

SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT
ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS,
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
FOR

MAKING WAVES ACADEMY

4123 Lakeside Drive

Richmond, CA. 94806

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Preface

Mission, Vision, Values, & Student Learner Outcomes

Mission Statement

MWA commits to rigorously and holistically preparing students to gain acceptance to and graduate from college to ultimately become valuable contributors to the workforce and their communities.

Guiding Principles and Expected School-wide Learner Outcomes

MWA is founded on a set of Guiding Principles and Core Values which establish the framework for working with students. MWA Academy's Expected School-wide Learner Outcomes and Core Values are integrated into the academic and social emotional curricular programs provided in the classrooms and community meetings. The Expected School-wide Learner Outcomes and Core Values are critical components to helping students connect the academic program to real-life issues and community needs.

Academic Content – What We Know

Wave-Makers demonstrate proficiency in MWA Content Standards (based on California State Standards) for English language arts, math, social studies, science, English language development, health and physical education.

- ***Scholarship- How We Think, Read, and Communicate***

Wave-Makers think, read, write, and speak like scholars (historians, mathematicians, scientists, authors, and literary critics).

- ***Critical Consciousness – How We Act on What We Know***

Wave-Makers combine their intellect and critical thinking to make healthy choices for themselves and positive changes for their community.

- ***Collaboration – How We Work with Others*** Wave-Makers work together to build collective genius.

- ***Self-Expression-*** Wave-Makers develop an understanding of self by demonstrating their creativity across the curriculum.

Revised SLO's as of fall of 2018, still are open for stakeholder feedback through 2020.

College Ready- Rigor

Wave-Makers think, read, write, speak, and listen like scholars (for example: historians, literary critics, mathematicians, scientists, linguists, artists, and athletes) by:

Practicing the practical application of real-world skills while engaging in all current content standards

Critical Consciousness How we Act on What We Know

Wave-Makers are agents of change who demonstrate the ability to engage with multiple perspectives through learning, questioning, reflecting and participating in meaning-making by:

- Asking questions to make meaning
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Explaining rationale
- Learning through reflection and problem solving

Collaboration

Wave-Makers work together to create joint products, cooperatively solve problems, and build an understanding of a topic while practicing key skills to develop proficiency and learn from peers by:

- Engaging with skills, habits, and content through multiple opportunities for discussion
- Learning from error
- Reflecting on data

The involvement and collaboration of all staff and other stakeholders to support student achievement.

Since the last accreditation the law changed, adjusting the governance structure to more transparency and accountability. The Charter was renewed in the 2016-17 school year. A petition was presented to grow the MWA to a new Pittsburg to a 5th to 12th grade school. This increase in size was finally put to rest by MWA. The structure of the main office is more like a public high school now. The Central Office has made involvement of all stakeholders more direct and accountable to stakeholders.

A single school leader model was adopted in the Spring of 2019. In January 2020, the lower school director was promoted to the senior school director (upper school and lower school).

In the winter of 2019 committee dealt with strong feelings regarding school leadership and practice. After a time of investigation and communication MWA leadership made changes to allow more staff participation; open forums now are used to allow more communication.

1. The clarification and measurement of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do through schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards (*note the selected schoolwide learner outcomes examined by the school*).

The school is a model and experiment in many ways in how to develop high achievement in at risk lower socio economic areas. The schools' clarification of what the students should achieve are ambitious. The school is growing and is difficult to gain admission.

The campus has grown significantly; in fact too fast given the high cost of housing that discourages young teachers from even applying to the school. Teacher retention at the upper school level is a challenge.

A teacher residency program was started in 2018-19, in a year long paid "residency" year to recruit teachers. This has been partly successful in developing a staff that will stay.

Technology was launched in 2018-19 providing a Chromebook to every student, for daily use and to take home.

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

The school has institutionalized data to show student achievement. Their dashboard shows significant increases in performance and improvement in school climate (lowering suspension rates for example). Their dashboard shows gains in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

Needs were identified in the dashboard in the areas of Math, Chronic Absenteeism, Suspension Rates and Graduations rates with most of these categories are slowly improving.

3. The assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning in relation to schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and ACS WASC/CDE criteria.

The school states "there is a lot to celebrate and acknowledge in terms of overall student achievement and college readiness." The program, in spite of the difficulty recruiting teachers for the high school, is implementing the student learner outcomes, keeping high academic standards (all students in high school are in A-G classes, and following WASC criteria married to LCAP criteria to drive student achievement.

4. The alignment of a long-range action plan to the school's areas of need; the development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the plan.

Challenges exist, as one might imagine given the very ambitious School Learning Objectives. The Action Plan coupled with the LCAP seeks to align to the greatest areas of need, and the fine tuning of a system of accountability and monitoring progress.

These challenges are: Recruiting and maintaining a highly qualified and experienced teaching staff and recruiting a veteran counseling and administrative staff. Aligning across grades with the middle and upper schools and encouraging collaboration between the two. The approach to learning and instructional philosophy of instruction is in the development stages.

Again it must be stressed that this is a highly at risk population, with many needs that go outside of traditional norms. The school defines an “efficiency based approach” (difficult to quantify, a “growth mindset” again not easily quantified) for statistical proof. The human touch is very important at MWA.

A “thinking outside the box” is often needed with at-risk students and there is plenty of evidence of that in the innovative practices that are being tried at MWA.

Chapter I: Progress Report

Since the last self-study:

Major changes have been made in more attention being paid by leadership to teacher’s concerns. Moreover, there is a realization that only with a diverse and capable staff can the high expectations of learning be accomplished for this at risk population.

A relatively new program has gone through some growing pains, but innovative approaches, for example the Differentiated Tier Instruction is used in the middle school as remediation and support. Students’ progress is tracked closely, and students “graduate ” from one tier of support to another (the higher the achievement the more independent the learner).

MWA also uses additional instructional minutes strategically with extended days, Saturday and summer programs to meet student instructional expansive needs. For example the DREAM program is SIS funded extending instruction to 6:00 pm in some instances.

It must be stressed that this is a new school relatively speaking and is attempting a very ambitious set of learning objectives.

Leadership Talent and Capacity Building: High School faculty attended many workshops and professional development activities. Several new key positions were created to support the college readiness and post secondary pathways.

An associate dean position was created in the 2016-17 school year but was eliminated as a planned new position to oversee the entire school (5-12). ***This essential change was done in January 2020.***

Several other positions were created, including a Student Activities Director.

Faculty retention rates fluctuated again due to economic housing factors; TFA Corps members finished their 2 year commitment. The school reports short term service by essential management personnel.

Curriculum

The curriculum has expanded in many ways as reported by the school, including: CSU college readiness, a Career Services Coordinator was hired, Next Generation Science Standards were adopted, adoption of Next Generation Science Standards were adopted with new classes in 2018, AP Program has grown significantly. The AP Program is open access.

Programming

Professional development has continued with a SPED Coordinator offering professional development. An English Language Development support class was created, a credit recovery program during the core day; a Fundamentals of Math course was developed, online math program, a Response to Intervention model was revised in intervening and accelerated programming for students. A Saturday Academy was started to help students who are struggling.

