

SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

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

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

FOR



Aragon High School

**900 Alameda de las Pulgas
San Mateo, CA 94401**

San Mateo Union High School District

March 11-13, 2024

Visiting Committee Members

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Introduction

Established in the city of San Mateo in 1961, Aragon High School is long recognized as a high-performing within the San Mateo Union High School District and beyond. It serves a diverse student population. The school has recently experienced a modest increase in demand, due to a larger number of English Learners than expected. Feeder schools in the area are experiencing declining enrollment, yet Aragon continues to be a school families choose though they may live in other areas of the district. Aragon High School offers a [comprehensive curriculum](#) that serves the varied academic and socio-emotional requirements of its students, featuring an array of specialized programs.

Aragon High School's dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion is manifested through strategic initiatives, including targeted hiring practices to enrich [staff diversity](#) and sustained engagements in race and equity dialogues. The school's curriculum is expansive, offering college preparatory, Advanced Placement, CTE Pathways, support classes, music, drama, art, computer science, Advanced Placement courses, and a strong AVID program, alongside specialized offerings like the Bay Academy for students with significant learning needs and Dual Enrollment courses in partnership with local colleges, which are particularly focused on supporting historically underrepresented student groups.

The school's self-study process was a collaborative endeavor involving faculty, staff, students, and parents aimed at evaluating and enhancing educational outcomes for all. Parent involvement was generally limited to survey feedback and Zoom meetings with limited attendance. It is unclear how the school site was supported by district leaders through the self-study. The site leadership made efforts to reach parent groups, but this proved to be challenging. The self-study process sought to foster community-wide participation, leveraging data analysis, group discussions, and extensive feedback to inform their areas of growth and resulting in an action plan.

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:

Most school site stakeholders and partners were invested in the self-study process and findings and participated in the analysis, and dialogue about the school's effectiveness and perceived strengths and growth areas. The school profile, the determination of major learner needs, and the evaluation of the school program and operations in relation to the ACS WASC/CDE criteria was a community endeavor. Based on focus group meetings, and discussions with staff, students, and parents, Aragon High School is committed to self-reflection, continuous improvement, and data analysis to ensure that the needs of all students are being addressed.

Chapter 1: Progress Report

Significant Developments

Leadership: Since the 2018 WASC Self-Study, the high school has experienced considerable changes in its administrative leadership. The departure of the long-standing principal and the introduction of a new principal in 2020-21 coincided with an unprecedented turnover in administrative leaders. There have been new assistant principals and a reevaluation of administrative roles to enhance work-life balance and operational efficiency, including the full-time appointments of key personnel in the dean and campus security positions.

Enrollment Trends: Enrollment trends have shown variability. The school adjusts to the district-set capacity limits and continues to be the most requested school for transfers in the district. The school's adaptation to a new learning management system was timely, which facilitated a smoother transition to distance learning. The LMS can support a blend of synchronous and asynchronous learning modalities. The system's integration has become a cornerstone of the school's instructional strategy, ensuring consistent engagement and resource accessibility for students and teachers.

Bell Schedule Changes: During the school closure in the 2020-21 academic year, the school adopted a hybrid learning model, blending synchronous online classes with asynchronous learning and staff development on Wednesdays. Eventually, 25% of students were welcomed back on campus for the last six weeks of the school year.

Transitioning into the next year, they implemented a new in-person bell schedule district-wide, featuring four block days, bi-weekly Flex Time for students, and allocated meeting/collaboration time for staff. This schedule has been set across the district in all schools except one.

The Aragon High School staff, having previously established a well-researched schedule that offered more instructional minutes and collaboration time, had difficulty embracing the new, more restrictive schedule. The revised schedule, developed by district-wide committees, reduced direct student contact time, cut annual instructional minutes, and limited staff collaboration time to two 45-minute sessions a week. These changes are proving to be a challenge for the school's historically collaborative culture. This struggle prompted the principal's discussions with district leaders in January 2024 to explore ways to reestablish collaborative input from the site regarding the bell schedule.

Campus Construction: Campus improvements have been a focal point, with numerous projects initiated to upgrade facilities and enhance the school environment, reflecting a commitment to providing a conducive learning atmosphere. These improvements range from significant infrastructural renovations to the addition of modern amenities, all aimed at improving the school experience for students, staff, and the community.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work: Aragon High School is the most diverse school in the SMUHSD in terms of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic composition. As such, the staff at Aragon have long celebrated students for who they are, resulting in almost [90 clubs](#). The school's commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable educational environment is evident in its strategic initiatives to expand student leadership, adapt its curriculum to be more inclusive, and implement comprehensive counseling programs. These efforts are designed to support every student's academic and social success, demonstrating a proactive approach to education that prioritizes diversity, equity, and inclusion. The ongoing development of programs and initiatives, such as those focusing on student behavior expectations and community engagement, illustrates the school's dedication to continuous improvement and its role as a dynamic educational community.

Multi-tiered Support Systems: The school's MTSS framework incorporates several specific programs designed to support students at various tiers of intervention, each tailored to address distinct aspects of student needs, ranging from general support to targeted interventions.

At the Tier I level, the [Aragon CARES](#) (Connect, Achieve, Respect, Engage, and Show Spirit) program offers "CARES Cash," a reward system acknowledging positive student behaviors. This system operates on the principle of positive reinforcement, where students earn "cash" for embodying the school's CARES values. They can be exchanged for small rewards or saved for larger, end-of-month prizes, thereby incentivizing consistent positive behavior. Additionally, the Behavior Management Chart was created to guide the dean, assistant principals, and campus supervisors when addressing behavioral expectations across the school.

The Tier II interventions are more specialized, focusing on students who need additional support beyond the Tier I strategies. This tier includes a variety of programs such as Wellness Groups, which provide a supportive space for students to discuss and manage emotional or social challenges, and the Check In Check Out (CICO) mentoring program, designed to offer regular, structured check-ins with students to foster positive relationships and consistent support. The Executive Functioning Workshops, known as SMART HOPS, target students' organizational and planning skills, which are crucial for academic and personal success. Additionally, the Art Therapy Group offers a creative outlet for students to express themselves and process their emotions in a therapeutic setting.

For students requiring more intensive support, the Tier III team steps in with even more personalized interventions. This team, comprising school counselors, psychologists, and special education professionals, takes the insights provided by the Tier II team and escalates the support as necessary. This could include a more intensive mentoring program, a change in the student's schedule to better accommodate their needs or the initiation of formal assessments for special education services. The aim is to ensure that each student receives the precise level of support they require to thrive academically and personally.

These programs collectively embody the school's commitment to a holistic, multi-tiered approach to student support, ensuring that every student has access to the resources and interventions they need to succeed. The structured yet flexible nature of these interventions allows the school to effectively address a wide range of student needs, fostering an environment where all students are empowered to achieve their full potential.

The school recognizes that their work in these areas must continue. In the 2022-23 school year, there was an uptick in the dehumanizing language used across campus. In Fall 2023, efforts were started to equip staff and students to navigate this problem. The focus of professional development was shifted to address the needs of the moment.

SPSA & Action Plan Implementation and LCAP Alignment and Summary of Progress: The implementation of the 2018 Action Plan at Aragon High School, spanning from 2019 to 2023, involved annual updates by a dedicated WASC Coordinator and subsequent reviews by the leadership team. Despite the original goals being impacted by the shift to distance learning, altered meeting schedules, and district-mandated PD requirements, the school strived to align its objectives with the District LCAP and the site SPSA.

Initiatives included the establishment of a dual enrollment program, alignment of CTE offerings with student interests, and the introduction of the BAY Academy to support students with learning disabilities. The school also adapted its Key Program to a Therapeutic Elective Class for students with significant needs and created a CTE Waiver Application to accommodate students focused on non-CTE fields. A new CTE Coordinator was appointed to foster career-oriented partnerships and activities.

The SPSA involved collaborative discussions with various school stakeholders and was subject to annual progress reviews, with details made publicly accessible. The school maintained its commitment to enhancing academic performance and equity, as evidenced by strong CAASPP scores and the adoption of inclusive academic strategies. Efforts to bolster student wellness included the implementation of a behavior matrix, the hiring of specialized counselors, and the enhancement of student support systems like the Athletic Study Hall. These actions reflect a sustained commitment to improving educational outcomes and student well-being at Aragon

High School.

Summarize Progress on goals of the last self-study: The 2017-18 self-study at Aragon highlighted four Critical Student Learner Needs,

1. Provide students and families a comprehensive social and emotional learning program that helps them to manage stress, achieve a better school/life balance and improve their social/emotional wellness.
2. Make Aragon's discipline and academic ethics policies, practices and communication systems more clear and consistently enforced to maximize the school's productivity, integrity, and physical and emotional security.
3. Significantly increase the percentage of students in high-priority groups (Multilingual Learners, Special Education, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, Latino, and Polynesian students) who earn C's or better and who meet or exceed standard on all portions of the CAASPP exam.
4. Make the academic program more inclusive and inspiring by preparing students for all types of post-secondary education and careers. This includes building more robust career and CTE pathways and better informing.

The school's improvement strategies are informed by a variety of data sources, including disaggregated academic and behavior data, alongside feedback from WASC Visiting Teams. These elements have historically guided the school's professional development and strategic planning. However, post-pandemic challenges of a new schedule that provides shorter meeting times have hindered the regular analysis of data, and sustained time for school-wide discussions has impacted the school's ability to maintain its innovative momentum.

Despite these obstacles, Aragon remains committed to its strategic objectives, adapting its action plans to accommodate unforeseen circumstances like the pandemic and changes in school administration. The continuous focus on these strategic areas reflects the school's dedication to addressing its identified needs, even as it navigates the complexities of evolving educational environments.

Analyze how the use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data are driving school improvement to increase high achievement for all students and why identified growth areas may not be identified in the current schoolwide action plan/SPSA:

The progress of their previous Focus on Learning Self Study was interrupted by the pandemic, and the school, like most schools in the nation, had to shift the focus to address the immediate need to move to a remote and hybrid educational structure. Aragon is to be commended for keeping their school improvement efforts by focusing on equity and achievement, behavior and wellness, and creating an inclusive and inspiring program. Here's a detailed summary and analysis:

Equity and Achievement

Objective: Enhance academic performance with a special focus on high-priority groups to ensure consistent and equitable academic policies.

Strategies: Implementation of high-yield instructional strategies, shared homework practices, equitable technology use, revising support programs, and diversifying faculty.

Progress: Varied success with instructional strategies focusing on engagement, equitable technology access achieved, and ongoing efforts to improve support programs and faculty diversity.

Behavior and Wellness Program Implementation and Communication

Objective: Refine behavior expectations and protocols, enhance student wellness, and strengthen communication systems.

Strategies: Development of a cohesive MTSS, promoting positive student behaviors, and creating efficient communication processes for student concerns.

Progress: Improved MTSS structure, introduced behavior consequence matrices, and ongoing adjustments to communication processes.

Creating a More Inclusive and Inspiring Program

Objective: Tailor the academic program to be more inclusive, focusing on students' career goals and diverse post-secondary paths.

Strategies: Expanding dual enrollment opportunities, reassessing counseling department structures, and aligning elective offerings with student interests.

Progress: Increased dual enrollment credit opportunities, optimized counseling support, and efforts to reflect student interests in elective programs.

