

SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS, WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FOR

Rio Americano High School

4540 American River Drive

Sacramento, CA 95864

San Juan Unified School District

March 12 - March 14, 2023

Visiting Committee Members

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NOTE: The visiting committee report format now includes the ratings on the accreditation status factors and the rationale integrated throughout the report. Please bold and underline the ratings. Use the Accreditation Status Worksheet.

- **Highly Effective:** The results of the self-study and the visit provide evidence that this factor has had a high degree of impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
 - **Effective:** The results of the self-study and the visit provide evidence that this factor has had a satisfactory level of impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
 - **Somewhat Effective:** The results of the self-study and the visit provide evidence that this factor has had a limited impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
 - **Ineffective:** The results of the self-study and the visit provide evidence that this factor has had little or no impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
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Preface

Rio Americano (RAHS) staff report a collaborative effort in the self study. They provided the groups that worked together on the WASC report by department and focus groups. They provide a timeline of work dating back to 2021 when the WASC Coordinator and Principal met to begin the process. Home and focus groups were established. Staff were surveyed to gather their voice on significant developments from the previous report and goals. Other stakeholders such as parents and community members provided voice as well through meetings and surveys, as well as listening circles for students. During the WASC, Visiting Committee (VC) heard from various groups about their involvement in the process and changes that have occurred, including a new Principal since the Mid-Cycle visit, and a new WASC Coordinator, after the previous one was promoted within the district.

Focus groups began to review the school's vision and mission statements, Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), and began to collect evidence. After surveys and student and parent group meetings, findings were reviewed and schoolwide strengths and weaknesses were categorized into common themes. Then groups began to discuss ways to align the SPSA and LCAP with the identified action items. During interviews, VC witnessed strong parent engagement from parents who are involved in various groups such as: band booster, sports, CIVITAS, CTE, Rio and Beyond, PTSA, and a group of parents that got together to address concerns in the academic area of mathematics.

RAHS has worked to align SPSA and LCAP goals with the Student Learning Outcomes. They are focused on better utilizing data when supporting students in academic, behavioral and social/emotional needs. RAHS has chosen to use funding for social emotional growth and development for additional counseling and mental health support. They have also purchased a curriculum that teachers have the option of using for social-emotional learning needs. In addition, this is the first school year that the new graduation requirements, a district-wide change, are being implemented. All students must meet A-G requirements. Students now need 30 math credits, 30 science credits, 20 world language credits, and 40 fewer elective credits to graduate.

The involvement and collaboration of stakeholders in the self-study reflects a thorough, accurate description and analysis of what currently exists at the school, as well as aligned schoolwide prioritized areas of strength and growth.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective **Effective** Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Instructional staff and other stakeholders are involved in data review and dialogue about perceived strengths and areas of need. Major student learner needs are addressed to some degree in valuation of the school's program and operations.

Chapter 1: Progress Report

RAHS experienced the global pandemic, as did the world, and clearly it has impacted things they were working on in addition to giving them other things to focus on when students returned. In addition, with the change in administration and several events that occurred regarding school culture, the need arose to address equity to bring the school community back together. A group of students, parents, staff, and administration formed the Equity committee and they have been working on SLO aligned issues such as staff allies, dress code, and restorative practices. These committees work to address concerns voiced by students. Rio's Equity team presented to district staff, and a suggestion was made to all schools to consider having an Equity Team to ensure positive school culture and student voice.

Steps have been taken to address the needs of English learners as the population of students designated EL have been rising each month. In addition, the need for services for the Newcomer population has become more prevalent.

In the original VC report (2017), the team agreed with the school's identified areas of improvement including providing students with an equitable experience and consistent curriculum, implementation of Common Core curriculum in all departments, the need to collaborate on curricular guides, benchmark assessments, and increased interventions for the achievement of "at-risk" students. There were additional areas for follow-up recommended by the VC. These included meaningful collaboration and curriculum development, improving communication and celebrating student differences and campus diversity.

RAHS reports that the following progress was made on each goal.

Goal 1: Provide an equitable educational experience for all students emphasizing curriculum development and common assessments.

All departments have created and implemented common assessments, pacing guides, and common grading practices. This goal has been reviewed in monthly department meetings, and schoolwide staff meetings.

Goal 2: Implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) campus-wide, making sure teachers and students understand how the standards tie to the Schoolwide Learner

Outcomes (SLO).

This goal is also discussed in department meetings and at schoolwide staff meetings. Curriculum maps are aligned with Common Core State Standards and Schoolwide Learner Outcomes (SLO's) are posted in classrooms.

Goal 3: Provide a consistent curriculum for all students in like classes, where they will be assessed using the common assessments.

Similar to Goal 1, departments continually discuss and refine common assessments, pacing guides, and common grading practices.

Goal 4: Increase and refine interventions to address gaps in achievement for all students defined to be at-risk.

The school has hired a School Community Intervention Specialist, a Community Specialist, a mental health therapist .40 FTE, and formed an Intervention Team to better assist in identifying struggling learners and put interventions and supports in place to best meet this need. We also have peer and teacher tutoring, credit recovery programs, and continue to explore options for scheduling to accommodate new graduation requirements.

Goal 5: Improve rapport between staff and students/parents.

The school has increased forums for student voice, such as the Equity Team, Black Student Union (BSU), the Queer-Straight Alliance (QSA). Club forums were established to increase communication and connectedness of clubs on campus. Activities such as the student/staff basketball game, Global Expo, and Lunch with Friends give students and staff an opportunity to engage outside the classroom.

Goal 6: Support students for higher achievement in Integrated Math (IM) classes and on CAASPP testing.

The special education and mathematics departments have created some co-taught Integrated Math classes to support students. Some of the Integrated Math 1 teachers have also adopted a mastery-based classroom for students allowing students to focus on skills they need to develop.

In 2019, a VC came for a probationary visit. They acknowledged a schoolwide culture of support for students, a robust co- and extra-curricular program for students, and an increase in the schools' communication with students, parents, and the community. They also recommended, continued and increased implementation of common assessments, district professional development for data analysis and PLCs, increased use of data to inform instructional practice, and to continue to address disparities in student achievement. An additional area of concern was to investigate scheduling options that will best support students through the transition to the new SJUSD graduation requirements.

RAHS reports that the following progress was made on each goal.

1. Examine consistency between course-alike classes (grading policies, curriculum covered).

Departments have developed curriculum maps, pacing guides, and common grading practices.

2. Develop aligned grading practices across departments and especially across similar courses.

All departments have developed pacing guides and common grading practices.

3. Create a unified and structured process for analysis of data to improve instruction with professional development for staff as needed.

Common assessment data is collected and analyzed by departments. Teachers can use platforms such as Illuminate to collect student data.

The 2019 Probationary Visiting Committee - New Growth Areas

Progress:

1. Continue to investigate scheduling options that will best support all students though the transition to new SJUSD graduation requirements for the class of 2023 and beyond.

A school schedule steering committee has been formed to investigate various scheduling options, and are to report back to the staff in the Spring of 2023.

2. Foster a reflective, responsive, and equitable, school culture that ensures academic success and social-emotional well-being for all students.

RAHS has an intervention specialist who works with staff on responding to the needs of students. All required courses have aligned pacing guides and common assessments. All Advanced Placement (AP) courses are accessible to all students with no prerequisites or screening.

3. There is a need for the school to increase student proficiency in ELA and Math standards measured by performance results on the CAASPP assessments, with a focus on the success of identified cohorts to close the achievement gap.

The math department has changed some of the IM1 course sections to a mastery-based model. The district did not give benchmark tests in the 2020/2021 or 2021/2022 school years. There is currently no district benchmark.

During the Mid-Cycle visit in 2021, the VC agreed with the school's report on progress of current goals as well as current areas for growth. Since the new Principal came in, the entire staff has been involved in working on WASC evidence and areas of growth. After many meetings, surveys, focus group discussions, and listening sessions the staff identified 5 new areas for growth. Several of the goals are the natural next steps to goals previously worked on with one

goal being new but put into place due to the rapid increase in English Language students arriving on campus with varying levels of need.

Staff at RAHS are gathering various types of data, reviewing data, and then attempting to make changes on their campus based on need. They are clearly aware of the things they do well and the things they need to work on.

The use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and drive school improvement.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

RAHS reviewed all previous accreditation findings and had staff input when creating the action plan. Some stakeholders were involved in action plan updates.

Chapter 2: School and Student Profile and Supporting Data

RAHS is located along the American River Parkway close to downtown. It is one of nine high schools in the San Juan Unified School District, in the eastern portion of Sacramento. They serve over 1,900 9-12 grade students, with a strong emphasis on college prep.

