

**Bert Corona Charter High School (BCCH)
Annual Oversight Visit Date: May 24, 2022**

Guiding Questions

1. Please share specific challenges and successes of in-person instruction given that we continue to be in a worldwide pandemic (e.g., student achievement, student attendance, EL reclassification, LTEL, teacher attendance, etc.).

Successes

Returning to in-person instruction has given our students the brain-boost they get from social connection. So much of distance learning was spent fighting fatigue and boredom. Being back together has allowed our kids to fire on all cylinders. Collaborative learning has been the most welcome change, with students being afforded the opportunity to talk directly to one another in groups and hear one another's voices in real time. This is critical for EL Learners.

Two of the most noticeable data sets that confirm the impact of learning context are the GPA and MAPS data of our students, specifically the Junior Class, who serve as our barometers for academic preparedness and college readiness. The Junior Class is currently 59% eligible for application to the CSU/UC system upon graduation. That is an 11% improvement over the class of 2022, and a 19% improvement over the class of 2021. This upward trend over the past 3 years is an immensely encouraging turn of events for our school, as our primary school wide outcome is college readiness.

Our Junior Class is also demonstrating noticeable improvement throughout the year in our periodic assessment data. The Northwest Education Association's Measure of Academic Progress assessments in reading and mathematics are used three times each year to determine grade-level proficiency in the areas of analytical reading and reading comprehension, as well problem solving ability and logical thinking. Our 11th grade cohort has grown from 40% to 43% of our student body performing on grade level in math from September to December, and from 50% to 57% performing on grade level in reading. Were these to be our SBAC scores, they would be the highest our school has ever received. This class is on pace to set new performance heights for our school in both college admissions and state test performance.

A third area of success for our entire school has been in the area of community service Project Based Learning projects. The vision of YPI Charter Schools is to graduate students who are college ready, active citizens (in service to their communities), and life-long learners. In order to equip students with the agency and resources to engage in community service projects, we created a structure within our academic program specifically for projects. Students have met with teams of teachers to get coaching and support as they envision projects that will allow them to give back to their communities. This is the first year that BCCHS has created this structure. During the 2020-2021 school year, students were asked to think about and plan out community service projects, but the reality of the limitations that the pandemic placed on actually interacting with others meant that these plans were really limited to just that, just plans. This year, students

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have already been talking with community partners and reaching out to local businesses in an attempt to understand the needs of the community, and to learn how best to participate in acts of service that would make a sustained difference. For a school that has a significant EL and bilingual population and is designed to get students into their community as a foundational element of its instructional program, the pandemic and distance learning really shut down much of the collaborative energy that is supposed to sustain our efforts. Being back in person is showing us the extent to which this is true.

Challenges

The most obvious and long-term noticeable impact that we see in our students since being back to the physical classroom is the loss of academic growth and acuity. This loss has taken months to remediate. Our students are ordinarily sharp, attentive, and engaged with us, eager to receive what we have to offer and try their hands at new skill sets. But life at home for a year was like mental novacaine; it seemed to numb the faculties necessary for engagement. In addition and closely related, we have been processing significant psychological trauma that students experienced while forced to be at home, indoors, and away from friends and teachers during a time in life when these people are the most important to them. Just watching students learn how to be with one another again has been both painful and beautiful to watch. Students really missed their friends, primarily for social reasons but also because learning with friends provides the courage to take intellectual risks. There has just been a whole lot of social, emotional, and intellectual recalibration happening this year, and it has caused progress to be delayed at best, arrested at worst. Getting all students back in the building was a challenge for most of the first semester, with an ADA that dipped into the 70%-80% range for a reporting period for the first time in our school's history. We learned that there was a significant mistrust of the vaccination process, and a fear for family health, both of which impeded the process of helping students return to as much of a sense of normalcy as is possible with masks and covid testing now creating the new normal.

Academically, we have seen that according to our primary valid data metric, our students with special needs and our students who continue to endeavor to learn English have been hit the hardest. Students within these two subgroups that are members of the junior class, again our bellwether cohort for measuring the long range impact of our efforts, experienced some growth but not enough to be performing at grade level according to the MAPS mathematics and reading assessments. EL learners in the junior class did experience a growth of 20% reaching grade-level reading performance, but EL math performance, as well as SpEd math and reading performance, saw no growth from August to December of this year.

