.26%
Basic	16.87%	19.37%	16.28%	8.85%
Below Basic	2.59%	4.02%	5.16%	1.54%
Far Below Basic	3.13%	2.01%	3.39%	0.70%
Total Students	735	697	737	712

Chemistry: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	17.63%	16.81%	20.30%	27.27%
Proficient	30.13%	31.47%	32.58%	28.57%
Basic	32.81%	34.48%	27.32%	32.73%
Below Basic	9.60%	10.78%	8.77%	7.79%
Far Below Basic	9.82%	6.47%	11.03%	3.64%
Total Students	448	464	399	385

88% proficiency in Bio/Life

65% proficiency in Chemistry

Earth Science: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	3.57%	5.26%	0%	7.69%
Proficient	7.14%	15.79%	27.27%	23.08%
Basic	46.43%	31.58%	13.64%	46.15%
Below Basic	39.29%	15.79%	40.91%	7.69%
Far Below Basic	3.57%	31.58%	18.18%	15.38%
Total Students	28	19	22	13

30% proficiency in Earth Science

Physics: CST Percent Proficient				
Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Advanced	31.25%	43.08%	46.15%	50.00%
Proficient	41.25%	33.85%	26.15%	41.67%
Basic	20.00%	20.00%	15.38%	8.33%
Below Basic	7.50%	3.08%	4.62%	0%
Far Below Basic	0%	0%	7.69%	0%
Total Students	80	65	65	60

91% proficiency in Physics

CAHSEE results also demonstrate a high level of proficiency for PVHS students.

CAHSEE Results for Grade 10: All Students				
Subject	2008	2009	2010	2011
Mathematics	98%	98%	98%	99%
English Language Arts	98%	98%	97%	98%

Number of AP and Honors Courses					
	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
AP	N/A	28	26	27	29
Honors	N/A	13	13	12	13
AP and Honors Sections	N/A	106	100	106	106

The VC felt that the AP rigor at PVHS might be an area in which PVHS could improve.

AP 2011 Scores

Score	Total Exams	% of Total Exams
5	222	17.3%
4	368	28.7%
3	392	30.6%
2	207	16.1%
1	94	7.3%
Total	1,283	100.0%

NMSQT Results				
	2008	2009	2010	2011
Commended	N/A	20	11	28
Semi-Finalists	N/A	6	7	11
Finalists	N/A	2	5	2

Scores for SAT and ACT exceed national and state averages.

SAT Results				
	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Total Tested	379	362	356	423
Critical Reading	557	557	565	563
Mathematics	593	586	606	585
Writing	572	567	581	582

ACT Results				
	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Total Tested	220	184	251	261
Composite Score	25.3	25.6	25.9	26.2

The a-g eligible rate for PVHS is astounding and commendable.

Students Eligible for UC and CSU Admission				
	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Graduates	425	438	448	477
Number of Graduates Eligible	294	315	344	383
Percent of Graduates Eligible	69.2%	71.9%	76.8%	80.3%

CELDT scores demonstrate excellence for these students.

CELDT Achievement	Grade 9			Grade 10			Grade 11			Grade 12		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
Advanced	13%	33%	33%	13%	50%	29%	25%	44%	40%	0%	25%	0%
Early Advanced	50%	33%	17%	63%	33%	29%	25%	44%	40%	0%	25%	0%
Intermediate	25%	11%	33%	25%	17%	43%	25%	11%	20%	0%	50%	0%
Early Intermediate	13%	22%	17%	0%	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Beginning	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Skill Area Mean Scale Scores												
Number Tested	8	9	6	8	6	7	4	9	5	3	4	0
Listening	649.9	622.2	638.7	647.6	689.3	634.3	590.5	685.2	646	0	576.8	0
Reading	612.1	597.8	572.5	603	666.2	600.7	576.3	658	665.4	0	603.8	0
Writing	583.3	593.9	569.5	618	582.5	572.4	594	641	568.6	0	615.5	0

EXPLORE

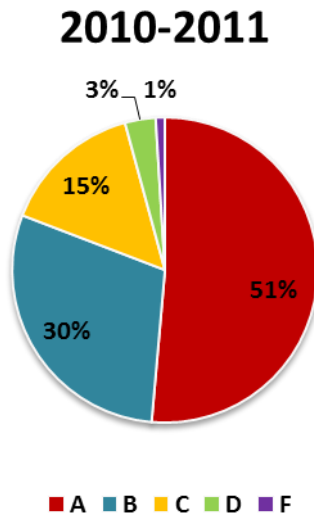
In 2010, a new program, College Day, was implemented at PVHS in order to support and promote a college enrollment culture. During College Day, freshmen, sophomore, and junior students take grade level curriculum appropriate standardized test measures, while seniors attend a series of workshops to assist them with college applications, financial aid, and available opportunities at the Southern California Regional Occupational Center. PVHS PTSA and Booster Club cover the costs of College Day, including test-scoring fees.

PLAN

The PLAN program helps sophomores build a solid foundation for future academic and career success and provides information needed to address priority issues.

Grades

PVHS had a thorough review of grades.



Parent, Staff, Student Surveys

PVHS has done a thorough job of requesting and receiving feedback from all stakeholders.

Overall general impression for PVHS is very good. Concerns that PVHS will be addressing were:

Amount of homework and if it were meaningful.

Communication of Edline

Block schedule-effective use of class time

Consistency of school policies

Outcomes of Critical Needs at PVHS as identified by the school and the Self Study report.

1. Algebraic Proficiency

Evidence

- In the last three years, only 8 to 12% of PVHS freshmen received proficient or better scores on the Algebra I CST
- From test results, students continue to struggle in tenth grade geometry
- In grade 11, the deficit in students' Algebra skills is evident
- Algebra II CST scores show that close to 90% of the students are scoring below basic or far below basic
- CAHSEE pass rates and academic classroom grades support the conclusions that students who take Algebra 1B in the ninth grade continue to struggle in high school mathematics

2. Support for Special Education Students

Evidence

- API scores for students with disabilities have consistently decreased over the last four years with the lowest score, a 620, recorded in 2010
- Special education students CST measures have decreased the last three years
- Special education CAHSEE scores have decreased the last three years
- Special education students classroom grades have decreased the last three years

3. Consistent Implementation of School Policies

Evidence

- Results of certificated employees survey indicate that 60% agree that the administration has a serious approach to student discipline
- Only 54% of certificated employees feel that the administration is consistent with school wide expectations and policies
- Results of the classified employees survey indicate that only 54% agree that the administration is consistent with policy enforcement
- Open-ended comments from parent surveys indicate that consistent school rules, policies, and the enforcement of them is an area of concern and possibly an impediment to a productive learning environment
- Parents expressed specific concerns and lack of policy consistency in three areas: dress code, drugs and alcohol, and cheating

Chapter II: Progress Report

Since the last self-study:

Significant developmental progress and changes have taken place at PVHS since the last full WASC visit in 2006. The four significant areas include the following:

- **Funding:** PVHS and PVPUSD are part of California's budget situation.
- **Administration:** The only PVHS principal since the re-opening of the school in 2002 retired in 2011. In addition, PVHS lost one full time administrator in 2009.
- **Academic Courses of Study:** PVHS has restructured many student programs since 2006.
- **Facilities and Technology:** Collaboration between PVHS and PVPUSD has been effective with the upgrade of PVHS classrooms, athletic and extracurricular facilities, and the improvement and addition of technology for classroom teachers.

