

Mid-cycle Visiting Committee Summary Report

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

FOR

MOUNT DIABLO HIGH SCHOOL

**2450 Grant Street
Concord, CA 94520**

Mount Diablo Unified School District

March 14-16, 2022

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Visiting Committee Members

Peg Hauselt, Chairperson
Teacher (Retired) Livermore

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- **Brief summary about the school/program**

Mt. Diablo High School (MDHS) is a comprehensive 9-12 high school serving 1500 students located in Concord California. It is one of five schools in the Mt. Diablo Unified School District. Sixty percent of the students live in the Pittsburgh/Baypoint area and are bussed to and from school each day. MDHS has the lowest income demographic in the district, with nearly 70% qualifying for free and reduced lunch. 70% of MDHS students identify as Latinex, and 26% are English Learners. The school receives CSI and Title 1 funding.

The school offers a variety of programs for students: Athletics, Visual and Performing Arts, 8 AP classes, Special Education, and numerous student clubs. MDHS is a CTE school offering pathways in Automotive, Biotech, Culinary Arts, Engineering, Multimedia, Patient Care, Construction Tech, JROTC, and Software & Systems Development.

Programs through which the school supports diversity, equity, and inclusion include the MTSS system, The Diablo Community Center, the College and Career Center, and Family Purpose, an on-campus source for social-emotional support and education.

- **An updated summary of student academic progress and social-emotional well-being with implications of the data and identified student learner needs**

Data from the Dashboard for 2023-24 indicate that suspension rate (15.8%), English Learner progress (35.2%), College/Career Readiness (23.8%), and graduation rate (83.5%) all increased from the previous year. ELA (59.4 points below standard) and Mathematics (106.5 points below standard) both declined 4 points, yet were still higher than in 2022.

- **Significant changes and/or developments and the impact on the school, students, and staff**

1. In 2022-2023 there was a complete turnover of school administration. A new vice principal was hired at the start of this spring semester.

Impact: Despite the new administration, much of the climate and performance data has been trending in a positive direction.

2. The school started this school year, 2024-25, with a full teaching staff, having hired five new teachers in the Science Department.

Impact: Having a full teaching staff promotes more stability for students and enhances the implementation of school initiatives.

3. The school has eliminated the wall-to-wall California Partnership Academy model.

Impact: This has led to changes in the collaborative model for many teachers. PLC work has been informed by the transition to a departmental model.

4. Curricular changes include:

- A Link Crew Freshman Transition Program was introduced this year.
- An experimental Algebra 2/Trig class created last year has been discontinued in an effort to reduce tracking and improve overall math scores.
- A music program of band, choir, and drumline has been established in response to the district identifying a lack of VAPA at low SES schools.
- CTE courses have been rewritten into 2-year pathways. A Transportation Technology CTE pathway has been created. This allows students to choose and complete pathways as a sophomore or junior, rather than having to make that decision as a freshman.
- There has been significant support for Math PLCs with Algebra 1 and Geometry teams being created. The district has supported this move with smaller class size and thus promotes the goal of increasing PLC collaboration among math teachers of like courses.

Impact: These changes are supporting success through a stronger freshman community, improving student academic success, expanding opportunities for students, and strengthening PLC work.

5. After piloting their use in summer school in 2024, the school has implemented Yondr Pouches this school year.

Impact: There has been a reduction of cell phone distractions school-wide. particularly during class time allowing teachers and students to concentrate on learning.

6. The school is receiving Comprehensive Support and Improvement Funds due to the decrease in CAASPP performance in English and Math.

Impact: The school is working with Leadership Legacy Consulting and has contracted with Solution Tree to strengthen PLC work. This work includes aligning curriculum with course-alikes, aligning grading scales and policies, and collecting and analyzing formative assessment data. All groups noted that this PLC work is in its initial stages and that not all departments are progressing at the same pace.

7. The Curriculum and Instruction Leadership Consortium has transitioned to an ILT and has been expanded to include all department chairs, administrators, and other key teacher leaders.

