

Palisades Charter High School



Collaborative School Equity Review Report

Palisades Charter High School

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Collaborative School Equity Review

A School Equity Review (SER) is a systematic examination of the systems, structures, practices and processes that shape student experiences and outcomes in a school setting that is intended to clarify the context and starting points of school development and improvement efforts through the lens of educational equity. Review results guide the development of a meaningful school plan and suggests benchmarks for evaluation. Schools that undergo a careful analysis of data and information make better decisions about what to change and how to institutionalize systemic change.

External reviews are helpful to schools for a wide range of reasons, however, it is also critical that schools develop mechanisms and the capacity to self-assess and take account of what is working well and what requires development/improvement if the school is to be responsive to the needs of its stakeholders. The process of training school staff and community members to conduct their own SER is called a Collaborative School Equity Review (CSER). The Collaborative School Equity Review is not an evaluation of individuals. Instead, it attempts to holistically examine the intentions, impact and outcomes of the school's work through four domains: 1) School Culture, 2) Leadership, Management and Accountability, 3) Teaching, Learning and Assessment, and 4) Partnerships with Families and the Community.

The Collaborative School Equity Review process includes:

1. Training for school staff in the School Equity Review process
2. Training for school staff in understanding equity in education
3. Collaborative development of a customized rubric to measure the effectiveness of various aspects of the school during the review, to develop shared language and understandings of the school, and to guide recommendations
4. Observations of student learning during classroom lessons and conversations with students about the work they are engaged in
5. Focus group interviews with teachers, administrators and other school staff, students, and family members
6. Analysis of available student and school data
7. Group analysis and prioritization of review findings and recommendations for the development and improvement of the school

The CSER builds participants' capacity by providing them with the opportunity to deepen understandings of equity and their own schools' needs, while also serving to mobilize community stakeholders to make collective decisions about and commit to actions that support equity. It is our hope that this document will be used to support decisions regarding the strategic development and improvement of services for underserved populations of students and families that make up the Palisades Charter High School Community, while retaining and building upon the many strengths of the school.

Understanding Equity in Education

The American Library Association (ALA) takes up the issue of clarifying the difference between *equity* and *equality*, terms that are often misused by being used interchangeably, since both related to fairness. Yet, these similar terms come with important distinctions and carry different implications. According to the ALA, fairness "...demands remedies to redress historic injustices that have prevented or diminished access in the first place: for just as there can be no fairness without equality, there can be none without justice... in order to maximize opportunities for access experienced by certain groups, a good society commits resources in order to level the playing field". *Equality*, on the other hand, can relate to uniform distribution and the same level of access, which is complicated when a society is "stratified into poles of advantage and disadvantage, with the inevitable consequence of privilege and exclusion" (Kranich, 2007).

Corson (2001) argues that equity is associated with 'fairness' or 'justice with fairness', meaning 'justice in the provision of education', and takes individual circumstances into consideration, while 'equality' connotes sameness in treatment by asserting the fundamental or natural equality of all persons (Espinoza, 2007). Discussing the importance of making distinctions between equity and equality, Espinoza (2007) provides historical and political context for understanding equity in education by affirming the role of education as a reproductive mechanism in society, "Indeed, critical theory affirms that educational systems in capitalist societies are involved in the reproduction and change of class relationships and cannot be understood by simply 'adding up' the effects of schooling on each individual to arrive at a sense of social impact (Bowles & Gintis, 1976)... in all those societies with a 'free' market economy a primary function of education is to reproduce the social relations of capitalist societies..." (Espinoza, 2007, p. 344). Her citing of Bowles & Gintis (1976) is a reminder that education is the main factor in upward mobility but also the main cause of the reproduction of social status from generation to generation, making education a social justice issue. Centralizing equity as a priority in education, therefore, comes with both long-term and immediate goals, commitments and implications, given the deep roots of existing social, cultural and economic inequity in our society.