Funding

PVPUSD and PVHS have teamed with community organizations to help minimize the impact of budget reduction on the quality of education within the district. While these efforts have been successful in preserving quality instruction and curriculum, it continues to remain a challenge for parents, faculty, and administrators to continue with the same momentum every year.

With the support of the PEF, PVHS Booster Club, and the PVHS PTSA, these groups have spared classroom budget cuts. In 2010, the school district cut instructional days from 180 to 176, and decreased the number of professional development days prior to the beginning of school from three days to only one. Every year, since 2008, between 10 and 20 PVHS teachers and counselors with permanent and tenured status have received Reduction in Force notices. The teacher-funding ratio at the high school level has increased from 32:1 to 34:1. It is not uncommon for classes to reach 38 or more students at PVHS in the 2011-2012 school year.

The PEFoundation has consistently increased its annual donation to the PVPUSD general fund. PEF is the only organization in the district that is able to raise donations that go directly towards saving teachers' jobs. The PEF recently has earmarked \$1 million to go specifically towards saving teachers jobs. In 2011, the PEF donation to PVPUSD was \$2.5 million with a \$2.7 million pledge for the 2011-2012 school year. Along with the PEF, the PVHS Booster Club donates approximately \$400,000 each year to extracurricular activities in order to maintain current programs. In November 2011, Palos Verdes residents approved Measure M, a non-expiring parcel tax of \$374 per parcel, which generates approximately \$7 million of an \$86 million budget.

Administration

In the last six years, the most noticeable changes at PVHS have been in the area of administration. In 2009, PVPUSD reduced administrative positions at both high schools with the elimination of a Dean of Students, leaving the administrative staff with one principal and two associate principals. After the retirement of the first principal at PVHS since it re-opened in 2002, the associate principal was appointed principal in 2011. In addition to a new principal, PVPUSD appointed two new associate principals to PVHS. A special education teacher was placed on a full release special assignment in order to facilitate the administrative duties related to the special education program.

Academic Courses of Study

In the 2010-2011 school year, PVHS decided to discontinue the humanities block classes. In the 2011-2012 school year, PVHS administrators and faculty continue to collaborate in order to reinstate the block for the 2012-2013 school year. Another course, Advanced Calculus, was eliminated in the 2008-2009 school year, due to low enrollment. However, in 2011-2012, it was decided to once again offer the class with the hope that it would attract high achieving middle school students by offering the same courses in advanced mathematics as the other district high school.

In 2010-2011, the resource course, Study Skills, was revamped and renamed. The Guided Studies course was intended for special education resource students to receive extra academic help. Engineering and robotics (PVIT) at PVHS offer four courses with the following progression: Introduction to Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, and Engineering Development and Design.

The fine art classes have several new courses, which include Surfboard Shaping and Silk Screening.

Facilities and Technology

During the last six years, PVHS has experienced facility improvements in athletics, classrooms, and technology. Private donations and bond Measures R and S are the major contributors to these improvements, as well as supporting plans for future improvements. Renovations include the following areas of improvement from the years 2007-2012.

- Discuss how the school through its action plan has accomplished each of the critical areas for follow-up, including the impact on student learning.
-

WASC Visits

The school conducted the last full self-study and WASC visit in 2006. PVHS hosted a revisit in 2009. Both visits recommended the following areas for evaluation:

- Faculty needs to continue to analyze disaggregated assessment data to design curriculum, instruction, and future assessments to improve student achievement of the academic standards
- Faculty needs to develop learning opportunities to improve and/or enhance all students' academic, career/vocational, and personal growth
- Faculty needs to work with the district to identify additional opportunities for improved articulation with feeder schools
- The school leadership in collaboration with the faculty and other stakeholders need to refine the school-wide action plan sections to include a sequential timeline, especially in relation to specific long range planning and goals

Implementation of the 2006 WASC Action Plan

Progress was made in many areas, but specifically, progress was noticeable in standard aligned curriculum and assessments. During this period, PVHS saw an increase in API to 865 in 2009. In 2009, PVHS received a three-year review visit. This visit confirmed that PVHS was making adequate progress towards action plan goals, as stated in the 2006 self-study.

In 2009, PVPUSD eliminated all but one paid pre-instructional professional development day. This decrease in professional development time resulted in a lack of progress towards the goals in the 2009-2010 school year. As a result, PVHS had inadequate professional development time to make progress on action plan steps. Following the loss of an administrator who oversaw curriculum, instruction, and professional development, PVHS did not make significant progress toward action plan steps in this school year. In 2009-2010, there was one pre-instructional workday for teachers and seven 90-minute late start days. As a result, it was apparent that the school was not meeting WASC action plan steps. The reduction in pre-instructional days forced PVHS to look to alternative models for staff development time.

During the 2010-2011 school year, PVHS began to incorporate zero period into its instructional minutes. The increased professional development time also allowed PVHS to start addressing the upcoming self-study. This time proved to be very effective, which contributed to an API score increase of 50 points to 898 in 2011.

For the 2011-2012 school year, PVHS is having one late start every Wednesday in order to provide additional professional development.

Procedures for Managing the School's Action Plan

Each of the school's action plans consist of a series of activities that were outlined as part of the 2006 WASC visit and subsequent areas for follow-up. Each year, the school's leadership team, department leads, and academic departments meet to discuss progress towards meeting the action plan goals, as well as the relevance of each activity and plan.

Since the writing of the action plan goals from the 2006 WASC visit, the PVHS administration has completely changed. The following action plans were important for the school six years ago; however, they lack specificity to the issues that are relevant to PVHS, today. Some of the original activities outlined in the 2006 visit have been replaced to address the needs of the current student body and staff.

Visiting Team Comment:

Action Plan #1 addresses: closer alignment among classroom standards-based assessments, grade reporting and standardized test scores.

- **Which meets the needs of Critical Area #1 left by prior VC.** (Faculty needs to continue to analyze disaggregated assessment data to design curriculum, instruction, and future assessments to improve student achievement of the academic standards.)

At the beginning of 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years, teachers completed Data Analysis Worksheets. They were asked to compare cluster scores to school and district averages, as well as with the previous year's scores. The departments collected and shared reflections. In 2011-2012, teachers were asked to complete two additional data analysis worksheets. One worksheet identified students who received scores below basic in the previous year. The other worksheet identified students that could improve by one or two performance bands from last year's scores.

The use of student grades has been an important practice among PVHS departments over the last six years. Following interim reports and quarter reports, PVHS teachers receive printouts of grade totals and anonymous comparisons to other teachers who teach the same subjects.

PVHS has not made the desired progress towards achieving consistency in benchmark assessments, rubrics, and pacing guides school-wide. While these provisions are used in some departments and courses, other departments and courses do not use common benchmarks, rubrics, or pacing guides.

Action Plan #2 addresses: Students will demonstrate improved achievement in reading and writing in STAR and CAHSEE tests annually.

- **Not a WASC VC Critical Area-can relate to Critical Area #2 left by prior VC.** (Faculty needs to develop learning opportunities to improve and/or enhance all students' academic, career/vocational, and personal growth).