Impact: The ILT is a new model of decision making for the school that was implemented at the end of the last school year. ILT members have received monthly training and support from their consultant in leadership skills and how to lead as well as implementing processes for the analysis and use of data to drive instruction.

- **School's follow-up process and process used to prepare the mid-cycle report**

The SPSA/Action Plan is primarily overseen by the School Site Council. Additional community input is provided by the ELAC. The ILT carries out the plan and assists staff in identifying and addressing the goals outlined in the SPSA.

For the mid-cycle report, the WASC coordinator and the administrators solicited input from various leads at the school, gathered information from surveys. and provided data analysis of student performance, discipline trends, and dashboard information. Student and parent voices were limited to review by the School Site Council.

- **Summary of progress on action plan that addresses student and school needs and growth areas for continuous improvement with the impact on student learning.**

Progress on Action Plan Goals

The school utilizes its SPSA as its action plan. It's four goals are:

1. Safety, Supplies, and Support for All Students

All students will receive a high quality education in a safe and welcoming environment with equitable high expectations, access to technology, and instruction in the California State Standards that prepare them for college and/or career.

There is clear evidence that students feel both physically and emotionally safe while at school. The visiting team witnessed an orderly campus in all classrooms and outdoor student spaces. When asked about concerns at the school, parents, students, teachers, District Office staff, and the administrative team did not mention safety. Each of these groups discussed structure and policies that rectified safety concerns of the past, such as the Wellness Center and school counselors who support emotional safety, and strict accountability for student whereabouts during the school day to support physical safety. Students, teachers, and administrators discussed a culture of "friendliness" and "caring" to describe the learning environment. Students and staff were overwhelmingly positive about the Mt. Diablo High School experience and expressed pride in their school. Students said that the administration was fair and that staff were "passionate about helping students".

Classroom visits verified that all students have access to technology and Standards-based Instruction. Student learning objectives were visible in every classroom. Students were engaged and learning in every classroom. Strict adherence to the "no cell phones" policy ensured that students were in classrooms and interacting with learning content.

2. Family Engagement and Communication

Parents, family and community will be informed, engaged and empowered as partners with Mt. Diablo Unified to support student learning.

The school is making progress in this growth area.

- All teachers have been trained in the use of Parent Square. The data shows an increase this year with administrative communication with staff, parent communication with teachers and staff communication with parents. There has been an increase in post, smart alerts, and direct messages. Parents reported that they have easy access to ARIES and Parent Square but noted that increasing parent engagement remains an area for growth. Full participation in School Site Council remains a challenge for the school.
- A staff survey shows that 53% of teachers state that communication has improved, with 17% saying that it has gotten worse.
- The counseling team sends a weekly update to the community.
- The school website migrated to the ADA-approved format with frequent posts in the summer of 2023.
- The school is expanding channels of communication to reach more parent groups such as ELAC and the new African-American Parent Advisory Committee (AAPAC).

3. High Quality and Responsive Instruction

High quality, culturally proficient, and responsive staff will provide engaging instruction respectful of all students' backgrounds to ensure they are college and/or career ready.

The Visiting Committee found that the school has been making effective progress in this growth area.

- The ILT meets twice a month. One of these meetings is led by the consultant with the focus of increasing the use of data across PLCs. Here there are three primary data collection initiatives within the PLCs:
 - Creating, administering, and analyzing course-like common assessments
 - Increasing the Depth of Knowledge levels that are taught and assessed
 - Facilitating department review of common assessment results and data.
- To address “strengthening consistency between classes through the PLC process,” changes in math include rescuing the number of preps for teachers and reducing class size in Algebra and Geometry making it easier for teachers to collaborate and align their practices.
- Teachers are working to align grading policies within departments and within alike courses.
- To share best practices, administrators conduct instructional rounds. Additionally, each quarter Constructing Meaning Showcases allow teachers to visit other classrooms and then to debrief what they observed and learned.
- Measures of instructional rigor have shown growth:
 - Graduation rate has increased from 39% to 57%
 - An additional AP class is currently offered: AP Precalculus. Next year AP Physics and AP Spanish Language and Composition will be offered.
 - Eliminating the Wall-to-Wall CPA academies led to a reduction in the number of students meeting the college and career indicator due to fewer students completing pathways. However since the initial decline, there has been a steady increase in the number of students who are college and career ready, this last year there was a 4.7% increase.
 - Students earning the Seal of Biliteracy has increased from 19-52.
 - Progress by English Learners has increased 6.6%.
 - Star assessments have replaced District benchmarks thus providing more detailed information for each student