Analysis:

Aragon High School exhibited a commitment to continuous improvement through targeted action plans influenced by feedback and data-driven insights. Their adaptive strategies reflect a responsive approach to evolving educational challenges, highlighting a dedication to equity, student well-being, and inclusivity. Progress in certain areas demonstrates effective implementation, yet ongoing challenges underscore the complexity of school improvement efforts. The school's proactive stance on leveraging technology and diversifying instructional strategies shows a forward-thinking approach to education, aligning with broader goals of preparing students for diverse futures. However, the need for further work, particularly in unifying communication processes and fully integrating inclusive practices, as well as addressing the gap in academic performance of the Latino and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged subgroups, indicates areas for ongoing focus.

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

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Aragon showed clear and focused efforts to reach the goals of their prior self-study. The school reviewed its action plan progress and shared it with stakeholders, though attendance at parent meetings and School Site Council meetings was lackluster. Aragon made some effort to analyze the impact of actions in the plan on student learning, including major student learner needs. The schoolwide action plan/SPSA is updated as needed, and progress is shared with most stakeholders/educational partners.

Chapter 2: School and Student Profile and Supporting Data

School Location and Description

Aragon High School opened in 1961. Located approximately 20 miles south of San Francisco in a residential area of the City of San Mateo, it is one of six schools in the San Mateo Union High School District (SMUHSD). Its boundaries extend from Belmont to San Bruno. Aragon is a four-year, comprehensive high school serving grades 9-12. Though district policy permits families to request admittance to any of the six district schools, space permitting, Aragon primarily serves students from feeder schools in Hillsborough, Foster City, and San Mateo.

All data referenced below is included in the [data packet](#).

Enrollment

- SMUHSD is projecting a decline in student enrollment across all schools. Aragon, which has seen growth of 150 in the last six years, recognizes a trend in declining enrollment. In 2021-22 there were 449 9th graders, and as of November 2023, there are 389 (a decrease of 60 students in two years).
- The ethnic and racial composition has remained relatively unchanged over the past five years. The largest subgroups are Asian (26.4%), Hispanic (27.1%), White (27.2%), and Two or More Races (11.8%). The smallest groups are Filipino (4.6%), Pacific Islander (2.5%), and African American (.3%).
- Shift in gender distribution: Female student decline in the last five years from 50.3% to 46.6% in November 2023. Starting in 2020-21, non-binary students on campus are being identified. Currently, non-binary students account for .02%. Males are 53.1%.
- English Learners are currently 4.56%. This is a small subgroup, and it remains small, but it has seen growth since 2018-19.

Major School Programs

Aragon High School offers the following programs to students as described in the [Course Catalog](#).

- **Advanced Placement (20)/ Honors (5)** courses are open-access (Art, English, Math, Science, Social Science, and World Language). Grade bump on GPA for these courses. In Spring 2023, 605 AHS students took 1,535 AP tests.
- **AVID** (Advancement Via Individual Determination) is a robust program with eight sections, two per grade level. Nearly 100% of AHS AVID students attend college.
- Bay Academy supports students with IEPs with moderate to severe learning needs. The goal is to equip students for post-high school opportunities. This is a certificate program, and students matriculate to the district's Bay University post-secondary program, for 18-22 year olds. This program will move off to another site next school year.
- **Compressed Math** courses allow students to complete three levels of math (Geometry, Algebra II, and Precalculus) in a two-year period.
- **Dual Enrollment** courses are offered in partnership with the College of San Mateo and Skyline College in the areas of Business, Entrepreneurship, Video Production, Food and Nutrition, Culinary Arts, Bio-Technology, and Kinesiology. Emphasis on enrollment is aimed at historically underrepresented groups. In the 2023-2024 school year, 381 (22%) students participated. Enrollment includes 27.8% Latino, 1% American Indian, 28.6% Asian, 1.5% Black, 9.4% Filipino, 3.4% Pacific Islander, and 47.2% White.
- **Self and Social Empowerment (Guided Studies)** courses focus on supporting students with work completion and learning SEL skills that support emotional resilience and academic persistence.
- **CTE Pathway Model Courses** are available for students in Art, Biotechnology, Ceramics, Choir, Computer Science, Culinary Arts, Digital Photography, Dance, Drama, Engineering Technology, Jazz Band, Orchestra, and Video Production.
- **Therapeutic Elective** class is offered for students with IEPs requiring on-demand

access to wellness counseling support. This program offers students with school-avoidant behaviors the flexibility to complete all academic coursework in one classroom setting, with a fading support system as students are able to participate in the full academic program. A full-time licensed MFT supports students in this program.

Vision & Mission

ARAGON MISSION STATEMENT

Aragon supports all members of our community to realize their individual potential as productive participants in a diverse society and to pursue dynamic educational and career goals.

(Revised/adopted on November 7th 2017)

ARAGON VISION STATEMENT

Aragon's vision is to provide the highest quality academic and co-curricular programs that foster intellectual, emotional and physical well-being.

(Revised/adopted on December 7th 2017)

Schoolwide Learner Outcomes

SCHOOLWIDE LEARNER OUTCOMES

KNOW—THINK—DEVELOP—CONTRIBUTE

All Aragon graduates are expected to...

KNOW Foundation Skills and Information in each Discipline and can

- Identify and understand key facts and concepts
- Speak and write effectively
- Read and listen actively
- Gather, process and communicate information using appropriate technology
- Transfer skills to emerging technologies

THINK Creatively using Higher Order Thinking Skills and can

- Gather, analyze and evaluate data
- Define problems, propose and implement solutions
- Generate their own ideas and organize material using a variety of techniques
- Think metaphorically and categorically
- See relationships within and between disciplines

DEVELOP Effective Methods of Self-Management and can

- Maximize personal strengths while exploring a variety of academic and co-curricular areas
- Demonstrate reliability, time management, organization and self-discipline
- Set appropriate goals for physical fitness, hygiene, nutrition, and emotional health
- Develop personal goals for career, family and community life
- Identify areas of personal challenge and self-advocate to manage them constructively

CONTRIBUTE to a Diverse Democratic Community and can

- Work effectively with others to accomplish goals
- Welcome diversity and other points of view and can handle conflict constructively
- Contribute to maintaining a safe, clean and caring environment
- Follow the school and community standards of ethical behavior
- Have integrity and take responsibility for choices
- Participate in local, national and global discourse and decision-making

Identified Major Student Learner Needs

After reviewing the profile data, the school identified the following major student learner needs:

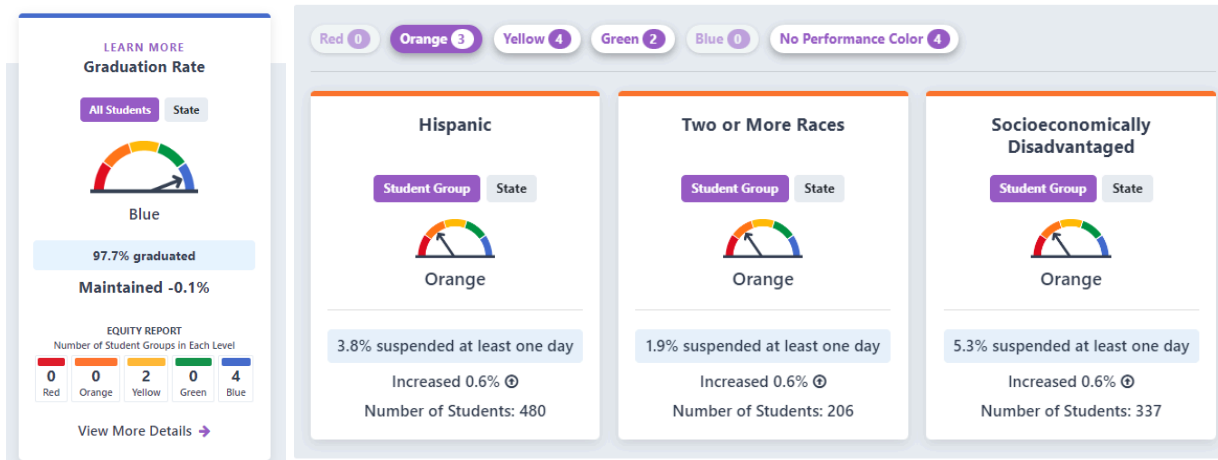
- Aragon staff identified a need to minimize hate speech and denormalize dehumanizing language and insults used among students to help foster a more empathetic, compassionate, and emotionally safe community. This should include better education around consistent and clear consequences and expectations from ALL staff. (See [Panorama Survey Data - Students, Staff, Families](#))
- Aragon staff identified a need for refocused, school-wide use of strategies to develop academic identity, skills, and literacy in all classes for all students, particularly for historically underrepresented students and our rising MLL (Multilingual Learner) population (See CAASPP ELA and Math performance data).
- Aragon staff identified a need to increase student motivation and agency and to develop student executive functioning skills. (See [California Healthy Kids Survey Results](#))
- Aragon staff identified a need within and outside of classroom curriculum to broaden the development and preparation of skills for post-high school success.

Performance Data

California Dashboard Overview 2023



Explore Groups By Performance Level



Comparing Student Group Reports from 2019 and 2023

(2019 was the last time data was communicated using the dashboard system)

Student Group Report for 2019

Student Group	Chronic Absenteeism	Suspension Rate	Graduation Rate	College/Career	English Language Arts	Mathematics
All Students	N/A	Orange	Blue	Blue	Green	Green
English Learners	N/A	Orange	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level
Foster Youth	N/A	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level
Homeless	N/A	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	N/A	Yellow	Blue	Green	Yellow	Orange
Students with Disabilities	N/A	Orange	Blue	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level
African American	N/A	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level
Asian	N/A	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Filipino	N/A	Blue	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level
Hispanic	N/A	Orange	Blue	Green	Yellow	Orange
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N/A	Orange	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level	No Performance Level
White	N/A	Orange	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Two or More Races	N/A	Orange	Blue	Yellow	No Performance Level	No Performance Level

Student Group Report for 2023

Student Group	English Learner Progress	Chronic Absenteeism	Suspension Rate	Graduation Rate	English Language Arts	Mathematics	College/Career (Status Only)
All Students	N/A	N/A	Orange	Blue	Green	Green	Very High
English Learners	Red	N/A	Yellow	--	--	--	Medium
Foster Youth	N/A	N/A	--	N/A	--	--	N/A
Homeless	N/A	N/A	--	--	--	--	--
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	N/A	N/A	Orange	Blue	Yellow	Orange	High
Students with Disabilities	N/A	N/A	Yellow	Yellow	--	--	Low
African American	N/A	N/A	--	N/A	--	--	N/A
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	N/A	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Asian	N/A	N/A	Yellow	Blue	Green	Green	Very High
Filipino	N/A	N/A	Green	--	--	--	--
Hispanic	N/A	N/A	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Orange	High
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N/A	N/A	Green	--	--	--	--
White	N/A	N/A	Yellow	Blue	Green	Blue	Very High
Two or More Races	N/A	N/A	Orange	Blue	Green	Blue	Very High

CAASP English Language Arts

CAASPP English Language Arts/Literacy Results	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Std Exceeded Level 4	48.26 %	N/A	N/A	52.86 %	54.18 %
Std Met Level 3	28.86 %	N/A	N/A	33.1 %	28.86 %
Std Nearly Met Level 2	13.43 %	N/A	N/A	9.76 %	8.86 %
Std Not Met Level 1	9.45 %	N/A	N/A	4.29 %	8.1 %

Current ELA Performance Data Trends:

- There is a gap in data as students at AHS did not participate in CAASPP or CAST testing during the 2019-20 or 2020-21 school years (like most all schools in California).
- From 2017-18 to 2021-23, a 4% increase in the number of students who met or exceeded ELA standards
- Subscore data: Reading (90.3%-->93.3%), Listening (92.8%-->94.3%), and Research (91.4%-->94.8%) - %Above/At/Near standard. Writing remained at 90%.
- EL subgroup shows large gains: Meeting or Exceeding Standard: 67.2% to 71.3%, but a large performance gap between this group and “All Students.”
- Latino subgroup shows gains in Reading (from 80.1% above/at/near standard to 85%)
- Students with Disabilities are not showing gains. 57.1% of students remain in the “Nearly Met / Not Met” performance bands.
- Economically Disadvantaged Students do not show progress. 41.1% in the “Nearly Met / Not Met” performance band.