ELA, CST, and CAHSEE scores have increased over the last three years both school wide and among the major subgroups of PVHS students (Asian and students with disabilities). AP Literature and Language scores, as well as the percentage of students deemed college ready by the ACT have increased over the last six years. In 2010-2011, an emphasis was placed upon CAHSEE preparation for students with disabilities. This resulted in a significant increase in the percentage of students passing the ELA portion of the CAHSEE on the first attempt during their sophomore year.

Similar to the benchmark assessments, rubrics, and pacing guides, it has been a challenge for PVHS to implement ELA improvement strategies in all departments. While there are some examples of individual teachers collaborating with teachers from other departments, PVHS still lacks a cohesive plan that incorporates ELA improvement strategies in all courses and classes.

Action Plan #3 addresses: Students will demonstrate improved achievement in mathematics annually on the STAR and CAHSEE tests.

- **Not a WASC VC Critical Area-can relate to Critical Area #2 left by prior VC.** “Faculty needs to develop learning opportunities to improve and/or enhance all students’ academic, career/vocational, and personal growth”.

Over the last six years, the mathematics department has worked to align all of their curriculum, instruction, and assessment to the CCS. Students falling short of expectations and requiring additional support have a number of different support mechanisms available to them. Pathways tutoring labs have given way to before school tutoring labs. Guided study classes have proven to be useful to work with students on CST and CAHSEE preparation. This has resulted in an increase of students with disabilities passing the CAHSEE. In 2011, students with disabilities taking the CAHSEE had a passing rate of 88% on the first attempt. Benchmark assessments have proven to be useful to help identify students requiring additional support.

There was not as much progress as the school would like. The lack of collaboration is primarily due to the decrease in professional development time, which is a concern. Math is a fundamental skill for many lessons in science, art, and music. While math teachers have made progress towards aligning classes to the CCS, the cross-curricular activities must occur to assure that math teachers are teaching the standards so that students are able to apply course concepts to other subjects.

Action Plan #4 addresses: Students will have more opportunities to improve and/or enhance their academic, vocational, and personal growth.

- **Which meets the needs of Critical Area #2 left by prior VC.** “Faculty needs to develop learning opportunities to improve and/or enhance all students’ academic, career/vocational, and personal growth”.

PVHS has 80% of its students attending a four-year university, and 95% of the remaining students attending a two-year college. The PVHS Counseling Department and CCC have developed numerous programs to assist students with university acceptance and to prepare them for university academics and university life. Outside activities coincide with classroom instruction. Some of these activities include students having the opportunity to travel to the Galapagos Islands on a marine research vessel in order to study organisms indigenous to the islands, internship with top scientists at UCLA and USC, and compete in engineering and robotics competitions at a national level.

PVHS held its first annual College Day giving all students the opportunity to further the college application process.

PVHS has increased student involvement in nearly every program on campus including AVID, MUN, Scientific Research, and others. PVHS has also started several new academic organizations and programs including Speech and Debate, Academic Decathlon, and Student and the Law class.

While these programs are in the beginning stages, they are successful and continue to grow each year. Increasing the number of opportunities for students in academic areas has been an administrative priority for the last six years.

The school reports that the use of differentiated instruction is evident at PVHS through the integrated use of IEPs and 504 plans, as well as teacher lesson plans. While the 2006 action plan called for differentiated instruction in all subject areas, there are varying degrees to which differentiated instruction is used in the classrooms. Most teachers do not collaborate with colleagues to discuss differentiated instruction and it has not been a focus at department or faculty meetings. Many teachers and administrators lack a fundamental understanding of differentiated instruction and PVHS has not sought nor obtained training in this area. However, teachers use different modes of instruction.

- **Critical Area 3 left by prior VC** – “Faculty needs to work with the district to identify additional opportunities for improved articulation with feeder schools.”

While not specifically drawn into any written Action Plan-additional opportunities for articulation with feeder schools were informal yet sporadic.

- **Critical Area 4 left by prior VC** – “The school leadership in collaboration with the faculty and other stakeholders need to refine the school-wide action plan sections to include a sequential timeline, especially in relation to specific long range planning and goals.” The 2006-2012 Action Plan lacked specificity.

It would be the desire of the VC 2012 that the school, in conjunction with the school’s Single Plan, develop a long-range Action Plan including a sequential timeline, especially in relation to specific long range planning and goals.

To include:

- Statement of areas for improvement with student growth targets**
- Links to student learning results.**
- Ways of assessing progress including student achievement of critical academic needs and academic standards**
- Means to monitor and report progress**
- Who’s responsible and involved**
- Specific steps, including professional**
- Timeline (3-5 years recommended)**
- Resources**

Chapter III: Self-Study Process

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) at Palos Verdes High School

Community Oriented Citizenship

Demonstrate an understanding and be able to analyze current issues from historic, political, economic, geographic, and multicultural perspectives.

Use technology to access information, communicate ideas, and analyze and solve problems.

Demonstrate knowledge of the scientific process through reading, literature analysis, and appreciation of the linkage between science and society.

Understand, appreciate, and respect ideas, attitudes, and values that shape diverse cultures and individual differences.

Participate in community, social, civil, or cultural service.

Teamwork & Personal Development

Develop teamwork and interpersonal communication skills.

Communicate articulately, effectively, and persuasively when speaking and writing.

Demonstrate knowledge, skills, and self-discipline necessary to achieve and maintain personal well-being.

Foster positive interpersonal relationships within diverse settings.

Contribute and function in various group roles, accepting individual and group responsibility.

Post-secondary Preparedness

Set appropriate and realistic educational, vocational, and personal goals and make informed decisions based on those goals.

Stay informed and prepared on post-secondary options.

Apply content and skills learned through the PVHS curriculum to academic and extracurricular pursuits after high school.

Demonstrate school-to-work/post-secondary transition skills and knowledge.

Pursue intellectual, artistic, practical, or physical endeavors.

- 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.

All stakeholders, including certificated and classified staff, students, and some parents, were involved in analyzing data, assessing needs, and developing the action plan. The school used the self-study process to validate their belief that the Palos Verdes students are high achieving. The self-study was an accurate, honest reflection of the program for students, compiled by a knowledgeable staff. The self-study did a good job of describing the academic and extracurricular programs.

The school community is cohesive, with almost all stakeholders working together for the betterment of the school.

2. The clarification and measurement of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do through expected schoolwide learning results and academic standards (note the selected expected schoolwide learning results examined by the school).

Palos Verdes has been reviewing test results. The faculty still feels strongly about their current SLOs and feels that these reflect the goals and aspirations that the Palos Verdes High School community has for their graduates. At this point, SLOs are not assessed but rather addressed informally in class. Teachers and departments are still developing departmental common assessments.

3. The gathering and analyzing of data about students and student achievement.

Student achievement is a priority at PVHS and the staff works with appropriate student and program assessment data. With a school that is highly successful but not ethnically nor socio-economically diverse, the school may need to look at other pieces of evidence that leads them to an even further successful improvement to Advanced in CST or increase AP pass rate since most students are already proficient in CSTs. Teachers have begun to work within subject areas to further develop assessment tools to improve student academic growth. The self-study provided adequate assessment data on most programs and subgroups. More data is needed in Special Education.

4. The assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning in relation to expected schoolwide learning results, academic standards and WASC/CDE criteria.