Middle School

Leadership Talent and Capacity Building

The middle school has maintained its faculty and leadership. Leadership has been maintained at the middle school and 100% has been retained.

Curriculum and Programming

The school has moved to a single-subject model. Various math program curriculums are being tried, including Math Expressions and Open Up, dealing with critical thinking ; the goal being that all students will be able to attempt an AP math class by the time they are upper level students.

The goal is that by the end of the 8th grade all students will be performing at grade level in math. A math intervention program is implemented to attain this lofty goal.

Innovation

Technology is everywhere on all levels, from 5th to 12th grades. All students have a Chromebook that they take home. White boards are in abundance and are used heavily along with HDMI projectors, etc.

The school has a high level of innovation in several areas, supporting staff for diversity and inclusion. Aides are plentiful, a restorative justice model is in full effect. Intervention strategies are robust, ranging from teacher interventions to social workers. Staff partner with families. All parents volunteer 20 hours a year to actively participate in learning of all students including their own.

A teacher residency program has been launched, successfully “home growing staff”. Residents earn their credentials, receive a salary, health benefits and compensation to cover their credential costs. 100% of the members of this have later taught on the staff.

A “tumbling block schedule has been adopted in 2016-17; along with a modified block schedule that prioritizes student’s input.

The student activities office utilizes a new technology 5 Star Students to track and incentivize participation in campus activities.

In 2016-17 a student transition program was begun: studying the transition from high school to college or trade schools and the CAP alumni association of the MW Foundation.

The Middle School has maintained high faculty and leadership retention. This mid-level core of stability has made MWA a more resilient and stable organization. The middle school also adopted the ANET (Achievement Network), a standards based assessment platform that provides valid data.

The middle school has made good progress in school culture and climate as well as co-curricular offerings.

Restorative practices have been established as a set of school discipline to build positive not negative relationships. Relate, repair and restore drives the discipline of the school and student suspension rates have dropped from 9.5% in 2016 to 6.0 % in 2018.

In 2017-18 middle school athletics ceased being club only and became interscholastic. A full sports program has developed for the middle grades, joining a full interscholastic program for the high school.

The Action Plan and the LCAP goals have been merged. In spite of the difficulties in merging the LCAP and the Action Plan, the committee has shared the information from both sources to track the Action Plan.

A School Site Council is moving toward reviewing the LCAP and WASC plans as one.

School leadership during the year provides updates related to the WASC Action Plan. LCAP plans will be reviewed together now and in the future.

Since the mid-cycle review the school has reviewed the student community profile and the midterm committees recommendations on multiple occasions as reported to this committee, again paying attention to both the LCAP and the Action Plan.

The Action Plan was also tracked in a standardized document "WASC Progress to Goals".

Documents were referenced in the FOL.

Chapter II: Student/Community Profile

The school was established in 1989 to support socio-economic disadvantaged youth. In 2005-2007 the school started the process of becoming a Charter School.

In 2007-2011 MWA opened as a 5th through 8th middle school.

In fall of 2011 MWA expands to grades 9-12.

About 70% gain admission to four year colleges and 25% enroll in community college; a remarkable feat for a new school.

In 2017 MWA expands enrollment. In the spring 2019 more than a dozen students graduate from college in just four years.

Growth ambitions are denied in the attempt to build another facility in Pittsburg.

The rapid growth of MWA has a downside. For one, it has been difficult to build a consistent staff at the high school level, although it must be noted all high schools in the bay area are having trouble holding on to staff due to the high housing prices and the chronic teacher shortage.

Meanwhile the facilities at MWA have seen additional building and growth of the 5-12 model, with separate facilities arranged around elementary subject areas and the high school (or upper school) .

Hence there are two lower school buildings that are state of the art plus two upper school buildings. None of these buildings are at capacity.

MWA is located in Richmond California with a very diverse student body. Over 70% of the students come from Title One Schools in Richmond. Over 75% of the students qualify for free and reduced lunch.

MWA is a 501 c 3. MWA implements a "holistic approach to educating students that includes rigorous instruction, academic intervention, transportation, meals, mental health services, socio-emotional development, and robust college counseling and college access services."

Moreover, academic support and differentiation is adopted in the middle school, which addresses the needs for students of remediation, support and extension. For example ELD and GATE instruction/activities occur at the same time as Tier 3 and Tier 4 support for remediation and more intensive support .

Hence a comprehensive student centered approach, likened to an individual IEP for behavior for example, is enacted for all the students who need it. This is in sync with the overall mission of the school to enhance the achievement potential in every student.

Curriculum and Approach:

“The overriding belief structure as observed by our committee in many aspects, that ALL students are capable at high levels and are capable of having access to a rigorous and relevant curriculum that leads to college and career readiness.”

This has led to a very effective approach that starts in the middle school, which is essentially the only entry point into the 5-12 school system, giving maximum effort to change and modify student learning and overall behavior and mold it into a successful paradigm.

Interviews with students show exactly that. “We get all the help we need with whatever blocks our success. It means we have to work at it, but the support is there.”

This ambitious expectation of student achievement is working, given the improving achievement results that are in evidence in classroom behavior and beginning to show in assessments, both teacher made and standardized.

It needs to be noted that the 9-12 segment of the MWA educational system has only six years of development.

There have been many changes and adjustments made to emphasize the goal of the school to make overachievers from those students who do not enjoy the privileges and advantages of more affluent youth.

In short, we witnessed the American Dream in educational achievement in many aspects of the school’s model; and as such attesting to the continuing progress of the school in many different aspects of a quality secondary education.

This ambitious expectation of student achievement is founded in the middle school, which is the most common entry point into the school (the vast majority of students enter the fifth grade to join the school).

This fact is very important because it gives the school grades 5 to 12 with virtually the same children. Hence the goals and objectives of the Action Plan for long range improvement of student achievement is much more under the control of the school’s leadership and vision.

School's analysis of student achievement data

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT COMPARED TO HIGH-PERFORMING DISTRICTS

