

**MID-CYCLE VISIT  
VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

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

**FOR**

**PALOS VERDES HIGH SCHOOL**

**600 Cloyden Road**

**Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274**

**Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District6**

**March 25-28, 2012**

**April 27, 2015**

**Visiting Committee Members**

***Mrs. Nadine Elwood, Chairperson***

AP Spanish/ELD Teacher, WASC Self-Study Coordinator, WASC Trainer  
Esperanza High School-Anaheim, California

***Mr. David Parsons***

Spanish Teacher/College Adjunct Professor, WASC Chair  
Shadow Hills High School-Indio, California

## I. Introduction

Include the following:

- General comments about the school, its setting, and the school's analysis of student achievement data.

### Palos Verdes High School Community

#### Palos Verdes Peninsula

The Palos Verdes Peninsula is a coastal community located 21 miles southwest of metropolitan Los Angeles. The population, which includes various racial, religious, and ethnic groups, is divided among four cities on the Palos Verdes Peninsula: Palos Verdes Estates (PVE), Rancho Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills, and Rolling Hills Estates. The Palos Verdes Peninsula is primarily an upper middle-class community. The parents in the community are well educated; the majority attended college in addition to postgraduate training in a variety of fields. The median family income is above \$130,000, which places the community in the top 2% for median income when compared to cities of similar size nationally or in California.

The school currently has an Academic Performance Index (API) score of 898 and continues to receive educational recognition and national rankings from a variety of sources. A national ranking came from *The Washington Post* in 2014 with PVHS receiving number 308 in the nation. California used the same ranking criteria, which ranked the school 33rd in the state. The most recent rankings in 2014 have PVHS ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in California and 55<sup>th</sup> in the Country. In April 2015, PVHS was ranked the #35 Smartest Public High School in the Nation by *Business Insider*. Following a recent school visit by a Gold Ribbon Visiting Committee, PVHS has been recommended for the Gold Ribbon Award for the signature practice of Building a Culture of Readiness.

**Palos Verdes High Report / Enrollment by Ethnicity for 2013-14 & 2014-15**

Year	Hispanic or Latino of any Race	American Indian or Alaska Native, Not Hispanic	Asian, Not Hispanic	Pacific Islander, Not Hispanic	Filipino, Not Hispanic	African American, Not Hispanic	White, not Hispanic	Two or More Races, Not Hispanic	Not Reported	Total
'13-'14	166	5	197	7	22	38	1,219	26	0	1,680
'14-'15	183	4	205	6	33	38	1,156	38	0	1695

Less than 1% of the enrollment participates in the free and reduced lunch program. PVHS has a small, successful English Language Learners (ELL) student population. The 21 ELL students identified as limited in English proficiency receive support in general education classes. Diversity at PVHS also comes from students with learning disabilities. There are 147 students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) receiving special accommodations from special education teachers and other staff support. An additional 104 students have a Section 504-accommodation plan. In December 2014 PVHS opened Palos Verdes Life Skills Center, which is the district's new SPED center for students between ages 14 to 22 who need additional support with basic life skills.

The curriculum at PVHS places a high emphasis on college preparatory skills. Many PVHS students are high achieving, either taking honors or Advanced Placement (AP) courses. In 2014, our students continue with their exceptional AP performance with 38% of the students (612 of 1630) taking an AP exam with 76.5% scoring greater than three. The Advanced Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, and the College and Career Center (CCC) guide and support PVHS students towards college curriculum. Over the last three years, 80% of PVHS students attended a four-year college or university. The majority of the remaining 20% of students attended a community college.

In addition to high achieving classes, PVHS offers many unique programs. One unique program is the Palos Verdes Institute of Technology (PVIT). PVIT features a series of classes that follows a national curriculum developed by Project Lead the Way (PLTW). Students in the PVIT program participate in national engineering and robotics competitions, and receive class instruction from UCLA faculty members and engineers from Northrop, Grumman, and Aerospace Corporations. PVHS award winning students also participate in *Live from 205*, a nationally awarded broadcast journalism program. Other programs include the production of *The Point*, the school newspaper, and *The Triton*, the school yearbook. Several academic competition teams include Model United Nations (MUN), Academic Decathlon, Speech and Debate, and Science Bowl/Olympiad.

Since the reopening of the school, the only principal retired in 2011. As a result, a new principal was appointed for the 2011-2012 school year in addition to two new associate principals. The new principal takes a leading role in curriculum, instruction coordination, and staff development. An associate principal oversees counseling, guidance, and student services while the other associate principal manages student discipline, athletics, technology, and school operations. In 2013, a new principal was named along with a new associate principal. PVHS has had three principals in the past 13 years since its re-opening.

### **School Facilities**

The final phase of Measure k funding allowed for the opening of 10 additional classrooms to replace the portable buildings on the east side of the campus in December, 2013. In February 2015, the Booster Club installed an outdoor basketball court fully funded by parents. The school also has thorough Emergency Preparedness Plans along with the required Safe Schools Plans.



### **School Purpose**

#### **Mission Statement**

PVHS highly emphasizes the academic success and emotional well-being of all students. For all levels of students, various programs challenge each PVHS student to reach their maximum potential. PVHS ensures students are well equipped with academic skills allowing them to follow academic pursuits and extracurricular endeavors in high school and beyond.

#### **Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)**

- 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.