Palos Verdes High School has an understanding of the *Focus on Learning* process due to the commitment of the school administration. There has been an assessment of the entire school and its impact on student learning as it relates to academic standards and standardized testing. The WASC/CDE criteria is also addressed. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs were revisited this past year).

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.

Due to budget cutbacks not as much time as the school would like is used by the staff for professional development including the WASC self-study using the *Focus on Learning* joint WASC/CDE process guide.

It would be the desire of the VC 2012 that the school in conjunction with the school's Single Plan, develop a long-range Action Plan

To include:

- Statement of areas for improvement with student growth targets
- Long-range planning and goals.
- Links to student learning results.
- Ways of assessing progress including student achievement of critical academic needs and academic standards
- Means to monitor and report progress
- Who's responsible and involved
- Specific steps, including professional
- Sequential Timeline (3-5 years recommended)
- Resources

The Action Plan for 2012 and ongoing does include these areas.

PVHS has identified the following needs based upon their Self Study report.

1. Algebraic Proficiency

Evidence

- In the last three years, only 8 to 12% of PVHS freshmen received proficient or better scores on the Algebra I CST
- From test results, students continue to struggle in tenth grade geometry
- In grade 11, the deficit in students' Algebra skills is evident
- Algebra II CST scores show that close to 90% of the students are scoring below basic or far below basic
- CAHSEE pass rates and academic classroom grades support the conclusions that students who take Algebra 1B in the ninth grade continue to struggle in high school mathematics

2. Support for Special Education Students

Evidence

- API scores for students with disabilities have consistently decreased over the last four years with the lowest score, a 620, recorded in 2010
- Special education students CST measures have decreased the last three years
- Special education CAHSEE scores have decreased the last three years
- Special education students classroom grades have decreased the last three years

3. Consistent Implementation of School Policies

Evidence

- Results of certificated employees survey indicate that 60% agree that the administration has a serious approach to student discipline
- Only 54% of certificated employees feel that the administration is consistent with school wide expectations and policies
- Results of the classified employees survey indicate that only 54% agree that the administration is consistent with policy enforcement
- Open-ended comments from parent surveys indicate that consistent school rules, policies, and the enforcement of them is an area of concern and possibly an impediment to a productive learning environment
- Parents expressed specific concerns and lack of policy consistency in three areas: dress code, drugs and alcohol, and cheating

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

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

A1. To what extent does the school have a clearly stated vision or purpose based on its student needs, current educational research, and the belief that all students can achieve at high levels? To what extent is the school's purpose supported by the governing board and the central administration and further by expected schoolwide learning results and the academic standards?

PVHS places a high emphasis on the academic success and emotional well-being of all students. Many programs challenge students to reach their maximum potential. Students who graduate from PVHS are well-equipped with the academic skills that allow them to follow their own unique academic pursuits and extracurricular endeavors. Since the last WASC visit in 2006, the school has embraced the challenges of academic improvement and student achievement, such as more variety of college admittances, and additional services and resources for students, such as PVIT and PVID.

In the spring of 2011, PVHS stakeholders (faculty, staff, students, and parents) represented in the WASC focus groups and SSC, developed and refined the SLOs. School stakeholders created the mission statement. The ESLRs are called Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) and there is a focus on community-oriented citizenship, teamwork and personal development, as well as post-secondary preparedness. PVHS has made efforts to update the SLOs and to involve all stakeholders. Few stakeholders were unclear about the process and the over-arching philosophy behind SLOs.

A2. To what extent does the governing board have policies and bylaws that are aligned with the school's purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results and academic 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 regularly results and approve the single schoolwide action plan and its relationship to the Local Educational Agency (LEA) plan?

District site objectives and policies are communicated to the PVHS staff at the beginning of each school year and each department develops its objectives based in part on these policies. This is accomplished during a staff-development meeting prior to the start of the school year. The follow-up continues at regular department and faculty meetings. Parents have the opportunity to be involved in the school's governance in many ways: policy making positions on the school site council, and general support positions on the Booster Club and PTSA. Teachers expressed a need for more structure, guidance and planning for how to use the collaboration time effectively and the Visiting Committee (VC) agrees.

Through regular progress report cards and Edline, parents can monitor their students' progress. Through parent support group funding, PVHS offers opportunities for teachers to attend subject-specific conferences. Teachers are encouraged to collaborate to develop standards-based lesson plans, although its implementation is inconsistent. The administrator conveys information to the department leads who then inform their departments. The Superintendent and the Director of Human Resources also come to faculty meetings to hear concerns and/or share information. During regularly scheduled PVPUSD board meetings, the faculty, staff, administrators or community members have an opportunity to address the board. The Superintendent regularly posts "updates" on the district website and emails information to all school personnel. There are also regular "Personnel Updates" emailed to all faculty and staff members from the Director of Human Resources. The emails always ask to forward comments, questions, concerns, or suggestions to the Superintendent or Director of Human Resources.

The principal sends weekly email updates via Edline, asking for parent input on various issues; he also monitors results regularly and approves a single school-wide action plan and its relationship to the LEA plan. VC observed that parents and students appreciate this method of communication. The PVPUSD board reviews the results of testing data such as CST, API, AP, and CAHSEE. They also analyze students' GPAs, as well as college acceptances.

A3. To what extent based on student achievement data, does the school leadership and staff make decisions and initiate activities that focus on all students achieving the expected schoolwide learning results and academic standards? To what extent does the school leadership and staff annually monitor and refine the single schoolwide action plan based on analysis of data to ensure alignment with student needs?

The Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) is updated annually and provides evidence of analysis of student achievement data that includes CST, SAT, ACT, AP, CAHSEE, and GPA. This plan directly informs decisions made by the leadership of PVHS and the SSC, which involves the allocation of funds and other resources. At the beginning of each year, the principal reviews data with the entire faculty in order to identify general student performance trends. PVHS SSC is an important decision-making body, which consists of the principal, faculty, parents, and student representatives. The council meets once a month during the school year to evaluate goals, programs, strategies, and expenditures relative to student achievement. The Department Leads are comprised of the principal, two associate principals, department chairs, and faculty leaders. This group meets monthly to discuss school-wide instructional and student support issues.

Last year the department leads spent a great deal of time looking at practical and sustainable ways to help struggling students. This was accomplished through the analysis of data, concerning CST, grade incentives, and tutoring. The district provides on-going professional development training. The Wednesday Late Start allows some teachers to align their curriculum with state standards, to engage in teacher-run standards-based

workshops and to work independently, or to collaborate with others. The school enjoys wide support from the community, as the PTSA and Booster Club donate funds to support PVHS SLOs and to improve the school wide action plan.

The principal meets with departments and department chairs as needed to discuss data and develop strategies for improvement. The VC observed that there is need for greater structure in articulating collaboration time usage and accountability for that time. The Department Leads meeting serves at the school's instructional leadership team.

A4. To what extent does a qualified staff facilitate achievement of the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results through a system of preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development?

Teachers and counselors attend AP workshops, conferences, and take online classes for professional development. In addition, teachers and counselors are members of education oriented professional groups (e.g. NEA, WACAC, etc.). Furthermore, most departments set short-and long-term goals and use tests, AVID, Video Production, and PVIT training to support instruction.

Some teachers exchange information regarding lessons in an informal way, which helps enhance the learning environment. Forms of communication and planning include the following: staff and department meetings, daily announcements, *Live from 205* broadcasts, Administration Cabinet meetings (weekly), and Department Lead meetings.