Mingat and Tan (1985) explain two complementary approaches to assessing equity. The first focuses mainly on the question of who gets into school, taking into consideration characteristics of the enrolled population (sex, socioeconomic background, ethnic origin, etc.) and those of the reference population in the country. This form of analysis often leads to examination of the reasons for differences in access, such as prerequisites to admission, examinations, and promotion, and how they affect social selectivity. Considerations of who succeeds in school and why is expanded to include questions of how students with different social backgrounds perform and achievement is examined based on personal and social characteristics as well as access to school resources, availability of books, teacher qualifications, class size, etc. The second approach to analyzing educational equity starts by making explicit the gains associated with access to a particular level of education, viewed through the accumulation of human capital and the appropriation of public resources used to enable education. This is one 'long-term' view of educational benefits and attainment that considered outcomes and returns, or overall resources accrued as well as contributions made to overall government revenue (Mingat and Tan, 1985, p. 298-299). So, while the immediate goals and implications of equity work in education may have to do with understanding the range, difference and specifics of the needs of individual as well as groups of students, long-term implications and goals relate to life outcomes.

Discussing the difficulty of defining equity in education, Jordan (2010) points out that equity is a complex social phenomenon and equalizing opportunities and equalizing outcomes are vastly different endeavors. "What is equitable and fair can be better understood in relationship to other

things and from within a given context... problems in measuring and defining learning using 'objective' standards versus cultural knowledge or multiple ways of knowing complicated attempts to define equity" (p. 147). He goes on to argue that equity is not about providing the same to all students regardless of difference, but because of increasing cultural and linguistic diversity, it is important to define equity in terms of providing knowledge, skills, and worldviews that enable social mobility, meaning context must shape views of equity and it will take on different meaning in different populations. In fact, definitions of educational equity have changed meaning over time as discourse on inequity has evolved (Milem, Umbach, & Ting, 2004; Mohr & Lee, 2000). Educational equity in a global society is about providing transformative learning experiences for students who require such experiences for social mobility, as well as social and cultural reproduction for students already on top" (p. 151). Nieto (1999) frames equity in terms of either equality of opportunity or equal outcomes, including the contexts in which students participate in educational experiences and the extent to which those experiences enable their academic growth (Valenzuela et al., 2006).

Equity is a priority in education largely as a result of recognition that how we educate, who we educate, and how well that education serves future generations is a social justice issue that directly impacts the health and wellbeing of the nation as well as the individuals that make up the communities we serve. Schools are uniquely positioned to respond to the social and cultural forces at work in society and, as such, both research and practices aligned with equity goals recognize the need to draw from various disciplines to address the complex issues that manifest in education and schooling as a result of social, cultural and economic inequity (Carter & Reardon, 2014). For these reasons, equity in education requires a critical pedagogical approach and critical understandings of educational issues, making the following critical equity themes central to equity for teacher mindset in planning and the creation of *content* as well as learning and teaching *practices, processes, and outcomes*: 1) Power 2) Oppression 3) Inequity 4) Positionality 5) Agency (J. Duncan-Andrade, 2009; J. M. R. Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008).

School Profile

Palisades Charter High School (PCHS) is a secondary charter school located in the Pacific Palisades with a long history of being recognized as an academically successful institution. Originally established as a traditional public high school in 1961, the school decided to become a dependent charter school in 1993 when it was threatened with closure due to low enrollment. As a charter, the school expanded the reach of the students it enrolled, intentionally targeting diverse communities throughout the Los Angeles Area and successfully increasing the student population. In 2003, it became an independent charter school.¹

PCHS serves 2,982 students in grades 9-12. 54.3% of the students are identified as White, 21.3% are Latino, 13.9% are African American/Black, 8.3% are Asian, 0.5% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 0.8% Filipino, 0.4% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.4% identify with two or more races. 1,976 of the students attending the school come from more than 113 zip codes, making the student body population one of the most ethnically diverse schools in Los Angeles. More than 25 different languages are spoken among this diverse population of students. 8.9% of the students are identified as special education students, 1.8% are English Learners and 30.9% are socioeconomically disadvantaged.

California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) data indicate 77% of students in the 11th grad met or exceeded the State Standards in English language arts (ELA) and 50% in mathematics, compared to 40% (ELA) and 30% (math) for the district average and 48% (ELA) and 37% (math) for the State average. 76.66% of all 11th grade students have met or exceeded the standards for ELA, yet when disaggregated this means that 51.9% of African American/Black students, 92.31% of Asian students, 65.48% of Latino students, and 84.35% of White students meet or exceed the standards. 40% of students with disabilities meet those same standards. For math, 50.22% of students meet or exceed the standards in the 11th grade, which breaks down to 22.78% African American/Black, 78.85% Asian, 29% Latino, 61.5% White, and 15.94% for students with disabilities. When it comes to 11th grade students who are considered socioeconomically disadvantaged, 64.35% are meeting or exceeding the standards in ELA and 31.28% meet or exceed the standards in math. The percentage of students who complete Palisades Charter high School graduation requirements is 87.1%. African American/Black, American Indian or Alaska Native, Latino, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students, English Learners, Students with Disabilities, and Foster Youth all complete the graduation requirements at a rate lower than the percentage calculated for all students.