Enrollment is open and many students are coming to RAHS for the CIVITAS Program, nationally renowned music program, amazing CTE programs, as well as the college prep education being offered. There is strong parent involvement and alumni groups that are actively involved in things going on at the campus.

VC was able to observe the above programs as well as AVID, AP courses, Drama, Art, Media, Student Government, English Language Development, Special Education, as well as some extra curricular groups.

Vision

All students will have access to a challenging curriculum that supports their graduation and enhances their post-secondary education and careers and instills a lifelong commitment to learning and their community.

Mission

Rio Americano provides an academically excellent environment to educate and inspire each student to succeed and meet the challenges of the future, through a variety of integrated college and career programs within a supportive and nurturing community.

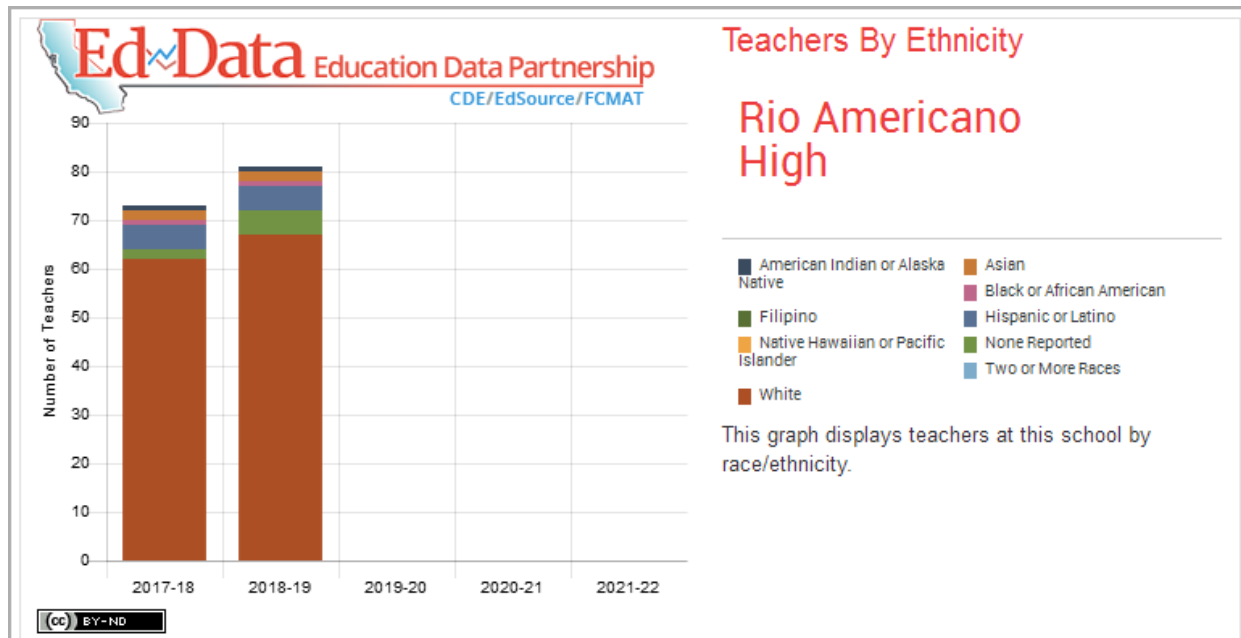
Schoolwide Learner Outcomes

Rio Americano students are:

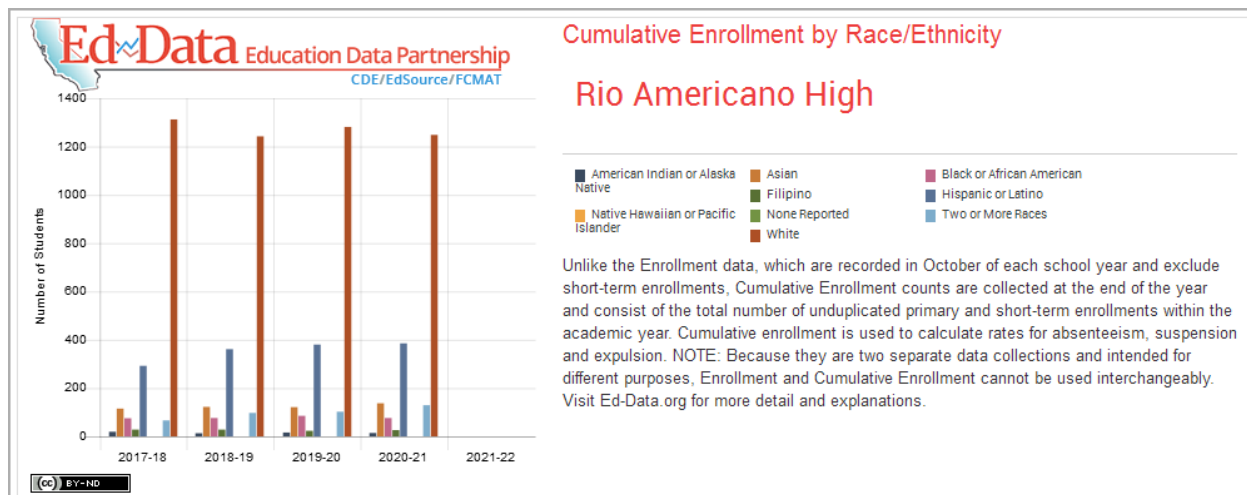
- Effective Communicators
 - Students will speak and write effectively, and listen with an open mind. Locate, interpret, evaluate, organize, and process text. Present information using technology, and support arguments with effective evidence.
- Independent, Creative, and Critical Thinkers
 - Students will apply knowledge to solve problems. Access and process information utilizing current technology. Synthesize the information, skills, and concepts acquired through curriculum, and develop educated opinions and make well-informed decisions.
- Self-Directed Learners
 - Students will set goals and use self-discipline to move towards these goals. Maintain curiosity about learning. Develop specialized talents and interests, and master skills for success in higher education / careers.
- Ethical Contributors to School Community and Society
 - Students will work well with others, demonstrate acceptance of human individuality and diversity, and contribute to the well-being of others and the environment.

RAHS identified three major student learner needs. The first being support for the English Learner student population. Second would be support to help students find connection in the school community. Lastly, the school staff feel there is an increased need for Social Emotional Learning Supports and Academic Supports for all students.