The actions and accountability to support learning includes some administration classroom observations, a few workshops to share current educational innovations, as well as new teacher BTSA evaluations and some departmental data analysis. There has been a redistribution of administrative duties and responsibilities among the three administrators and the restructuring of the Special Education Department as a result of the evaluation process.

A5. To what extent are leadership and staff involved in ongoing professional development that focuses on identified student learning needs?

The administration and faculty are determined to improve teaching strategies and school policies in order to improve SLOs with an increased focus on special education students. Administration and math teachers addressed the low performances in Algebra II CST tests.

Support for professional development is provided by PTSA funding, Booster Club support and financial support from the PEF.

The administration has a vision for the school to encourage departments to assess and monitor multiple forms of assessment. Department leadership and teachers should also use this data to improve curricular and instructional approaches. These efforts by teachers and administrators should help to create a cohesive school environment that promotes collaboration and communication.

A6. 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) to support students in accomplishing the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results?

The ongoing budget crisis continues to negatively impact Palos Verdes HS, including its resources, both personnel and site maintenance. Still, the facilities are safe and adequately maintained. Teacher training (e.g. AP training) continues and the school still has sufficient resources to meet the vision of the school and district. The VC observed that there are adequate resources for the creation of mechanisms to monitor SLOs. Parent support groups provide additional funding for the school.

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

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

- Increase in faculty meetings and department meetings during the current school year
- Improved communication with Department Leads, Focus Group, SSC
- Faculty qualifications
- Parent and community support with PTSA, Booster Club, PEF
- Improved Special Education support
- Improved support and consistency of school policies
- Quality support for student inquiry into college

Key issues for Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- Upgrade technology
- Improve communication with feeder schools
- Continue improving communication and collaboration between administration, faculty, staff, and community
- Analyze testing results and evaluation of data through collaboration

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

- Self-study document
- Classroom observations
- Dialogues/meetings with Focus Groups and key stakeholders

CATEGORY B. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: CURRICULUM

B1. To what extent do all students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results.

To what extent are the expected schoolwide learning results accomplished through standards-based learning (i.e., what is taught and how it is taught)?

The curriculum at PVHS is grounded in the state standards and AP Curriculum, and many teachers analyze the Frameworks to determine the focus standards in each course. Many teachers attend off campus trainings and conferences to enhance their instruction.

According to the WASC stakeholder surveys, over 94% of teachers, parents and students agree that PVHS's curriculum is aligned to the California State Standards.

There is congruence between the actual concepts and skills taught, the academic standards and the Student Learning Objectives.

Teachers ensure that students engage in a curriculum that prepares them for post secondary endeavors. Teachers do this by providing students with standards based textbooks, syllabi and pacing plans as well as challenging lessons and assignments.

PVHS has many courses, programs and special extracurricular activities that provide students with a rigorous and relevant curriculum. The school participates in the Model United Nations, Mock Trial, the Palos Verdes International Diploma program, and the Palos Verdes Institute of Technology. The school also has a large variety of AP and Honors classes with a passing rate on AP tests of over 76% in 2011.

PVHS puts a great deal of focus on college preparedness with its AVID program and various on-line college preparatory programs. PVHS's AVID program directly supports the school's learning outcomes and departmental focus standards.

A rigorous, relevant and coherent curriculum is accessible to all students. The school's instructional practices and other activities are beginning to facilitate access and success for special needs students.

Departments participate in some informal cross-curricular assignments, such as English and history lessons that analyze the influence of history on literature. The school would like to increase and formalize interdisciplinary collaboration. Progress is being made with regard to collaboration between the general education and special education departments and should be continued.

Individual teachers and some departments assess their curriculum through common exams. However, many do not. The visiting committee concurs with the school's desire to further the collaboration in and between departments and feeders schools as it relates to assessment of curriculum.

While some individual teachers utilize data to drive and revise curriculum, there is a need to formalize this process. The evaluation and revision of curriculum is similarly dependent upon the sophistication of individual teachers and departments. On a schoolwide level, PVHS assesses and evaluates graduation requirements, credits and grading policies.

Articulation with feeder schools is occurring in some departments and is a desired growth area in others.

B2. To what extent do all students have access to the school's entire program and assistance with a personal learning plan to prepare them for the pursuit of their academic, personal, and school-to-career goals?

Students at PVHS have equal access to academic pathways. Students and/or parents can fill out a Request for Placement Form to waive into any AP or honors class. PVHS also offers a variety of classes in each academic subject area for students to choose from. There is also a wide range of athletic and physical education programs.

Parents, students and staff collaborate in the development and monitoring of a student's personal learning plan which is based upon career and educational goals.

The Counseling Department and College Counseling Center provide support for students in terms of college and career planning with individualized, four-year academic plans. Students are given transcript review notebooks, grad check documents, on-going academic and career counseling, transition plans, annual IEP's and access to several online resources, including Naviance. Students also participate in a College Day program each year.

Free tutoring, hosted by a variety of groups, is available to all students each week.

In 2011, 98% of PVHS's students were accepted into two or four year colleges, 79% matriculated to four year universities. The class of 2011 was offered 12.9 million dollars in undergraduate merit and athletic scholarships.

B3. To what extent are students able to meet all the requirements of graduation upon completion of the high school program?

All students have access to real world applications of their educational interests in relationship to a rigorous, standards-based curriculum.

99.98% of PVHS seniors completed the requirements for graduation in 2010-2011. 99% of PVHS seniors passed the English portion of the CAHSEE exam on their first attempt and 98% passed the math portion on their first attempt.

SST meetings are used to ensure that at-risk students receive support and fulfill graduation requirements.

Teachers, parents and students are also given the opportunity to monitor student progress through the online Edline system.

PVHS's commitment to rigor, equal access, and support is reflected by its high rate of passing scores on state testing along with a 50 point jump in the latest API score of 898.

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

- Successful focus on improving all state and national exam scores: API, ACT, SAT, AP
- Sustaining high percentage of CAHSEE pass rates
- Superior matriculation rates to two and four year universities
- A large selection of course offerings based on student interest and academic goals
- A variety of special programs and organizations that meet the need of PVHS's students
- Strong communication between faculty, staff, students, and parents

Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Curriculum (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- Foster collaboration (departmentally, inter-departmentally, and with feeder schools with regard to best practices, assessment, and evaluation)
- Increase use of data analysis by all teachers to inform instruction

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

- Self-study document
- Classroom observations
- Dialogues/meetings with Focus Groups and key stakeholders

CATEGORY C. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: INSTRUCTION

C1. To what extent are all students are involved in challenging learning experiences to achieve the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results?

Students at PVHS are encouraged to participate in challenging and rewarding learning experiences. The PVHS staff responds to the needs of students, and challenges them to reach their potential, academically, socially, and personally. This is done through self/teacher examination of student work and course offerings. Learning experiences are modified when necessary. Best practices are found in most classes. Some teachers differentiate instruction (teach to different student ability levels). However, further professional development training on differentiation of instruction (adjusting instruction and curriculum to varying student ability levels) is needed.

The staff aspires to realize a high level of achievement for all students. According to the parent/student survey, the majority of the respondents agreed that the educational programs are of high quality and challenging. Instruction and curriculum are provided by a teaching staff that possesses a high level of education, experience and qualifications.