### Parent and Community Support

Several organizations consisting of the PVHS Booster Club, PTSA, and PEF make annual contributions to the various programs serving PVHS students. PVHS has a Booster Club that supports extra-curricular activities. For the last three consecutive years, the PVHS Booster Club raised \$425,000 for various activities. A general meeting takes place each month when the club’s officers approve expenditures submitted by the PVHS staff and faculty. This organization supports the academics, the arts, and athletics. The PVHS PTSA also supports school programs, as well as the teachers. The association also supplements classroom materials by pledging \$100 to every teacher at the beginning of the school year, in order to assist with additional classroom expenditures. In addition to this initial amount, there are two rounds of gifting during the school year. During this time, the PTSA gives over \$40,000 to faculty and staff members for optional expenditures. Additionally, PEF (Peninsula Educational Fund) has pledged to raise \$3,400,000 for the 2014-2015 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. During the summer, PEF offers a program for student enrichment. Typically, K-12 summer school earns a profit of approximately \$300,000 that is donated directly to the school district.

### Participation Donations

Starting in the 2010-2011 school year, PVPUSD began implementing a participation donation program in order to provide additional funding for athletic and extra-curricular programs. Donations go toward coach stipends, equipment, and other related costs. Each sport or extra-curricular activity receives a suggested donation amount from participants.

### Teachers

All teachers are highly qualified with teaching credentials, as certified by No Child Left Behind (NCLB), as well as having Bilingual, Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development (BCLAD), Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD), or Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) certificates.

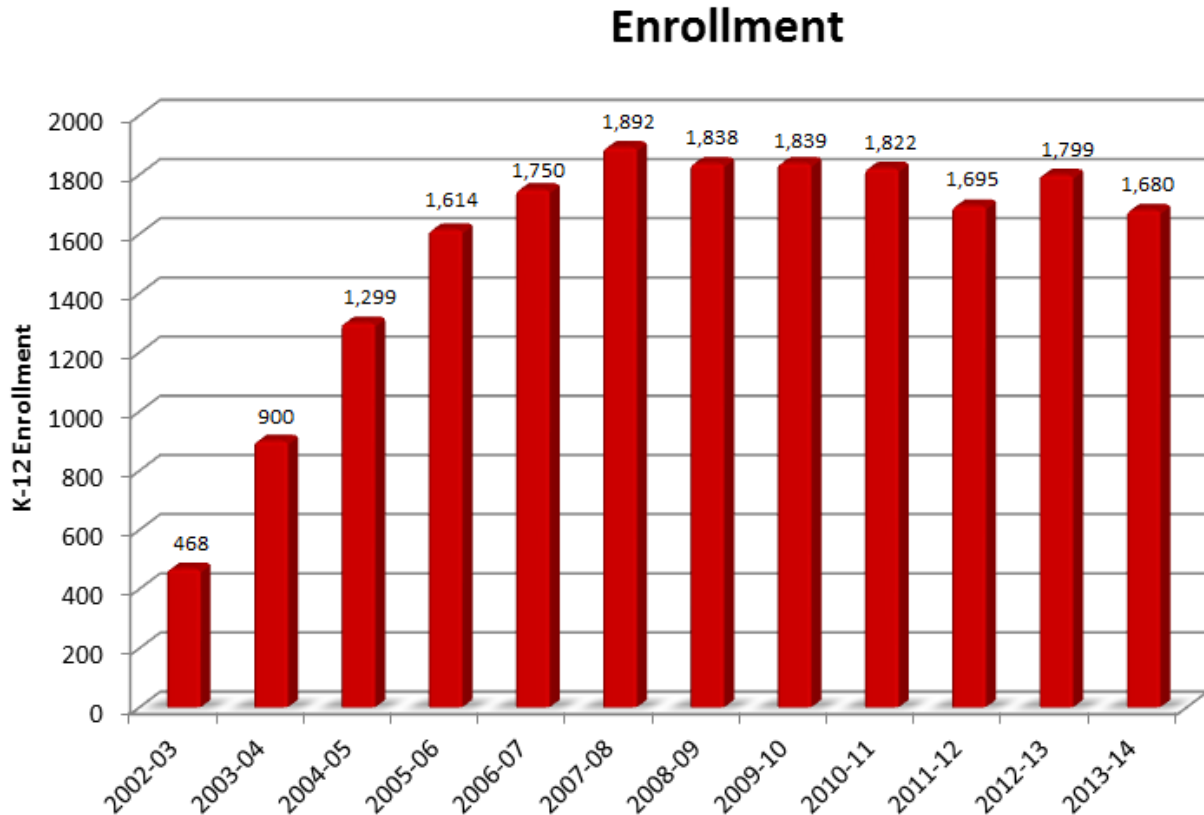
Teachers by Education					
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Bachelor	14	14	14	16	16
Master	60	56	59	54	54
Doctorate	5	5	6	5	5

### Professional Development

In alignment with educational research, the school administration and faculty consider it necessary to allow time for staff collaboration and communication. PVHS has a one-hour late start every Wednesday, which allows staff and faculty time to discuss instructional, student, and campus needs. Meetings include a combination of staff meetings, department meetings, and interdisciplinary meetings.

## Student Demographics

### Enrollment



### Enrollment by Grade and Gender

The following charts show the PVHS enrollment by grade and gender for the past five years.