During the 2020-2021 school year, we did not have to resort to suspension as a disciplinary strategy because the Ed Code was rarely violated to a degree that required it. Since we've been back to in-person instruction, it's been challenging for a number of our students to reestablish healthy relationships and healthy conflict resolution skills. Our suspension rate is now considered low to medium for high schools, at 5.8% for 2021-2022, according to the 2019 CA suspension reference grid.

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2. Please describe the successes and challenges experienced in monitoring and supporting mental health and social and emotional well-being of both pupils and staff during the 2020-21 school year, as applicable.

2020-2021 is and will be a surreal year that staff and students are slowly waking up from. I liken it to waking up from a deep nap, which for many people is a very unpleasant experience that results in moody and antisocial behavior until the mental fog lifts. It just isn't developmentally normal in any way for students in their teen years to be isolated from one another. Social grouping and norming behavior is of vital importance to them during this time period, and to be left "up in their own heads," as it were, was like watching a bad physical injury take place and trying to stay hopeful. Eventually, some students just couldn't manage to stay hopeful and disappeared. Those who kept showing up on Google Meets every day felt that it was vital for them to stay connected.

Some of the ways we tried to stay successfully connected and aware of student/staff need were:

Slack Culture

Slack is a workplace communication platform that facilitates all forms of instant communication, including calls, video calls, social-media style instant messaging, and document sharing. To help our staff stay in sync with one another, connected professionally and socially, feel validated for their efforts and heard when things were difficult, we established morning and afternoon check-ins with a rich emoji and gif environment. It was a quickly adopted practice by everyone to share their current status using lots of emojis, gifs, and transparent language, which allowed peers to congratulate, comfort, consort, and celebrate with one another. We also made a habit of meeting at the end of a week to "shout out" one another's successes. It was definitely something to look forward to during a pretty bleak time.

A Commitment to Daily Family Communication

A group of our support staff began making daily phone calls to families to look for students who had not made an appearance in distance learning spaces, but quickly found themselves serving as an ad-hoc mental health support team, checking in on how people were doing as the days began turning into weeks and months. This group, consisting of administrative leaders, became known as "Team Chancla," an affectionate reference to the loving nudge given by a mom, auntie or grandmother to motivate young people to "get with the program," as it were. While this team set out to look for lost students, they were typically the first group of people to learn that someone had lost working technology, or lost internet service, or was experiencing a family emergency or a personal crisis. Team Chancla was uniquely responsible for holding our school community together during those 17 months of relative isolation (March 2020 through July 2021). Their initiative, persistence, attentiveness to detail, compassionate listening, and quick action created a safety net of communication that allowed for students to feel as though they were well within the sight and grip of a supportive school community. Without the efforts of this group of committed team members, our school would likely have functionally gone silent throughout most of the distance learning diaspora, as many schools did. We, as a BCCHS community, owe them a debt of gratitude for any social, emotional and academic success we were able to have with our students and families during that time.

Crisis Response Team

Max Garcia, our Director of College Counseling Services and a trained MFT, in partnership with Luminarias, a mental health services team led by Dr. Jose Cardenas, was at the ready to support our students during the period they were away from campus. Our support staff would refer students whom they perceived to be in crisis, and these mental health professionals would immediately execute a plan of action that included assessments and scheduled check-ins to monitor mental health. In the span of time from March 2020 until the return to full-time in-person instruction for all students in August of 2021, this team did not report even one instance of an attempt at life-ending self-harm. This is a testament to YPICS wrap-around commitment to every facet of a student's well being.

Regular "Assemblies"

Led by our Student Leadership facilitator ms. Gonzalez and our School Climate and Culture Director Ms. Fuentes, BCCHS staff sought to make regular efforts to gather students on school-wide Google Meet assemblies to publically share student successes and give encouragement. We gave out our monthly On F.I.R.E Awards to dozens of students (Focussed, Intentional, Reflective, Engaged), and shared our affirmations for student engagement and initiative. We also celebrated birthdays and special events in the lives of those in our community, disconnected physically though it was. Just hearing each other's voices and seeing one another all together gave everyone a big emotional lift, staff and students alike.

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3. Please share any areas of growth and/or improvement identified by the school leadership team during this academic school year and any action plans for improvement.