CAASP Mathematics

CAASPP Mathematics Results	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Std Exceeded Level 4	30.33 %	N/A	N/A	37.86 %	40.1 %
Std Met Level 3	20.55 %	N/A	N/A	25 %	21.01 %
Std Nearly Met Level 2	24.31 %	N/A	N/A	21.9 %	17.87 %
Std Not Met Level 1	24.81 %	N/A	N/A	15.24 %	21.01 %

Current Mathematic Performance Data Trends:

- There is a gap in data as students at AHS did not participate in CAASPP or CAST testing during the 2019-20 or 2020-21 school years (like most schools in California).
- 2017-18 to 2022-23, a 7% increase in the number of students who Met /Exceeded Math standards: from 54% in 2017-18 to 61.1% in 2022-23
- Most subgroups demonstrate an increase in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standard from 2017-18 to 2022-23.
- Economically Disadvantaged students had the largest drop from meeting standard.
- Subgroups with the largest “Nearly Met / Not Met” numbers are Students with Disabilities (81%), Economically Disadvantaged (80.2%), Latino (74%), and Multilingual Learners (62.2%).
- Overall, students have stronger performance in “Problem Solving” and “Communicating Reasoning,” as no subgroups have more than 30% Below Standard.
- Students indicate some difficulties in “Concepts & Procedures” area.

2023 CAASPP Subgroup Performance

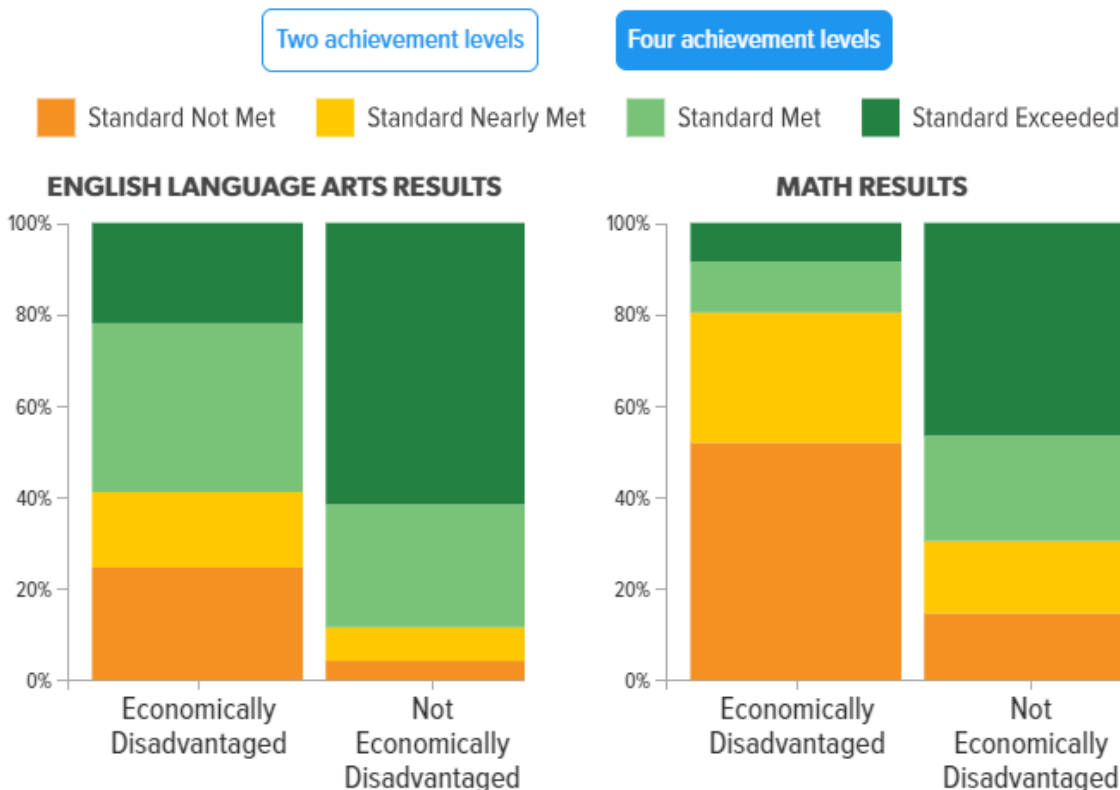
2023 TEST RESULTS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY



In 2023, there is a clear performance gap between the Hispanic and other subgroups on the ELA and Mathematics CAASPP. The math performance of the Hispanic subgroup shows a high percentage of students scoring Standard Not Met.

Students in the Socioeconomically Disadvantaged subgroup perform below their peers on the ELA and Mathematics CAASPP. The gap is the widest in math performance.

2023 TEST RESULTS FOR LOW INCOME STUDENTS



AP Course Data

Enrollment & Scores	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Enrollment in Grades 10-12	1274	1282	1308	1333
Enrollment in Grade 12	464	450	436	444
# Tests Administered	1276	1239	1333	1519
# of Students Tested	517 (40%)	519	540	603 (45%)
AP Score = 1	60	64	44	40
AP Score = 2	117	130	136	169
AP Score = 3	258	267	291	324
AP Score = 4	368	397	384	435
AP Score = 5	473	381	478	551
# Students with Score 3+	464 (88.0%)	454 (87.5%)	492 (91.1%)	544 (90.2%)

- Large drop in students taking AP Calculus AB - Drop from 112 to 68 students in a year
- Course takes consist of mostly students in the Chinese and White subgroups
- Hispanic students have more AP course takes in the humanities (AP Language, AP Lit, AP Spanish, AP Psychology, US History) and Environmental Science.
- Higher concentration of males take AP Calc BC, AP Computer Science, AP Physics 1, AP Physics C.
- Higher concentration of females take AP Lang, AP Lit, AP Psychology,
- Number of AP exams has increased each year, and 90% score 3+

Graduation Rates and Post-High School Plans

Overall

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Cohort Graduation Total	395 (98.4%)	387 (96.3%)	416 (97.9%)	443 (97.7%)
Non Completer Rate	2 (.5%)	9 (2.2%)	7 (1.6%)	
% Grads Meeting UC/CSU A-G Reqs	74.7%	83.5%	79.3%	74.0%

	2020	2021	2022	2023
4-Year College/University	205 [52.97%]	213 [58.84%]	239 [58.15%]	286 [66.20%]
Community College	162 [41.86%]	128 [35.26%]	151 [36.74%]	121 [28.01%]
Vocational Ed	3 [0.78%]	5 [1.38%]	3 [0.73%]	7 [1.62%]
Military	--	2 [0.55%]	--	1 [0.23%]
Work/Mission	11 [2.84%]	9 [2.49%]	8 [1.95%]	10 [2.31%]
Gap Year	6 [1.55%]	5 [1.38%]	10 [2.43%]	7 [1.62%]

- Very high graduation rate.
- College-going rate hovers near 94% of graduates.
- Drop in number of students UC/CSU eligible to 74%
- College going rate for graduates 94% for last four years.

Summary of Survey Feedback

Students

- 78% appreciate the 4-day block schedule.
- 39% enjoy coming to school most of the time.
- 53% feel safe when adults respond to hate speech.
- 86% have been the target of hate-motivated speech or behavior.

Staff

- 95% feel confident supporting English Learners and BIPOC students.
- 98% feel confident responding to hate speech and homophobia.
- 63% find professional development improves instructional practice.
- 82% view their school/worksites as managed effectively.

Parents

- 63% worry about violence at their child's school.
- 74% feel it's difficult for bullied students to get help.
- 71% value the school's diversity; however, 84% see the school as unwelcoming to parents.
- Only 1% meet with teachers, and 35% have visited the school in the past year.

Analysis

The data reflects strong approval from students regarding the 4-day block schedule, but a lower percentage enjoy school overall, indicating a gap in engagement or school satisfaction. Staff confidence is high in supporting diverse student needs and addressing hate speech, though the perceived effectiveness of professional development and school management presents room for improvement. Parent responses indicate significant concerns about school safety and inclusivity, along with a notable lack of engagement and communication with the school. This suggests a need for enhanced safety measures, improved communication strategies, and more inclusive community engagement practices to better align with the needs and expectations of all stakeholders.

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: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Multiple measures show growth targets being reached for some identified student groups, and overall, the students have improved since the school closure, indicating that students have not been impacted by significant learning loss. There are academic gaps between the Hispanic, and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged subgroups when compared to their peers. The two groups's math performance is consistent with the State of California as a whole in Mathematics performance, but Aragon's students score well above the state average on the CAASPP ELA.

Chapter 3: Quality of the School's Program

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

A1: Vision and Purpose

A1.1 Vision and Schoolwide Learner Goals/Graduate Profile: The school has established a clear, coherent vision and purpose and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile based upon high-quality standards and congruent with research, school practices, and aligned with district goals for students.

A1.2 Equity and Inclusion: The vision and purpose of the school reflects a belief that all students can learn and achieve.

A1.3 Development/Refinement of Vision and Purpose: There are effective processes in place to ensure involvement of all stakeholders/educational partners in the development and periodic review and refinement of the vision and mission, and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile.

A1.4 Communicating and Understanding Vision and Purpose and Schoolwide Learner Goals: There are effective processes for communicating with all stakeholders/educational partners to ensure the understanding of the vision, purpose, and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile.

Visiting Committee Comments

The staff at Aragon has established a clear, coherent vision, mission, and schoolwide learner goals. Although the vision and purpose of the school reflects a belief that all students can learn and achieve, the vision, mission, and schoolwide learner goals have not been revisited since their initial conception in 2017/2018. The Aragon staff acknowledge that they need to be reviewed including the involvement of all educational partners to ensure a community-wide commitment toward their realization on campus. Although Aragon has processes for communicating with all educational partners what the vision and mission is through new family presentations for example, there are no other ongoing efforts to ensure that the larger community understands the vision, mission, and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile. Staff have acknowledged that more consistent efforts have been made to ensure students understand the core values of the school, Aragon CARES, through regular leadership student presentations. There is an opportunity to review the school's vision, mission, and schoolwide learner outcomes to reevaluate what is important to the entire school community and also the work needed to make the vision the school reality.

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: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Although the vision and mission supports high achievement for all students, the statements have not been reviewed by the schoolwide community in several years. And although it is clearly stated on the website along with the schoolwide learner outcomes, the vision, mission, and SLOs are not clearly visible around campus nor are they taught or explained for schoolwide understanding. There are limited processes in place to ensure involvement of all educational partners in the development and periodic review and refinement of the vision and mission, and schoolwide student goals. Limited communication processes are in place to ensure understanding of the vision, purpose and schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile.

A2: Governance

To what extent is school's purpose aligned with governing board goals and policies and focused on student achievement and well-being through data driven decisions with the aim of preparing students for college and career readiness?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

A2.1 Relationship between the Governing Board and the School: The school community has a clear understanding of the role of the governing board and how the governing board's decisions, expectations and initiatives guide the work at the school with the aim of improving academic achievement and well-being of all students.