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Grade 9	486	386	474	349	469
Grade 10	471	486	391	481	359
Grade 11	379	457	483	384	463
Grade 12	486	368	451	466	378

### Enrollment by Ethnicity

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
American Indian/Alaska	2	2	4	5	4
Asian	215	224	196	197	205
Pacific Islander	8	12	9	7	6
Filipino	15	17	18	22	33
Hispanic/Latino	118	135	165	166	183
African American	31	28	36	38	38
White	1408	1279	1345	1219	1156
Multiple/No Response	25	0	1	26	38

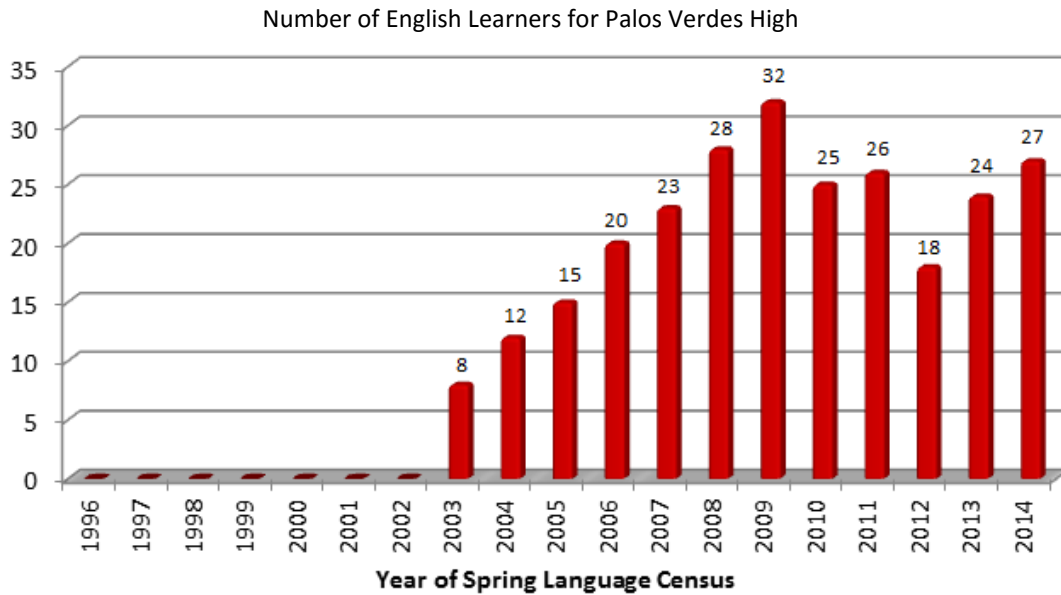
## Home Languages

English is the primary language for PVHS students with the representation of many additional languages as determined by the annual California English Language Development Test (CELDT).

Language	Number of English Learners (EL)	Number of Fluent English Proficient (FEP) Students	Total Number of EL & FEP Students	Percent of Total EL & FEP Enrollment
Korean	3	33	36	2.14%
Spanish	8	23	31	1.85%
Mandarin (Putonghua)	6	17	23	1.37%
Japanese	4	17	21	1.25%
Farsi (Persian)	1	5	6	0.36%
German	1	4	5	0.30%
Russian		5	5	0.30%
Portuguese		4	4	0.24%
French		3	3	0.18%
Cantonese		2	2	0.12%
Punjabi		2	2	0.12%
Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian)		2	2	0.12%
Italian	1	1	2	0.12%
Thai	1	1	2	0.12%
Vietnamese		1	1	0.06%
Other non-English languages		1	1	0.06%
Rumanian	1		1	0.06%
Arabic	1		1	0.06%
Armenian		1	1	0.06%

## English Language Learners (ELL)

The following chart demonstrates the number of ELL students since the reopening of PVHS.



Selected School Level Data  
Palos Verdes High School and PVPUSD  
2013-14

School	Enrollment	English Learners	Fluent-English/ Proficient Students	Students Re-designated FEP
Palos Verdes High	1,680	27 ( 1.6 %)	122 ( 7.3 %)	1 ( 4.0 %)
District Total:	11,700	816 ( 7.0 %)	1,083 ( 9.3 %)	93 ( 11.4 %)
County Total:	1,552,704	369,289 ( 23.8 %)	435,748 ( 28.1 %)	50,500 ( 13.3 %)
State Total:	6,236,672	1,413,549 (22.7%)	1,273,561 (20.4%)	170,225 (12.0%)

PVHS employs a part time ELL teacher that monitors student progress, teacher communication, and student support in academic courses.

## Students with Disabilities

The population of special education students at PVHS has fluctuated over these past three years as evidenced by this table.

	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
SDC	16	12	20
RSP	157	128	132

PVHS supports special education students with six special education teachers, ten special education assistants, a school psychologist, and a speech and language pathologist. One of the PVHS associate principals oversees the special education department. PVHS also receives support from a behaviorist BASIS team from the school district. Special education teachers teach one-two collaborative classes, one-two guided study classes and a RSP subject specific course.

**504 Plan**

Over the last five years, the number of PVHS students with a 504 Plan has increased.

504 Plans					
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
	101	104	130	119	120

**Discipline Data**

Year	Census Enrollment	Students Suspended	Suspension Rate	Students Expelled	Expulsion Rate
2011-2012	1,695	50	2.8	3	0.2
2012-2013	1,799	31	1.7	1	0.1
2013-2014	1,680	15	0.9	0	0.0
2014-present	1680	29	NA	2*	NA

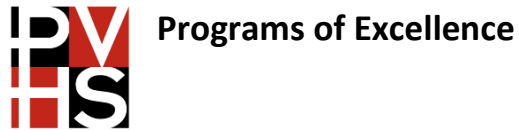
> Full data for 2014-2015 school year will not be available until the close of the year.  
 Recommended

**Attendance and Truancy Policies**

Truancies							
2007-2008		2008-2009		2009-2010		2010-2011	
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
925	48.89%	843	45.87%	945	51.39%	970	53.24%

Truancies							
2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014		2014-2015	
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
626	35.5%	1006	54.17%	1047	62%	pending	pending





**Associated Student Body (ASB)**

**Academic Decathlon**

**Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)**

**Mock Trial**

**Model United Nations (MUN)**

**Palos Verdes International Diploma (PVID)**

This program is modeled after the Advanced Placement International Designation (APID) certification requirements. Students take rigorous and challenging courses with a focus on international history, politics, and humanities.