Students have numerous opportunities in the areas of leadership, service and academics. These opportunities are varied and have different degrees of involvement and intensity. Counseling services provide students with guidance to develop an understanding for the standards and expected performance levels for each area of study.

Special Education goals are focused on full inclusion and special education students are evenly distributed in classes. A variety of strategies, such as pairing general education and special education students together, are beginning to be used to help the special education students gain access to the curriculum. The collaboration between general education and special education teachers is emerging in math and English, but still needs further development in other subject areas. Guided Studies courses (academic support classes) are offered and the Resource and Support page on Edline is beneficial to the PVHS community.

Most students are aware of the Content Standards, and they trust their teachers to direct instruction towards their many learning styles through the use of a variety of teaching techniques. There are many quality educational opportunities presented by the staff both in and outside of the classroom instructional setting. Parents and students strongly agree that PVHS is doing a good job of preparing students to continue their education at more advanced levels.

C2. 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 engage students, emphasize higher order thinking skills, and help them succeed at high levels?

PVHS has a professional staff who attends trainings on instructional methodology. They share best practices and participate in some collaboration but, according to the WASC stakeholder survey, 48% of teachers feel that collaboration needs to become more systematic and regular.

All departments access some level of technology and use it to further their instructional practices. In the Math Department, online textbook resources, Exam View test generators, and SMART clickers (responders) are utilized. English teachers have students work with research databases and create a number of multimedia projects. Science teachers utilize online case studies from universities and facilitate Facebook science pages. Social studies teachers use the internet for research and for project based learning.

Teachers, staff and administrators are very collegial and warm towards each other as well as towards students and parents. Teachers work as coaches to facilitate learning for students in a variety of ways and employ strategies to address different learning styles. Students complete numerous types of work conducive to a high level of learning. Their work is standards-based and is reflective of the school's Student Learning Objectives.

Instruction is varied, meaningful, and is designed to give students multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of standards. Students are challenged to engage in experiences that require the use of higher order thinking. Representative samples of student work demonstrate structured learning, inquiry, and the gathering of knowledge and the ability to communicate their understandings. Work samples also demonstrate the use of technology and resources that go beyond the textbook.

PVHS students are recognized within the community by numerous entities for their high level of work in academics, the arts, athletics, extra-curricular activities, and community service. Many students complete complex and extensive community service-related projects that demonstrate the school's SLOs.

According to the Parent/Student Survey, students make connections between what they are studying and their everyday lives through the use of real-world, practical applications.

Some departments involve themselves to a degree with integration of curriculum and providing knowledge across disciplines, however responses on the Teacher Survey indicate that more collaboration within and between departments is needed.

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

- Teachers use a variety of learning experiences and teaching strategies to positively impact student performance
- Collegial attitude displayed among faculty, staff, and administration
- Variety and richness of learning opportunities beyond the classroom available for all students
- Staff aspires to realize a high level of achievement for all students.
- Teachers have a high level of education, experience and qualifications.

Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Instruction (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- Through Focus Group discussions, teachers expressed the desire for expanded technological services while recognizing the fiscal impact
- More opportunities for collaboration to develop new, cross-curricular learning experiences
- Increased use of data assessment software/data assessment by all teachers to inform instruction

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

- Self-study document
- Classroom observations
- Dialogues/meetings with Focus Groups and key stakeholders

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

D1. To what extent does the school use a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, analyze and report student performance data to the parents and other shareholders of the community?

At Palos Verdes High School the academic year begins with an all-day faculty meeting where the principal/administration report all state and national data to the faculty. Staff states additional opportunities are needed for further review, analysis and application of the data throughout the academic year.

The PVHS website makes all results available to the public at large and various councils and committees use student performance data to assess the school's overall areas of strength and areas of growth. Students and parents have access to student standardized data which helps students plan their future years. Student performance is also constantly available to stakeholders through district, school, and teacher websites.

PVHS has recently begun to use student performance data, such as data analysis worksheets, to devise and evaluate programs and the Single School Action Plan. Some teachers access DataDirector to target areas that fall short of adequate student understanding and comprehension, and modify their instructional delivery accordingly. There is an emergence of a common basis for evaluating performance (common assessments and benchmarks created at the school) in certain departments. Many teachers are beginning to use the results as a tool for evaluating the effectiveness of instruction.

To assess students, teachers provide various assessments including projects, tests, quizzes, and class work to check for understanding. Staff reports that for the general population, teachers use various assessments to check for understanding or lack thereof. During direct instruction some teachers ask questions which check for individual students' understanding of the content.

In addition, teachers are beginning to design assessments used to demonstrate proficiency and areas in need of improvement. There are grade checks that informally assess student progress and organization in AVID, Special Education, and EL. At PVHS, special education students have two assessments per year and conduct self- assessments. Also, triennial reports are conducted to assess all aspects of a special education student's progress, including academic and psychosocial progress.

PVHS uses Naviance, the College and Career Center, the counseling department, and various assessments to assist students with goals that go beyond high school. Naviance provides students and parents with the child's SAT/ACT scores and GPA. Naviance allows college admissions offices access to student data.

Students and parents are encouraged to check progress, using Edline, to be aware of class assignments, reminders of deadlines, and to communicate with the teacher. Student performance data is organized in a way that allows parents, teachers, and students to assess areas of strengths and needed growth. In addition to web-based reports, teachers report student data and achievement using the traditional means of progress reports and grade issuance. Furthermore, teachers issue interim grades (quarter grades), as required by the Board of Education, to students and parents/guardians every nine weeks. At the end of the eighteen-week semester, students receive official grades which are recorded and sent home by the guidance staff.

D2. To what extent do teachers employ a variety of strategies to evaluate student learning?

To what extent do students and teachers use assessment results to enhance the educational progress of every student?

PVHS teachers use standard and authentic assessment tools to evaluate student learning. These methods include projects, skits, improvisation, video presentations, journals, murals, Socratic Method, and debates. Multimedia tools have proven effective in the evaluation and demonstration of student learning. PVHS is working on a systematic method for analyzing data produced by these assessments to inform future instruction.

Cooperative learning strategies are implemented to further the growth of the student as a whole and aid each student in practical application. At the end of their senior year, each PVHS student will present a research-based paper, coupled with hands-on experiences, to a board of shareholders (Senior Project).

Few departments collaborate to develop common cumulative chapter and unit exams. The math department has quarterly benchmark assessments using released CST questions. Several teachers have begun to use SMART clicker (responder) technology to check for student understanding and provide immediate feedback. Most programs use college-level examinations and research opportunities to help students earn both high school and college credit.

In some programs, student feedback and peer evaluation are used as an additional source of assessment information for monitoring of schoolwide Student Learning Objectives.

The school is beginning to create curriculum embedded standards-based assessments in English language and math, and have started to use this data to modify the teaching/learning process. Analysis of EL and Special Education subgroups is limited because of the size of these groups.

D2b. To what extent do students and teachers use these findings to modify the teaching/learning process for the enhancement of the education progress of every student?

Teachers and counselors use information from the prior year's performance to determine appropriate placements.

Some teachers provide alternative assessment strategies for students. If skills are not mastered, some teachers provide additional opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. Community opportunities allow students to apply classroom concepts in a real-world setting. These occasions are followed by written and oral post reflection. At PVHS, peer tutoring and student critiques help modify and reinforce instruction.