Since the opening of the 2021-2022 school year, BCCHS has undertaken several initiatives to create an improved social-emotional and academic program for our students. The following are major initiatives, but do not represent an exhaustive list:

Junior Seminar

All 11th grade students are now enrolled in a course designed specifically to prepare them for the process of post-secondary transition and college/vocational program application and matriculation. We had seen a pattern of stress, panic and unpreparedness in our seniors in August of their final year with us, which is when college applications are supposed to be in full swing. We also noticed that many of our students were so unfamiliar with the process of thinking through college/vocational application and matriculation that some of them avoided the process altogether. To correct this pattern, we have implemented a course taught by UC graduates and mentored by our Director of College Counseling Services, which spends an entire year walking students through the process of thinking, discernment, preparation, and application to post-secondary educational institutions and programs.

Elimination of both D and F grades in our assessment and grading practices.

BCCHS has never awarded D grades as they are not accepted by the UC or CSU system for determining offers of admission. However, although our students are programmed to repeat courses until such time as they earn a C or better, when an F grade is received, it temporarily lowers the cumulative GPA in such a dramatic fashion that deep and pervasive academic self-doubt ensues. To protect the cumulative GPA without compromising academic integrity, students now receive “i” marks for courses not passed successfully within the semester time limits. This “i” stands for “incomplete,” and indicates that the course must either be finished or retaken. In the meantime, while they are retaking or finishing the course, students do not experience the plummeting of their cumulative GPA. The YPICS School Board is following the lead of progressive urban school districts throughout California in this transformation.

Reading and Literacy Intervention Specialist

BCCHS was given approval to hire a K-12 Literacy Specialist to support our students who are reading below middle school lexile norms. Using Achieve 3000 data as well as data from our MAPS periodic assessments, the most struggling readers in 9th, 10th and 11th grade have been identified for intensive reading intervention for a minimum of 80 minutes per week. In the short time she has been here, students in her program have grown anywhere from 1 to 4 grade levels in lexile reading performance. Ms. Miller, our K-12 Literacy Specialist, has determined that some students have significant gaps in their reading skills, but that these gaps are quickly remediated for students who successfully learned how to read in English in earlier grade levels. The gaps or misconceptions are easily identifiable as students read aloud, and in a safe, shame-free environment, are corrected and reading is strengthened. For other students, a lack of fluency is almost exclusively the result of insufficient time spent reading and acquiring new vocabulary.

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The 40 focused minutes for reading and vocabulary acquisition discussions, twice a week, are having an immediate impact on lexile performance.

New Career Technical Education Visual and Media Art Program Leadership

BCCHS has invested enormous financial resources into industry-standard technologies that, in the hands of a knowledgeable mentor, can be used to equip our graduates with job skills for use in online content production, entertainment industry editing, or advertisement, just to name a few. For the first 6 years of the school's existence (including the 17 months spent in distance learning for most students), the instructor in charge of this program was not utilizing the program resources to their maximum potential, and ran more of a fine-art studio than a visual and media arts training environment. This year, BCCHS hired a veteran CTE expert to run the visual and media arts program. He is credentialed in 3 different CTE fields, including: Arts, Media and Entertainment, Information and Communication Technologies, and Manufacturing and Product Development. The difference is already striking. The types of media that our students are producing, from advertising tools to clothing to student portraiture to game products to short films (not an exhaustive list), is just categorically different from anything we've seen in past years. Mr. Benavides is already envisioning a robust Adobe Creative Suite training component to his courses next year, and with the school's powerful Mac Media Lab machines at our students' disposal, we anticipate amazing things!

Major planned areas of improvement for 2022-2023 include:

ESL

We are hiring a language acquisition specialist to work with our EL/LTEL learners in course sections that are embedded in student schedules, in addition to the SDAIE and tutoring support they already receive as part of their daily instruction.

Advisory

Our school has been very fortunate to have an Advisory Committee stewarding the design and implementation of our SEL-focused curriculum. Our challenge over this past year has been that our students are at very disparate places in their reentry to in-person learning and socializing. This has created a significant challenge for the teaching staff, specifically their capacity to successfully develop a multi-age, multi-grade, transparent and trusting community within each Advisory class. In order to meet this challenge, our Advisory Committee has already started to assemble and package a more heavily scripted, hands-on curriculum that allows students to safely do some reflection before engaging with peers around topics that can be challenging for any student to tackle, let alone students who have recently experienced the trauma of social isolation and fear. As a school, we have also noticed that scheduling Advisory class first thing in the morning is creating challenges for both students and staff to start the day with focused and intentional energy. Tardiness and lack of alertness are daily issues. We are looking for a time of day that will allow us to maximize energy, alertness, presence, and openness so as to finally leverage this important structure for all that it could produce on behalf of our very special climate and culture.