**Palos Verdes Institute of Technology (PVIT)**

**Project Lead the Way (PLTW)**

This program, a national nonprofit organization, offers a flexible sequence of courses to build students skills and knowledge in engineering / technology.

**Capstone Senior Project**

Each student at Palos Verdes High School conducts a culminating Senior Research Project in his or her senior English class.

**Student Media Publications**

**Live from 205**

*Live from 205* is a student run news broadcast show that runs two 25 minute broadcasts each week.

**Newspaper**

**Open Orchard Productions**

Students at Palos Verdes High School have employed their creative, writing, journalistic, editing, and technological skills to develop their own radio production organization.

**Yearbook and Literary Publications**

**Athletics**

In 2013-14, PVHS won 7 League Titles and 1 CIF Championship. All 23 CIF Sports teams went to CIF playoffs. In December 2014, our football team won CIF, making it their second CIF in three years. In spring of 2014, several teams were recognized by CIF for superior academic achievement, earning scholar athlete awards. While winning and accolades are a source of pride, PVHS athletics seeks to build student character, work ethic and integrity.



## Student Achievement Data

### Academic Performance Index (API)

Since the last WASC visit in 2012, PVHS continues to show significant improvement in nearly every standardized testing measure. More than ever, students are participating in AP classes. PVHS students continue to demonstrate improvement on the SAT and ACT tests and matriculate to the most highly ranked universities.

Groups	Number of Students Included in 2011 Growth API	2011 Growth API	Number of Students Included in 2012 Growth API	2012 Growth API	Number of Students Included in 2013 Growth API	2013 Growth API	Non-Weighted 3-Year Average API*	Weighted 3-Year Average API*
School-wide	1308	898	1300	896	1317	884	893	893
Black or African American	21	828	19	851	27	863	847	849
American Indian or Alaska Native	1		2		3			
Asian	159	942	151	941	147	933	939	939
Filipino	11	882	11	859	14	903	881	883
Hispanic or Latino	90	858	109	839	123	789	829	825
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	5		7		7			
White	978	898	978	897	966	889	895	895
Two or More Races	18	928	16	941	30	883	917	910
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	13	765	17	718	40	790	758	768
English Learners	34	807	23	713	31	775	765	771
Students with Disabilities	134	692	135	704	141	696	697	697

### Annual Yearly Progress / 2013 - 2014

#### Participation Rate

	Target	Criteria met
English-Language Arts Target	95%	Yes
Mathematics Target	95%	Yes

**Percent Proficient - Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)**

	Target	Criteria met
English-Language Arts Target	100.0	No
Mathematics Target	100.0	Yes

Groups	ELA					Math				
	ELA Valid Scores	# At or Above Proficient	% At or Above Proficient	Met 2014 Criteria	Alternative Method	Valid Scores	# At or Above Proficient	% At or Above Proficient	Met 2014 AYP Criteria	Alternative Method
School-wide	461	374	81.1	No	--	459	404	88.0	Yes	Sh
Black or African American	13	11	84.6	--	--	13	9	69.2	--	--
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	--	--	--	--	0	--	--	--	--
Asian	47	39	83.0	--	--	47	44	93.6	--	--
Filipino	6	--	--	--	--	6	--	--	--	--
Hispanic or Latino	47	31	66.0	--	--	47	35	74.5	--	--
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	2	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	--
White	336	277	82.4	No	--	334	300	89.8	Yes	Sh
Two or More Races	10	--	--	--	--	10	--	--	--	--
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	15	10	66.7	--	--	15	13	86.7	--	--
English Learners	18	10	55.6	--	--	18	15	83.3	--	--
Students with Disabilities	58	29	50.0	--	--	59	41	69.5	--	--

**California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)**

CAHSEE Results for Grade 10: All Students				
Subject	2011	2012	2013	2014
Mathematics	99%	98%	96%	99%
English Language Arts	98%	98%	98%	98%

CAHSEE Results for Grade 10: Special Education Students				
Subject	2011	2012	2013	2014
Mathematics	88%	82%	70%	88%
English Language Arts	85%	82%	82%	88%

**Advanced Placement and Honors Participation**

Number of AP and Honors Courses						
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
AP	26	27	29	28	27	65 sections
Honors	13	12	13	17	18	40 sections
AP and Honors Sections	100	106	106	100	94	105

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Palos Verdes High School (052358)					
Total AP Students	640	600	654	647	612
Number of Exams	1,351	1,283	1,326	1,390	1,353
AP Students with Scores 3+	517	499	532	521	468
% of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	80.8	83.2	81.3	80.5	76.5
California					
Total AP Students	282,819	301,505	321,501	338,891	354,229
Number of Exams	518,476	555,057	594,959	635,596	668,494
AP Students with Scores 3+	181,485	191,999	207,367	215,233	227,779
% of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	64.2	63.7	64.5	63.5	64.3
Global					
Total AP Students	1,855,310	1,982,133	2,106,843	2,225,625	2,352,068
Number of Exams	3,236,335	3,475,395	3,714,079	3,955,410	4,199,691
AP Students with Scores 3+	1,116,959	1,193,662	1,295,051	1,354,800	1,442,093
% of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	60.2	60.2	61.5	60.9	61.3