The data shows that despite the well-deserved recognition for providing high quality, innovative programming and maintaining high academic outcomes for the majority of students, Palisades Charter High School struggles to meet the needs of African American/Black and Latino students, as well as English learners, Socioeconomically disadvantaged students, students of parents with lower parental education levels, and students with disabilities. The school's leadership recognized the unfinished work of addressing the opportunity gaps at Palisades Charter High School and decided to partner with Small Axe Group LLC to begin the work of intentionally addressing equity.

¹ The data represented in this section of the report has drawn from the 2016-17 School Accountability Report Card (SARC) and the 2018 Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) report.

Overview

Collaborative School Equity Review Methodology:

The CSQR team was comprised of Palisades school staff working alongside Small Axe Group team members. The school staff members selected to participate in Palisade's first CSER included: Jamie Agius (Science), Myrna Cervantes (ELL Coordinator), Monica Iannessa (Assistant Principal), Yakun James (Math), Jeanne Saiza (Social Studies), Giovanni Stewart (School Culture), and Todd Wilkinson.

The review took place over the course of three days². During the three-day review, the CSER team observed 69 classroom lessons for 10-20 minutes each, facilitated 30-60-minute interviews/focus groups with Palisades teachers (25 participants), students (83 participants), coordinators (3 participants), department chairs (10 participants), the school's leadership team (5 participants), school counselors (10 participants), classified staff (8 participants), and spoke with counselors in the college center. On April 30, 2018, our team met with a small group of parents (8 participants), predominantly parents of English learners. Despite organizing a follow-up meeting with parents, the population of parents that were engaged was extremely limited and the team concluded that the information gleaned from those focus groups was insufficient to draw conclusions about the systems, structures, practices and processes used by the school to support strong parent and community partnerships, although some findings did support existing findings related to teaching and learning.

Overview of strengths and focus areas for growth:

What the school does well to support equity:

- The school has established shared leadership structures that keep senior leaders informed and enables responsive decision-making and resource allocation based on analysis of school data and trends
- The school has done well to incorporate important resources and personnel to support the social-emotional needs of students and has become increasingly intentional about cultivating a school culture that embraces diversity and inclusion, while working to establish conditions that allow all members of the community to flourish
- There have been discussions and strategic planning to expand access to Honors courses in an attempt to diversify those classes
- In classes where high levels of student engagement were observed, it resulted from structured student collaboration and effective use of real-world connections and students' prior knowledge, making clear that those teachers had established a healthy rapport with students and made effective use of instructional time
- A wide array of student engagement programs have been developed to build community and make sure students feel connected to the school

To more effectively address equity on campus, the school must:

- Follow through with the charges of the revised 2018 WASC Action Plan for Equity.

² Parent focus groups were organized for a later date, after the three-day review.

- Make more effective use of time in class:
 - increase active engagement of students in lessons
 - regularly check for understanding and utilize formative assessment to provide appropriate rigor and support for students
 - Support students to generate knowledge based on prior learnings, lived experiences and real-world connections in relation to course content
- Utilize strategies that strengthen students' self-efficacy:
 - improve the quantity and quality of feedback provided to students on the progress of their learning and how they can improve (success criteria)
 - improve communication with community stakeholders regarding programmatic and support opportunities on campus
- Deepen teachers' understandings of equity and diversity so they can recognize equity related issues that surface in classes and make informed decisions when responding
- Create a bell schedule that allows for meaningful collaboration among staff and teachers and to allow more traveling students to take advantage of the many resources on campus, particularly those that begin at the start and end of the school day
- Build teacher capacity of what is necessary to support high quality learning for all students through the PLC structure in order to address issues like inconsistencies in grading policies, understandings of how to differentiate based on student needs, understandings of the necessary components of a lesson to support student learning, assessment needs, etc.
- Make better use of monitoring systems to ensure that trends in teaching and learning are known, but also to uphold expected standards for learning
- Empower leaders of learning and teaching to develop ways of understanding trends in teaching and learning within their departments, and provide non-evaluative support and feedback/collaboration on student learning and how (or for whom) it might be improved
- Improve the engagement and supports available to English learners
- Address the barriers to entry and success in AP classes for underrepresented students