Table 3: Selected 2017-2018 Dashboard Results

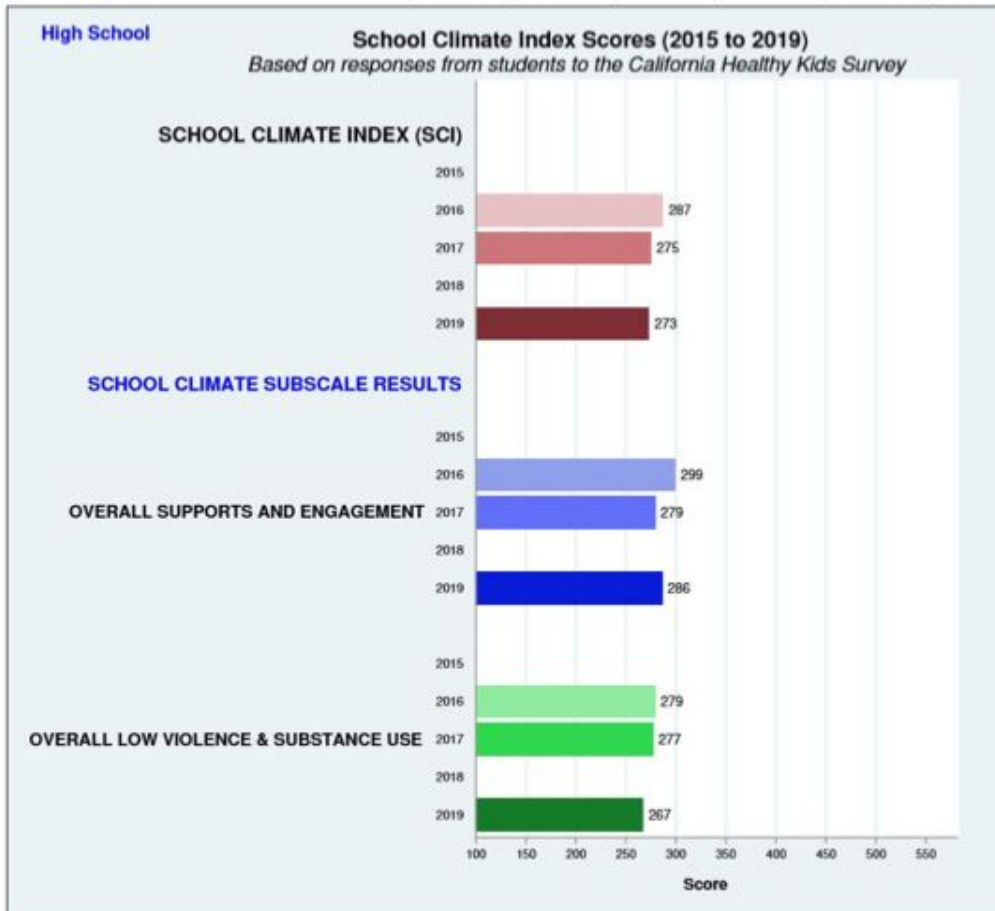
	Acalanes Union	San Ramon Valley USD	Making Waves Richmond	WCCUSD	Pittsburg USD
Graduation Rate					
ALL	96.4%	97.0%	94.4%	80.5%	90.8%
SED	91.6%	93.2%	94.1%	79.1%	90.1%
HI	95.9%	96.2%	95.2%	76.8%	90.6%
College and Career Prepared					
ALL	78.0%	76.8%	70.8%	34.8%	49.3%
SED	59.4%	58.1%	70.6%	30.9%	47.1%
HI	66.0%	64.4%	72.6%	29.2%	47.5%



As you can see by this graphic, MWA competes very well, considering the high school has only been in existence six years with districts in the immediate area. This is impressive considering that MWA takes children who from lower socio economic status with societal lower expectations of scholastic success.

School Climate Index – Upper School

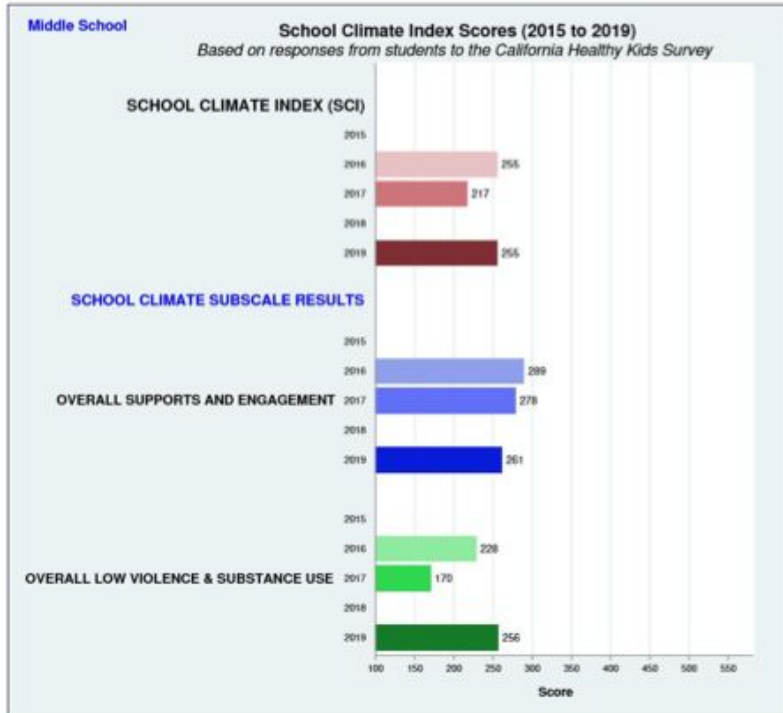
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Change
SCI Score	-	287	275	-	273	-14
SCI State Percentile	-	40	30	-	28	-12
SCI Similar Schools Percentile	-	55	44	-	43	-12



School climate and behavior is a constant emphasis. These scores show improvement and low levels of violence and substance use.

School Climate Index – Middle School

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Change
SCI Score ²	-	255	217	-	255	0
SCI State Percentile	-	21	6	-	21	0
SCI Similar Schools Percentile	-	39	7	-	39	0



Again, dashboard data shows a school climate that is getting more positive all the time. This, as shown in the progress report, by design.

Again it must be noted that the middle school (Grades 5-8) has a longer history and their success is beginning to be felt as they move through their high school careers.

Dashboard changes at a glance

Demographic Data	2017	2018
# of Students Enrolled	781	795
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	88%	89.7%
English Learners	24.8%	19.5%

Indicator	2017	2018	Notes
English Language Arts	Orange	Yellow	EL, Hispanic and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students increased in academic performance. African American students stayed in the yellow but increased 18.7 points.
Mathematics	Orange	Yellow	Hispanic and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students increased in academic performance. African American and EL students moved from red in the prior year to orange.
English Learner Progress	Blue	NA	Due to the new ELPAC scoring a color will not be assigned until academic year 2019-20. 30.8% of ELs are "Well-Developed (level 4)" and 51.1% are "Moderately Developed (level 3)."
Graduation Rate	Green	Green	Grad rate 94.1%
Chronic Absenteeism	NA	Orange	2018 Dashboard is the first year this indicator shows up. Chronic absenteeism increased 1.8% from the 2016-17 school year.

Improvement is shown in basic skills. Again, as the middle school students move through high school the achievement pay off of the basic program of achievement and affect improvement begin to show.