**National Merit Scholar Qualifying Test (NMSQT) (Class of 2015)**

2 National Merit Semifinalists, 3 National Hispanic Scholars, 3 National Achievement Scholars, 17 National Merit Commended Scholars

**Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)**

Year	Grade 12 Enrollment	Number Tested	Percent Tested	Critical Reading Average	Math Average	Writing Average	Total >= 1,500 Number	Total >= 1,500 Percent
2010-2011	486	423	87.04	563	585	582	342	80.9
2011-2012	366	318	86.89	569	596	585	265	83.3
2012-2013	451	373	82.71	559	581	563	276	74.0
2013-2014	470	387	82.3	568	596	581	307	79.3

**American College Test (ACT)**

Year	Grade 12 Enrollment	Number Tested	Percent Tested	Average Score	Score>=21 Number	Score>=21 Percent
2010-2011	486	261	53.7	26.23	430	93.1
2011-2012	366	220	60.11	26.2	196	89.09
2012-2013	451	255	56.54	26.0	221	86.67
2013-2014	470	253	67	27.0	229	90

**UC and CSU Eligible Students (A-G qualified)**

Students Eligible for UC and CSU Admission					
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Graduates	448	477	362	445	470
Number of Graduates Eligible	344	383	286	369	380
Percent of Graduates Eligible	76.8%	80.3%	79%	82.9%	80.8

**College Admission (2009 – 2014)**

Parents from PVHS expect their children to be prepared to succeed in post-secondary educations. Typically, 80% of the students go directly to four-year universities, with an additional 20% going to community colleges. SAT, ACT, AP scores, STAR test results, school generated data, and alumni surveys demonstrate the school’s success in preparing students for a college education.

**CEDLT Achievement**

	Grade 9			Grade 10			Grade 11			Grade 12		
	201 2	201 3	201 4	201 2	201 3	201 4	201 2	201 3	201 4	201 2	201 3	201 4
Advanced	63 %	45 %	50 %	14%	20 %	36 %	57 %	14 %	40 %		25 %	67 %
Early Advanced	13 %	27 %	50 %	43%	60 %	36 %	29 %	14 %	40 %		75 %	
Intermediate	13 %			29%		9%		43 %				17 %
Early Intermediate	13 %	9%			20 %		14 %	29 %				
Beginning		18 %		14%		18 %			20 %			17 %
Total Students	8	11	6	7	5	11	7	7	5	0	4	6

- **Include a description of any significant changes and/or developments, i.e., program additions since the last full visit, changes in student enrollment, staffing changes.**

The previous WASC Visitation occurred in March 2012 and there have been a number of significant changes at Palos Verdes High School since the previous accreditation visit.

- A new administrator to the district was appointed as the Associate Principal at Palos Verdes High School on July 1, 2012.
- The previous principal that served for two years took a high school principal position in another school district as of July 1, 2013.
- One of the Associate Principals was appointed as principal effective August 8, 2013. There was a month and a half long recruitment and selection process.
- Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District appointed a new Associate Principal effective August 8, 2013.
- In January 2015, Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District opened the Life Skills Center on the PVHS campus. The center educates students ages 15-22 with exceptional needs working on an alternate curriculum to address academics, functional skills, and community participation. One new SDC teacher was hired and approximately 10-15 new students will enroll by 15-16 school year.
- Palos Verdes High School is currently seeking a new Associate Principal to replace a retiring Associate Principal. Interviews for the new position will take place in April 2015.
- Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District appointed and promoted a number of new district senior staff.
- There was a change in the lead teacher position for the special education program.
- There has been a change in teaching positions to include Special Education, French, English and PVIT Program.
- Two counselors were hired. One of the counselors is fully funded by PEF.
- There has been a change in the director of the College and Career Center along with a new librarian.
- There is an addition of one custodian and the Principal's Secretary retired at the December holiday break. This past January, PVHS hired a new Principal's Secretary and Registrar.
- The district has created Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Committees in the areas of Mathematics, English, History, Science, Special Education and World Language.
- There has been the development of a new Mathematics sequence as aligned with the Common Core Standards.
- The Algebra classes are piloting new textbooks and the World Language Department is beginning that process in the area of Spanish.
- Targeted district and site funds have been allocated to meet technology baselines in all classrooms to include short throw projectors and digital visualizers. Bring Your Own Device was implemented and Chromebook carts were bought to prepare students for SBAC. A PC cart was purchased to help French and Spanish AP students take their AP exams on laptops as opposed to tape recordings.

- The school principal has created various platforms to communicate school events through email blasts called Constant Contact, Twitter feeds, daily bulletins, and weekly Principal's Updates.
- The school district engaged in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium pilot assessments this past spring.
- Through the collaboration with PTSA, school leadership created a new tutoring program called Triton Academy. PVHS used intervention funds to hire professional tutors from Peninsula Academy and they provide tutoring in the areas of history, English, math, science, and ACT/ACT prep. Students can reserve appointment slots online via pvhigh.com.
- Principal created a new student advisory council called the Principal's Advisory Council (PAC).
- A Speech and Debate team was created.
- Our Science Research class has increased from 4 to almost 20 students.
- The Booster Club has added support for the Academic Decathlon Team and the team is now a Period 7 class. This year, the Team won 32 medals and placed top 24 in the Los Angeles County and won first placed in the Super Quiz.
  