Staff Demographics

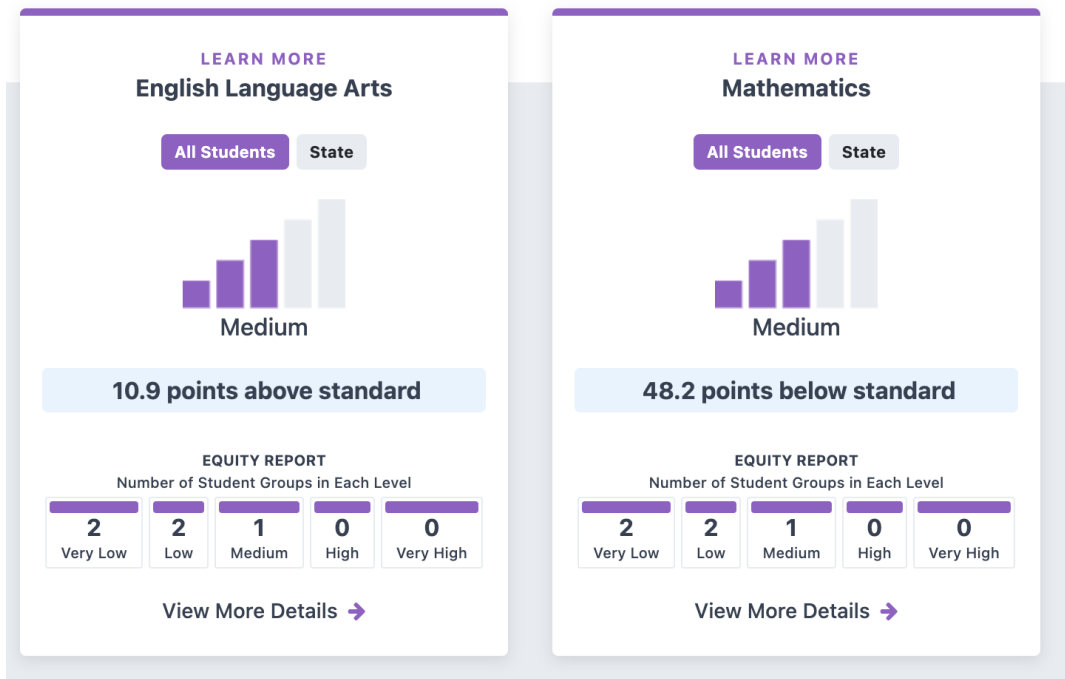


Student Demographics

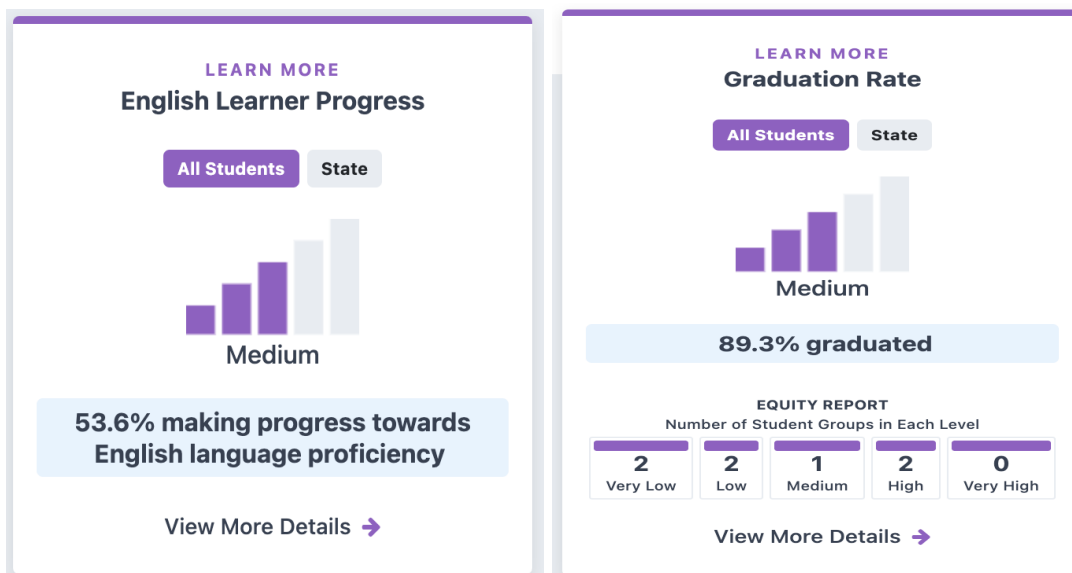


CDE CA School Dashboard School Performance Overview data

English Language Arts and Mathematics



English Learner Progress and Graduation Rate



Chapter 3: Quality of the School's Program

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

A1. Vision and Purpose Criterion

Visiting Committee Comments

RAHS Schoolwide Learner Outcomes (SLOs) states that students are: effective communicators, independent, creative and critical thinkers, self-directed learners, and ethical contributors to school community and society. SLOs are supported by the school vision and mission statement outlined in the student and parent handbook.

As observed by one Visiting Committee (VC) member, teachers utilized a plethora of teaching strategies: differentiated instruction, visualization, cooperative learning, student centered inquiry, technology, etc. Yet, what was missing from most whiteboards, Promethean panels, or displays were the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) or English Language Development (ELD) standards. In the area of high-quality standards, RAHS students could benefit from CCSS or ELD standard driven lessons. Lessons could pull from one or more state standards and have clear objectives or student outcomes. It should be noted that the curriculum maps for Social Science (Economics, Government, US History, and World History) showed alignment between the CCSS and ELD standards.

The self-study states that RAHS staff, in staff meetings and curriculum Thursdays, reviewed and approved the vision and mission statement that led to the SLOs. It does not however expand on how these goals are periodically refined.

Focus Group A - Organization shared various means to increase student understanding of the SLOs: targeted SLOs lessons, incorporation of SLOs into CTE language, posters displayed in classrooms, and reviews of SLOs prior to WASC visit. Parents and student representatives are listed as participants in the SPSA. The Student and Parent handbook listed on RAHS's webpage contains the vision, mission, and SLOs.

Vision and Purpose that supports high achievement for all students. Defining of the school's vision and purpose through schoolwide learner outcomes/graduate profile and academic standards.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

The vision and mission statement are clearly stated, based on student needs, alignment with LCAP goals, and holds the belief that all students can achieve at a high academic level. Processes are in place for stakeholders to be involved. Vision and mission statements are available to students, parents, and staff.

A2. Governance Criterion**Visiting Committee Comments**

The self-study outlines a clear connection between vision and mission statements to the SLOs. Additionally, it articulates how administrators, parents, and students collaborate to construct the SPSA to support district LCAP goals. The School Site Council, charged with developing the SPSA, meets monthly. School Site Council membership, minutes, and meeting dates are linked on the RAHS webpage.

RAHS has a student representative serving on the district advising committee. Additionally, two students, along with the principal, attend boarding meetings in the spring and fall to provide a summary of school events. During the VC's meeting with parents and community, it was shared that a parent group presented to the governing board recommendations to address vaping at RAHS. This led to vaping QR code posters displayed around the school and in restrooms to support students coping with substance abuse, a substance abuse assembly for students, and vape awareness training for staff. Additionally, the administration developed an intervention lesson in lieu of suspension for first time vaping infractions.

According to the self-study, Uniform Complaint Procedures in written form are located in the administration office, staff lounge, and posted in major areas. The San Juan Unified School District's (SJUSD) webpage offers a link to submit safety concerns anonymously regarding a school site in seven languages that touch on the topics of: bullying, concern for self, discrimination, other concerns, threats, and vandalism.

Governance that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Leadership provides stakeholders multiple opportunities to be involved through teams or committees. Stakeholders demonstrate an understanding of district objectives that guide the work of the school. Leadership informs staff and communities of the Uniform Complaint Procedures.

A3. Leadership: Data-Informed Decision-Making and Continuous School Improvement Criterion**Visiting Committee Comments**

RAHS relies on multiple committees and groups to assess and monitor data. These groups include but are not limited to: the administration team, department chairs, leadership team, school site council, equity team, and counselors. Collectively, the group reviews common assessment data, CAASPP scores, grade distribution, and surveys. As one result of these discussions, the 2022-2023 SPSA identified common assessment and grading as an area of need

in addition to inclusivity amongst the RAHS student body. While the SPSA mentioned limitations to common assessment and grading, it noted changes such as collaboration with Epoch Education on racial divides to increase inclusivity.

The SPSA is separated by Goal Subjects. Beneath each goal are the LEA/LCAP goal followed by SPSA goal. Consistently, the SPSA goals towards reaching LEA/LCAP goals. For example, goal four focuses on “clear pathways to bright futures,” and RAHS’s goal is to “provide different opportunities and pathways for students to best be prepared for a college and career future.”

Throughout multiple Focus Group sessions, RAHS staff have consistently stated that they are active participants in school based decision making. Staff members are elected from amongst their peers to the leadership team, are represented by department chairs, have representation on the School Site Council, and have autonomy during department meetings. Staff exercise these channels and administration solicited questionnaires to provide feedback on actions and common goals. As a result of these discussions, the self-study states that progress has been made in the areas of curriculum maps, pacing guides, common grading practices, and assessment of data by departments.

At RAHS, email is the main method of internal communication. Staff members are responsible for reading and responding to emails. Daily bulletins are announced over the intercom at the beginning of the school day. Departments have regular meetings Thursdays. Counselors meet bi-weekly with administration and staff meetings are held every third Thursday. Department chairs can act as an intermediary between administration and teachers to convey information, gather data, or share concerns.

Leadership: *Data-Informed Decision-Making and Continuous School Improvement* that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective **Somewhat Effective** Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

RAHS has gathered site and department assessment data. Some departments informed the VC that collaborative discussions occur at the end of each semester. More can be done in the areas of monitoring results and its impact on student success.

A4. Staff: Qualified and Professional Development Criterion

Visiting Committee Comments

According to EdData from 2018-2019, the average teaching experience for teachers at RAHS is 15 years with six teachers being in their first or second year. Of the 81 teachers, 61 identify as White, 5 Hispanic or Latino, 5 none reported, 2 Asian, 1 Black or African American, and 1 American Indian or Alaska. The 2021 RAHS School Accountability Report Card did not have data identifying teachers fully credentialed, without credentials, or teachers assigned

outside-of-field. It does however identify 75 teachers as full-time and six as part-time.

The self-study indicates that new teachers are provided orientation, paired with a veteran teacher within their department, and must complete two years of teacher induction. Teachers have available to them one hour of professional development (PD) and collaboration per week in addition to 12 hours of PD per year. Examples of previous PD offered at the site were: de-escalation, social justice and equity, drugs and vaping awareness, and inclusivity training. All recent PDs were based on feedback from parents, students or staff.