4. Success for Focus Scholars

Focus scholars, specifically Black/African American students, Foster Youth, students experiencing homelessness, students with disabilities and emerging bilingual students, will experience culturally responsive practices and instruction, high expectations, equal access to educational opportunities, within an an educational environment that builds trust and inclusive partnerships between the students, parents/guardians and staff.

There is evidence of a strong coaching program for new teachers that directly supports English Learners and Long-term English Language Learners. Both the EL coach and the Instructional Leadership Team report consistent use of a Depth of Knowledge framework in classrooms aimed at increasing rigor for students and improving instructional practice. Increasing academic rigor for all students is an ongoing expectation of the District Office team, as well as the Administrative team.

An Instructional Learning Team (ILT) established in the 2023-2024 school year to empower department leaders to guide Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) is in place to improve student engagement and learning for all groups of students. Not only did teacher groups, the Administrative team, and the Instructional Learning Team speak positively about the now-embedded data and standards-review process, students articulated that classes were “not too hard and not too easy”. District and administrative leaders are committed to the consistent use of these newly established processes to ensure improved student outcomes.

Students pointed to diversity as a strength of the school which included staff diversity, diversity of program offerings, and cultural diversity within the student body. Parents reported equitable access to classes, fairness in discipline, and a range of support structures and staff depending on student needs (academic, behavioral or social-emotional).

The school did note that with the transition to the six period day and the elimination of the academies that there is no formal opportunity for academic support or intervention.

The committee compared these goals with the growth areas identified in the self-study and probationary reports to the school’s action plan and verified that all areas were addressed in the action plan.

The only growth area not included was the evaluation of wall-to-wall academies. This has been completed, and the school has replaced the academy structure with departments.

Schoolwide Strengths

1. A staff dedicated to supporting all students in their academic, social-emotional and post-high school preparation.
2. Campus culture that promotes student physical and emotional safety in direct support of learning.
3. Systems of continuous improvement are being developed at each level (data, accountability, and feedback) to support student achievement (District data systems, student assessment systems, Instructional Leadership Team, and Professional Learning Communities).

Growth Areas for Continuous Improvement

The visiting committee concurs with the school’s identified areas for growth as identified in the schoolwide action plan/SPSA:

1. The site administration and leadership together with the staff and the support of District administration will develop and implement practices, procedures, and opportunities so that all students receive a high quality education in a safe and welcoming environment with equitable high expectations, access to technology, and instruction in the California State Standards that prepare them for college and/or career.
2. The school will work to enhance community engagement and communication so that all educational partners (parents, family and community) will be informed, engaged and empowered in the support of students’ college and career readiness.

3. With leadership provided by the site administration and the Instructional Leadership Team, and working collaboratively through the Professional Learning Communities, the staff will further develop, implement and support high-quality and responsive instruction in all content areas. This will include improving rigor and consistency within departments, common student outcomes, alignment to state standards, agreed-upon scope and sequence within content areas, and data-based instruction that is respectful of all student's backgrounds to ensure that they are college and/or career ready.
4. The school staff is developing and will implement planned structures and processes that provide all students, particularly those identified as Focus students, opportunities to experience culturally responsive practices and instruction, high expectations, and equal access to educational opportunities. These efforts should be based on data-driven instruction to improve student outcomes. Providing support and intervention opportunities for students is an essential part of this effort so that all students are college and/or career ready.

Additional Areas for Growth:

The Committee did not identify additional areas for growth.