Suspension Rate	Red	Yellow	African American and Students with Disabilities remain in the red. Hispanic and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged improved and moved to Yellow. English learners improved and are now in the orange.
Local Indicators	All Met	All Met	----

2018-2019 School Year Dashboard Data

Priority 4 – Student Achievement (Academic Indicator)

English Language Arts			
Grades	2019 - Achievement Level	2018 - Achievement Level	Change
5th Grade	Standard Nearly Met	Standard Nearly Met	-4.8
6th Grade	Standard Nearly Met	Standard Nearly Met	+22.2
7th Grade	Standard Nearly Met	Standard Met	-10.4
8th Grade	Standard Met	Standard Nearly Met	+34.5
11th Grade	Standard Met	Standard Met	+21.6

Math			
Grades	2019 - Achievement Level	2018 - Achievement Level	Change
5th Grade	Standard Nearly Met	Standard Nearly Met	-13.8
6th Grade	Standard Not Met	Standard Not Met	+22.7
7th Grade	Standard Nearly Met	Standard Nearly Met	-49.4
8th Grade	Standard Nearly Met	Standard Not Met	+38.4
11th Grade	Standard Nearly Met	Standard Nearly Met	+12.2

State Priority	Indicator	2019	2018	Change
5: Student Engagement	Chronic Absenteeism (absent 10% or more missed days)	7.8%	7.8%	0%
5: Student Engagement	Graduation Rate (four-year cohort rate anticipated)	98.72%	94.4%	+4.32%
6: School Climate	Suspension Rate (2018-19)	6.0%	6.6%	-.6%
8: Outcomes in a Broad Course of Study	College/ Career Indicator (Projected)	62% (48 out of 78 graduates are prepared)	70.8%	-8.8%

Basic skills scores show standards nearly met in most categories, given the challenges the school faces, and the graduation rate of over 90% is impressive.

Subgroup	% of Students Suspended 2017-18	% of Students Suspended 2018-19	% Change
All students	6.6	6.0	-0.6
Socioeconomically disadvantaged	6.7	5.5	-1.2
Students with disabilities	15.2	7.3	-7.9
African American	22.4	14.7	-7.7
Hispanic	5	4.4	-0.6

Suspensions are falling in all demographic groups. The school uses again a holistic approach to student learning needs. What is impressive is as the school matures there is better articulation, especially in behavior and goal setting, that encourage student high achievement levels than would be expected given the lower socio economic circumstances these children must deal with every day.

The intensive help that the student gets on every level in many ways, dealing with all aspects of the students life, behavioral modification, improvement in readiness to learn, learning modalities, on task behavior, discipline, high achievement qualities that are paying off in a cohort that heretofore has not performed very well in regular school environments.

The committee visited many classrooms and watched the system in action, interviewed specialized staff who dealt with the challenges these young people have to deal with every day (many of the high school students are working!) to help their families survive AND work themselves, plus attend school with the ultimate goal of college enrollment.

In short, this place works, in quality conditions that are delivered to students in a meaningful and enriched way. This school delivers a quality and high level educational experience that is paying off in success as the high school turns out more college bound students (which is the main goal of the entire MWA experience).

Much more data was made available than shown in this section. However, the data shown here is from the FOL and summarizes the achievements of the school and areas of growth.

Math and Science and acquiring a staff that is consistent and stay working at the school, in math and science is important.

Classroom observation encountered several substitutes and a high school staff that needs continuity. At present, in spite of innovative efforts at retaining staff, the upper school (high school) is still losing teachers.

The new middle and high school director, who will have authority over ALL the schools, both high school and middle school, and is aimed at being successful in hiring and keeping an excellent teaching staff BOTH keeping the able Middle School Staff AND building an able and qualified high school staff.

Again, it must be emphasized that the high school is relatively young, with many changes in leadership. It also must be mentioned that in spite of this, the high school maintains an over 95% graduation rate while everyone takes A-G classes.

It appears this inconsistency in leadership has ended with the recent promotion of the Middle School Director to Director of both High School AND middle school and is a much needed reform that already is showing some progress.

Because this is a new development and not really addressed in the school's FOL, we arranged an interview with the new Director.

An extensive interview with that person indicated that she has the vision and purpose to achieve a more stable high school staff, since for the past decade she has done so at the middle school level. It must be noted that finding teachers in today's market is not easy; the competition is fierce especially in the Bay Area.

However an interview with the newly appointed school Director indicates a dedication and experience that will help fill this essential gap in personnel that is critical to the school's overall success.

It must be noted that this appointment was made about a month ago, and is not included in the school's recent FOL.

The new Director indicates that she intends to work on the culture of the high school to improve chances of retaining staff. In the short time she has been Director of both High School and Middle School she has moved her office to the high school plant, she had held several meetings with staff and conducted surveys to find areas of consensus with high school teachers as to making their experience at the school more satisfying and hence deserving of staying.

Finally given the difficulties in hiring teaching staff in the Bay Area the committee has made it plain to them that this will be a difficult task. The new Director appears to be equal to the task, having built the Middle School staff up over the lifetime of the school.

Chapter III: Quality of the School's Program

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

A1. Vision and Purpose Criterion

To what extent a) does the school have a clearly stated vision and mission (purpose) based on its student needs, current educational research, the district Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), and the belief that all students can achieve at high academic levels?

To what extent is the school's purpose, supported by the governing board and the district LCAP, further defined by schoolwide learner outcomes and the academic standards?

The School's vision and purpose is clearly stated. The school is for at risk students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds with the goal of high academic achievement. This vision is very strong and pervades the school's culture. The mission of the school is consistent with the idea that all students, even those from difficult backgrounds, can achieve at a high level and be prepared for college and career. The evidence indicates that the school involves all stakeholders in the development of vision, mission and schoolwide learner outcomes.

The school's purpose is defined in the mission statement and is further defined by schoolwide learner outcomes. More specifically, the school has published guiding principles and core values. These guiding principles are focused on both academic outcomes for students as well as the social emotional learning of the students. The schoolwide learner outcomes are based on college ready rigor, critical consciousness, and collaboration. These schoolwide learner outcomes are strongly in support of the school's purpose. The school's purpose and schoolwide learner outcomes are aligned to the resources and strategies defined in the LCAP. The evidence indicates that the students, parents and other members of the school and business community understand and are committed to the vision of the school and the LCAP.

A2. Governance Criterion

To what extent does the governing board a) have policies and bylaws and the school's purpose is aligned with them to support the achievement of the schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and college- and career-readiness standards based on data-driven instructional decisions for the school?

To what extent does the governing board delegate implementation of these policies to the professional staff?

To what extent does the governing board monitor results regularly and approve the single schoolwide action plan and its relationship to the Local Control and Accountability Plan?

The governing board has policies and procedures that are aligned to the school's purpose with the goal of achieving schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards and college and career readiness standards. Student performance data is reviewed regularly by the board as well as school leadership. The governing board appears to delegate its implementation of these policies to the professional staff and monitors that these policies are being implemented. The evidence indicates that the governing board has approved the single schoolwide action plan as well as the Local Control and Accountability Plan. The presentations and subsequent approvals by the board are based on data-driven instructional decisions for the school. Governing board members meet regularly with parents, teachers and school leadership and parents regularly attend school board meetings to express their concerns. The school utilizes the uniform complaint procedure as described in the charter.

A3. Leadership: Data-Informed Decision-Making and Ongoing Improvement Criterion

To what extent based on multiple sources of data, does the school leadership, parent/community, and staff make decisions and initiate activities that focus on all students achieving the schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and college- and career-readiness standards?