The self-study notes that teachers must earn 150 PD hours to move across the pay scale every five years, that survey data is used to measure PD effectiveness, and that the leadership considers survey results when planning, but it does not explain what measures are in place to gauge how PD impact teaching practices or student performance. VC members did hear from staff that the second day of de-escalation PD was helpful, that the vaping awareness helped them to identify vape paraphernalia, and that the student EL panel helped them to better understand the unique experiences of EL students coming from other countries.

All RAHS administrators oversee various school departments. Additionally, administrators observe and evaluate teachers using the SJUSD's System of Professional Growth (SPG) every 3-5 years. Administrators and teachers work collaboratively to establish goals, schedule informal and formal observations, participate in reflective conversation, and work to gather evidence of professional growth.

School policies and procedures are reviewed at the beginning of the school year during PD sessions. Staff are provided with the staff handbook and given access to an updated Google file pertinent to each school year.

Staff: *Qualified and Professional Development* that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective **Effective** Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

RAHS offers staff relevant PDs based on their needs, and clear systems of communication between staff and administration exist. RAHS could benefit from creating an effective process to measure the effects of professional development on teaching practices and the impact it has on student performance.

A5. Resources Criterion

Visiting Committee Comments

The School Site Council is composed of the principal, teacher representatives, other staff, parents, and student representatives. This governing body is charged with the development and

approval of the SPSA which involves the allocation and uses of site base funds. While SPSA goals are site specific, they must show a connection to district LCAP goals and center on student academic achievement.

The principal oversees the site budget and approves the use of general site funds. General funds allocation may include but are not limited to: departments, student services, athletics, supplies, school business, etc.

RAHS employs two campus monitors to assist with campus safety and security. Additionally, there are two day janitors that work to maintain the cleanliness and functionality of the school. Currently, the Bilingual Instructional Aide position, designed to provide academic support for ELs, remains unfilled. This year, all classrooms have received new furniture. Teachers had the ability to decide on a single desk or tables for their classrooms.

Student focus group expressed a need for regular maintenance of classrooms and restrooms. Students reported that some restrooms that were unable for use due to peers vaping in the restrooms.

SJUSD is currently adopting a math curriculum. Teachers at RAHS are a part of the adoption committee and are currently piloting the programs. Math teachers shared that textbook representatives have been responsive to their needs in terms of materials and supplies to effectively implement the curriculum.

RAHS is striving to fill all vacant teaching, clerical, and support staff positions. Currently there are vacancies in Math and SPED.

Resources that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

SPSA expenditures are aligned to categorical goals. RAHS staff work to maintain facilities conducive to learning and are provided the essential materials and equipment to support students.

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

Areas of Strength for Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership, Staff, and Resources:

1. All stakeholders are included in leadership groups. Decision making is shared with feedback from staff, parents, and students (A2.2, A3.1, & A5.1).

2. Professional development addresses the needs of staff and students. Staff feedback provided to leadership help refine future PDs (A2.2, A3.3, & A4.3).
3. Clear and consistent alignment between vision, mission, and SLOs. SPSA goals mirror LCAP goals (A1.1, A2.1, & A3.2).
4. Support provided to teaching staff. Communication between admin and staff (A1.2, A3.4, & A4.2).
5. Means to address/share grievances for staff, parents, and students (A2.3).

Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement for Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership, Staff, and Resources:

1. Means to assess the measurable effect of professional development on teacher practice and the impact it has on student performance (A4.3).
2. Clear and explicit student outcomes. Incorporation and alignment of CCSS to ELD standards in all classrooms (A1.1).
3. Additional release time, training, and collaboration to address CCSS/ELD standards (A4.2, A4.3, & A4.5).

Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and growth areas for continuous improvement include the following:

- RAHS SPSA 2022-23
- SJUSD LCAP 2022-23
- RAHS website
- SJUSD Professional Growth Guidelines
- RAHS faculty handbook
- RAHS staff Google files
- Admin Roles and Responsibilities
- Admin meeting agendas
- Staff meeting templates/meeting notes
- Department meeting/templates
- Common assessment Google files
- Leadership team meeting/templates
- School site council (dates and minutes)
- ELAC meeting/templates
- Equity Team (composition, dates, and minutes)
- SLO (student and parent handbook)
- RAHS Student Accountability Report 2021
- Ed Data for RAHS 2021-22

CATEGORY B. CURRICULUM

B1. Rigorous and Relevant Standards-Based Curriculum Criterion

Visiting Committee Comments

RAHS offers a full range of choices in their master schedule and provides a rigorous college and career ready education. Students are able to select courses from a variety of college and career options. The school provides for career exploration in their CTE pathways, including medical assisting and robotics, and all students have access to honors and Advanced Placement courses. Many courses are aligned with regard to pacing, grading, and rigor, and curriculum is based on the California Content Standards.

Curriculum that is based on current educational research and thinking is evident with the adoption of new textbooks in the Math department, which reflect the California framework. Their courses follow the California Mathematics Standards and prepare students for progression to college level math with IM 1, IM 2, IM 3, Pre-calculus, AP Calculus A, and AP Calculus B. Students can also opt for courses in Statistics and QRAT, and 9th grade students can take a transitional course, Math Foundations Workshop, which is designed for students who are not yet ready for IM 1. They also offer a financial math course which employs math concepts to promote financial literacy, and they plan to offer some dual enrollment courses in the fall of 2023. Science follows the NGSS standards which align with the Schoolwide Learner Outcomes and has experienced a shift in their courses with the removal of Earth science, which created some challenges for students who struggle. They have worked heavily on curricular changes toward adoption of the NGSS and textbooks, have aligned their units to the same order by course, and are fairly close to being at the same pace. They have done some vertical alignment with specific science skills. Chemistry specifically has adopted a new textbook and has updated their pacing guide to base their curriculum on the latest research in scenic education which encourages more phenomena-centered science instruction. Biology uses Claim-Evidence-Reasoning methodology to teach students to use evidence to support their reasoning. The Social Science department uses Understanding by Design methodology in their courses to design rigorous units that align with standards-based curriculum and assessments. Many courses are aligned with curriculum maps in Economics, US History, World History, and American Government and include the use of primary sources and interactive projects in their units. The English department offers the regular English courses by grade level along with Honors courses for 9th and 10th grade. Juniors can challenge themselves with AP Language and Composition. Seniors can either take the Expository Reading and Writing Course (ERWC) or AP Literature and Composition. They also offer electives in Speech, Journalism, and Film and Literature. The literature choices in many courses are culturally relevant and relatable to students' ethnicities. Writing instruction at the freshman and sophomore levels is process-based and expands at the junior and senior levels, allowing for student voice in writing, and students create multimodal projects incorporating life experience skills. In PE students engage in goal setting to create and implement weekly fitness and nutrition plans. RAHS offers a Medical CTE program in which students can earn a Medical Assistant certification, and an Engineering CTE program. Current educational research and thinking indicates that students need support with social-emotional development. While RAHS has not implemented an SEL program or curriculum school-wide, there are courses and teachers that incorporate SEL into their lessons in a variety of ways.

RAHS has identified Schoolwide Learner Outcomes (SLOs) and have them posted in most classrooms and around the school. The SLOs are congruent with academic standards and

college- and career-readiness standards and departments include them in their courses. A clear mission statement is communicated to students, staff, and parents. During and upon the return from COVID, RAHS has reviewed and reevaluated curricular priorities. RAHS had focused on writing across the curriculum before COVID but has not circled back since their return. Literacy across the curriculum has not been school-wide focus, but some courses have incorporated reading skills (e.g. reading like a scientist in chemistry and written explanations in calculus and geometry).

Cross-curricular integration and alignment among academic and career technical disciplines occurs informally between some disciplines and formally in team-taught courses in English 3 and US History.

RAHS engages with community partners and resources to help the ELD students, a large number of whom are refugees and need various levels of support. The Social Science department has collaborated with Arden Middle School to coordinate skills and content curriculum to help students prepare for high school history courses.

Rigorous and Relevant Standards-Based Curriculum that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective **Somewhat Effective** Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

The level to which students have access to rigorous and relevant standards-based curriculum that supports high achievement for all students is **somewhat effective**. Students are participating in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and the college- and career-readiness standards in order to meet graduation requirements in many courses. Consistency across like courses is sporadic and some students may not have the same access to rigorous curriculum as other students. RAHS needs a clear process for reviewing, creating, and aligning curriculum across like courses.