Visiting Committee Comments

Staff claim to have a clear understanding of the role of the governing board and how the governing board's decisions, expectations and initiatives guide the work at the school with the aim of improving academic achievement and well-being of all students. However, although the board website provides access to agendas and the meetings which can be viewed on the YouTube channel, some staff report that there is a lack of transparency with the decision-making process of the board. An example of this lack of transparency is the decision to provide athletes with a study period in lieu of having to take physical education during the school day. The concern raised was the lack of a pilot program that would have provided clearer guidance on how to implement this new program including how to assess and grade students.

Governance that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

There are resources available to the school community regarding board agendas and meetings however the decision-making process is not transparent to staff raising concern regarding the Board's authority and impact on the school. The school community is clear on the Board's authority and how their decisions impact the school and request more clarity on how decisions are made.

A3: Leadership for Learning

A3.1 Broad-based and Collaborative: The school’s leadership, faculty, staff a) assess data to determine student needs, and b) determine and implement strategies and actions, and c) monitor results and impact on student learning to support continuous improvement.

A3.2 Leadership Role in Accountability: The school leadership and faculty demonstrate shared decision-making, responsibility, and self-reflection on actions and accountability expectations for implementing practices, programs, actions, and services that support student learning.

A3.3 School Action Plan/SPSA Correlated to Student Learning: The schoolwide action plan/SPSA is directly correlated to and driven by the analysis of student achievement and other data and aligned with the LCAP.

Visiting Committee Comments

Aragon HS has many strategies in place in an attempt to meet the needs of students so that all students can be academically successful. However due to a district school schedule change, the professional development time for teachers and staff to collaborate has been limited. With the exception of preparing for this study, the teachers have not collaborated schoolwide around data analysis, evaluation of implemented support strategies, or professional learning community (PLC) work including continuous cycles of improvement. Data analysis has occurred within smaller specialized teams for example within the counselor team, administration, and tiered support teams. Teachers have also utilized the PLC time they have available and common prep periods to collaborate in curricular groups to design rubrics, share best practices, and align curriculum units. According to some staff, the faculty has had the opportunity to give input on some decisions but feel their suggestions are not taken into consideration when decisions are actually made. Other staff feel that faculty has not had the opportunity to truly participate in the responsibility of shared decision-making as they are accustomed to with their previous administration. Some staff feel that sufficient information from the leadership has not been shared with the staff regarding the decision making process and the reasons behind certain site decisions. Although the SPSA has been completed there has been a lack of quorum on the school site council and the community has not been fully engaged in the analysis of student achievement and other data.

Leadership for Learning that supports high achievement for all students.
Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective
Narrative Rationale:
 The school’s leadership, faculty, and staff need more time and structured professional development so that they can analyze data to determine student needs, to evaluate selected and implemented aligned strategies, and monitor results. The school leadership and staff can improve on their shared and transparent decision-making processes. The process for SPSA completion currently does not include thorough analysis of student achievement by the school site council due to a lack of quorum.

A4: Qualified Staff and Professional Development

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

A4.1 Qualifications, Preparation, and Supervision of Staff: The school understands district and school procedures to ensure that leadership and staff are qualified based on staff background and preparation. The school implements effective supervision and evaluation procedures in order to promote professional growth of staff.

A4.2 Professional Learning and Impact on Student Learning: The school effectively supports professional development/learning and evaluates its effectiveness on teacher practices

and student learning, with time, personnel, and resources to facilitate all students achieving the academic standards and college- and career-readiness expectations.

A4.3 Communication and Understanding of School Policies and Procedures: The school implements a clear system to communicate administrator and faculty written policies, procedures, and handbooks that define responsibilities, operational practices, decision-making processes, and relationships of leadership and staff.

Visiting Committee Comments

In regards to recruitment of qualified staff, Aragon HS utilizes interview and screening processes to recruit and hire staff through an equitable selection process. Currently staff feel like the time set aside for professional development is not sufficient for them to collaborate with each other regularly as they are accustomed. Aragon has had effective professional development organized and facilitated by staff members and based on student needs and staff input. Some examples of effective PD include recent work around addressing dehumanizing language that students are using around campus, the 2020-2021 grading for equity group that met at lunch, and work done within departments for shared rubrics and aligned curriculum. Staff report that more work must be done to include classified staff in schoolwide PD. Staff also report that they are not clear on the disciplinary policies and their implementation or follow through by administration although there is a tiered behaviors and interventions document that clearly states the response regarding various disciplinary infractions.

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

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

The school team lacks a systematic approach to schoolwide continuous improvement through professional development based on student performance data, student needs and research. However, department chairs and departments through PLCs align their curriculum and improve teacher practices including rubrics and grading. The school team communicates administrator and faculty policies, procedures, and handbooks in limited ways and needs schoolwide clarity.

A5: Resources

A5.1 Resource Allocation Decisions: School leadership and staff are involved in resource planning and allocation decisions aligned with student and personnel needs, and goals of the schoolwide action plan/SPSA and the LCAP.

A5.2 Practices and Procedures: Transparent district and school procedures are in place to develop an annual budget, conduct audits and follow quality accounting practices.

A5.3 Instructional Materials: The policies and procedures for acquiring and maintaining adequate instructional materials and equipment, such as textbooks, other printed materials, instructional technology, manipulatives, and laboratory materials are effective.

A5.4 Facilities Conducive to Learning: The school’s facilities are safe, functional, well-maintained, and sufficient to support student achievement and the educational program(s) including the use of technology and digital learning.

Visiting Committee Comments

The district determines funding allocations for Aragon HS. The district provides the number of course sections. Although staff do not inform allocation decisions, they have been able to give input regarding teacher workload. Currently the department chairs feel that they do not have the

same agency as they have had in the past to share their desired workloads and feel that what is requested is not taken into consideration. It is not clear how the staff and leadership work together to plan how resources are spent taking into account the needs of students. Aragon has an abundance of support staff provided through the district and are currently developing and implementing systems and structures for student Tiered support. While systems are developing, there is a need for communication schoolwide on the process and shared transparency on student support. A recent concern is regarding the district decision to reduce staffing for technology and facilities support. The school site council does not currently have a quorum and therefore the annual budget has not been reviewed with this community group. Department chairs work with their departments to maintain materials for the classes and can place orders as needed. School facilities are safe and well maintained. Recent construction has caused unanticipated interruptions, however recent new and upcoming projects like the new baseball field and all gender changing areas have and will enhance the school environment.

Resources that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Human, material, physical and financial resources are sufficient and used appropriately to support student success. The policies and procedures for acquiring and maintaining adequate instructional materials and equipment are understood and implemented efficiently. The school has an abundance of support staff and the systems and structures for student support are developing with a need for schoolwide transparency. The school's facilities are safe, functional, well- maintained, and sufficient to support student achievement. There is a concern regarding the district's allocation of staff to support technology use at the site including training of staff to use the district software and online systems effectively.

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

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

- The core values, CARES implementation, reteaching, and reinforcement occurs schoolwide in a variety of ways
- The culture of collaboration and shared decision making present within departments across the school is very strong as individual departments continue to improve their curriculum and strategies to address students' needs.
- The staff take ownership of their professional development and the impact on student learning.

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

- Create a regular process for establishing the vision/purpose/mission and evaluating progress that reflects the importance of connection and agreed upon desired student outcomes.
- Administration and staff need to engage in analysis of different forms of data to determine effectiveness of programs and to what extent they are meeting students' needs.
- Develop practices to strengthen teacher and administration partnership to increase transparent shared-decision making processes
- Develop regular transparent communication schoolwide regarding current and developing systems of student support including tiered systems, support classes, and discipline.

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

Strengths:

- “The counseling department gives targeted annual [grade-level presentations](#) to all students related to behaviors that uphold the CARES statements.”
- Focus group feedback
- Classroom observations

Growth Areas:

- “Upon reviewing them this WASC cycle, most staff members noted that the 2017 Vision and Mission [continue to be adequate](#), though some discussion and potential updates may support our shifting foci.”
- “The [district-wide schedule](#) facilitates [collaboration](#) time, but there are constraints due to reduced meeting times with this new schedule. See [Chapter 1 for District-wide schedule info](#). Teachers in this focus area also noted the absence of a formal process at Aragon to critique and evaluate the effectiveness of all Tier III programs due to time constraints within the allotted meeting time. “
- Focus Group Feedback

CATEGORY B: CURRICULUM

B1: Rigorous and Relevant Standards-Based Curriculum

B1.1 Current Educational Research and Thinking: The school provides an effective, rigorous, relevant and coherent curriculum based on current educational research and thinking that supports the schoolwide student goals and academic standards.

B1.2 Congruence with Schoolwide Student Goals: There is congruence among the concepts and skills taught, the schoolwide learner goals/graduate profile, academic standards, and the college- and career-readiness indicators.

B1.3 Academic Standards and College- and Career-Readiness Indicators: The school has college- and career-readiness indicators and academic standards for each subject area, course, and/or program that meet or exceed graduation requirements.

B1.4 Curricular Integration: There is integration between/among areas of study, academic standards and college- and career-readiness indicators.

B1.5 Community Resources and Articulation and Follow-up Studies: The school engages with community partners and resources, articulates regularly with feeder schools, local colleges and universities, and technical schools.

Visiting Committee Comments

Aragon High School demonstrates effective, relevant and coherent standards based curriculum that is evidenced by content area alignment, curriculum guides and lesson plans that are continuously and collaboratively refined through content team meetings in the current iteration of a PLC on Friday's and protected teacher collaboration time on Wednesday's. During classroom observations the VC confirmed cohesive alignment across multiple departments and grade levels. One example of this is through the English department, where each grade level and course were addressing the same standards, measuring the student proficiency in various modes of writing or research. There was clear congruence amongst the concept and skills taught in support of the graduate profile, academic standards and college-career readiness indicators. The VC received feedback from staff that prior to COVID they had more consistent and ongoing professional development on Constructed Meaning (CM) where teachers were given strategies to use around building literacy through structured language practices and using academic language in writing and speaking; many teachers expressed a desire to revisit CM PD

as ongoing practice. Another PD offering is through ongoing UDL training, which recently has hit a pause due to a recognized need by the school community (initiated by students) on addressing dehumanizing language used on campus. This need is currently being addressed through a systematic approach involving student voice, and staff collaboration to develop a structured, system-wide roll out in Fall 2024.

AHS uses data along with district level guidance when it comes to course development and offerings. Through data analysis, AHS has recognized a need to revitalize the CTE pathway as a viable option and support for students who plan on attending a community college or pursue career opportunities rather than attend a 4-year college or university. AHS recognizes the need for continued CTE pathway development and planning on expanding course offerings (interior design) for the 24-25 school year. Their current CTE classes are articulated with the local community college allowing students to earn both high school and college credit for completing the course with a “C” or higher.

While the CAASPP highlights the strengths of AHS student performance in English and Math, it also highlights the student groups who are disproportionately affected and underperforming compared to their peers (20% of the overall student population as reported on the last CAASPP reporting from Spring 2023); specifically the socioeconomically disadvantaged, Latino/a, English Language Learners and Polynesian student groups are high priority areas. When queried by the VC, the staff acknowledged the changes in instructional support(s) for English Language Learners over the past few years and noted the consolidation and/or eradication of stand-alone designated ELD classes. They have been replaced at the sites discretion with Strategic English Support (SES) classes (and beginning in 24-25 CLA will be used as a class to support multilingual learners). The teachers of this class have structured the classes to build literacy in reading, writing, speaking and listening in English in preparation for the ELPAC & CAASPP exam(s) and as a generalized support for students language development with the goal of accessing curriculum in all their classes. There is no district mandate at this time to have stand-alone D-ELD classes, however district representatives did inform the VC the plan to reinstate D-ELD classes back at AHS in 24-25 school year. Some staff felt the current ELL supports in CLA & SES classes are effective and adequate as-is, while many staff members highlighted the lack of designated and systemized instructional support for this student population, which is affirmed in the data sets we analyzed. The VC recommends that AHS develops a more clear and delineated program to support newcomers, English Language Learners and Long-Term English Learners.