Main Findings and Recommendations

Overall Evaluation

Equity is now the central focus of many schools and districts throughout the country. For those who have been working on equity issues for many years, this is a welcome development, but of course it is also reasonable to ask what took so long? Palisades Charter High School has maintained high academic results for the majority of its students for much of its institutional history and enjoys a strong and healthy reputation in the local and surrounding community. The decision to make equity a priority by the school's leaders should be commended as a forward thinking and restorative effort to move an already distinguished school from good to great. Yet, a focus on equity must not be trivialized, since it is a call to reexamine the institutional and social norms that have enabled inequity to thrive alongside the school's generally high academically achieving majority. In essence, a focus on equity brings the need to establish clearer expectations for the implementation of the school's systems and structures, and teaching and learning practices and processes, driven by the school's vision for student success and what is necessary to achieve that vision. The recent WASC study highlights the need to more intentionally support traditionally underserved populations of students, and specifically describes a need for capacity building in instruction, support and college- and career-readiness pathways for all students. The Collaborative School Equity Review team concurs with those recommendations, but also recognizes the need for greater attention on the part of leadership at various levels of the school to become more intentional and strategic in the development of monitoring systems and strategies that enable community responsiveness - to providing support and accountability as needed - and capacity building for stakeholders at all levels. Although accountability may require leadership to drive the initial focus on equity, eventually the high functioning community will need to shift away from top-down to mutual forms of accountability, by developing more inclusive ways of knowing about the context of the school and drawing from the knowledge and experiences of marginalized populations on campus. If the pursuit of equity is truly going to be more than a clever slogan for reform, it will be necessary to make changes in policies and practices, to deepen staff understandings of social, cultural and economic inequity in society and how such inequity manifests in schools, and to develop greater clarity of what educators at Palisades can and must do to interrupt those trends.

Domain 1: School Culture for Learning

The quality of the school's culture for learning requires support in targeted areas.

- The school building is well organized, clean and appropriately set up to enhance learning experiences for all students. The school generally runs smoothly on a daily basis, and there are effective systems in place to ensure that occasional challenges are managed appropriately and effectively.
- The school promotes a collective responsibility among staff, parents and students, and has made efforts to support students to develop positive attitudes, be motivated to work hard and believe they can succeed. Many staff uphold these expectations and goals, yet these efforts are inconsistent. On numerous occasions, staff expressed and demonstrated a lack of buy-in or lack of clarity as to the ways in which school staff do or should support and address students' and colleague's attitudes, perceptions and practices that influence motivation and persistence.
- In most classes, we observed positive rapport between teachers and students, with few disruptions from students that distracted from the work of teachers or other students. However, passive engagement in learning is very common in classrooms, even in support classes intended to accelerate learning and growth, with teacher-centered

lessons dominating the use of class time and a lack of structures used to ensure students who are known to require support receive the help they need. Most staff commit to a collective responsibility for student success by seeking to identify and remove barriers to learning, however, this is not accepted by all.

- Relationships between teachers and students are mostly pleasant, but do not demonstrate sufficient challenge or high expectations for the achievement of all students, but especially underperforming students, English learners and students with IEPs.
- Numerous teachers spoke about a lack of clear expectations for teaching and learning, and a lack of oversight, which many enjoy, but that no clear expectations regarding differentiation and support strategies for students results in only those who choose to provide support or targeted teaching doing so.
- There is inconsistent commitment to and clarity about the school's vision and mission. Too many staff and other stakeholders do not know that the main priorities are for the school and staff do not fully understand how their daily work must align to the vision and mission of the school.
- Policies and procedures are in place to support academic and behavior expectations, but not all students or other stakeholder know them or implement them consistently. As a result, standards and application of policy vary.
- Some students and families are aware of their rights and opportunities to take initiative in classrooms and across the school to influence the quality of stakeholder's experiences, but these opportunities are unevenly known across student and family demographic groups or perceived to be uninviting. The result is that despite the many high-quality programs and learning/development opportunities, involvement in those programs has not sufficiently generated a greater sense of community or empowerment among students who would most benefit from being more connected to the school.