B2. Equity and Access to Curriculum Criterion

Visiting Committee Comments

RAHS offers a wide range of class choices including AVID, Advanced Placement (AP), Honors, electives, and CTE pathways. Beginning with the Class of 2023, as adopted by the San Juan Unified School District Board of Education, RAHS increased their graduation requirements. Students in grades 9, 10, 11 must enroll in six periods a day every semester. Students in grade 12 may enroll in a minimum of five periods a day both semesters provided that they are on track for graduation. Grades of D- or higher earn credits for graduation. Grades of C- or higher are required for college admission. The master schedule is built around student course requests with around 96% of students receiving their first choices. Counselors meet with students to develop four-year plans with group visits during class time and subsequent individual visits, along with

career presentations in the fall and spring by grade-level counselors to students, discussion on post-secondary goals. During course selections, students and parents are presented with a flowchart that guides students in their course selections. There are opportunities for career exploration with medical assisting and robotics and preparation for postsecondary education with core and elective courses available to all students. Most courses meet A-G college requirements, landing at 95% of all offered. RAHS currently offers dual enrollment in Statistics that allows students to receive college credit concurrent with high school graduation credit, and they have plans to expand their dual enrollment offerings in College Success, Statistics, Psychology, English, and ASL in the upcoming school year. Course selection begins in early March and allows students to make plans for their next years' courses. Counselors visit classrooms to work with students in the Naviance program in the ELA or Social Studies classes or Physical Education to grades 11, 10, and 9 respectively.

Departments utilize curriculum that includes real-world topics and issues and are aligned with RAHS' SLOs. In math students work on real-life applications, for example taxes, earning statements, and budgeting in Financial Math. In World and US History courses, students analyze current events and connect them with concepts from past events. American Government and Economics courses also focus on links between their concepts and real-world applications with political speech analysis and various economics units. In science Biology students learn about feedback loops, homeostasis, and diabetes in the carbohydrate glucose unit, while in Chemistry students learn from a multi-leveled curriculum that uses manipulatives, scaffolding, and real-life connections. In their English course, seniors research careers for their I-Search project to explore possible paths after high school. RAHS has medical and engineering programs to offer students opportunities to learn the skills needed for real-world employment, and students in the medical pathway are able to participate in internships in medical offices during their school day.

In the Rio and Beyond program, the Counseling Office and PTSA help support students and their families to find opportunities and resources to prepare for life after graduation. The Rio and Beyond parent group meets with juniors to discuss career goals, and seniors are invited to talk to a panel of parents about post high school options. RAHS also has an English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) that holds meetings quarterly for staff and community members which allows EL families to express their concerns and to address their unique needs. ELD teachers work with district liaisons to provide information on the academic and behavioral expectations of American schools to students and families in their home language. The CIVITAS political science academy program provides students with opportunities in political science and law. During their freshman year, students take Introduction to "Political Science" and "State and Local Government." The following year, they take "International Relations" and "Speech and Communications." The last course students must take is "Philosophy." Students may take the courses at different grade levels to best fit their schedule, and before the start of students' last year in the program, they must complete a 75-hour internship.

RAHS implements strategies and programs to facilitate transition to college, career, and other post high school options. The Rio and Beyond website provides information about the types of higher education, preparing and applying for college, and financial aid for college. There is a

section about CTE and the benefits and possibilities for students, and there is general information and links for students to explore military options. Students with IEPs can take a Career Development course with the Special Education Department to help with the transition to college and career. Their transition plans state the students' career interests, independent living options, and college awareness. Students work with counselors to create four-year plans, and parents and students are invited to College Night, hosted in September on the RAHS campus, to help students and parents learn about various colleges. Parents and students are also invited to Career Night, the last one being in March of 2021 with hopefully another one soon, to learn about careers and education beyond high school.

Equity and Access to Curriculum that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

The extent to which all student have equal access to the school's entire program and are provided assistance with a personal learning plan to meet the requirements of graduation and whether or not they are prepared for the pursuit of their academic, personal, and career goals is **effective** with a variety of programs and a full range of choices, however, a different schedule would allow for more access.

CATEGORY B: CURRICULUM

Areas of Strength for Curriculum:

1. RAHS has a variety of courses and programs for students.
2. Math is using common curriculum and common summative assessments in some courses and has streamlined their grading policies. IM 3 uses a common pretest to guide instruction before actual assessment.
3. Social Science has aligned their grading scale and worked on vertical alignment and pacing guides.
4. Social Science and English Language Arts work together on the junior research project.
5. Science has worked on alignment of curriculum in Chemistry, and all courses have done work to cover the NGSS with their textbook adoption.
6. World Languages has common assessments and has aligned pacing guides and percentage breakdowns for their courses.
7. Programs such as Rio & Beyond, Civitas, and AVID provide information to students on options after high school.

Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement for Curriculum:

1. Communication of coursework and daily curriculum to students and parents varies greatly. Some teachers use Google classroom but there is a lack of consistency.
2. Departments struggle with alignment in curriculum and grading policies making

- consistency of rigor for all students difficult to ensure.
3. Fast growth of EL population. There is a lack of resources to support beginner EL students for them to be successful in their classes.
 4. Post-COVID, literacy across the curriculum has not been a school-wide focus.

Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and growth areas for continuous improvement include the following:

- Master schedule
- Course Planning Guide
- Course syllabi
- Various lesson plans and unit plans
- Various curriculum maps
- Classroom visits
- Posted agendas and calendars

CATEGORY C. LEARNING AND TEACHING

C1. Student Engagement in Challenging and Relevant Learning Experiences Criterion

Visiting Committee Comments

RAHS offers students a wide range of challenging and relevant work by offering a wide variety of courses and learning experiences. This is evident by the large variety of Advanced Placement (AP) courses, CTE courses, and electives offered. Students complete an array of assignments and projects that are both rigorous and relevant. Technology is integrated as much as possible to facilitate learning experiences for students. Many teachers continue to use Google Classroom for assignments and communication. The engineering and robotics program uses commercial-grade technology to prepare students for college and career. The medical program uses a variety of technology to deliver content and provide students with competencies for career-readiness.

The RAHS counselors use Naviance (college and career readiness tool that helps students, teachers, and counselors connect student strengths and interests to their college and career goals) to provide in-depth instruction and information to students in preparation for college and career. The counselors visit classrooms to deliver lessons and make presentations on topics that relate to college readiness and career options.

In the self study, RAHS states that students in English classes use common rubrics, analyze college-level English composition, and participate in various Socratic seminars throughout the year. In math classes, students learn about personal budgeting and complete income tax forms. In physical education, students use projects and presentations to demonstrate learning. Social Science classes use standards aligned lessons. Students create presentations on historical, economical, and political topics. In addition, every junior must complete a Junior Research Paper that focuses on analyzing a historical event.

Science classes complete many labs throughout the year using simulations as well as hands-on methods. Health classes utilize mastery rubrics for learning targets. The Special Education Department works with other departments to modify assignments for students. ILS Special Education students are taught life skills and how to use online resources. Students in World Language work daily on conversational skills by applying material learned to dialogues.

Schoolwide Learner Outcomes (SLO's) are posted in classrooms and around campus. Many teachers align the SLO's with their content standards and learning targets. Health and World Language classes use learning targets consistently and connect learning to real life applications. This was provided as evidence to the VC. The posting of learning goals and expected student outcomes is not universal and was witnessed in very few classes visited by the VC. While many teachers continue the use of Google Classroom to support student understanding, several have moved away from the platform this year. Students and parents/guardians do have immediate, constant access to the online grading platform.

The VC observed many of these practices during their visit including hands-on activities in science classes, use of technology in various classrooms to deliver instruction, a wide variety of student engagement strategies, and rigorous content being delivered by teachers.

Student Engagement in Challenging and Relevant Learning Experiences that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Rio Americano High School continues to offer a wide range of challenging and relevant classes that support high achievement for students, but VC agrees that there could be more differentiation of content so all student groups are able to apply knowledge and skills at higher levels and depths, extend their learning opportunities, or access the instructional content.

C2. Student-Centered Instruction through a Variety of Strategies and Resources Criterion

Visiting Committee Comments

The RAHS staff demonstrate the use of a wide variety of instructional strategies and students encounter a diversity of learning experiences. The visiting committee observed classrooms during lectures, test review, labs, hands-on modeling, individual work, partner work and group activities. Students were actively engaged in most classrooms that were visited by the VC.

Teachers shared they are able to attend Professional Development provided by the district or site that will support their teaching and students. They shared that staff is surveyed for Professional

Development needs by their administration.