Service Learning PBL

In its very short life as a high school, just 7 years, BCCHS has established a rich tradition of giving back to the communities of Pacoima and greater Los Angeles. In the spirit of Señor Bert Corona, our Knights are taught, equipped, and supported to become Active Citizens (C.R.A.C.L.L) as an integral facet of what it means to be well educated. When students are given the opportunity to pursue service projects in areas of felt need that are important to them for very personal reasons, powerful learning and change happens. From caring for at-risk species in our local watershed, to caring for abandoned pets through local adoption agencies, or partnering with world-class NGO's to intervene in areas of starvation-prone food insecurity, and even making sure local elementary school students learn how to read well; BCCHS Knights have been giving back since the first semester we opened our doors. Project-based learning, or PBL, is not new to teachers and students at Bert Corona Charter HS, but the emphasis on community service PBL projects, conceived and driven by students, is a facet of our school that allows for unique training for life after high school. Authentic, rigorous, student-driven community service projects prepare our students to be California's future leaders. We are excited and eager for this tradition to continue now that we are back to in-person learning. In the past two years, we have experienced a significant regression in our students' understanding of the critical and powerful nature of PBL service learning opportunities, as well as their drive to participate in them. Our teachers have also not felt the energy or vision to lead this effort in a way that feels authentic. In the 2022-2023 school year, we hope to restructure our service learning PBL efforts to harness the energy of this school community and see it make significant impacts for social and environmental change in the San Fernando Valley.

ESL Reclassification

BCCHS has a student population comprised of 20% EL learners, both recent arrivals and LTEL students. This is a big portion of our school, and it would be a huge subgroup for any high school. At this point in a student's K-12 career, having spent significant time in the CA public education system, they should have already reclassified. Knowing that we continue to serve a growing population of EL learners, we have made it a priority to hire another specialist to give each of these students up to 200 minutes per week of additional ESL instruction. Our hope is that this additional support will help EL students grow exponentially in their English language acquisition, and that our school will be able to reclassify significant numbers to RFEP each year.

Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate.

Like many high schools in CA and around the country, the pandemic and distance learning gave rise to a pattern of several of our seniors going to work instead of finishing school. For the class of 2021, our 4 year cohort graduation rate slipped below 80% for the first time since we opened our doors. We have worked hard to raise this rate for the classes of 2022 and 2023, including class seminar time for each cohort in which A-G passage progress is closely monitored.

4. Please provide an update about BCCH's implementation of its LCAP and describe what is working well and what areas need further growth and attention (Please do not "cut and paste" directly from the LCAP)

Access for All Students, Technology Integration: Chromebooks

Between the fall of 2019 and the Spring of 2021, all students enrolled at BCCHS had their chromebook computers exchanged and updated to current year models. Every BCCHS student carries an updated chromebook with a home wifi hotspot provided if necessary. Student lesson expectations and assessment record keeping are managed exclusively through Google Classroom, and as such, chromebook access is essential for all students.

Access for All Students: Reading Specialist

In the fall of 2021, BCCHS hired a K-12 literacy and reading specialist to support students reading below a 7th grade lexile level. At least 15% of our student body has been serviced by this initiative, and every one of them has shown lexile growth to date. Students are given the opportunity to choose their own works of fiction and nonfiction to read as part of this program, while simultaneously reading in small groups using both student and teacher selected works.

Access for All Students: Lending Library

BCCHS received a \$2500 grant from Donors Choose to start a much needed lending library at our school. YPICS matched the grant amount, and created a startup lending library with approximately 250 volumes. Since that startup, we have added approximately 150 more volumes over the course of the 2021-2022 school year. Students now have access to literature from genres as diverse as current and popular YA (young adult) fiction, new canon works like Harry Potter, Percy Jackson, and Twilight series, and graphic novels in the tradition of Manga, as well as older classics such as the Lord of the Rings trilogy. All volumes are free to check out.