Recommendations:

1. *Building on the learnings and findings of the Collaborative School Equity Review team, develop an Equity Task Force that will guide the focus on equity at Palisades Charter High School by: a) deepening understandings of inequity in education, generally, before investing in deep understandings of inequity at Palisades; b) identifying high-leverage practices capable of addressing the equity issues across Palisades classrooms and provide differentiated support and feedback for teachers to improve the quality of learning across the school (leveraging tier 1 in-class instructional practices and interventions); c) participating in strategic development and improvement planning to ensure equity goals and strategies are embedded in all aspects of the school's growth; d) regularly reviewing the systems, structures, practices and processes that shape learning experiences and the gaps between school-wide intentions and impact of efforts to meet students' short-term goals (i.e. attendance, engagement, skill and knowledge acquisition) and long-term goals (i.e. college, career, health and wellbeing).*
2. *Intentionally target and engage minoritized populations of students and families in support of a more inclusive campus, to improve general communication and engagement with those stakeholders, and to ensure that they feel empowered to contribute to the growth of the school.*
3. *Train and support all staff, including college center staff, to ensure that the school is both perceived and experienced by first generation, low-income, traveling students, students of color and their families as a welcoming and supportive space that is capable of addressing their specific needs.*

Domain 2: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

The quality of learning, teaching and assessment requires support in targeted areas.

- Across the 69 classrooms we observed, teachers regularly communicate agendas and activities students will be expected to participate in during the period, however the new knowledge and skills that students will learn are not always made explicit. Learning objectives and language objectives are not consistently made specific enough to support effective assessment of student progress and are not shared in ways that clearly give focus, purpose and relevance to learning.
- Many teachers use strategies and technology resources to drive lessons and learning, but not for the purpose of improving engagement and accelerating the learning of underperforming students. Students produce work but are not always clear about whether it is of high quality. Students who engage in off task behaviors, and who also struggle with course content, are too frequently able to distract themselves from learning without receiving support or redirects from teachers. The majority of the students who demonstrated blatant disengagement in lessons – either listening to music, sleeping or leaving class frequently – were of color, raising concerns about teacher’s willingness and comfort with addressing off-task behaviors and utilizing interventions in teaching practices capable of interrupting these trends.
- In some classrooms, teachers make consistent effort to enable learning through group and partner work. However, this is not consistent throughout the school, and in most classes, lessons are teacher-centered, promoting passive engagement for students. Most teachers understand why these strategies are necessary for deepening understanding of content and for literacy skill development (writing, reading, listening and speaking), yet implementation in classroom lessons does not reflect this knowledge.
- As a result of a majority of classes being structured in a manner that promotes teacher-centered learning, the use of questions that encourage students to extend their use of new vocabulary or language construction is too infrequent. Observations and interviews with students and teachers suggest that teachers do not always plan questions and activities that meet the specific needs of the range of levels in most classes. Expectations of student use of new skills, vocabulary and strategies are inconsistent across classes, even in the same courses.
- The relationship between teacher practices and students feeling connected to school, being interested in course content, and being motivated to persist through difficulty in order to learn is inconsistent across departments. Students, families and many teachers named mathematics as a department where teaching practices are perceived as fixed, despite student needs. Many teachers we spoke with conveyed an interest in learning more about differentiation strategies and other in-class practices that can support them to meet the wide range of needs in their classes.
- In the majority of lessons, checking for understanding either did not take place or the efforts to check for understanding were insufficient for determining whether students completely understood and acquired newly introduced concepts.
- It was clear through observations that some teachers adjust plans for learning in response to assessment outcomes, but this practice was not a common feature in most lessons.
- Success criteria for the skills and knowledge students are expected to learn are utilized in only a minority of classes across the school. As a result, students are often unclear about what is required of them to be successful. Where rubrics are used, their use does

not always lead to the setting of individual targets or clear explanations about what the next steps might be to improve student work.

- Staff regularly record student progress from interim assessments and utilize school systems to make that data available to students and families, which students and parents describe as helpful and necessary for intentional engagement.
- There are inconsistent opportunities for students to listen, speak, read and write across classrooms, particularly in subjects other than English language arts. Teachers provide some, but infrequent ongoing feedback to guide individuals and groups. Far too many students are reticent to speak and are not sufficiently supported to build confidence in their use of new vocabulary and literacy skills.
- The use of programs, strategies and materials for literacy development is too infrequent across the school to meet students' language needs. There is little adjustment to meet the specific language needs of students, at initial implementation (during class) or in response to ongoing assessment information.