Teachers have weekly collaboration time each Thursday. Departments use collaboration time to examine data, refine instruction and plan curriculum. In speaking with the focus groups and the leadership team, teachers shared that they lack a data analysis tool or protocol. The data collected and used by many departments is not necessarily beneficial to adjust learning to student needs in a timely manner. The program provided by the district for this purpose (Illuminate) is not being used by most teachers due to lack of training.

Most courses at RAHS are aligned to similar or like courses, have common grading practices, common rubrics and utilize the same pacing guide. Departments such as World Language are fully aligned and other departments are at various levels of alignment. This was demonstrated by the evidence provided to the VC and was observed in classrooms during the visit.

Teachers have made adjustments to teaching strategies post-Covid to allow for more class discussions, collaboration, group work and relationship building. Students were observed during the visit participating in a wide variety of activities and learning methods such as inquiry based learning, hands-on activities, group discussion, direct instruction, and multiple methods of checking for understanding.

Technology is being used campus-wide in different degrees. The school site is not a 1:1 campus and there are Chromebook carts spread throughout classrooms. From the report, teachers identified that technology is used in English classes for reading, writing, publishing and presenting. Science uses Google Slides to present content and for students to access, analyze and present information. Science also uses online simulations to enforce difficult to understand concepts. Social Science classes use a variety of tools and programs to research and analyze historical events. In CIVITAS, students create presentations and conduct research. Visual and Performing Arts use technology for video production and for students to create, produce, collaborate, refine and perform. World Language uses several online tools to support student language development. The CTE programs use technology extensively in robotic design, CAD, online 3-dimensional modeling, diagnosing and treating patients, medical competency training and the delivery of content.

The VC observed many technological tools being used by teachers and students in classes during our visit. Students were watching videos, doing simulations, creating presentations, collaborating, reading online text, and writing. Teachers were mostly using their TV's to deliver content either using presentation programs or via a document camera. The VC did note that not all classrooms have Chromebook carts and that common classes are not using technology in the same manner.

Students at RAHS are able to demonstrate their knowledge, creativity and critical thinking skills in a variety of projects and assignments. Students use technology, videos, and portfolios to

demonstrate learning. Many classes have incorporated common projects that require students to research, evaluate, collaborate, integrate technology and present.

RAHS has many classes that are co-taught with a general education teacher and a special education teacher to support all students in general education classes.

The VC observed many samples of student work both in the classroom and submitted as evidence. The sample work observed in classes and submitted demonstrated the different strategies used by their teachers. The samples included videos, student-created presentations, band performances, student-created projects, socratic seminars, whiteboard work, poster projects and student discussion.

The focus groups and staff expressed to the VC the lack of support on campus for EL students. The number of students receiving EL support has drastically increased and staff resources and training have not been supplemented.

Lessons are adjusted and scaffolded by teachers to meet the needs of students at RAHS. Students are able to apply their learning, knowledge and skills. Lessons encourage students to utilize different levels of thinking. Students are offered opportunities for demonstrating knowledge and understanding.

Individual disciplines allow for a variety of opportunities to practice and demonstrate knowledge and skills. Science students complete inquiry labs, claim-evidence-reasoning activities, simulations and lab activities that allow them to transfer knowledge and skills to real-world problems. The use of inquiry was observed in science classes by the VC. Social Science courses allow for group collaboration and Socratic Seminars. This was provided as evidence in the self-study report. Math teachers use analogies or real-world situations to encourage application of knowledge and most classes are using “mastery-based” grading that allows students to self-monitor their learning. This was provided as evidence in the self-study report and robust methods of teaching were observed in classroom visits by the VC. English teachers provide opportunities for students to demonstrate learning and develop skills through the use of projects and concise rubrics. These were provided as evidence in the self-study. World Language classes encourage further exploration and language development practice through projects that were provided in the self-study report. CTE lessons include as many real-life situations as possible that encourage critical thinking and problem-solving skill development. This was observed by the VC in classrooms and in discussions with teachers.

Teachers and staff did identify that more work needs to be done to differentiate instruction to better support all students, EL, IEP and 504 students. Teachers in focus-groups requested more training on differentiation strategies.

In the self study it is indicated that students are involved in a wide variety of programs that prepare them for career, college and apply real-world experiences. There are a wide variety of AP courses where students can receive college credit for passing the AP Test. There are also a wide variety of college preparatory courses and CTE courses.

Students in English classes learn professional communication, resume writing, career exploration and budgeting skills. CIVITAS provides students with opportunities to visit professional settings such as the Federal Courthouse in Sacramento. Special Education provides vocational skills courses and students participate in the workability program. The CTE programs provide students with internship opportunities. The self-study report provided evidence for these items and many were observed by the VC during the visit.

The counseling department of RAHS provides students with resources and information regarding college and career through the use of Naviance. Counselors visit classrooms, meet with students individually, and are involved in the College Night and Career Night offered by the school site and the district. The self-study report provided evidence of these program offerings.

Student-Centered Instruction through a Variety of Strategies and Resources that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Rio Americano High School continues to work on student centered instruction through a variety of strategies and resources that supports high achievement for all students and this is evident with the various CTE pathways, courses, and programs that they offer students. The visiting committee would have liked to see a consistent use of technology in classrooms as well as more depth of knowledge in classrooms and class work for all students.

CATEGORY C: LEARNING AND TEACHING

Areas of Strength for Learning and Teaching:

1. Students are involved in rigorous, relevant coursework. (C 1.1, LCAP Goal 3, SPSA Goal 3)
2. Students are participating in a wide range of classes that prepare them for college and career; additionally, many are involved in clubs, sports, and extracurricular activities. (C 2.3, 2.4; LCAP Goal 4, SPSA Goal 4)
3. Teachers work as coaches and moderators to give students opportunities and support to learn deeply through the use of various teaching methods. (C 2.1, 2.3; LCAP Goal 3, SPSA Goal 3)
4. Teachers collaborate to develop consistent curriculum, common assessments and grading practices. (C 2.1, 2.2; LCAP Goal 2; SPSA Goal 2)

Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement for Learning and Teaching:

1. Meeting the diverse needs of all student groups and differentiating instruction is of great importance. Presently, not all student groups are able to apply knowledge and skills at higher levels and depths, extend their learning opportunities, or access the instructional content. (C 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3; LCAP Goal 1, SPSA Goal 1)
2. Although teaching staff have worked on identifying learning expectations for students and aligning them to curriculum they are inconsistently presented to students and may cause students to struggle with learning expectations. All disciplines can align language to be consistent and explicit with student learning expectations. (C1.2, LCAP Goal 2, SPSA Goal 2)
3. The use of technology in the classroom is important for the facilitation of learning, differentiation of content and college and career readiness. Technology use is inconsistent across classrooms and content areas. (C2.1, LCAP Goal 4, SPSA Goal 4)
4. Improve the use of data to drive instruction. Having a clear process of collecting, analyzing, and using data in departments to adjust instruction will improve student outcomes. (C1.1, C 2.3; LCAP Goal 3, SASP Goal 3)

Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and growth areas for continuous improvement include the following:

- VC Classroom Visits
- VC meetings with Leadership, focus groups, students and counseling department
- LCAP
- School Action Plan (SPSA)
- Schoolwide Learner Outcomes (SLO's)
- Common Assessments
- Course Syllabi
- Course Catalog
- Curriculum maps and pacing guides
- Chemistry pacing guide and assignments from bonding unit
- ERWC Curriculum guide
- College and Career Night postings to website
- Socratic Seminar participation sheet for English
- English 117A College Syllabus
- Energy Bar Competition description and example
- Health Learning Targets
- Food Web Assignment with modifications
- French dialogue practice and grammar
- English play instructions
- Math Modelers Game of Life assignment
- Social Science Socratic Seminar topic list and directions
- Science Vitamin and Mineral Sales Pitch assignment
- Special Education Dog Biscuit Business project guidelines
- Band performance videos
- AP French project student sample

- CTE Engineering student portfolios
- CTE Engineering robotic competition video
- Math and science course pathway charts
- Spanish 1 and 2 projects
- Naviance website
- PLC meeting information

CATEGORY D. ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

D1. Reporting and Accountability Process Criterion

Visiting Committee Comments

CAASPP data is available to all stakeholders in the school dashboard. It is also distributed, analyzed, and discussed in staff and department meetings. ELPAC results are provided to all stakeholders. Both CAASPP and ELPAC test results as well as grade distributions are used by the leadership and administrative team to plan and implement staff development and set site goals, and to develop site plans. Teachers have the opportunity to participate in a Learning Team book study using Grading for Equity. (three math teachers are participating in this professional development this year.)