There is integration and alignment between content areas, with the primary focus being college readiness (this is seen in high graduation rates, and A-G completion). Students have a vast amount of academic options to choose from in a 7-period day, be it AP courses, dual enrollment with middle college, and ongoing and continued collaboration amongst departments to ensure students have an academically focused experience across content areas and grade levels. However, the VC notes and affirms the AHS reporting that there is room to grow within the CTE pathways; specifically with note to the feedback from multiple student groups the desire for more career based pathways, and alternate post-high school pathways. The current CTE courses are articulated with the community college, allowing students to earn both high school and community college credit. However, the VC recommends the site prioritize developing a more robust CTE program to meet the needs of all learners; specifically socioeconomically disadvantaged, Latino/a and Polynesian student groups.

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

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Aragon High School demonstrates effective, relevant and coherent standards based curriculum that is evidenced by content area alignment, curriculum guides and lesson plans that are continuously and collaboratively refined through content team meetings in the current iteration of a PLC on Friday's and protected teacher collaboration time on Wednesday's. AHS teachers have expressed desire for ongoing and support PD on a school-wide level, possibly returning to CM or UDL PD. There is a need for continued development and expansion of the CTE course offerings, developing more robust pathways to meet the needs of all learners. The VC recommends the site prioritize developing a more robust CTE program to meet the needs of all learners; specifically socioeconomically disadvantaged, Latino/a and Polynesian student groups. Additionally, the VC recommends that AHS develops a more clear and delineated program to support newcomers, English Language Learners and Long-Term English Learners.

B2: Equity and Access to Curriculum

B2.1 Variety of Programs — Full Range of Choices: All students are able to make appropriate choices and pursue a full range of realistic college and career and/or other educational options. The school provides for career exploration, preparation for postsecondary education, and career technical options for all students.

B2.2 Access to Curriculum, including Real World Experiences, by All Students: A rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum that includes real world applications is accessible to all students through all courses/programs offered. Course enrollment patterns reflect the diversity of the school's students.

B2.3 Student-Parent-Staff Collaboration: Parents, students, and staff experience a sense of belonging and value within the school community and collaborate in developing and monitoring a student's personal learning plan, including college and career and/or other educational goals.

Visiting Committee Comments

It is clear in the reporting and in the feedback given to the VC that AHS has and maintains a reputation of academic excellence. Students connect with their identities as learners and all staff maintain a deep commitment to students academic success and overall well-being. There are clear systems in place that support and prioritize student learning; with special note to the rigorous course loads students take. From the outset of their experience at AHS, students are given a range of options to pursue rigorous A-G college prep courses, Advanced Standing courses, Advanced Placement as well as dual enrollment through CTE. There are multiple support classes offered across content areas for students with 504's, IEP's and academically struggling students in addition to athletic support classes geared towards student athlete accountability. "Flex time" is built into AHS bell schedule, allowing students and teachers the ability to make appointments with each other, retake assessments, or makeup classwork. Additionally, after school tutoring is available for all students, centrally located in the library. It is clear in the courses in place and the multiple academic supports and interventions offered, that AHS students and staff value learning and college preparedness.

While academics are a priority, the VC noted potential barriers to an equitable experience for all; specifically with Advanced Standing (AS) courses being in place. While the design of the course is to be "Pre-AP" and build student capacity, the implications and unintended consequences reinforce further stratification of high priority subgroups; specifically Black/African American students, Latino/a students, Polynesian Students, Students with Disabilities, and English Language Learners. While the other college prep courses in place still maintain their A-G status,

the sheer difference in course and curriculum variances lend itself to these high risk student groups not building competency at the same rate as their peers while the AS students unintentionally track as a cohort into the more rigorous course offerings in upper grade levels. Another potential barrier is the way students are identified and placed in an academic support class for non 504/IEP students. The implications of this can unintentionally gatekeep and track these students into a less robust course of study, preventing them from being equitable with their peers in an academic capacity taking varied classes throughout their 4-years at AHS. These potential barriers undermine the mission and vision AHS outlines of equity, belonging, inclusivity and community.

AHS students are assigned the same academic guidance counselor for the entirety of their 4-years. This continuity, as well as their own personal 4-year graduation plans they make with their counselor, prepares students to pursue their academic, personal and career goals. Counselors provide bi-annual class presentations covering a range of topics from mental wellness and mindfulness to academic preparation and review of their 4-year plans. Additionally, academic counselors have a system in place to help enroll students with multiple credit-recovery options such as summer school and on-site credit recovery (OSCR) during 1st and 7th period using Edgenuity curriculum. When speaking with parents, the VC heard that many parents feel very connected and supported by the school in supporting their child(ren) but both parents, students, and counselors highlighted a need for a college and career guidance counselor on site that is solely dedicated to monitoring the students path to college and/or career. Currently, many parents in the community pay outside college acceptance consultants to work with their child(ren), but that negatively impacts the population of students whose families do not have the socioeconomic means to access that level of support. The school administration is aware of this need and are actively looking on hiring for this position.

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

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective **Somewhat Effective** Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

It is clear in the reporting and in the feedback given to the VC that AHS has and maintains a reputation of academic excellence. Students connect with their identities as learners and all staff maintain a deep commitment to students academic success and overall well-being. There are clear systems in place that support and prioritize student learning; with special note to the rigorous course loads students take. While academics are a priority, the VC noted potential barriers to an equitable experience for all; specifically with Advanced Standing (AS) courses being in place. While the design of the course is to be “Pre-AP” and build student capacity, the implications and unintended consequences reinforce further stratification of high priority subgroups; specifically Black/African American students, Latino/a students, Polynesian Students, Students with Disabilities, and English Language Learners. Another potential barrier is the way students are identified and placed in an academic support class for non 504/IEP students. The implications of this can unintentionally gatekeep and track these students into a less robust course of study, preventing them from being equitable with their peers in an academic capacity taking varied classes throughout their 4-years at AHS. Finally, having and maintaining the same academic counselor for 4-years builds a trusting partnership between counselor-students-parents that lend itself to a strong academic and socioemotional support system all 4-years of high school. Based on student, staff and parent input, there is a desire for the school to provide a strong designated college and career counselor to address the equity gaps that exist with student groups. Feedback provided indicates key stakeholder groups do not feel this is an area on par with outside paid consultants and want a college and career counselor to support underrepresented and SED student groups and site

administration is actively looking to hire for this position.

CATEGORY B: CURRICULUM

Areas of Strength for Curriculum:

- 1. Rigorous, academic programs and course of study that effectively prepare students for 2-year and 4-years colleges and universities** - It is clear that AHS maintains and prioritizes academic excellence of its students. Staff is dedicated to continually developing and refining curriculum through ongoing collaboration and professional development.
- 2. Multiple opportunities for students to access academic support-** Students can take part of pathways (via science and CTE), enroll in AVID, have an academic support class (available to all students), take a wide range of AP courses, have credit recovery opportunities during the school day (OSCR), Flex time, Community Literacy in Action (CLA) classes and Structured English Support (SES) class(es) to support ELL students and students coming in below grade-level in reading and writing, as well as the standing “roaming” teachers who are an added layer of universal instructional support for students in Algebra and Geometry.
- 3. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Curriculum-** is evident through curriculum design and changes that are rooted in standards-based research. Staff has clearly implemented the ready for rigor framework from Zaretta Hammond’s “Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain”.

Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement for Curriculum:

- 1. Continue to develop a comprehensive CTE program** for additional career exploration where students engage in career development via pathway offerings.
- 2. Systemic and delineated support for ELL, LTEL & ELD students** that extends beyond Structured English Support classes and is provided for students in English, Math, Science and Social Sciences.
- 3. Revisit and Evaluate effectiveness and barriers of courses offered-** Create a clear process and system for evaluating and analyzing support classes in order to determine effectiveness of classes such as CLA & SES, and to what extent they’re meeting students needs. Additionally, reviewing the existence and merits of Advanced Standing courses vs. universal College Prep courses that better support equitable student access to higher level courses.

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

1. Focus Group Meetings with staff
2. Classroom Observations
3. Student feedback and focus groups
4. Query of Parents in the Community
5. Ongoing Professional Development in [CM](#) & UDL
6. [CAASPP Data](#)
7. A-G Completion Rates & [College and Career readiness indicator](#)
8. Current SES & CLA [class criteria](#) and placement
9. Culturally Responsive Teaching [evidence](#)
10. [EL advocate feedback](#)

CATEGORY C. LEARNING AND TEACHING

C1: Student Engagement in Challenging and Relevant Learning Experiences

C1.1 Results of Student Observations and Examining Work: All students are involved in challenging and relevant work in an equity-centered learning environment.

C1.2 Student Understanding of Learning Expectations: All students understand the standards/expected performance levels for each area of study in order to demonstrate learning and college and career readiness.

Visiting Committee Comments

Aragon prioritizes an equitable and challenging learning environment. Efforts are made to create equal opportunities and conditions for most students. Teacher teams, PD, student tutors, and acceleration options further support student achievement.

Although the last Panorama survey, designed to capture voice and opinions to influence school improvements, has shown that some students seem disinterested or disengaged in their classes, the staff has made multiple efforts to address this. For example, in history class, they use anchor questions for the day, teach skills to discern reliable resources online and discuss relevant topics to engage students in learning. In the science class, they use videos to display phenomena and relevant news stories, present information to students in different ways and use multiple means of representation to enhance engagement or use technology like smart boards to get immediate feedback. In math class, block days are chunked into 3s to offer a wider variety of strategies and activities to meet all students' needs and make the long block periods more bearable. On the other hand, counselors help students with different approaches to coping with personal and mental health issues that interfere with learning and also communicate regularly with parents. Teachers also develop strategies to build community and a sense of belonging to help students feel included, accepted, and valued.

During focus group meetings with teachers and staff, various teachers mentioned that district-directed PDs could have been more productive and valuable. However, site-run PDs were more related to what they find in the classroom. They expressed a strong desire to have more practical PDs regarding issues on site. The most recent PDs have been pragmatic, such as Dehumanizing Language.

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

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale: During our visits to Aragon, it was evident that most educators used instructional practices where students worked in a student-centered learning environment. At the same time, they facilitated learning, circulating the room, offering support, giving timely feedback, listening to students' thinking processes, checking for understanding, clarifying expectations, and addressing misconceptions in real-time as they appeared. As a result of our meeting with students while answering the questions: Could you describe your school and learning environment in just one word? Students used words such as safe, community, challenging, difficult, friendly, funny, etc., reflecting how comfortable students feel regarding what happens in their school and classrooms, and how positive their experience is. The school successfully challenges students, as reflected in its high graduation rates. This shows that the learning community effectively moves forward with common school wide goals, academic standards, and career readiness.

C2.1 Teachers Facilitate Learning: Teachers use a variety of evidence-based instructional methodologies and encourage student agency within an equity-centered environment.

C2.2 Student Voice and Agency: Student voice and agency are equally applicable for all students, empowering them to be meaningfully engaged in decision making about their own learning, strategic thinking and problem solving.

C2.3 Digital Learning and Problem Solving: Teachers use technology and digital learning tools to enhance and support student learning and help students solve real-world problems.