To what extent do the school leadership and staff annually monitor and refine the schoolwide action plan and make recommendations to modify the LCAP as needed?

There is evidence that the school uses multiple sources of data to make decisions and initiate activities that focus on all students achieving the schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards and college and career readiness standards. The evidence indicates that the school leadership and staff annually monitor the schoolwide action plan and make recommendations to modify the LCAP. This monitoring is done in cooperation between the school's governing board, the professional staff and community/stakeholder groups. The school collects data from numerous assessments throughout the year. The school should use this data more frequently to inform instruction and drive system changes. The school communicates regularly with staff about initiatives and expectations.

A4. Staff: Qualified and Professional Development Criterion

To what extent does a qualified staff facilitate achievement of the student academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes through a system of preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development?

To what extent is there a systematic approach to continuous improvement through professional development based on student performance data, student needs, and research?

The school provides regular and ongoing professional development to its staff. The school provides professional learning communities for its teaching staff to participate in where first and second year teachers meet regularly with the curriculum and instruction department. The curriculum teams, data teams and teachers meet regularly to address student data and facilitate achievement of the student academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes. Although the school conducts a wide range of professional development activities that have shown to be successful in achieving schoolwide learner outcomes, the school reports that it has struggled ensuring that all of its teachers are properly credentialed and implementing systems that ensure teachers are advised properly and credentialed for their assignment. The school has also struggled with high rates of teacher turnover and has put plans in place to address these issues. The school provides written policies, procedures and handbooks to staff and communicates staff expectations regularly.

A5. Resources Criterion

To what extent are the human, material, physical, and financial resources sufficient and utilized effectively and appropriately in accordance with the legal intent of the program(s) and LCAP to support students in accomplishing the schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and the college- and career-readiness standards?

Stakeholders are engaged in the process of allocating resources. The school has a business services department that ensures compliance with best practices and that accounting practices are followed. The professional staff, with the input from the stakeholders ensure that the resources are being allocated to accomplish schoolwide learner outcomes. These resource allocations decisions take place between

leadership and staff as well as stakeholders through the LCAP process. The schools facilities are exceptional with open space for students to work, classrooms with integrated technology as well as spaces for students to work with support providers. Evidence indicates that the school has adequate instructional materials available to the students as well as provides a chromebook to each student. The school has indicated an issue maintaining their teaching staff, which indicates that there is a disconnect between the resources for ensuring well qualified staff in the classrooms.

A6. Resources Criterion [Charter Schools only]

To what extent has the charter school's governing authority and the school leadership executed responsible resource planning for the future?

To what extent has the school developed policies, procedures, and internal controls for managing the financial operations that meet state laws, generally accepted practices, and ethical standards?

To what extent is the school fiscally solvent and does it use sound and ethical accounting practices (budgeting/monitoring, internal controls, audits, fiscal health and reporting)?

The school has a long term plan and vision for sustainable growth. The school has developed policies, procedures and internal controls for managing financial operations. These policies, procedures and internal controls meet state laws, generally accepted practices and ethical standards. The school has strong enrollment totals and large numbers of students on the waiting list. The high demand for the schools program coupled with the strong internal controls indicate fiscal solvency. The evidence also indicates that the school's resources are sufficient to support their planned growth. A review of the marketing materials indicates that the school is effective at communicating with families and sharing the vision for the school. The school leadership communicates regularly with their charter authorizer and for state required reporting.

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

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

The school has established a mission and vision that is clear and coherent. This mission and vision is part of the schools chartering documents and has been approved by the Contra Costa County Office of Education. The school has also adopted four areas of critical learner needs and is working on three additional student learner outcomes. Students, parents, teachers and support staff are aligned with the vision. The board appears to be heavily involved and parents attend school board meetings to participate in governance. The board initiated the Black/African American Student Achievement Initiative to help close the achievement gap.

The schools facilities are exceptional and well suited for student learning. The fiscal controls and fiscal oversight appear to be thorough and robust to ensure fiscal solvency of the school in the long term. The school communicates frequently with the charter authorizer around academic performance and fiscal solvency.

Key issues for Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership, Staff, and Resources:

The challenges around high turnover rate of teachers is an area that the school leadership must address. The school seems to be in the early stages of addressing the issue of teacher turnover as part of a reorganization and the hiring of a senior school director. The school should also ensure culture and practices from the middle and the upper school are aligned.

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

Interviews with teaching staff
Interviews with Board Members
Interviews with central office staff
Interviews with students
Local Control and Accountability Plans
School Site Council Minutes
School Board meeting minutes
Student, parent and staff survey results
MWA employee handbook
Student Learner Outcomes
Content Lead, Grade Level and Leadership Meeting agendas
HR staffing model

CATEGORY B. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: CURRICULUM

B1. Rigorous and Relevant Standards-Based Curriculum Criterion

The curriculum at MWA is aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Data is analyzed from ANET, SBAC, IABs, ICAs, SAT and PSAT to support that standards are being met. 1-1 Chromebooks, Promethean Boards, G-suite, Canvas and Hapara are all utilized to promote 21st century learning practices. Teachers follow a standards based template as evidenced by grade level Year at a Glance (YAAG) documents which include common practices for curriculum creation and unit planning. Laurel Springs and APEX are online programs used for credit recovery and are certified by UCOP to fulfill A-G requirements.

Cross-curricular/cultural connections and implementation of current events are areas of growth identified by MWA to enhance the curriculum and common practices of instruction.

Graduation requirements are aligned with UCOP A-G requirements to ensure that all students have the opportunity to satisfy US/CSU admission criteria. Students have the opportunity to participate in 7 AP courses and a Health CTE Pathway program.

Expansion of AP course offerings and CTE programs are being considered to include more subjects and specialities.

English (ELA) curriculum and standards are aligned as evidenced by students meeting standards or showing growth each year with SBAC scores, high graduation rates and college admissions. A high percentage of MWA graduates meet A-G eligibility due to the alignment of graduation requirements with UCOP A-G course requirements.

Math curriculum and standards congruence are not supported by data. Teachers do not have access to student learner outcomes, gradebook portal is not standards-based and AP test pass rates do not show alignment to curriculum and standards being mastered.

Integration exists in the middle school using fraction art, name art and science. The health science CTE pathway integrates physics, nutrition, exercise, biology, math, ELA and art. Technology is integrated across academic disciplines as well as through a yearbook club. The college and career center supports students in college and career exploration.

Parent outreach occurs via staff communication, electronic resources and parent family liaisons. The Making Waves Foundation partners with local businesses to recruit guest speakers. MWA graduates are supported through the College and Alumni Program (CAP) and promote mentoring opportunities.

An increase in community service opportunities and outreach with neighboring communities would benefit students.

B2. Equity and Access to Curriculum Criterion

College and career opportunities can be explored at MWA's College and Career Center which include career day, PSAT/SAT preparation, scholarship information, college fair, college site visits and application workshops.

Individual Learning Plans for each grade level need to be more structured and targeted towards grade-level college and career readiness with a focus on junior advising.