Common grading has been agreed upon in most departments. VC overheard one teacher & student side conversation about the grading policy. More evidence of how the grading policies are communicated to students, parents, and other stakeholders is needed. The assessment focus group explained that grading policies are communicated to students, and parents through the class syllabus, as well as verbally explained in class and at back to school night.

Progress report grades, pre-tests, mid-terms, and final exam scores are all used to monitor student progress. Student progress on IEP goals are monitored on a continuous basis throughout the year. Counselors meet with students to complete A-G progress checks annually. Counselors receive reports every four to six weeks with the names of students who have more than one D or F in a class. After receiving these reports counselors meet individually with students.

District wide department chair meetings. Music teachers meet with the district VAPA coordinator about music programs. AVID teachers meet with district coordinators and SCOE representatives.

Individual school sites have a great deal of autonomy in San Juan Unified. There are monthly department chair meetings that are attended by all department chairs from Rio Americano. They discuss curriculum and instruction. The music teachers meet monthly to share resources, and plan district wide events such as “San Juan” sings. Special Education teachers as well as AVID teachers work closely with district personnel. They receive regular visits and support. District-wide special education teachers meeting monthly via Zoom.

Using Assessment to Analyze and Report Student Progress that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale: The school leadership and instructional staff use effective assessment processes to collect student performance data. They have agreed upon the basis for students' grades across and within grade levels and content. The school has an effective system to monitor and report student growth as measured by grades.

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

Visiting Committee Comments

Most common assessments are summative. The type and timing of the assessments vary greatly by department.

Social Science: most assessments are multiple choice, administered near the end of the semester, and either administered as a separate test or quiz or embedded within other tests or possibly the final. Economics is the exception that tends to assess student knowledge using more project based types of assignments.

English: Most common assessments in English classes are essays. Due to the need to share resources (ie. novels), they are often assigned at different times of the semester/year. As a result, the data that is gathered from these essays is only useful for planning next year's teaching and assessment. Calibration of essay scoring usually happens in May in preparation for the upcoming school year.

Junior research papers are taught by the History and English teachers. A common rubric is used by all 11th grade teachers involved.

Chemistry teachers plan common quizzes, tests, and labs.

Math teachers use common unit tests and are often within a few days of each other on the course pacing guide.

Physical Education teachers use common rubrics to assess student performance and participation.

Special Education teachers use standardized assessments as well as teacher created formal and informal assessments to evaluate and then adjust student progress.

Although there is no prescribed timeline for how frequently teachers must have their grades

updated, most teachers update their grades frequently, described as every few days by one member of the assessment committee.

Using Student Assessment Strategies to Monitor and Modify Learning in the Classroom that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale: Most teachers use a variety of appropriate assessment strategies to evaluate student learning. The extent to which teachers and students use this data to modify teaching and learning in a timely fashion is limited.

CATEGORY D: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Areas of Strength for Assessment and Accountability:

1. A variety of data is collected across subject areas and the population.
2. All departments have some common assessments.
3. Data is used to identify students who are “at-risk.”
4. Teachers frequently collect and use both formative and summative data.

Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement for Assessment and Accountability:

1. Work towards more frequent common formative assessments that allow for reteaching of skills and content in real time.
2. Use common rubrics across common subject areas.
3. Consider developing and implementing more common rubrics for common skills across content areas (ie. Presentation Rubrics).
4. Consider using an LMS or updated teacher websites to communicate common grading policies.

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and growth areas for continuous improvement include the following:

- California Dashboard
- Focus Group - Assessment
- Discussions with parents
- Sample Rubrics

CATEGORY E. SCHOOL CULTURE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL, SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL, AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

E1. Parent and Community Engagement Criterion

Visiting Committee Comments

RAHS uses many strategies and processes to keep all stakeholders informed on things happening at the school. They have a website, weekly parent letter, calls home, orientation, surveys,

conferences, various meetings (SSC, PTSA, ELAC, Equity), boosters, social media platforms, as well as school sponsored events such as Back to School Night, FAFSA Night, and Listening Groups. In addition teachers use various platforms to communicate with families.

Parent engagement at RAHS is very strong. VC met with a group of parents that are actively engaged in programs throughout the campus. They shared examples of pride with the programs that the school offers as well as the creation of groups as needed based on academic struggles they have seen.

Staff reported in a couple of focus group meetings, the desire to reach more of the families who are not often represented at these meetings mentioned above. There are often language barriers or inability to participate due to transportation and/or work hours. Efforts have been made to get more families involved and they will continue trying to reach as many families as possible. One way that they are attempting to reach more families is by doing home visits when necessary to check on the wellbeing of a student, and/or find solutions to other concerns.

Parent and Community Engagement that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective **Effective** Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

School implements strategies and processes for regular involvement of stakeholder support groups in the learning and teaching process for all students.

E2. School Culture and Environment Criterion

Visiting Committee Comments

RAHS reports safety protocols in place, cameras, procedures, and a safety plan that is treated as a living document that gets updated often. Students report that cameras are not the best and may need more to cover more areas of campus. Safety committee meets regularly and works closely with district officials. Custodial staff assist in implementing safety procedures; however, there is often only one daytime custodian on campus because the other custodian is pulled to other district sites. Staff and students both emphasized cleanliness as a concern on campus and the lack of custodial help to the VC. There is a full time nurse, social worker, and safety community liaison are all available on campus to address health and safety concerns. Together with a District White House counsel and the RAHS counseling team, social emotional needs are being met. During interviews, VC was advised that the CTE Medical teacher often responds to incidents requiring medical attention to assist the nurse prior to medical staff arriving.

The school reports an inclusive atmosphere and student interviews echoed that. Students said they feel safe on campus and have a group of teachers/staff that they can go to if they need additional support either academically or otherwise. Some of the words used by students to describe the culture on campus were: welcoming, respectful, friendly, lack of cliques, and

everyone being friendly with each other. High expectations for students is evident and there are some measures in place to assist with that. Tutoring is available before, after and during lunch for students that need assistance. In addition, some programs (SPED, EL) offer study skills during the day where students get additional academic support. Students also reported being able to go to any teacher either during class or lunch to get assistance on academics when needed. They also described a peer tutoring program that is available to them as needed.

The Lunch with Friends club is an inclusive structured social time for students with disabilities and general education peers. Students spend lunch time as well as other school events ensuring students with disabilities have access to social occurrences on campus. Staff report that watching these groups of students together is rewarding and takes place during all times of day structured or organically.

The student driven Equity team has taken on several issues on campus. Although this team was created out of some alarming incidents on campus, the students have worked very hard to take on issues they felt needed to be addressed, and currently are attempting to build capacity by involving underclassmen to continue the group. Staff volunteered to be on the team and work together with students to create new systems. Sub committees are working on things such as modifying a dress code that was outdated and insensitive to groups of students, creating a Staff-Student Allies program so that students know who they can go to when in need, and restorative practice procedures such as how to report concerning incidences and assure they are being addressed. Students spoke passionately about the Equity team and the work they are doing. One of the members of the Equity team is also on the Superintendent's Advisory Committee and the RAHS Dress Code has been taken under consideration by the district. Some students reported concern with a small group of staff who seem to push back on initiatives that are designed to protect students, although their conversations were dominated by expressions of gratitude for staff who are welcoming and bring positivity to the culture of the school.

Staff report that they have access to professional development and continue to learn about things such as de-escalation techniques, unconscious bias, and social emotional needs of students. Often staff drive the need for professional development and seek it out for the needs they feel are most important.

School Culture and Environment that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective **Effective** Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Overall, the campus is a safe, clear, and orderly place for students to learn. There is a strong school culture that demonstrates caring, concern, and high expectations, while honoring individual differences, and social emotional needs.

E3. Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Student Support Criterion**Visiting Committee Comments**

RAHS reports a course schedule that provides curriculum to meet the academic needs of students and support overall growth. Several departments have created common assessments and pacing that provides similar experiences to students in like courses. VC witnessed a variety of teaching strategies that appeared to meet the needs of students. Students have options to take courses such as the CTE programs where hands-on real life skills are taught and practiced. Music, theater, multimedia, and art options allow artistic students to express themselves as well as exposing students who are not sure of their interests to visual and performing arts. VC members were able to see all of these programs in action and were delighted by performances and projects that students were working on. Core content areas work in creative and traditional ways to meet the needs of students. There are some departments that team teach courses to assist students in making connections.

The school has a strong AVID program where students receive support in pursuit of higher education. In addition, counselors work to assure students are aware of resources available to them and assist them in building the best schedule for them. Students have voice and choice in classes they want to take. Students did report that it would be nice if scheduling was reviewed by stakeholders to provide more opportunities for them to participate in programs they are interested in. Many of them have impacted schedules due to programs that they are passionate about taking up multiple sections over multiple years. A student who participates in CIVITAS and the music program, may be unable to choose to participate in other programs offered because of limits in the schedule.