- **Describe the impact these changes and/or developments have had on the school and/or specific curricular programs.**
- These changes have brought more personnel to PVHS.
- Many new co-curricular programs help to include students in a wide variety of programs thereby feeling further connected to Palos Verdes High School.
- Academics, the arts, and athletics remain strong but could be strengthened even more.
- Through Triton Academy, students are receiving help if they are struggling.
- Many new committees have helped with the transition to Common Core but more is still needed as Palos Verdes goes forward.
- The principal's formation of various groups to give input shows a true dedication to wanting to solicit input from all for the betterment of the school.
- The on-going changes in administration is of concern to Palos Verdes High School faculty and administration. As mentioned in the previous VC report...the VC's concern was if the young and energetic team were to change; that this might cause PVHS to not move forward with their Action Plan as stated. To a large degree, the Visiting Committee (through classroom observations) noted much of the same teacher-centered, lecture based teaching as three years ago.

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

In March of 2012 the WASC Visitation Committee completed their review and shared their report with the Palos Verdes High School learning community. The Accreditation Team granted a six-year accreditation with an April 2015 mid-term visit.

The leads met with their departments during the months of December and January to gather input from their teams to determine the level of progress in each area. The school principal shared this document with the School Site Council and the Parent Teacher Student Association to gather their input regarding progress towards meeting these goals. The school has identified and the VC concurs that there needs to be a focus on communicating and involving students in the process of the Self Study. A consistent, steady administrative team will help foster a more successful process in developing an action plan for the Full Self-Study in 2018. The Action Plan needs to be better monitored and made into a priority as the school enters the 2015-16 academic school year. Focus Groups need to be put into place and Late Start Wednesday Collaboration Time needs to be spent on Focus Groups and reviewing, modifying and updating the Action Plan as a collective effort.

- **Describe the process used to prepare the progress report.**

Information was gathered from various stakeholders. It was evident that the follow-up process was not formally followed. The new principal worked diligently the month before the visit to prepare a Mid-Visit report. There was some internal misunderstanding about whose responsibility it was to prepare the document. This Visiting Committee chair worked with the principal on various drafts of the report. The chair asked that the Action Plan be updated. While the plan had been updated by actions, the formal, written Action Plan was placed on the back burner-as fully admitted to by the school and ultimately the principal in the paragraph above. The principal, in the end, produced an excellent report-brought the data up to date and plans to update and input annually as the 6-year process goes forward.



## II. Progress on Critical Areas for Follow-up/Schoolwide Action Plan

- Provide an analytical summary about the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section referencing the critical areas for follow-up addressed through each section.

### Ongoing School Improvement:

In the 2012 Full Self-Study, PVHS identified the following needs based upon their Self Study report.

#### 1. Algebraic Proficiency

Students in Algebra are in need of extra support. One teacher in the math department teaches all of the Algebra classes. Currently, there are about 25% of the Algebra students receiving a D or F. Administrators and teacher leaders have been working with the teacher to provide extra support to the students in the class. AVID strategies were also implemented into the classroom. Intervention funding was used to place a professional teacher into each Algebra classroom that has helped in re-teaching concepts to small groups in the class. The teacher has expressed that the extra support structures are welcomed and helpful. The teacher has also reported that overall class test and quiz scores are improving. There has also been a decrease in parent calls and concerns from parents about homework and quizzes. The teacher has also provided the students with the ability to re-take exams to allow students to access time and re-teaching opportunities to master the content.

#### 2. Support for Special Education Students

CAHSEE scores for special education students are at the highest levels since 2012 at 88% passage rates for both English and Math. A lot of this can be attributed to the fact that since the last full self-study, PVHS has hired a new SPED Coordinator who has led the department to new heights under his leadership. SPED teachers are utilizing collaboration time effectively to learn new instructional strategies especially in the area of using technology such as with PVHS Chromebooks. PVHS's Collab classes have a Special Education teacher in the English classroom to help RSP students and 504 students with writing and reading. There has also been a better case management of IEPs whereby Palos Verdes is meeting compliance on meeting timelines on all IEPs. Special Education district meetings have been helpful in the sharing of ideas and articulation of ideas between high schools and intermediate schools.

The District selected PVHS as the new site for the Palos Verdes Life Skills Center where students across the district will be able to come to PVLSC to access its new facilities and technology. We are striving to provide the best for students with special needs.

### 3. Consistent Implementation of School Policies (also further addressed below).

There will be an end-of-year survey which will have the same baseline questions from the 2012 survey questions provided to students, staff and community regarding the implementation and practice of school policies. Since 2012, PVHS has implemented a K-9 Drug Detection Program on campus where for the past three years. Its presence has decreased the number of controlled-substance activities. Social media highlighting the dog's presence on campus, which has also helped deter these activities.

The student cheering section called Red Tide has had a negative perception from community members for their chants and behavior during athletic events, especially football games. Although behavior has been improving from year to year, the administrative team decided to restructure the selection process of the five leaders who are chosen as Red Tide leaders, called Red Tide Presidents, for the upcoming year. Starting in 2015-2016 academic year, the Red Tide presidents will be selected through student votes and approval by school leadership members in the Principal's Cabinet.

Every year, Halloween is seen as a day where student behavior has not been at its best. Each year since 2012, Halloween has been much placated in negative student behavior partly due to the staff's consistent message to students about dress code and proper behavior.