Year-at-a-Glance (YAAG) and unit plans organize and support real-world applications and instructional practices in both middle and upper schools. Project based learning is evidenced by the Cultural Heritage project in the middle school and the CTE Health pathway coursework in the upper school. Learning objectives are posted in classrooms to guide strategies and best practices. ELD standards and SDAIE strategies are embedded in all courses. CLEVER, CANVAS and Google Classroom are utilized to deliver lessons.

Online courses are offered to students when students are in need of credit recovery or when students are experiencing extenuating circumstances such as a medical leave need.

Instructional materials are created by individual teachers and are not consistent across content or grade level. There is a need for a cohesive and culturally relevant curriculum across the school.

Conferences are held every semester with the student, parent and faculty to update the student's individual learning plan. Parents and teachers attend all IEP meetings for students who need additional individual support. Parents are invited to participate in Back to School events, School Site Council, and the Black/African-American Student Achievement Initiative (B/AASAI) workgroup.

Increase in parent involvement is identified as an area to improve. Restructure conferencing to include grade level information.

College tours, admission team visits and presentations expose students to a variety of colleges and universities. MSA hosts an annual Case Study and College Fair. The CAP program supports students as they transition from high school to college. The CAP program coach checks in weekly/monthly with alumni by text, email and phone.

It is recommended for MWA to continue to align it's advisory curriculum across grade levels.

CATEGORY B: STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: CURRICULUM

Areas of strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: Curriculum:

MWA uses a CCSS aligned curriculum that is supported by data-informed assessments. Faculty and staff are provided support through relevant professional development opportunities. Curriculum is aligned to the UCOP A-G requirements and career-readiness standards which includes AP course offerings, a CTE Health pathway and online course offerings. English curriculum is congruent with CCSS as evidenced by high graduation rates, matriculation rates into college and completion rates of UCOP A-G requirements. Content is integrated between middle and upper school classrooms. Project-based learning projects are interdisciplinary. Advisory/homeroom collaborates with academics and career technical disciplines. Middle school and upper school unitize year-at-a-glance (YAAG) lessons and unit plans that include ELD and SDAIE strategies for all classes. MWA uses technology based applications to support instruction with CLEVER, CANVAS and Google Classroom. Students are provided the opportunity to participate in credit recovery through online courses during the school day and/or summer school. Online courses offered are aligned to CCSS and are UCOP A-G approved courses.

Families participate in conferences every semester to review student individual learning plans. Students with individual support needs are addressed through IEP meetings. Parents are invited to participate in School Site Council, a volunteer network and community events that are hosted by the Black/African American Student Achievement Initiative.

MWA offers a variety of programs which include the College and Career Center, college visits/tours, SAT/ACT prep, paid PSAT, SAT, ACT and AP exams, up to 8 paid college application fees, scholarships, open access for all AP courses, student/parent conferences for individual learning planning and an annual Case Study and College Fair. Students are supported by parent/family outreach, College and Alumni program (CAP) collaboration, partnerships with local businesses, community resources and community guest speakers.

Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Curriculum (if any):

In order to enhance the curriculum and common practices of instruction, MWA should continue to increase the cross-curricular/cultural connections and implementation of current events. Expansion of CTE pathway programs and AP offerings is needed to further support college and career readiness.

Math curriculum is not congruent with CCSS as evidenced by SBAC scores. Access to data and student learner outcomes need to be increased. Standards-based grading practices need to be implemented and teacher vacancies need to be decreased. AP passing rates are in need of improvement.

Reorganization of the advisory curriculum is advised to target grade-level college and career readiness goals.

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

ANET, SBAC, IABs, ICAs, SAT, PSAT scores.

Graduation rates and college admissions.

UCOP A-G graduation requirements.

Staff and student interviews.

Classroom visitations.

CATEGORY C. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: INSTRUCTION

C1. Student Involvement in Challenging and Relevant Learning Criterion

MWA is actively responsive to student learning and progress as evidenced by the tiered interventions (RT) and Student Success Team (SST) meetings. If a student does not demonstrate grade-level mastery, the school has prepared teachers to respond accordingly so that student needs are met and supported. Furthermore, MWA implements a variety of teacher instruction and learning models to support student learning; differentiation of the course material.

MWA students understand the standards/expected performance levels for each area of study through a variety of ways. For instance, the evidence of consistent visible postings of CCSS on the classroom and teacher presentations/slideshows. Through observations in classroom visits in the lower (middle) school, there are sentence stems used such as: "This week, we are _____ so we can _____. We know we have mastered the content when we _____" (Le, Room MS1-139). The impact of student friendly language of standards/expected performance levels is the greater understanding of the "why"

students are engaging and completing the assignments they are presented. Furthermore, MWA provides students an individualized report on “achievement towards standards through report cards and PowerSchool” (p.83). Overall, the MWA appears to be intentionally reaching stronger alignment with respect to teaching practices so that no matter what space a student is in, there is as consistency of experience in every classroom on campus.

C2. Student Engagement through a Variety of Strategies and Resources Criterion

MWA teachers implement a diverse number of teaching strategies and resources that help facilitate a comprehensive learning environment/courses. For example, teachers offer access to learning support similar to, “text to speech, SDAIE strategies, explicit vocabulary instruction, scaffolded language and speaking prompts...modified passages' ", which ultimately help to harness higher-level thinking skills (p.82). Through classroom observations, there exists a strong technology instructional culture supported by platforms such as Newsela, Lexia, Canvas, and Google Classroom.

Teachers have a variety of strategies and instructional tools to meet the needs of all students. Teachers participate in ongoing professional development and utilize Google Classroom, CANVAS, Newsela, Lexia and ST Math.

An area of growth at MWA is to create and implement a rigorous and CCSS aligned curriculum across all subjects and grade levels. Clear instruction approaches to instruction and intervention need to be defined.

MWA functions under the framework of a Project Based Learning for instruction. As such, there is an extensive focus on “adapting curricular materials” that authentically engage students in their learning and mastery of concepts through the creation of projects (p.85). Through many classroom observations, there were a multitude of spaces where students are critically thinking about the content for the reason that students are creating projects that reflect their internalization of content.

Students are presented with tasks and experiences to foster critical thinking and problem solving through group and individual settings in a Project Based Learning framework.

MWA hopes to maximize student learner outcomes by collaborating with Academic Intervention Services (AIS), RTFisher and current staff.

MWA offers extended-learning opportunities through different support and varying levels. Students demonstration of mastery is flexible.

The CTE pathway in health services includes Intro to Health Sciences, Medical Terminology and Anatomy and Physiology. There is a need to extend CTE opportunities across other jobs and industries. The California Career Zone website is used for career interest assessments.

CATEGORY C: STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: INSTRUCTION

Areas of strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: Curriculum:

An incredibly impressive strength for Standards-Based Student Learning is the implementation of an inclusion model that considers the “race, gender, academic achievement, ELD and IEP status” of all students as they are placed in each classroom roster.

MWA has intentionally established spaces on campus that provide students the greater opportunities to “learn from older students’ successes and challenges” (p.89). As self-reported in the study, after school

programs such as, DREAM, have afforded students such experiences therefore conclusively have helped promote student career preparedness as well as provide real world experiences here on campus.