Recommendations:

1. *Continue to develop Professional Learning Communities across the campus to establish shared understandings of learning and teaching needs and expectations for addressing equity and areas for growth outlined in this report.*
2. *Incorporate aspects of the workshop model into pedagogical practices across the school to provide more modeling and feedback, to enhance use of formative assessment to adjust plans and strategies for learning, and to differentiate engagement and support for students.*
3. *Provide differentiated professional development and coaching for teachers on culturally responsive learning, teaching and planning strategies that address school equity goals, and make curricula more robust, accurate and representative, but also to support teachers to personalize learning based on understanding of each student as a person and a learner, and to identify and take action on need for intervention and support and increase the relevance of teaching.*

Domain 3: Leadership, Management and Accountability

The quality of leadership, management and accountability is effective.

- The school's mission statement is displayed in parts of the school and on the school's website, yet they are not integrated into the daily work of teachers, school leaders, and staff. It is not sufficiently utilized as a compass to guide the school's work in teams or for individuals, and not all teachers, leaders and staff understand their roles in minimizing distractions and removing barriers that hinder student progress.
- School leaders empower teachers to take initiative and make decisions that shape learning and teaching practices in the classroom in alignment with the school's priorities. Leaders demonstrate high levels of trust through shared leadership structures that enable teachers to make decisions for themselves and their PLCs based on school priorities and student needs, as evidenced by in-class experiences and student achievement data.
- Leaders make effective use of ongoing data to set goals and monitor progress. Teachers are generally aware of students' changing needs but would benefit from more specific feedback on classroom systems, structures, practices and processes that effectively support student learning and ways that student learning could be improved.

- Structures are in place to facilitate collaborative planning for teachers and teachers meet regularly, but there is insufficient focus on the needs of underperforming students and little or not enough impact on their progress as a result of meetings. Leaders ensure that meetings are happening, but do not participate or ensure that effective decisions are made, and actions carried out.
- Leaders visit some classrooms more consistently than others, but not necessarily as in response to there being greater need for support or accountability in those classes, which garners limited information on the effectiveness of learning and teaching for students struggling academically. Sometimes, leaders do not provide support because it is not the main priority, because they do not know how to, or because there will be resistant responses.
- Leaders offer professional development to all staff, but provision is not determined by explicit understanding of what individual staff need or desire to improve outcomes for all students, especially underperforming students. Inconsistent follow-through/implementation of newly acquired skills/strategies and best practices in classrooms has the greatest impact on the students who would benefit most from their use.
- The school's development path is guided by a commitment to the notion that nothing happens by chance. Improvements are managed through short-, mid-, and long term-stages and a wide range of stakeholders contribute to the creation of action plans, although there is still a need to involve more of underrepresented stakeholders and parents of students who live furthest from the school. Strategic planning aligns with identified student needs and makes good use of available finances, people, time, facilities and materials. The process for allocating resources includes effective focus on monitoring and evaluating the impact on student progress, including underperforming students. Leaders revise and adapt strategies in response to ongoing evaluation.
- The school's board of trustees has a system in place to stay knowledgeable of the concerns and needs of the diverse stakeholders served by the school. The board's agendas and minutes reflect the mission and vision of the school, emphasizing student achievement and reflect a commitment to excellence and equity. Board members have clear roles and responsibilities, when contributes to them working as a cohesive unit. Communication protocols are consistently used to ensure stakeholders are informed of change processes and school priorities.

Recommendations:

1. *Establish learning and teaching leaders (LTLs) across the school to support team learning for teachers, which may take place in grade-level, departmental teams, or PLCs, that use student learning as a barometer for teacher needs. Charge LTLs with the task of taking greater ownership of what is happening in and across classrooms so that they can work with colleagues to inform how teams will address school priorities, to reflect on individual student learning, for gathering advice, ideas, and supports, and to take the next instructional steps necessary to advance student learning. LTLs will need to collaborate with the Equity Task Force, and vice-versa, to ensure equity is embedded in collaborative work, planning and teaching across the school. Establish systems and protocols for non-evaluative observations and feedback to enable teachers to practice, grow and take risks in teams without fear of consequence and to support continuous growth.*
2. *Develop monitoring systems and strengthen leadership's "ways of knowing", so that leaders at various levels of the school have an accurate understanding of what is working well and what must be done to improve the quality of learning for students across all classrooms, but*

also to ensure that support and accountability is provided to uphold teaching expectations that meet the community's standards for learning.