D3. 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 and the expected schoolwide learning results?

Parents, the school, PVPUSD, and the community assess the school's success and student progress through the standardized state and national testing results which are published in the local newspaper and online. More internal assessment is necessary. The VC would like to see the school increase the scope of data used.

Parents and students are able to monitor progress in most classes through Edline where teachers post grades, course calendars, assignments, and more. Administration uses Edline and Vplex to inform students, parents, and community members of current and upcoming events at the school. PVHS posts its school profile and district proficiency ratings, standardized test scores, SAT scores, and other statistical data online. Annual CELDT scores are reported by the district to the school and the parents of ELL students.

Departments and teachers set expected levels of student accomplishment based on CST, CAHSEE, AP, SAT, and ACT scores. District members serve on committees to help assess senior projects in June.

Special Education students receive weekly reports of progress as needed.

The Attendance office is working with the Associate Principal and district office personnel assigned to attendance to council students with attendance problems. Counselors meet with each sophomore and junior to determine college readiness. The school board reviews student achievement annually.

D4. To what extent does the assessment of student achievement in relation to the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results drive the school's program, its regular evaluation and improvement and usage of resources?

At PVHS, some teachers meet with department members to disaggregate and analyze student assessment data to determine areas of strength and need, however, further collaboration is needed to more effectively utilize this data. Staff receives state and national testing data on all students, but teachers need further training on how to use the data to inform instruction. Students who need extra academic support are given an opportunity to join a support program or attend tutoring labs.

Some school leadership teams assess the school's overall areas of strength and areas of growth. The CST scores drove changes in preparation, awareness, and motivating students. These changes were in the form of Mock STAR tests, 205 awareness programs, student tutoring in MCR classes, and STAR incentives. Students are given the opportunity for extra academic support by joining support programs or attending tutoring labs.

In January of 2009, the WASC home groups and focus groups worked on a new mission statement and new SLOs.

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

- Edline provides students and parents status on grades, assignments, progress, expectations, and other information.
- Counselors communicate needs of students through emails for 504 and IEP students

Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- Use a wider variety of data and data analysis to identify specific areas of student needs
- Use current technology more effectively across the curriculum
- Provide collaboration time to share teaching strategies and best practices and evaluate performance data.

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

- Self-study document
- Classroom observations
- Dialogues/meetings with focus groups and key stakeholders

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

E1. To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to encourage parental and community involvement especially with the teaching/learning process?

Palos Verdes High School provides many opportunities for parental and community involvement and regularly updates the community about school events. Through the use of the Edline website, parents are able to access information regarding their students' performance and class expectations. In addition to this, parental involvement is encouraged through multiple committee meetings and Principal forums. Furthermore, printed fliers and emails are sent out to parents for important events, and most of the information can be found online at pvhigh.com. Parents are also encouraged to participate in on campus programs. Parents participate as guest speakers and library volunteers. When surveyed, parents and community members were found to be involved in PVHS. When surveyed, parents shared that PVHS must work to address the needs of all students and take input from all stakeholders.

During the visit, parents suggested translation services for non-English speaking parents at meetings.

PVHS utilizes many community resources to support student learning and experiences. Community members are also encouraged to participate in senior project mentoring and assessment panels.

The Booster Club funds advisors and materials for the various academic competition teams and VAPA program.

The PTSA helps with projects such as registration and College Day. They also pledge nearly \$50,000 to the school for classroom support.

The Peninsula Education Foundation pledged to raise 2.7 million in funds for the 2011-2012 school year. This is the only fundraising group that directly funds salaries. PEF supports K-12 elementary music, world languages, engineering programs, academic counselors, and helps to reduce class size.

Parents and community members are informed of student achievement through multiple means of communication. The principal sends out updates and newsletters on a consistent basis. Parents and community members can see evidence of student achievement during Open House and Back to School Night. Parents are sent progress and interim reports.

E2 A. To what extent is the school a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning?

At Palos Verdes High School, many clubs and groups take ownership of the campus to maintain its cleanliness. PVHS employs seven custodians and two grounds men. Certificated staff, classified staff, and parent/student surveys indicate that individuals feel that the campus is safe and clean.

PVHS maintains a comprehensive safety plan in the event of an emergency disaster. On campus security measures can be seen in the form of cameras, campus security officers, and PVE Police officers. PVHS staff is working to eliminate negative student actions through cooperation between site administrators, campus security, and local police. An Associate Principal is assigned to handle discipline and the referral process involves teachers, administrators, counselors, and security. Students sign behavior contracts at the beginning of the year, and many programs on campus have their own code of conduct that students must sign. With the implementation of Saturday School, PVHS was able to reduce the number of suspensions by 50%. The overall truancy rate was an issue the last four years, and a new tardy and truancy policy was implemented. The VC observed that the tardy policy still needs to be more consistently implemented.

At PVHS, the staff and students work to promote a safe school environment. The school employs 3.5 security officers. Based on survey results, certificated and classified employees agreed that the PVHS campus is clean, safe, respectful, and orderly.

PVHS provides multiple opportunities for student inclusion. The school offered 77 clubs during the 2011-2012 school year. PVHS encourages and rewards positive behavior through ASB, student of the month, student of the quarter, senior awards, junior book awards, and PV pride incentives.

E2 B. To what extent is the culture of the school characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement?

At PVHS, teachers and staff care for all students. Also, many teachers are involved in extracurricular activities. According to PVHS, teachers use a holistic approach to recognize and work with students to strive for higher level thinking and learning. At PVHS, many students can self advocate and often use their counselors and administrators as positive resources.

There is a sense of respect, trust, and professionalism on Palos Verdes' campus. Triton posters are posted throughout the school and represent the expectations of the faculty, staff, and students. Certificated faculty, classified staff, and parents agree that PVHS students are treated with respect and equality by teachers, counselors, and administrators.

PVHS maintains a professional environment that is conducive to learning. Programs help to nurture professional relationships on all levels (teacher-student, administration-teacher, and administration-student).

The staff maintains high expectations and is shown through the growth of the school's scores. In the 2010-2011 school year, PVHS raised their API score to 898, an increase of 50 points. The curriculum at PVHS places a high emphasis on college preparatory skills. In 2011, 599 students took over 1,275 AP exams in 27 different subjects with a pass rate of 77%. 80% of PVHS students have attended a four-year college or university over the last three years and 19% of the remaining student body attended a two-year college, 1% other.

E3. To what extent do all students receive appropriate support along with an individualized learning plan to help ensure academic success?

The personalized support at Palos Verdes High School starts with a relationship with the counselors during the 8th grade meetings where individual learning plans are created. In addition, individual counseling sessions are offered to sophomore students and parents to discuss the students' four year plan and post-secondary goals. PVHS counselors meet with students throughout their high school career to assist them in choosing the courses necessary to fulfill graduation and college requirements. The teachers submit course and level recommendations for students in English, Math, and World Language. Furthermore, the school offers alternative courses that fulfill graduation requirements. For special education students, transition planning is provided and aligns their curriculum with real world goals.

Students are provided free mental health services by referral. Counselors created pvpsos.com, which provides students with resources for substance and physical abuse issues.

The students can also find support through the Special Ed program, EL, AVID, College Day, and information about courses in the Counseling office. PVIT meets on Sundays, and the NHS provides tutoring. Students can also expand their learning through such opportunities as trips to other countries, technology, Diversity Week, and Scholar Quiz.