MWA provides adequate work space for students to engage in individual and group activities. The College and Career Center offers students the opportunity to further explore college and career options. The CTE Health Sciences Pathway supports students who are exploring careers in the medical health field.

Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Instruction:

It is recommended that there is a concise implementation of student-friendly language of CCRS (e.g. SWBAT objectives written in student language) throughout the upper (high) school campus.

Based on the school performance data presented by the Innovate Public Schools, “Top Bay Area Public Schools for Underserved Students 2019” and lack of fidelity for data-informed instruction observed throughout humanities classroom spaces, it is recommended that MWA proactively respond to the assessment data. As self-identified in the self-study, the school desires to ground itself in an “instructional philosophy and approach to better align our practices with math instruction”, an aggressive progress-monitoring practice to provide either in the moment or support in clarifying a whole-class misconception, should assist in improving standards-based student learning (p.90).

At the lower (middle) school, the implementation of differentiated tier instruction (DTI) has been put in place for the reason that the class sizes of the English Language Development (ELD) intervention courses has virtually doubled between the 2016-2019 school years. As self-identified, one crucial way to help mitigate this key issue is to hire more teachers to support these intervention classes so that class size decreases as a result.

At the upper (high) school, it is recommended that the alignment in purpose and execution of the core-day Intervention, also known as Marlin Hour, be improved for the reason that the engagement and investment (buy-in) from both students and staff has subsided over the years. The evidence to support this recommendation stems from both the student and staff interviews conducted throughout the course of the visit. Ultimately, the desired impact of such changes would help increase advocacy for either the intervention or enrichment courses.

There is a lack of alignment and consistency across subjects and grade levels.

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

Observation rubric

California Standards for the Teacher’s Profession

Instructions or templates for teacher/staff evaluations

Student Learner Outcomes (SLO)

Slides from CEO’s Address

Student Success Team (SST)

SLides from Director’s Address

5th-12th grade Pacing Guides / YAAGs

7th grade science YAAG

5th-12th grade Curriculum guides

Student work samples (Embedded Assessments) ---History DBQ

Classroom Observations.

Student and staff interviews.

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

D1. Using Assessment to Analyze and Report Student Progress Criterion

To what extent do the school leadership and instructional staff use an effective assessment process to collect, disaggregate, analyze, and report student performance data to the school staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders?

To what extent does the analysis of data guide the school's programs and processes, the allocation and usage of resources, and form the basis for the development of the schoolwide action plan (SPSA) aligned with the LCAP?

The school effectively administers assessments regularly and stores the data for analysis and review by school leaders and teachers. There are strong systems in place to score the interim assessment. The school convenes leaders from across the school to evaluate student results on state and interim assessments called the Assessment Workgroup which makes decisions on how to collect, disaggregate, analyze and report student performance. This workgroup meets every six weeks to discuss student performance on interim assessments and administration of assessments. This data analysis is then used by the curriculum department and the teachers to identify academic improvements. The data is used to guide the school's programs and processes and develop the SPSA and the LCAP. The school is focused on state assessment scores to measure student growth and has recently added additional formative and summative assessments. The school has a college and career counseling department that evaluates student credit completion and readiness for college or career.

D2. Using Assessment to Monitor and Modify Learning in the Classroom Criterion

To what extent do teachers employ a variety of appropriate formative and summative assessment strategies to evaluate student learning?

To what extent do students and teachers use these findings to modify the learning/teaching practices to improve student learning?

The school uses a variety of formative and summative assessment strategies to evaluate student learning. These approaches rely on state provided resources, nationally normed interim assessments and local assessments. The staff review the data at regular intervals. While these meetings occur regularly, it is unclear from the evidence as to what extent the results of these analyses lead to changes at the school or in the classroom. The school has recently focused on coaching practices using the assessment data to inform their instruction. The school is also focusing on ensuring that its grading expectations match those expectations on state tests to ensure the level of rigor necessary for students to demonstrate mastery on state assessments. The school focuses on the Teaching and Learning cycle. This training takes place each quarter following the administration of the interim assessment. This data is used to create their reteach plans that the teachers then implement.

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

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

The school has adopted a wide range of assessment tools including state provided resources, nationally normed assessments and locally provided formative assessments. This suite of tools should be adequate to ensure that teachers and school leaders are informed of student progress. The performance of the students, particularly the 11th grade students is exceptional. The data practices are very strong with regular meetings taking place between the data team, curriculum teams and teachers. Data is widely collected and used to make instructional decisions.

Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability (if any):

The school should implement steps to ensure that the data collected from these assessments is used regularly to help inform instruction and lead to improved student outcomes. The school should also ensure that its grading practices reflect the rigor of the state standards and expectations of statewide assessments.

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

Interviews with curricular and data team leaders

Review of assessment schedule

Review of data dashboards

Review of data walls in classrooms

Agendas from Assessment Workgroup meetings

Review of state dashboard and state assessment performance

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

E1. Parent and Community Engagement Criterion

In an effort to maintain regular involvement of stakeholder support groups in the learning and teaching process for all students, MWA purposefully practices building community between families and the school community. For example, the school has an appointed “parent/guardian engagement coordinator”, who represents the families from both the middle and upper school, to serve as a liaison between student families and the school. One of the major priorities of this coordinator is to support those parents that express the desire to volunteer their time, resources, etc.

Additionally, the Special Education Director at MWA is responsible for holding annual/triennial IEP meetings for all students holding legal documentation by way of IEPs and 504s. The campus is proactive with their identification processes as they intervene by way of the Student Success Team (SST), which provides weekly /daily updates of student attendance and academics. The impact of these strategies and processes is the assurance of collective community inclusion as well as meeting the diverse needs of student families.

E2. School Culture and Environment Criterion

MWA upholds their systems and policies by intentionally providing means of open-communication between school and families that detail the “nutrition policy, school policy, academic calendar and discipline policy”. Both students and families are well-informed of the school policies, and in such cases where interpretation is necessary, bilingual staff support as interpreters.

MWA has prioritized both their strengths and areas of growth in order to maintain a focus on continuous school improvement. There are a host of different settings where all school-community stakeholders can participate in the growth and success of MWA. Such outlets include (but not limited to): “Parent Meetings, ELAC, B/AASAI, Special Education Meetings, Student Success Program (SSP)”, etc (p.118).

MWA’s lower (middle) school’s feedback from the Staff Satisfaction Survey (administered during 2018-19) provided evidence that there does exist a high level of trust, respect, and professionalism among colleagues. Conversely, the upper (high) school’s feedback from the Staff Satisfaction Survey (administered during 2018-19) revealed that there is a low level of trust and respect, “specifically with leadership” as a result of the greater percentage of turnover among faculty and staff. Feedback from the survey recommended that the change begin with the school leader position, by request of a “solid leader at the helm” (p.110).

E3. Personal and Academic Student Support Criterion

MWA appears to prioritize providing students with as many options as possible to help avoid accumulating debt throughout college.