#### **Progress of the 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.*

The Special Education Department has incorporated standardized test results to help formulate IEP goals. These goals are being realigned to comply with CCSS. Special Education students' classroom performance is regularly reviewed by their case carriers. Special Education students who have not passed the CAHSEE review relevant content in their Guided Study classes. Additionally, they review English content in Reading Writing Skills classes and focus on math goals in Essentials of Algebra classes.

The Science Department analyzes the results of formative and summative assessments to guide re-teaching: the formative assessments are used to check for student understanding, while the summative assessments are used to check for content retention. AP data is studied to drive instructional modifications to AP courses. The Science Department is anticipating the New Generation of Science Standards (NGSS) and their associated assessments. Their preparation includes exploring lessons aligned with Common Core and the NGSS.

The Mathematics Department analyzed 2012-2013 STAR results at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year to improve curriculum. Pacing guidelines for each subject area within the department were created and implemented. AP teachers analyze AP exam results each year to improve the AP curriculum. The department analyzes SAT, ACT, and AMC results to assess student achievement on National exams. In anticipation of the transition to the SBAC, the

department is waiting for SBAC results and guidelines in order to continue realigning the math curriculum.

The History/Social Science Department reviews their Advanced Placement Exam results by content area each year. Additionally, the department reviews the AP Program based on the number of courses offered and student enrollment in these courses.

The English Department reviewed its reading lists and pacing guides at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year in order to prepare for the transition to the SBAC. The department is currently reviewing CCSS vendors' products to incorporate in quarterly assessments and SBAC preparation. Additionally, the English Department will begin to modernize its writing portfolio requirement. The goal is to eventually replace the current hard copy with an electronic one. Students will be required to submit essays to turnitin.com as the first step in this transition.

The World Language Department utilizes teacher created writing samples at the beginning of the year to assess students' abilities and set pacing and other instructional goals. Additionally, the department is using quarterly assessments. Teachers utilize placement tests for Spanish 2 & 3 and Chinese 2, 3 & 4 to ensure students are in the appropriate level. AP Data is used to review pacing and content for upper level courses.

The Visual & Performing Arts Department is incorporating various types of written assessments. Students write reflections regarding projects and performances. Students record their pieces of work for feedback. The department is using technology such as online surveys, student reflections, social media, online sharing sites and peer/instructor critiques in order to provide a variety of opportunities for assessment.

**See concluding comments below.**

*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.*

The Special Education Department is improving development and articulation in a myriad ways. The department provides educators with opportunities to attend conferences such as ASCD and CCSS. Aide training is provided to para-educators. In addition, the department is collaborating with other sites that have Basic Skills teachers. The District CIA team communicates ongoing CCSS developments with the department, while the Special Education Department regularly communicates with general education teachers who work with their students. Recently, the district curriculum and instruction department added special education teachers to the CIA team meetings, which has allowed district special education teachers to collaborate on current practices and challenges being faced at the secondary level.

The Science Department increased their time spent collaborating. Many teachers have attended conferences and shared materials at late start meetings. These include Common Core,

Kagan, NGSS, NSTA, and APSI. Also, many teachers have attended PBL symposiums which teach the basics of BL learning implementation; teachers are implementing PBL units and assessments in their teaching practices. The department was trained in the use of science databases and how to incorporate more research into teaching methods. Teachers in every science discipline are part of a district level CIA team which discusses best practices for all K-12 teachers.

The Mathematics Department participates in staff development individually and collectively. Several members have attended various mathematics conferences such as AP and CMC-South conferences. The department participates in District CIA meetings and regular site department meetings. The Mathematics Department used the districtwide in-service days to meet with grade-level colleagues. The department articulates with feeder schools through CIA.

The History/Social Science Department participates in District Professional Development during late starts, pupil-free days, and rotating staff through CIA meetings. Many teachers also attend AP Conferences. Department members have collaborated on topics such as scaffolding Document Based Questions and AP US History curriculum.

The English Department is collaborating during regular late start meetings, district staff development days, and at CIA meetings. In collaboration with Peninsula High School, department grade level teachers are meeting and sharing best practices on the district's required novels at CIA meetings. Department members participated in summer workshops such as NEA and AP. Department members share new ways to use technology in the classroom such as turnitin.com and Google drive.

The World Language Department is working on improved articulation with feeder schools. The Department regularly studies pacing and planning at Wednesday Late Start Meetings. Many teachers attended professional conferences such as the CLTA Conference in San Diego. Teachers have attended MCLASC (Modern and Classical Language Association of Southern California) and Occidental College World Language Project conferences covering the topics of Common Core implementation, Project Based Learning and technology in the classroom. Department members also attended the College Board Spanish AP Literature seminar and the Southern California Chinese Teachers Association Conference. Latin teachers at PV and Peninsular collaborated on curriculum and attended the state conference.

The Visual & Performing Arts Department collaborates on site during regular late start department meetings. They participate in interdepartmental conversations with members of other departments during lunch breaks. Department members are involved in district based professional development concerning CTE and CCSS. Teachers attend Common Core Conferences that relate to their discipline. Additionally, PVHS students perform collaboratively with middle school students from feeder schools by working together to put on concerts, performances, and shows.

**See concluding comments below.**

*3. The school needs to continue to find ways to foster a culture of consistency in school policies.*

The PVHS Staff sees improved communication and consistency in a variety of areas. Teachers have worked to improve the accuracy of attendance and tardy records. Teachers and administration have enforced consequences such as Saturday School and trash pickup. This has helped reduce the number of students wandering campus during instructional time. Parents are informed of attendance issues in a timely manner through automated phone messages. Teachers who take students on field trips, special events, and athletic competitions submit rosters to the attendance office, ensuring student accountability. The district has updated and increased the number of attendance codes which allows for more consistency in teachers taking attendance and parent notifications for school absences and period tardies. The attendance team meets with the administration on a weekly basis to share information about student attendance issues, including truancy and the SARB process.