3. *Engage school leaders at all levels in developing strong understandings of equity in education and equity issues at PCHS so that they understand how and where leadership is needed to support a school-wide focus on and commitment to equity.*

Domain 4: Partnerships with Families and the Community

Although a group of parents were engaged in focus groups with our team during an April 30th gathering, we do not believe the group was large enough to be considered a representative sample. Therefore, the CSER is unable to make judgements about the quality of family and community partnerships. We suggest a parent liaison or committees that work to engage and represent parents contribute to a targeted review of parent and community partnerships through an equity lens to determine strengths, growth and priority areas.

Scoring Summary

Grade	Descriptor	Definition
1	Requires School-Wide Support	There are insufficient guidelines, policies or practice in place to ensure that provision is of an appropriate quality to support student learning.
2	Requires Support in Targeted Areas	There are pockets of suitable work being done, or practices in place that could be built upon to improve the overall provision, but inconsistencies are apparent and the plan to embed the work is not solidly implemented to ensure that all students learn effectively.
3	Effective	The work is supported by consistently implemented policy, leading to consistency in practice, so that the majority of students make good rates of progress.
4	Exemplary	The work is of an exceptional quality leading to better than expected rates of progress for all students

Domain 1 – CULTURE FOR LEARNING		1	2	3	4
The extent to which:			x		
1.1	The school promotes a collective responsibility among staff, parents and students, ensuring all students develop positive attitudes, are motivated to work hard and believe that they can succeed.		x		
1.2	Staff members and other stakeholders have high expectations of the achievement and conduct of all students, demonstrate deep commitment, believe that students can succeed, set challenging goals, and maintain a common, consistent school-wide approach.		x		
1.3	Staff and other stakeholders are committed to the school's vision and mission and to doing what is necessary to ensure all students reach their potential.		x		
1.4	Stakeholders share mutually respectful and positive relationships, with staff who model and maintain high expectations for professional behavior. Equality of opportunity, understanding of cultural diversity and an appreciation of personal dignity support all students' continual improvement. All students and families feel safe and welcome.				NA
1.5	The school personnel consistently implement policies and procedures that address academics, attendance and expectations for behavior in order to establish clear and consistent routines that support a positive, academically stimulating, student-centered learning environment. The school is effective in communicating these policies and ensuring all stakeholders understand them.		x		
1.6	Students and adults feel empowered to make decisions, show initiative and take on responsibility that add value to the school and the wider community.		x		
1.7	Leaders and staff understand that a safe, clean, collaborative and well-ordered work environment can play a positive role in the culture of the school and develop a sense of efficacy and empowerment among staff which influences the school's identity, culture and performance.			x	
Overall score:				x	

Domain 2 – QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING		1	2	3	4
The extent to which			x		
2.1	All students clearly understand the learning target and know why they are relevant. Teachers set content and language objectives that are specific.		x		

	Learning targets have clear success criteria. Teachers share learning targets with students and reference them often in lessons.				
2.2	All students are challenged to new learning levels. Teachers use specific strategies, including technology, which motivate students' interest and encourage high levels of engagement and productivity.		x		
2.3	Students demonstrate progress towards standards-based learning targets through opportunities to work collaboratively, share ideas, solve problems, think critically and practice new language and content skills and knowledge.		x		
2.4	Students practice analytical skills and use strategies that promote better understanding, enabling practice and development of listening and speaking skills.	x			
2.5	Teachers make regular checks for understanding during lessons. By the close of the lesson, teachers know which students have and have not met the objective for learning.	x			
2.6	Multiple forms of data inform plans for teaching and learning. Learning activities are appropriately challenging and matched to the learning needs of all students.		x		
2.7	All students reflect on and analyze their own work to set individual targets.	x			
2.8	Teachers record and share ongoing assessment data to monitor the progress of all students.			x	
2.9	Students experience a rigorous, balanced, engaging and culturally relevant curriculum that emphasizes the development of speaking, listening, reading and writing across all content areas.		x		
2.10	The school implements programs and strategies and uses materials specifically designed to support English language development for all students.	x			
2.11	Real-world experiences and relevant links across subjects increase engagement and accelerate learning.		x		
	Overall score:		x		