C2.4 Career Preparedness and Applied Learning: Teachers provide learning opportunities that extend beyond the textbook and classroom, deepen students' depth of knowledge, and prepare them for college and careers.

Visiting Committee Comments

Instructional approaches at Aragon emphasize student involvement, choice, and real-world readiness. Students actively participate in learning through various avenues, such as self-assessments, choosing elective courses based on interest, FLEX time for personalized academic support, and peer-tutoring programs.

Teachers, to clarify expectations and ensure students know what to do at all times, make explicit the learning objectives, revisit during class as observed in multiple classes by the visiting committee, and many provide rubrics to students before major assessments, clarifying evaluation criteria. They also have a robust collaborative culture within the department by grade level. However, they acknowledge that the structure and functioning of PLCs meetings can improve. They want to structure time to allow time for longer meetings.

Students who struggled with math in chemistry are given the option to take physics for more support in the physics course; when confident with math and science, their next class can be chemistry or AP Environmental Science; these students have been identified in biology based on their math skills or desire to learn science. To support those students from the math perspective, the algebra class has an extra teacher each period, pulling out some students to provide math remediation, students get assessed, return to their classroom, so they get level support. This system of support is called "roaming." However, they think school needs more support at the district level. The school also offers support programs such as the Strategic English Support Program (SES), which aids long-term English learners (LTELs) and students struggling with literacy development across subjects. One of the strategies observed during our visits is collaborative work where students are grouped based on the supports they need and under the guidance of their teacher facilitator, students help each other, which in turn, lowers the affective filter, anxiety, and makes learning more enjoyable as learners develop ownership and self-directedness. This strategy has been proven effective as grade improvement indicates. This support structure is in place. Years ago, the district dismantled ELD classes.

Aragon educators underwent Constructive meaning (CM) training before and during 2020. They incorporated CM practices and literacy development tools to support language in their classrooms. Academic conversation sentence frames, protocols, and graphic organizers are employed across multiple subjects to boost comprehension and language acquisition. World Language instruction aligns with current language acquisition trends, and implements Communicative Language.

In their report, Aragon also states that classes employ project-based learning, standards-based grading, and student-centered learning environments and offer opportunities for retakes or test corrections in various subjects. These approaches exemplify the commitment to enhancing student comprehension and depth of understanding across the curriculum and were observed during our visiting committee to the school.

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

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale: While visiting classrooms, most teachers used a variety of strategies and resources to create an equity-centered learning environment. They implemented various project-based learning activities and similar educational student-centered approaches where students remained engaged and focused during our observations throughout most departments. Educators also used explicit language instruction to support grade-level content

learning in English. These instructional practices prove Aragon uses various evidence-based instructional methodologies to promote student success and learning. Some classes observed by the visiting committee implemented various projects where students demonstrated self-directedness and ownership as they worked on self-paced and self-directed projects with their teacher as their facilitator. Students became experts on topics they had to show to their classmates later, showcasing decision-making and problem-solving skills.

Implementing different technologies such as smartboards, projectors, and laptops was evident in some classes while students worked individually and collaboratively to enhance learning and engagement. Although there are some areas of growth, such as improving the layout and structure of PLCs and offering opportunities and supports to meet all student's needs, overall, Aragon High School is effective in implementing a variety of strategies and resources to create an equity-centered learning environment that actively engage all students in creative and critical thinking skills, problem-solving, and application of learning.

CATEGORY C: LEARNING AND TEACHING

Areas of Strength

1. Robust technology integration through the use of Canvas, one-to-one computers, Smart TVs, in CTE classrooms, etc.
2. Rigorous course opportunities at Aragon: robust AP, and desire to expand CTE (Career Technical Education), drama/music program and classes with curriculum reflects real world experiences.
3. Instructional evidence-based strategies to make learning targets/expectations clearer (e.g. modeling, rubrics, PLC shared assessments, etc.).

Areas of Growth

1. Aragon needs to continue dialogue and implementation of equitable grading practices.
2. Aragon High School wants professional development that accentuates sharing best practices and strategies that help support student learning and executive functioning for students (specifically MLL + LTEL students).
3. Aragon needs to continue to foster a healthy sense of identity in its students, whether they pursue trades/careers out of high school or are college-ready, and offer more student choice in electives and content within classes.

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

- Classroom observations.
- Focus Group Meeting Conversations.
- Students and staff focus meetings.
- High graduation rate.
- AP exams and enrollment.
- **AP testing:** Currently, 672 (674 in 22-23) students at Aragon are enrolled in 24 (22 in 22-23) AP courses taking 1788 (1,616 in 22-23) AP exams. According to our School profile, 90% of students in our AP courses received a score of 3 or above in 2023.
- Common rubrics and instructional practices, such as assignments, assessments, strategies, methodology, etc.
- Implementation of the same language supports such as, Constructing meaning, instructional strategies, methodologies, etc.

CATEGORY D: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

D1: Reporting and Accountability Process

D1.1 Professionally Acceptable Assessment Process: The school leadership and instructional staff use effective and equitable assessment processes to collect, disaggregate, analyze, and report student performance data to all stakeholders/educational partners.

D1.2 Basis for Determination of Performance Level: The school leadership and instructional staff have agreed upon the basis for students' grades, growth, and performance levels to ensure consistency across and within grade levels and content areas.

D1.3 Assessment of Program Areas: School teams use assessment results to make changes in the school program, implement professional development activities, and allocate resources demonstrating a results-driven, continuous school improvement process.

D1.4 Schoolwide Modifications Based on Assessment Results: School leadership partners with district leadership to periodically assess programs and expectations for students' academic growth and progress.

Visiting Committee Comments

Aragon's approach to continuous school improvement involves a variety of stakeholders and multifaceted assessment processes. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) convene weekly to design and synchronize assessments and rubrics, with certain groups within departments adopting collective grading policies inspired by Joe Feldman's *Grading for Equity*. Co-teaching arrangements across different departments with college prep and special education teachers aim to ensure a meaningful, inclusive learning environment. With the new bell schedule, the PLC/ PD time has been split over two days, and therefore reduced to 45 minute sessions and the time is not as productive as they were with the previous schedule. The staff acknowledges that though many of their students perform well on CAASPP ELA and Math assessments, they have not reviewed the data in recent years to focus on specific areas where students need to build skills. There is a significant disparity between the CAASPP performance of Latino and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged subgroups on both the ELA and Mathematics CAASPP. The Hispanic subgroup is 27.1% of the population and the Socioeconomically disadvantaged enrollment is 20.6%, This is a significant portion of the school enrollment that is not thriving.

Significant reforms have emerged from teacher-led initiatives, notably within the Math department, which established a minimum percentage grading policy, and the broader adoption of four-point grading scales in various departments. Such initiatives have influenced the school's professional development programs, exemplified by the training centered on "Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain," and the recent shift from Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to address the students' casual and pervasive use of dehumanizing language.

The district upholds GPA and unit prerequisites for extracurricular engagements. The school recently introduced an Athletic Study Hall, geared toward sophomores. It has received positive feedback from students. The administration and the Counseling department conduct targeted Tier II and Tier III meetings, enhancing student support structures.

The school noted that although the state no longer mandates the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), the district leverages this framework for an annual, data-informed review of educational programs and initiatives. This process aligns each school's objectives with the District's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) goals, facilitating a thorough evaluation that culminates in district leadership's recommendations and the formal approval of plans by the Board of Education.

Reporting and Accountability Process that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective **Somewhat Effective** Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Aragon's approach to evaluating student progress uses a range of tools and analysis to keep improving the way students learn and how programs are run. They focus on using data to make better decisions about teaching and helping students succeed. The school has organized groups of teachers (PLCs) and co-teaching cohorts, and course alike are working toward establishing consistent clear rules for grading.

However, the school knows it has to look more closely at how well students do on standardized tests and make sure grading is consistent across all areas. Socioeconomically Disadvantaged subgroups on both the ELA and Mathematics CAASPP perform below their peers. The Hispanic subgroup is 27.1% of the population, and the Socioeconomically Disadvantaged enrollment is 20.6%. This is a significant portion of the school enrollment that is not thriving. They work closely with the wider school district to make sure their educational programs match up with district-wide goals, aiming for a well-coordinated way of improving how students learn. This effort to continually update and improve their methods shows Aragon's strong commitment to providing high-quality education, staying adaptive, and responsive to student needs.

D2: Using Student Assessment Strategies to Monitor and Modify Learning Progress

To what extent do teachers employ a variety of appropriate 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 within and across grade levels and departments?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

D2.1 Monitoring Student Growth: Teachers determine and monitor all students' growth and progress toward meeting the schoolwide student goals/graduate profile, academic standards, and college- and career-readiness expectations.

D2.2 Teacher and Student Feedback: Teachers provide timely, specific and descriptive feedback in order to support students in achieving learning goals. Teachers use student feedback and dialogue to monitor progress and learn about the degree to which learning experiences are understood, relevant, and prepare students for college and careers.

D2.3 Demonstration of Student Achievement: Teachers use the analysis of formative and summative assessments to guide, modify, and adjust curricular and instructional approaches.

Visiting Committee Comments

Aragon focuses on tracking student progress, aligning with academic standards, and readiness for college or careers. Strategic placements in subjects like Math, English, World Language, and Science are based on students' past performance, aiming to challenge each student appropriately. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are essential for aligning the curriculum with standards and monitoring student progress. The VC recommends that the school explore the consequences of offering Advanced Standing courses in 9th and 10th grade on students who do not enter high school with the academic confidence to self-select rigor.

Support classes, such as the Self and Social Empowerment Class and literacy support, involve regular check-ins, grade monitoring, and planning of social-emotional curricula. Counseling plays a key role in assisting students and families with scheduling, course selection, and alignment with post-high school plans, promoting individualized educational pathways and

access to Advanced Studies (AS) and Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

The school recognizes the need to review the impact on the Physics or Chemistry placement process and address the support disparity between Geometry and Algebra, using FLEX periods for Geometry support.

Teachers provide specific feedback through rubrics, Canvas comments, and assessments, regularly updating grades and utilizing assessments to refine teaching. Student feedback, collected through surveys, exit tickets, and reflections, informs instructional adjustments. In PE, individual skill mastery is emphasized. Teachers are expected to update grades every three weeks, but most update weekly.

PLC time is crucial for discussing student progress and instructional strategies, with a focus on aligning learning experiences with college and career pathways. The need for a more unified approach to connecting learning with future pathways is noted.

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

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

While feedback from students is actively sought and utilized for instructional improvement, this focus group expressed a need for a more unified approach to connect learning experiences with college and career pathways at Aragon. Students pass classes and graduate in high numbers.

CATEGORY D: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Areas of Strength for Assessment and Accountability:

1. Strong collaboration practices (curriculum is aligned, rubrics/expectations are aligned in most subject areas)
2. PD is designed to respond to teacher & student needs
3. Teachers prioritize student learning/performance, and most students perform well on both internal and external assessments.
4. Many teachers offer multiple ways to show mastery (lots of variation, i.e., retakes, spiral content, etc.)

Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement for Assessment and Accountability:

1. Interpersonal communication between teachers and admin regarding students who are struggling with executive functioning/communication skills and academics, and how Aragon is using our resources to make the classroom experience better for all students.
2. School leadership team (MTSS, admin, PD) should engage in data analysis (standardized testing, placement testing, SRI, CAASPP, CST, etc.) and pick some plan skill development areas to work on strategically during schoolwide PD.
3. Continue to give space for our conversations on grading and assessment. Encourage PLCs to align on grading/assessment practices.
4. The school need to look more closely at the disparity of performance of Socioeconomically Disadvantaged subgroups on both the ELA and Mathematics CAASPP as well as overall academic engagement. The Hispanic subgroup is 27.1% of the population and the Socioeconomically disadvantaged enrollment is 20.6%. This is a significant portion of the school

enrollment that is not thriving.