E4. To what extent do students have access to a system of personal support services, activities and opportunities, at the school and within the community?

Palos Verdes High School provides many methods of personal support to the students. School clubs encourage all students to be involved. In addition, the school provides drug/alcohol programs and a nurse on campus to help with any health issues and counseling services for stress management. The Student Attendance Review Team proactively seeks to remedy student attendance issues. Programs, such as Link Crew, provide support for freshmen transitioning from eighth grade. The school provides a full time librarian for students and the College and Career Center and College Day to aid students with college requirements.

Students have the ability to receive personal assistance from peer tutors or teachers before and after school, and at lunch.

PVHS provides multiple opportunities for its students. In the field of science, students have UC research opportunities through UCLA and UCSB. They can also be part of the Galapagos Research Trip, Gene Black Medical Internship, PLTW, or the PVIT program, which offers opportunities for internships, mentoring, and research. In the field of social studies/law, students are provided opportunities through PVID, Mock Trial, MUN, and Academic Decathlon. PVHS provides Engineering classes, PVIT, SCROC, MU Alpha Theta, and the Math Honor Society for students who are interested specifically in math or engineering. For students with an interest in a career in the performing arts, PVHS provides multiple opportunities for performance in the choral, drama, and musical shows. Students interested in the field of teaching can become a part of Link Crew, peer tutoring, and community based volunteer opportunities.

In addition to college preparatory classes, PVHS also offers career and technical training elective classes for high school credit. Students can take SCROC classes, participate in Work Experience Education, or take part in an internship. Students have many opportunities for direct connections with staff and the community through the College and Career Center, PTSA, Peninsula Education Foundation, speakers in the classroom, and senior project mentors.

Areas of Strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: School Culture (if any):

- PVHS has many methods to encourage community involvement
- The Booster Club, PTSA, and PEF are involved in educational and extracurricular funding
- There is an atmosphere of trust at PVHS
- PVHS has many classes (more than 30), activities, and accomplishments that support the SLOs
- PVHS maintains high expectations for students (API, CELDT, AP, SAT, ACT, CAHSEE, course offerings)
- Parents, students, and staff believe that the campus is safe, clean, and inviting
- There are few suspensions and expulsions over the last four years
- PVHS provides opportunities for students to apply their learning to real life
- Parents have an effective means of monitoring student progress
- Students have many options for involvement and personal support
- Assemblies, raising awareness of differences, celebrating diversity within the community, raising awareness of life after high school, linking upperclassmen with freshmen to help transition

Key Issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: School Culture (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- Continue proactive action to avoid problems on campus (tardy policy, attendance)
- Reassess the discipline plan that informs students of expected behavior and consequences
- Continue to keep dialogue open between administrators, teachers, and students
- Through focus group discussions, teachers expressed a desire for expanded technological services while recognizing the fiscal impact

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

- Self-study document
- Classroom observations
- Dialogues/meetings with focus groups and key stakeholders

B.

General Comments:

Palos Verdes High School has developed a very positive culture in which students feel secure in their relationships with peers and staff. Staff, parents, the community, and the students feel connected with pride to their school. There exists a spirit of collegiality among staff that can clearly support the school's purpose. With the consistency in administration and support from the district, the school's improvement can surely be accomplished. The school's purpose of providing the college bound student an excellent education is clearly stated and articulated by students, parents, and the staff. Expectations are high for academic performance and preparation for university bound students. The Visiting Team is confident that Palos Verdes High School will continue the excellence that abounds at the school and reach beyond a 900 API as well as other indicators of rigorous success.

More work needs to be done in the creation of common school site evaluation pieces (CFAs-Common Formative Assessments-ongoing, CSAs-Common Summative Assessments) as well as the evaluation of all data to best enhance further academic growth. Enhanced training in use of data, development of departmental data pieces, effective use of block schedule time, differentiated instruction and differentiated assessment (to address students with different abilities-including Special Education, continued use of data assessment software/extended data assessment), and continued collaboration would assist the school in becoming even more successful.

Schoolwide Areas of Strength

1. Successful and superior results on state and national examinations as well as matriculation into colleges and universities.
2. The aspiration of all stakeholders to continue to exceed beyond current levels of excellence.
3. The staff, administration, students, the parents, and the community enthusiastically and professionally work together.
4. The staff demonstrates a caring and compassionate attitude toward their students.
5. The staff is highly qualified.
6. Students are encouraged to pursue multiple passions, that are not only limited to sports and academics, but includes a variety of other interests.
7. The school offers many extracurricular and co-curricular opportunities for students.
8. The school's guidance department implements a proactive and comprehensive counseling program.
9. Multiple forms of communication with parents and students are frequent and informative.

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-Up

1. There is a need to develop assessment data (from classroom > formative > summative > state and national exams), and examine the data through more analysis to further drive academic improvement for all students.
2. There is a need for a focus on ongoing staff development in support of varied research-based teaching strategies (i.e.-use of block schedule time, differentiated instruction and differentiated assessment to address students with different abilities-including Special Education, further data assessment training), as well as feeder school articulation.
3. The school needs to continue to find ways to foster a culture of consistency in application of school policies.

Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement

The long-range Action Plan is a well-articulated plan. The goals generated by PVHS will help (if carried out) student achievement for all.

The final self-study document and the action plan were discussed in professional development settings. The schoolwide goals are:

- Develop a schoolwide organization system that includes all stakeholders to promote and facilitate an increase in student achievement with communication and consistency.
- There is a highly qualified staff at PVHS.
- Explore and expand curriculum opportunities to engage and support all students.
- Enhance a school culture that is welcoming to all student, provides students with emotional support and that values the contributions of individual students along with the interconnectedness of the school community.

There is clear evidence that teacher leaders and administration want to work together to accomplish the plan. Follow-up and carry through may be in place.

Factors that Will Support Student Achievement

- The school has demonstrated the capacity for ongoing school improvement in the past. Staff will need to rededicate and examine themselves further to sustain this improvement.
- The new administration is a professional, knowledgeable, and energetic team that is ready to lead Palos Verdes High School to a new level.
- There is parent and community support to support on-going improvement at PVHS.
- Use of data assessment software for assessment evaluation will be beneficial.
- There is commitment and support of instructional programs by classified personnel.
- The students have a positive attitude about their school, campus environment, and involvement in school activities.
- There is a safe teaching and learning environment.
- The Visiting Committee agrees that all of the identified areas for on-going school improvement are found in the PVHS Action Plan.
- The VC interview with the District Personnel indicated that there will be on-going support.

Possible Impediments

- The school has an emerging process to collect and review data that assists in the ongoing assessment of student performance.
- Formal departmental collaboration is limited. Well articulated, formal collaboration time needs to exist in order to move forward with improving student learning, instruction, and results.
- The Action Plans are feasible within current existing resources. The Action Plan, if implemented and carried out, will improve student learning. There is reservation by the Visiting Committee that the listed items in the Action Plan may not be completed if the current administration were to change. This observation is due to prior history of incompleteness of the WASC Action Plan at PVHS.

In summary, the Visiting Committee admires the highly qualified and dedicated staff members and the enthusiasm of the students, parents, and the community and desires the best for their efforts for improving the learning environment for all students.