Domain 3 – LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY		1	2	3	4
The extent to which				x	
3.1	The school has a clear and relevant vision for the success of students.		x		
3.2	School leaders model commitment to the school's mission and lead by example, demonstrating depth of commitment, tenacity to achieve the school's vision, and high expectations for the performance of staff and students.			x	
3.3	School leaders monitor the progress made by students in meeting their interim targets, develop an improvement plan to ensure the realization of the communities' values and beliefs, as well as the achievement of long and short-term benchmarks to ensure continuous improvement.			x	
3.4	School leaders recruit and hire effective staff that are developed and retained through differentiated professional development. School leaders guide and monitor the use of structured teacher planning time/PLCs to ensure it is used effectively and results in continuous progress for students.		x		
3.5	School leaders measure the effectiveness of teaching and learning across the school. They provide constructive feedback and set goals to improve practice.		x		
3.6	School leaders provide relevant support and professional development to improve teaching for all students.		x		
3.7	School leaders align resources for all students with strategic plans and goals to meet identified priorities for development and improvement.			x	
3.8	School governance provides proper oversight to ensure adherence to the mission and vision of the school as laid out in its charter.				x
Overall score:				x	

Domain 4 – PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY					
The extent to which					
4.1	School leaders and teachers place a high priority on regularly communicating with parents and guardians to build collaborative relationships and engage them as partners in their child's learning. Home languages are used to ensure all families are engaged.				
4.2	Information for parents and guardians on the academic and social progress of students, expectations of standards, areas for improvement and potential pathways to college and career is shared regularly and in response to the school's growing awareness of the needs of families.				
4.3	The school encourages parents, guardians and families to participate in the decision-making processes within the school.				
4.4	The school creates opportunities to celebrate academic achievement with parents. The social and cultural diversity are recognized as integral components of the school community.				
4.5	The school creates collaborative partnerships with external agencies and community groups to support the academic and personal development of students.				
Overall score:					NA

Appendix A

After discussing learning and teaching, we agree that good teaching consists of:

- Checking for understanding
- Clear learning objectives and clear expectations – academic and behavioral
- Modeling
- Independent practice time
- Check-ins for prior knowledge and retention of previously introduced knowledge/skill
- Good use of formative assessment
- Interpersonal support/mutual respect/relationship building
- Providing quality feedback
- Providing opportunities for revision and the development of mastery
- Clear routines established to facilitate learning
- Students tracking their own progress
- Being responsive to the energy and feelings of students/the room
- Sharing success criteria with students
- Responding to, enabling and encouraging the development of multiple intelligences/learning styles
- Scaffolding and ensuring quality plans for intervention
- Validating prior knowledge

Appendix B

Team concerns after review of school data:

1. Do we have access to disaggregated data on students with special needs in our school?
2. What resources are committed to supporting disadvantaged students?
 - a. How are diagnostic assessments used?
 - b. What kind of interventions exist? What are they for?
 - c. Do we incentivize preparation and support for CAASPP?
3. What has changed about mathematics that has shaped student achievement trends (downward or “leveling off”)? Why are all students struggling with problem solving and data analysis?
4. Do students who have to travel long distances face additional challenges at Pali?
5. What are we doing to assess and reassess reading?
6. How do students perceive discipline at the school? How is race/ethnicity significant in perceptions and experiences with discipline?
7. What are relationships like between administrators and teachers?
8. What annual evaluations and adjustments do we use or plan for?
9. What can we do in our curriculum to better support/engage for African American, Latinos, RFEPs, and students coming from homes with less educated parents?

Appendix C

Articles on Palisades HS for historical context:

- Los Angeles Magazine (1998), (p. 52):
URL: <https://books.google.com/books?id=510EAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA52#v=onepage&q&f=false>
- *Driven to Learn: Minority Students endure long days to be bused to westside schools, but sometimes they get blamed for campus problems* (1994):
URL: http://articles.latimes.com/1994-06-19/news/we-5997_1_westside-schools
- *LAUSD Proposes ending PaliHi Buses* (2010):
URL: <https://archive.is/20120911090952/http://www.palisadespost.com/news/content.php?id=5529>