MWA appears to implement SBAC type questions across all contents. For instance, the course catalog displays electives, AP, and CTE pathway classes.

Within the lower (middle) school, MWA appears to have implemented a Designated Tiered Intervention (DTI) for the purpose of equipping students with a “focused intervention in their respective areas of academic growth based on assessments and data” (p. 113). Furthermore, an example of the DTI is the Marlin hour at the upper (high) school.

MWA implements multi-tiered systems that focus on supporting student learning and socioemotional well-being. These systems are focused on providing all students with comprehensive, individualized instruction that is also rigorous and connected to real world experiences.

MWA ensures that there is a high level of student involvement in curricular and co-curricular activities for all grades 5th-12th. As evidenced by the self-elected options to participate in “field trips, student government, clubs, sports, and interscholastic athletics” (p.115). In addition, students are afforded the opportunity to engage in post-secondary experiences through the College and Career Counseling teams resources.

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

Areas of strength for School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth:

School community. The MWA community collectively strives to establish a strong school culture and systems of support that will ultimately promote academic success of all students.

From the lower (middle) to upper (high) school, the intentionality behind building strong systems of transparent communication between campus and families. MWA recognizes that “parents are critical in the work of educational and social emotional development” and as such, the parent representatives selected to build and support these systems of communication are paramount to sustaining the strong sense of school community.

The focus on post-secondary pathways compliments the students are supported by parent/family outreach, College and Alumni program (CAP) collaboration, partnerships with local businesses, community resources and community guest speakers.

Key issues for School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth:

A self-identified area of growth for school culture and support for student personal and academic growth is the establishment of an on-site interpreter, whose sole purpose is to support the school with correspondence between families. Currently, the support comes from bilingual teachers/staff, and the subsequent impact of this reality weighs heavily upon the school community in a detrimental way for the reason that staff feel over-extended beyond their regular job responsibilities.

An additional, yet similar area of growth, is the establishment of “several designated leadership and staff” personnel who respond to all parent/guardian questions and questions during meetings so that an administrative perspective is present. Especially within special circumstances where there is a need for establishing a student action plan regarding the appropriate next steps both the school and families should take.

A self-identified area of growth for school culture and support for student personal is the absence of a designated parent and community engagement leader who forefronts support for parents representative of the LGBTQ+, GATE, and “families experiencing documentation stress due to blended citizenship within their families.

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

GATE overview

SSP overview

DREAM overview

EL overview

AP overview

SPED overview

RSP overview

DTI overview

Staff and student interviews.

Teacher observations.

Chapter IV: Synthesis of Schoolwide Strengths and Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement

Schoolwide Areas of Strength

1. Students, parents, teachers and support staff are aligned with the mission and vision of the school.
2. The schools facilities are exceptional and well suited for student learning.
3. Curriculum is aligned to the UCOP A-G requirements and career-readiness standards which includes AP course offerings, a CTE Health pathway and online course offerings.
4. MWA offers a variety of programs which include the College and Career Center, college visits/tours, SAT/ACT prep, paid PSAT, SAT, ACT and AP exams, up to 8 paid college application fees, scholarships, open access for all AP courses, student/parent conferences for individual learning planning and an annual Case Study and College Fair. Students are supported by parent/family outreach, College and Alumni program (CAP) collaboration, partnerships with local businesses, community resources and community guest speakers.
5. The implementation of an inclusion model that considers the “race, gender, academic achievement, ELD and IEP status” of all students as they are placed in each classroom roster.
6. The school provides adequate work space for students to engage in individual and group activities.
7. The data practices are very strong with regular meetings taking place between the data team, curriculum teams and teachers.
8. The MWA community collectively strives to establish a strong school culture and systems of support that will ultimately promote academic success of all students.

Schoolwide Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement

(list numerically; include who, what, why, and the impact on student learning)

The visiting committee concurs with the school’s identified growth areas for continuous improvement that are outlined in the schoolwide action plan. These are summarized below:

1. Math curriculum is not congruent with CCSS as evidenced by SBAC scores. Access to data and student learner outcomes need to be increased. Standards-based grading practices need to be implemented. AP passing rates are in need of improvement.
2. Expansion of CTE pathway programs and AP offerings is needed to further support college and career readiness.
3. The lack of fidelity for data-informed instruction observed throughout humanities classroom spaces, it is recommended that MWA proactively respond to the assessment data provided. As self-identified in the self-study, the school desires to ground itself in an “instructional philosophy and approach to better align our practices with math instruction”.
4. The school should also ensure that its grading practices reflect the rigor of the state standards and expectations of statewide assessments.
5. An area of growth for school culture and support for student personal and academic growth is the establishment of an on-site interpreter, whose sole purpose is to support the school with correspondence between families.

In addition, the visiting committee has identified additional growth areas that need to be addressed:

1. The challenges around high turnover rate of teachers is an area that the school leadership must address. The school seems to be in the early stages of addressing the issue of teacher turnover as part of a reorganization and the hiring of a senior school director.
2. The school should ensure student and teacher culture and practices from the middle and the upper schools are aligned. For example, consistency of enforcing student uniform expectations will help teachers meet their baseline professional expectations.

Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement

The schoolwide action plan includes items that are part of the mission and goals of the school.

The Action Plan is adequate and ambitious in addressing the identified growth areas. The ambitious goals will definitely enhance student learning. The Action Plan is easy to understand. The Action Plan definitely enhances student learning. The basic learning environment of the schools (middle and high school) is expected achievement at a high level. There is no compromise. Hence the action plan, if present practices are followed, will almost certainly enhance learning.

The Action Plan is feasible within existing resources. It appears to be user friendly and clear.

It is suggested the school include an Action Goal 4 that addresses recruitment and retention of upper school teaching staff.

Interviews with staff indicate that sufficient commitment exists both schoolwide and system wide to accomplish the Action Plan. Recent interviews and Director consolidation indicates also that the school is well aware of the need to recruit and retain qualified high school teachers.

The school reports that after the FOL process, the Action Plan will be aligned as much as possible to the LCAP.

There are many factors that will support school improvement including: Leadership changes that are being made to deal with staff retention issues, a strong alliance with parents to assist the students to achieves at a high rate, a mission statement that simply makes no excuses for not achieving at a high rate, staff support in many unconventional ways (intervention specialists, social workers, etc) that almost creates an individualized learning environment for all students who need it. The school calls this a holistic approach; which is extensive, comprehensive, and as shown by the graduation rate and placement rate in college.

The largest impediment is hiring and keeping staff at the high school level. A late development shows the school's attention to this with the hiring of a single Director for both the Upper School and the Lower School. This Director, was responsible for the stability and retention of a highly qualified staff at the lower school (using innovative techniques to financially help teachers get credentialed, pay for the credentialing, housing etc. as incentives). This same approach will be used with upper school level teachers to build more stability in staffing.

Those responsible for follow up are clearly defined in the schoolwide action plan. Given that in the last cycle most of the Action Plan was completed on time, it seems reasonable that the follow up process is sufficient to accomplish the Action Plan.