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:

- Focus Group Meeting Conversations
- Classroom Observations
- [Evidence provided with the report:](#)
 - High graduation rate
 - CAASPP and other state testing scores are sent home to students and parents
 - **AP testing:** Currently, 672 (674 in 22-23) students at Aragon are enrolled in 24 (22 in 22-23) AP courses taking 1788 (1,616 in 22-23) AP exams. According to our School profile, 90% of students in our AP courses received a score of 3 or above in 2023.
 - [Tier II supports at AHS with descriptions CICO](#)
 - [CICO mentor training presentation](#)
 - [Tier II - meeting calendar for 2024](#)
 - Common rubrics
 - Instruction BP 6154 HOMEWORK/MAKEUP WORK (not all teachers follow)

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

E1. Family and Community Involvement

E1.1 Strategies and Processes: School implements a range of culturally sensitive strategies and processes for ongoing family and community involvement in the learning and teaching process for all students.

E1.2 Inclusive Cultural Understanding: School leadership values the cultures of students and adults through the learning opportunities and materials provided to develop an inclusive cultural understanding.

E1.3 Rapport and Trust: School leadership develops rapport and trust with students, staff, families and the community, valuing the identities of all individuals..

Visiting Committee Comments

Members of the Aragon staff and leadership team have implemented a range of processes and strategies for showing cultural sensitivity when it comes to how learning and teaching happen at the school. There are various signals that the community is one that values diversity and the many cultures and experiences of students and staff members, though there are areas where consistent communication, relational trust, and rapport-building need more attention and development.

The VC found that Aragon has consistent and well-established groups of parents – such as ELAC, the PTSO, the Latino Parents Group (OPLA), and the Aragon Asian Parent Group – who have strong lines of communication with school leadership about a variety of issues that impact the school and its families. The school holds an annual Open House for parents, works with booster organizations for multiple school programs, and collaborates with parents on events and fundraisers throughout the year. Efforts to consistently provide translation services that make school-hosted parent events more inclusive are evident. However, it is unclear whether the existing parent groups and events are equally inclusive for all families from all backgrounds and socioeconomic levels. Some parents who participated in a Focus Group conversation confirmed that Aragon regularly sends text messages and emails to guardians in order to provide timely updates about attendance, grades, and other important campus information.

All around the Aragon campus, there are messages, images, and learning spaces that

affirm a clear community value for various cultures, ideas, and identities. Framed student photos, posters for student organizations, beautiful artwork, ceramics displays, affirming messages, class spirit mementos, and other community-centered elements can be found in nearly every corner of the campus. Students involved in equity and leadership groups also confirmed that the school offers a wide range of opportunities for students to explore different identities, talents, skills, and interests. However, the students also shared that the school culture around academics and college expectations pushes a lot of students to pursue things in a way that produces stress and emphasizes competition. Further, the VC confirmed with staff and student groups alike that there are still some students at Aragon who frequently use dehumanizing language. Strategies for addressing this issue are being actively explored and have come about largely through student advocacy and collaboration with staff to build awareness and strengthen community norms for responding to dehumanizing language, but the VC confirmed that this is a notable problem in need of continued commitment.

Overall, staff indicate that they strongly appreciate, trust, and respect their colleagues. Instructional staff noted particularly strong support systems within course teaching teams and departments, including for new or new-to-Aragon teachers. However, in light of the many changes in administration and other roles that have happened in the last few years, staff expressed in Focus Groups that they do not feel as though their institutional knowledge, community awareness, and educational expertise is always accessed or utilized to the greatest extent possible in decision-making process, and they would also like to have clearer, more consistently accessible ways to advocate for themselves, their programs, and their students.

Family and Community Involvement that supports high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

There are many culturally sensitive strategies in place at the school in order to promote ever-increasing levels of inclusivity among students and parents. Parents have multiple ways they can get involved in the school community or connect with one another, a theme which is even more pronounced among the highly involved and engaged student body. Despite many displays and examples of community values focused on inclusivity, cultural acceptance, and celebrating diverse identities and talents, some students and adults do not always honor these values with the way they talk about one another, an issue that multiple students and staff members are working together to try and address. Because of many shifts at the school in the last few years to teaching, learning, and multiple key school leadership roles, there is a strong staff desire to have more trusting, timely, two-way communication with administration when it comes to major decisions, such as those made about scheduling dynamics, student needs, and staffing issues.

E2: School Culture and Environment

To what extent does the school leadership focus on continuous school improvement by providing a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning?

To what extent does the school leadership develop a culture that is characterized by trust, inclusivity, professionalism, equity, and high expectations for all students?

INDICATORS: Use the following indicators as a guide to ensure all key aspects of the criterion are addressed. Add any additional reflections based on the criterion.

E2.1 Policies and Resources: The policies, regulations, and resources ensure a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning for all students, including internet safety.

E2.2 Trust, Respect, and Equity: The school culture demonstrates caring, concern and high

expectations for all students in an environment that honors individual differences, social emotional needs and is conducive to learning.

E2.3 School Culture: The entire school community has an atmosphere of trust, respect, equity, and professionalism.

Visiting Committee Comments

There is a noticeable presence of both facilities and campus safety staff at Aragon. Even during short breaks and lunchtimes with many students to serve and a closed campus, staff providing food service move very efficiently, and the campus has many spaces for students to use to enjoy their time outside of classes. In all classrooms and throughout other frequently used spaces on campus, signs and posters reminding students how to care for themselves, for others, and for their community are consistently evident. Students shared with the VC that trash around campus has been an issue, but there are a variety of strategies being implemented by the school and students to encourage students to care for their campus and build awareness of practices that sustain the community.

It is evident from students that the school culture demonstrates caring and concern for all students, however when it comes to the level of expectations and sense of belonging felt by members of the community, students and staff shared various examples with the VC of ways the school's competitive environment prioritizes academic achievement, which can significantly impact students who need additional support to achieve in the most advanced courses offered at the school or who don't feel like they belong in those spaces based on their identities and how they are perceived by others – such as those with learning disabilities or whose first language is something besides English.

Aragon has implemented a schoolwide "CARES" focus which emphasizes personal development and skills that contribute to a positive school community. Both Leadership students and Student Equity Council members collaborate on this effort, along with staff support, to address various campus issues and uphold positive campus values. Students are active participants and facilitators of community and SEL-focused lessons that happen regularly, and they relayed to the VC that the structure and content of these lessons are responsive and adaptable to community needs based on student input and collaboration with staff and school leaders.

While general trust, respect, and professionalism are things that the staff, parents, and students cite as strengths of the school overall, they also raised some various equity concerns and instances where student identity and learning differences need to be addressed more robustly, transparently, and/or strategically. For example, some Focus Group members pointed out that behavior expectations and consequences from administration can sometimes seem inconsistent depending on the identity of the student. Some staff members also indicated that people within the school community are uncomfortable having conversations about race, and students indicated that they notice and experience strong delineations in the types of students associated with different classes or educational experiences. They notice that some racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups are seen by both students and adults as the "typical" competitive or advanced academic students, while other racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups are seen as the "typical" non-AP or non-college bound students. While some students and teachers are actively working to defy these assumptions or associations and PD work focused on UDL is aimed at increasing accessibility to coursework for all students across all classes, it was affirmed for the VC that this is an area where the school will need to keep seeking solutions that better support all students in meeting the highest academic expectations at the school with their individual differences social emotional needs being centered in the process.

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

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective **Somewhat Effective** Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

School leadership understands and has implemented the kinds of policies, regulations, and resources needed to ensure that the school is a place where students can feel physically safe while they are learning. Most of the staff and students work to establish a culture and environment where each person feels valued and supported. However, students do not all feel quite as safe at school in terms of their identities and social emotional needs, particularly when it comes to race and equity. For example, student demographics across AP versus college prep and some CTE courses are noticeably different and not proportional, and for students still acquiring literacy skills, school experiences look quite different at Aragon than they do for highly literate peers. Various stakeholders indicated clear awareness of these inequities, and the school is using various approaches to promote a culture of high expectations for all, though many structural, social, and systemic hurdles remain.

E3: Academic, Social-Emotional, and Multi-tiered Supports

E3.1 Multi-tiered Support: School leadership implements personalized, academic multi-tiered support and alternative instructional approaches to meet student needs.

E3.2 Multi-tiered Support Effectiveness: School leadership implements and assesses the effectiveness of multi-tiered support for students' social-emotional learning needs.

E3.3 Student Involvement: The school ensures a high level of student involvement in curricular and co-curricular activities that link to schoolwide student goals/graduate profile, academic standards, and college- and career-readiness.

E3.4 Student Self Advocacy: Students deepen their sense of self and make personal and community connections that are meaningful and relevant and allow students to become advocates for their own needs and supports.

Visiting Committee Comments

For students who are struggling, Aragon offers a variety of supports and alternative instructional approaches meant to encourage success. Based on feedback from students and from staff working in the wellness center and counseling office, the VC committee determined that the school has been in the process of shifting some of its MTSS practices over the last couple of years as a result of work with an outside consultant brought in by the district and while Tier II supports are now more data-directed, there is a continued need to more clearly define and implement Tier I supports. Some staff in teacher leadership roles indicated to the VC that they would like to see collective teacher expertise accessed more consistently in order to assess efficacy of different supports in a structured, thoughtful way.

The staff in the Wellness Center work closely with School Counselors to offer a robust range of social-emotional support options through a combination of drop-in sessions, one-on-one counseling, therapeutic group sessions, and additional learning opportunities planned in conjunction with outside organizations on topics like dating violence and social media safety. Staff identify a high need for these types of services within the community, but note that the combination of academic pressure and socio-cultural dynamics among students and their families means that not all students who may really need wellness center support actually end up accessing it.

The VC saw clear evidence of how many co-curricular programs are available to provide students chances to explore interesting skills or interests, be involved in their community, and enhance their overall connection to the school alongside Aragon peers. Many students indicated that the way they are able to grow, learn deeply, and try new things at the school is one of its greatest attributes, and they appreciate their teachers, coaches, advisers, and peers as being key contributors to a positive overall school community. Students did note, however, that the

opportunities for students to get involved or explore other interests still have a strong academic slant that is in line with the competitive overall environment. As a result, some students are perceived to be doing extracurriculars to gain an edge for college admissions rather than out of true intrinsic motivation or passion, and other students reported that for those who may want to pursue post-high school options besides college, opportunities for growth and development are more limited than for the Aragon students who are specifically focused on 4-year college attendance.

While students shared with the VC that they often do try to advocate for themselves and what they need as learners and/or humans within this community, they sometimes feel like accessing personalized support or getting follow-through from adults can feel inconsistent with some staff members seeming very flexible, supportive, and responsive while others feel less so. Students have played a crucial, central role in the rollout and implementation of multiple school initiatives meant to improve campus climate, and leadership efforts to support what the students are doing and help them sustain student voice in addressing key community issues is an important strength worth sustaining and expanding moving forward.