Student Mental Health: Luminarias

BCCHS partnered with Luminarias Institute beginning in the 2019-2020 school year. The COVID pandemic created the necessity for students to enter telehealth counseling relationships with Luminarias staff in place of the on-campus services that were previously available to our teens. That said, Luminarias referrals have become a consistent facet of our multi-tiered system of support services for students with significant dysregulation behaviors and mental health crises. Luminarias also serves as the supervising partner of our own in-house MFT professional. We are deeply grateful for the expanded availability of these caring counselors.

College Access: Junior Seminar

Over the course of our school's brief time in operation, BCCHS Juniors have demonstrated a pattern of inconsistent eligibility for 4-year undergraduate admission upon graduation from high school. 10th and 11th grade cumulative GPA is used to determine UC/CSU admission qualification. Our school's eligibility numbers by percent of cohort earning a 2.5 GPA or better at the end of their Junior year in high school (GPA used for college

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applications) is as follows for the first 5 graduating cohorts:

Class of 2018 - 50%
Class of 2019 - 40%
Class of 2020 - 44%
Class of 2021 - 40%
Class of 2022 - 48%

The inconsistency of these numbers, their lack of growth, and their persistent performance of under 50% of each cohort earning eligibility, all indicated to administration that something was missing in our students' understanding of what was necessary for qualification. In response to this need, we initiated a course called Junior Seminar for every 11th grade student at BCCHS. These courses are facilitated by teachers who are UC graduates, and with the support of our Director of College Counseling and our Gear Up grant staff, students are equipped with an understanding of the process of becoming CSU/UC students. After 1 year of the program's implementation, our CSU/UC eligibility number for the class of 2023 is as follows:

Class of 2023 - 59%

We hope to see similar growth going forward, for the sake of our students and their families and all they have invested in the dream of college admissions.

College Access: Los Angeles Mission College Concurrent Enrollment at BCCHS

For the seventh consecutive year, students at Bert Corona Charter High School have been given the opportunity to take Los Angeles Mission College Courses on our campus during both academic semesters. All students in grades 10, 11, and 12 are afforded the opportunity to enroll. Students in grade 9 who demonstrate the capacity to perform on grade level through the first semester of their 9th grade year are extended an early enrollment opportunity.

CTE Pathway Access for All Students: New CTE Expert Instruction and Leadership

As previously mentioned, BCCHS hired a veteran, experienced and multi-pathway credentialed CTE instructor to lead our CTE Visual and Media Arts Program. The difference has been striking. Every student at BCCHS is required to take all three courses of VMA (Visual and Media Arts), and our new instructor has improved the entire scope and sequence of the pathway. Students who leave our school as seniors after 4 years will be equipped with skills that make them employable in any number of entry-level entertainment industry jobs.

Valid Assessment: NWEA MAPS, 9-12

Although the SBAC state assessment system is only for 11th grade students, we implement the Northwest Education Association's MAPS test three times a year for all students. Students are given information about their growth with respect to grade level for reading and mathematics performance, as the test is norm referenced. Students having an understanding of their true performance as compared to typical grade level

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performance for all students who take the test nationally, supports the school's efforts to improve academic self-perception and helps students deconstruct narratives that only wealthy and white students can be academically successful in high school and college.

5. Does BCCH have the resources necessary to implement the instructional programs necessary to attain high student academic achievement?

The most significant resource that our school needs in order to successfully implement its instructional programs is trained staff. We are very fortunate to have a veteran teaching team on deck for the 2022-2023 school year. Our most significant instructional need is a multi-year deficit in reading capacity for a majority of our students. While math scores are our lowest performance area, much of this problem is owed to the inability of our students to determine what is expected of them when they try to read their textbooks and test questions. So, the investment of resources into a K-12 literacy specialist this year, and an ESL specialist to focus on LTELS beginning in the fall of 2022, is strategic and budgeted! Thanks to our COO and ExEd finance manager, BCCHS has always had what it needs by way of curricular resources, be they text or technology in nature. We are a resource-rich school in this sense, with all computer and text resources distributed at 1:1 ratios.

One of the only inconsistencies in program resources has been Gear Up tutor availability. Gear Up grants do not serve every class of students; the cohorts are intermittent. Also, there is turnover in these positions every year. If there were to consistently be a second full-time adult in every math and English classroom on our campus, in the form of a highly educated tutor, the impact would be immediately measurable in our periodic assessment data.