A renewed focus on safety is exemplified by the installation of security cameras and the presence of the Palos Verdes Estates Police Department campus K9 unit. All science programs implement, enforce, and adhere to lab safety guidelines. School safety and emergency drills have been updated and implemented. Some staff members completed Specialized Emergency Response Training, with plans for more to complete training in the future. Other improvements include the hiring of a female security staffer to support gender specific issues. Defined faculty parking areas help keep the campus in order. The closing of specific lockers and areas on campus has helped to control student behavior during lunch and breaks.

The administration has utilized various types of media to communicate with the school community. The staff handbook and PTSA handbooks are updated annually. Throughout the year new and/or updated policies such as dress code, behavior at athletic events, and Halloween costume guidelines are communicated through the daily bulletin, emails, pvhigh.com, the school twitter feed, and the student news program *Live From 205*. Recent improvements in communicating expectations to students have been developed by Be The Change and Associated Student Body. Incoming freshmen attended induction activities prior to the beginning of the school year. This process culminated in Coronation Day during the first week of school where they officially became Sea Kings. The central gathering area on campus formerly known as Senior Park was renamed Sea King Park in order to foster a spirit of community. Various speakers have been invited to campus to discuss digital citizenship and the consequences of online behavior.

**The new principal and members of his leadership team are leaders who are knowledgeable and professional. The entire school needs appreciate WASC protocol.**

**Concern was expressed by the VC about to what degree the critical areas of follow-up were implemented from the last visit, especially regarding academic rigor in the classes. As one reads in the above descriptors that the school provides, attempts have been made but do not**

delve deeply. The school, as stated above has done many activities that do not seem to be translating into the classrooms. The students bring in a strong internal capacity, and community demographics indicate that students who come to PVHS come with great preparation for academic excellence. The teaching rigor that was observed continues to be at a level that does not adequately address this high level of potential of these high performing students. The VC again observes that the staff needs to utilize teaching strategies that more strongly engage the students in ways that adequately challenge their true potential and that will push them to the next levels as will be indicated in the SBAC results.

Additionally, the VC again encourages greater emphasis on better utilization of the long block periods (nearly two hours) in order to maximize those lengthy learning periods.

In order to evaluate effectiveness of the instructional practices and the rigor of the curriculum in the classroom; the staff still needs to understand that there is a critical need to develop and implement a systemic and structured assessment data system (from classroom > formative > to summative > to state and national exams) and examine the data through more analysis to further drive academic improvement for all students, as noted at the last visit. The Visiting Committee truly notes and realizes that all schools are in transition with implementation of Common Core, which makes assessment even more important at this time.

Going forward, the VC strongly encourages the leadership team and the teachers to annually refer to the schoolwide action plan and to honestly and genuinely reflect on how that important document can guide all stakeholders in incorporating the major recommendations that were stated in the last self-study visiting committee's report from three years ago.

- **If any critical areas for follow-up were not included in the school's action plan, indicate what actions have been taken to address these issue(s) and include supporting evidence.**

All critical areas were addressed. It is the implementation that needs to be more rigorous.

- ➔ **Note: The school's schoolwide action plan should have incorporated all the critical areas of follow-up or major recommendations that were stated in the last self-study visiting committee report.**

The schoolwide critical areas suggested by the VC three years ago, have been added to the action plan.

### III. Commendations and Recommendations

#### A. Commendations:

- Comment on significant progress the school has made in responding to the critical areas for follow-up and in carrying out the related action plan.
1. **Palos Verdes High School's** proficiency levels for all students continue to be excellent. Students continue to meet A-G requirements in great numbers.
  2. **Palos Verdes** students have access to a vast array of choices when it comes to curriculum and placement opportunities. In addition, they have the support system in place to help them to understand which classes are right for them and to ensure appropriate placement and support.
  3. **Palos Verdes High School** benefits from tremendous community support in terms of financial assistance, volunteerism, student learning opportunities, and experiences in community businesses and a myriad of other ways.
  4. The campus is well-maintained and conducive to student wellbeing.
  5. **Palos Verdes** has a tradition of school pride and school spirit that promotes an engaged and involved student body.
  6. Diverse athletic and co-curricular opportunities enjoy tremendous success and student involvement.

#### B. Recommendations:

- Comment on any critical areas for follow-up/action plan sections that have not yet been completely addressed, if applicable.
1. The staff still needs to understand that there is a critical need to develop and implement a systemic and structured **assessment data system** (from classroom > formative > to summative > to state and national exams) and examine the data through more analysis to further drive academic improvement for all students, as noted at the last visit.
  2. There is a need for all stakeholders to understand and implement professional development that supports **varied research-based teaching strategies** for classroom use (i.e., effective use of block schedule time, differentiated instruction, and including effective student engagement strategies.)
- Identify any new areas of concerns, if applicable.

3. A **professional and collegial atmosphere** amongst ALL stakeholders needs to be developed and needs to be consistently implemented to carry PVHS to greater levels of student achievement.

*The Visiting Committee would like to thank the staff and students of **Palos Verdes** for their hospitality and for sharing their programs. As fellow educators we recognize the difficulties of making systemic changes in response to outside demands and changes and look forward with the school and the community to great strides with all learners.*