Academic, Social-Emotional, and Multi-tiered Supports that support high achievement for all students.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective **Somewhat Effective** Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

The school is beginning to review and implement some systematized academic, social-emotional, and multi-tiered supports to help promote high levels of student learning, but further work promoting Tier I supports campuswide and addressing college and career readiness and success for students with various post-high school goals would be beneficial. Students report that they have many chances to grow and explore interests at the school, both in and out of classes, but would like to see an expansion of CTE-related options and opportunities. The school appears to be working on assessing the efficacy of some of its support systems in order to strategize about how to best meet student needs, but involving more people in reflection and decision making about relevant school-wide tiers of support and how best to implement them could promote greater levels of equity. Additionally, student voices need to continue to play a key role in how priorities for the campus culture are set and the reach should widen to establish more systematic ways of accessing input from many types of students who want to take part in shaping Aragon culture.

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:

1. Aragon offers students with many different programs, clubs, and opportunities outside of traditional classroom spaces that allow them to feel personally enriched and authentically connected to others on campus.
2. The staff is thoughtful, engaged, and clearly dedicated to supporting students at the highest levels possible, even when facing structural challenges or hurdles.
3. The use of student voice as a driver of actions currently being taken to address community concerns about dehumanizing language, paired with the staff commitment to intervene and address such language, represents a positive model for mobilizing staff and student strengths and school resources in order to be responsive to authentic issues within the Aragon community.

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

1. Several tiers of support for academics, mental health, social-emotional wellness, and college and career pathways are available to some students, but need to be expanded and made more visible and accessible to all students, and students want their own experience of accessing these supports to be more consistently positive regardless of their identity and/or who they go to for support.
2. Space needs to be regularly created for staff and school leaders to have complex, courageous conversations about the most pressing issues that impact the community overall and interfere with students' equitable access to the highest level learning opportunities available at Aragon. There needs to be shared acknowledgement that some of the conversations that need to happen may feel uncomfortable for some, but they still need to happen in order to better support all students.
3. Aragon staff holds a wealth of communal wisdom and expertise that needs to be more systematically, strategically accessed by site and district leaders in order to refine school practices, foster more authentic consensus, and build collective understanding around key school issues and needs.
4. The positive dynamics that already exist between the school and some key parent groups like OPLA should be leveraged in order to invite a wider set of parents and guardians to participate in the kind of coordination and collaboration that might help them better advocate for their students and learn more about school issues and resources.

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:

- *Focus groups held with:* Student Equity Council, Leadership students, Department Chairs, School Counselors, School Therapists, Ad Hoc Student Group, and School Leadership Team, and parents from OPLA and the PTSO.
- *Evidence seen on the walls of classrooms:* CARES values posters, sustainability tips, "know your rights", emergency procedures,
- *Evidence seen in the halls of school buildings:* posters capturing words of encouragement; flyers for school events that showcase music, theater, athletics, dance, robotics, and more; powerful text and images from student identity/affinity groups; mental health messaging, photography displays, ceramics showcases, post it affirmations on lockers, advertisements for various elective classes, & more
- SES and SSE Tier III courses, and CLA Tier I course that targets specific student literacy and social/emotional needs
- Summer School and OSCR programs offer credit recovery options
- Over 80 clubs, sports, and inclusive events
- Promotion of college and career readiness through events like College Talks, Career Day, and counselor sessions.
- Advocacy, leadership, and personal development focuses in programs like AVID or through the Algebra I "Roaming" model
- WASC surveys &/or school focus group notes from parents, students, and staff

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

Schoolwide Strengths

Based on the self-study and then validated by the visit, the Schoolwide Areas of Strength for Aragon High School, are as follows:

1. Rigorous Academic Programs

- **Who:** Curriculum developers and educators
- **What:** Advanced Placement, developing Career Technical Education, and varied curricular pathways.
- **Why:** Prepares students effectively for post-secondary education and works to align learning with real-world experiences.

2. Technology Integration and Pedagogical Strategies

- **Who:** Teachers and IT staff
- **What:** Use of modern technology like one-to-one computers and SMART displays alongside clear pedagogical methods.
- **Why:** Enhances learning experiences, making education more relevant, accessible, and engaging for students.

3. Assessment and Professional Development

- **Who:** Teachers and administrative staff
- **What:** Strong curricular teams, varied assessment methods, and responsive professional development.
- **Why:** Ensures alignment with educational goals, addresses student and teacher needs, and fosters continuous improvement.

4. Inclusive and Supportive Environment

- **Who:** Entire school community
- **What:** A strong commitment to create a culture of belonging, acceptance, and support, with attention to students facing academic or social challenges.
- **Why:** Seeking to foster a safe and respectful atmosphere conducive to the well-being and growth of every student.

These strengths reflect the school's commitment to fostering an educational environment that is collaborative, academically challenging, technologically advanced, academically rigorous, and inclusive.

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.

In addition, the visiting committee has identified additional concrete, specific growth areas that need to be addressed: **Include a Who, What, and Why for each growth area for continuous improvement. (Note: Show the relationship to what the school has already identified, if possible.)**

The following is a synthesis of the schoolwide areas of growth for Aragon High School

1. **A Organization-** Transparent Decision-Making
 - **Who:** Administration and staff
 - **What:** Enhance transparency in decisions regarding section allocation and department funding and school wide support structures.
 - **Why:** To ensure all staff members are informed, fostering a sense of inclusivity and trust within the school community.
2. **B Curriculum-** Enhanced Career Readiness Programs
 - **Who:** Educators and curriculum developers
 - **What:** Implement comprehensive career-exploration and readiness programs engaging students in career development activities. Use student interest data to inform the direction of CTE offerings.
 - **Why:** To prepare students comprehensively for post-secondary success, aligning educational experiences with future career opportunities.
3. **B Curriculum-** Inclusive Curriculum Development
 - **Who:** Academic departments and curriculum specialists
 - **What:** Ongoing examination and adaptation of curricula to include diverse representations and perspectives to address equity gaps.
 - **Why:** To foster an educational atmosphere that is reflective of and responsive to the diverse identities of the student body
4. **C Teaching & Learning/ D Assessment-** Consistent Grading Policies
 - **Who:** Teaching staff and administration
 - **What:** School-wide discussion and potential standardization of grading practices
 - **Why:** To ensure fairness, clarity, and consistency in student evaluation, promoting a more equitable learning environment.
5. **E Culture:** Cultivating School Community and Culture
 - **Who:** Staff and students
 - **What:** Building stronger connections and relational capacity within the school community to address and build capacity to confront the pressing issues facing the school community and meet the needs of students.
 - **Why:** To enhance the sense of belonging and support among all school members, contributing to a positive and inclusive school culture.

These growth areas highlight the need for more inclusive, transparent, and student-centered practices to enhance the educational experience and community at Aragon High School.

The WASC Visiting Committee concurs with the school's self-study analysis that confirms Aragon's identified learner needs as follows:

1. Aragon staff identified a need to stem the use of hate speech and dehumanizing language and insults used by students to help foster a more empathetic, compassionate and emotionally safe community. This must include common agreements, clear and

consistent consequences, and expectations from ALL staff.

Rationale: The Panorama survey, Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS), student focus group data, and anecdotal reports from students and staff indicate the need. In the CHKS, there is a percentage of students in all four grade levels that indicated they Strongly Disagree, Disagree, or Neither disagree nor agree that they feel safe at school. The same for the question about Perceived Safety. The school reports that during the student focus groups, the majority of students noted they hear dehumanizing language on campus between peers. Members of the Student Equity Council acknowledge and are affected by the use of dehumanizing language and hope to eliminate its use on campus.

2. Aragon staff identified a need for refocused, school-wide use of strategies to develop academic identity, executive functioning skills, and literacy in all classes for all students, particularly for historically underrepresented students and our rising MLL (Multilingual Learner) population.

Rationale: The MLL enrollment patterns from the last WASC cycle and the District projects the numbers to continue to rise. The CAASPP results show a 7.8% increase in MLL not meeting the ELA standards. The Performance data from the 2022 California Dashboard shows MLLs scoring low in both ELA and Mathematics in comparison to other students. This is also true for Economically Disadvantaged and Latino students. There has been an overall increase in all students tested not meeting ELA or Math standards from 2017-2018. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners, and Students with Disabilities all showed a decrease in meeting the A-G Completion Rates.

Chapter 5: Ongoing School Improvement

Goal 1: Connect all students to academic and skill-based success

Objective: Develop skills that prepare students for success post-high school.

Strategies:

- Enhance elective choices aligning with student interests and real-world opportunities.
- Embed school counselor ASCA standards into the curriculum, ensuring counselors interact with each level, in addition to course selection.
- Increase hands-on, real-world applicable learning.
- Strengthen partnerships with post-secondary and trade institutions.

The Visiting Committee recommends the following:

Revisit and Evaluate effectiveness and barriers of courses offered- Create a clear process and system for evaluating and analyzing support classes in order to determine effectiveness of classes such as CLA, SES, SSE, and Math Roaming and to what extent they're meeting students' needs. Additionally, reviewing the existence and merits of Advanced Standing courses vs. universal College Prep courses that better support equitable student access to higher level courses.

Goal 2: Connect all stakeholders to school culture and community

Objective: Create a welcoming, inclusive community, especially for BIPOC, LGBTQ+ individuals, and those facing social/emotional challenges.

Strategies:

- Establish norms to eradicate dehumanizing language and behavior.
- Encourage humanizing practices campus-wide.
- Integrate community-building activities in classrooms.
- Align staff efforts with the CARES values, promoting a cohesive and supportive environment.

Goal 3: Establish Common Tier I Instructional Agreements

Objective: Focus on implementing Tier I practices to bolster academic identity, skills, and literacy, especially for MLLs and underrepresented students.

Strategies:

- Share and implement best practices for enhancing student literacy and communication.
- Promote equitable grading policies and practices school-wide.
- Address disparities in A-G completion rates among different student groups.
- Improve inter-staff communication about student progress and needs.

Goal 4: Streamline Site Leadership Teams to Support Collaborative & Effective Strategic Planning

Objective: Enhance staff-community relationships to improve strategic planning and decision-making for student benefit.

Strategies:

- Revisit the school's mission and vision to align with post-pandemic realities and community expectations.
- Form a leadership team inclusive of various stakeholders for better collaboration and oversight.
- Refine behavior management and response strategies for consistency and effectiveness across the school.

Each goal is directly linked to the overarching aim of enhancing the educational experience and success of all students at Aragon High School. The action plan emphasizes measurable

outcomes, continuous monitoring, and a commitment to adjusting strategies based on ongoing data analysis. The alignment with the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) is evident in the shared focus on academic achievement, equity, and community engagement. The structured approach for implementing and monitoring the plan ensures that the school can effectively track progress and make informed adjustments to meet its objectives effectively.

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: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

The action plan includes analysis of data regarding the identified major student learner needs and student achievement, school operation, and program supports. Focus on improving student achievement is present where needed.

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

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Aragon High School has the resources, staff and resolve to monitor and implement their action plan.

Accreditation Status Factors Summary

Accreditation Status Factors	Highly Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective
The involvement and collaboration of the entire school community in the self-study that reflects a thorough, accurate analysis of what currently exists as well as aligned prioritized areas of strength and growth.		X		
The use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and drive continuous school improvement.		X		
Acceptable progress by all students		X		
Vision and Purpose (A1)			X	
Governance (A2)		X		
Leadership for Learning (A3)			X	
Qualified Staff and Professional Development (A4)		X		
Resources (A5)		X		
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		
Family and Community Engagement (E1)		X		
School Culture and Environment (E2)			X	
Multi-tiered Personal, Social-emotional, and Academic Support (E3)			X	
Alignment of a schoolwide action plan/SPSA to school's areas of greatest need	X			
The capacity to implement and monitor the schoolwide action plan/SPSA	X			