RAHS reports being an inclusive school with forums for student voice. In addition, opportunities for all students to participate together are offered both academically and socially. Students with special needs are included in Physical Education (PE) courses when appropriate. A VC member observed a mixed cohort of students playing tennis together, a modified volleyball game with beach balls, and a separate setting in which general education students recorded time lapse weights exercise while students with special needs played basketball outside. In addition, during classroom visits, VC members saw study skills classes where special education students were working closely with teachers and support staff on projects from their other classes.

The Equity Team, BSU, QSA, Student Club Congress, and Global Expo, are just some of the student-led forums working to assure inclusive practices for all students. While speaking with students, they reported several opportunities for diverse activities and several students of color reported feeling included and respected. It was reported that if one of the many clubs does not interest students, they have the option of taking steps to start a club of their choosing. Students report that they have a clear understanding of things going on at the school through social media, announcements, bulletins, flyers and posters, and word of mouth.

The environment at RAHS clearly supports academic and personal growth. Staff are taking

social emotional wellbeing into consideration and have additional staff on campus to assist when needed. Students are often well rounded participating in academic and extracurricular activities. Students expressed some concern over inconsistent communication from some staff. Regarding academics, they report a syllabus is provided and some teachers use Google Classroom or other ways of communicating with students while others do not clearly communicate expectations and/or due dates for assignments. Staff report a variety of ways that students and families can get information on events, classwork, and services offered at the school. VC witnessed information provided on the school website, print materials in the office and classrooms, posters, messages on white boards, as well as parent interviews stating that staff communicated well and were very responsive to email and phone communication.

When asked about wishes for their school, staff requested new buildings that better meet the needs of students, more support for their growing English Learner population, more support staff in all areas of campus, additional custodial support to assist in keeping the campus safe and clean, more elective options for students, and less open periods/options to assist teachers over elective courses. Students' wish list included changing the schedule so that they could fit more classes into their day, updated textbooks/literature that is more inclusive of represented demographics, less push-back and more collaboration on initiatives meant to protect students, better security system, and swift attention to problems on campus with a focus on proactivity rather than reactivity. Parents requested earlier courses for larger programs such as CTE medical, more support staff, more resources for programs such as Mock Trial, Robotics, and music programs, and better facilities. All stakeholder groups addressed a concern and wish for a new stadium that includes bleachers and lights. It is clear that not having the ability to have night games on their campus, where they all would like to be, is troublesome. VC heard in many forums about the "temporary" intention for the school and concern that so many years ago it was decided to keep the temporary school so why hasn't it been treated as a permanent school by continuing to update facilities and provide students a safe space to learn and participate in extracurricular activities while allowing families and the community to participate in a comfortable manner.

Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Student Support that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

RAHS uses some multi-tiered support approaches to meet academic student needs. The goal would be to find how to fit them into the academic day to assure access by all students.

CATEGORY E: SCHOOL CULTURE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL, SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL, AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

Areas of Strength for School Culture and Support for Student Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Growth:

- Overall strong parent engagement

- Safety plan as a living document, social worker, providing more counseling
- Campus monitors
- Equity Team
- Class offerings, tutoring options, and extra curricular
- Open access to AP and Honors classes
- Student voice

Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement for School Culture and Support for Student Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Growth:

- Engaging a broader range of families
- Need to refine and communicate safety plan
- Foster Equity Team efforts
- Greater representation of all students in activities and special support for EL population
- More support for SEL and academic needs
- Increase communication
- More custodial assistance to assure culture of cleanliness
- More access to elective courses for students

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and growth areas for continuous improvement include the following:

- RAHS WASC Self-Study Report
- VC Interviews
- Focus Group Meeting
- VC Classroom Visits
- School website
- Bulletin examples
- Student Announcements during visit
- Minutes from SSC, PTSA, Equity Team, ELAC, etc. meetings
- Social Media accounts
- Safety Plan
- Cyber/Online Policies
- Club Minutes/Information
- Tutoring Schedule/website
- Master Schedule
- Team Teaching Plans
- AP courses
- APEX course information
- AVID classes

Chapter 4: Synthesis of Schoolwide Strengths and Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement

Schoolwide Strengths

The visiting committee identified the following specific schoolwide strengths and their rationale

for the identification:

VC agrees with schoolwide areas of strength in the report:

Rio Americano High School offers a college preparatory education with open access to a variety of courses, including Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

1. Rio Americano High School has a variety of unique programs including CIVITAS, Jazz Band, Advanced Placement (AP), CTE, ACE, and dual enrollment with American River College.
2. Rio Americano High School has a high level of parent involvement including a strong PTSA, Rio and Beyond, and parent boosters in sports, band, and science.
3. Rio Americano High School offers a variety of extracurricular activities that include sports, clubs, and academic competition teams which enable students to be connected to the school.
4. Rio Americano High School has many student support structures such as peer and teacher tutoring, credit recovery, intervention and pull-out programs, FAFSA night, and an on-site mental health therapist.
5. Rio Americano High School is an inclusive school with forums for student voice and student concerns, such as the Equity Team, Black Student Union (BSU), Queer-Straight Alliance (QSA), and Student Club Congress.

Schoolwide Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement

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

1. Rio Americano High School should identify needs and create additional supports for our increasing English Learner (EL) population to improve students' academic success and connection to the school.
2. Rio Americano High School needs to create additional supports and a system to better identify students who are struggling to improve their academic success.
3. Rio Americano High School should improve communication between staff, administration, students, families, and the community to improve engagement, understanding, and inclusivity of all stakeholders.
4. Rio Americano High School should create more access to elective courses for students to provide equitable access to a well-rounded educational experience.

VC would like to recommend the following modifications to the already identified growth area #5:

5. RAHS should improve its use of data analysis by using the four critical questions of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) to determine changes to instruction on a monthly basis (at a minimum). Additional PD might be necessary.

Chapter 5: Ongoing School Improvement

RAHS has an action plan that is directly tied to the SPSA and LCAP goals. They have growth targets in addition to specific tasks where responsible parties, and a timeline are identified. It is a living document that staff use to monitor progress and direct links to SPSA indicators are crosswalked as well.

Acceptable progress by all students toward clearly defined schoolwide learner outcomes/graduate profile (major student learner needs), academic standards, and other institutional and/or governing authority expectations.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Multiple measures show growth targets being reached for some identified student subgroups based on the major student learner needs, the academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes. Some recognition by all stakeholders of the need for continual improvement in ensuring students are prepared with creative and critical thinking skills, communication skills, and other 21st century skills/global competencies.

The alignment of a long-range schoolwide action plan to the school's areas of greatest need to support high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

There is analysis of all appropriate data/information about the major student learner needs and student achievement, school operation and program supports the identified prioritized growth areas in the action plan. There is a strong focus on improving student achievement in each action plan section. There is clarity of each action plan section that includes suggested components.

The capacity to implement and monitor the schoolwide action plan/SPSA.

Visiting Committee Rating (select one): Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

RAHS has the capacity to implement and monitor the schoolwide action plan/SPSA through the living document created. Action plan can be reflected on and progress monitored through the school year. It is clear that many stakeholders worked on this plan together.

Accreditation Status Factors Summary

Accreditation Status Factors	Highly Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
The involvement and collaboration of stakeholders in the self-study that addresses the self-study outcomes.		X		
The use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and drive school improvement.		X		
Vision and Purpose (A1)		X		
Governance (A2)	X			
Leadership: Data-Informed Decision-Making and Continuous School Improvement (A3)			X	
Staff: Qualified and Professional Development (A4)		X		
Resources (A5)		X		
Resources (Charter only) (A6)				
Rigorous and Relevant Standards-Based Curriculum (B1)			X	
Equity and Access to the Curriculum (B2)		X		
Student Engagement in Challenging and Relevant Learning Experiences (C1)		X		
Student-Centered Instruction through a Variety of Strategies and Resources (C2)		X		
Reporting and Accountability Processes (D1)		X		
Using Student Assessment Strategies to Monitor and Modify Learning in the Classroom (D2)			X	
Parent and Community Engagement (E1)		X		
School Culture and Environment (E2)		X		
Personal, Social-Emotional, and Academic Student Support (E3)		X		
Acceptable progress by all students		X		
Alignment of a schoolwide action plan/SPSA to the school's areas of greatest need	X			
Capacity to monitor and implement the schoolwide action plan/SPSA		X		