



PASADENA HIGH SCHOOL MID-CYCLE REPORT

2925 East Sierra Madre Boulevard

Pasadena, CA 91107

Pasadena Unified School District

May 23, 2025

**Accrediting Commission for Schools
Western Association of Schools and Colleges**

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Note: The mid-cycle template has been revised and is now universal for all schools and programs. Select the appropriate data and terminology that applies to your school or program. The template language includes different data sources for formative and summative data (Chapter 1) and for the schoolwide action plan/SPSA/LCAP/CIP/CAEP (Chapter 5).

If you have any questions, please contact your WASC Advisor.

1: School Description (1 page maximum)

- Provide a brief background of the school, a link to a list of programs offered, and a description or list of schoolwide strategies that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- From the analysis of updated relevant student achievement data, include an updated summary of student academic progress and social-emotional well-being with implications of the data and identified student learner needs.

Pasadena High School was established in 1886. The school has been at its current location since 1960. Pasadena High School is one of four comprehensive high schools in the Pasadena Unified School District and serves students from the communities of Pasadena, Altadena, and Sierra Madre.

Pasadena High School offers a variety of programs, both curricular and extracurricular, to all students. PHS currently offers three College and Career Pathways for students: the Creative and Media Arts Design (CAMAD) Academy, the Law and Public Service (LPS) Academy, and the DATA Academy, which emphasizes and develops students skills and knowledge in Computer Science and Information technology (IT). Students involved in the College and Career Pathway Academies complete coursework and have the opportunity for field experiences in their respective area of study. Students have had the opportunity to learn more about careers through visits to the City of Pasadena Courthouse, sit in on law classes at Loyola Marymount University, visit the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and learn about various roles at a technology company, Spokeo. In addition to our College and Career Pathways, students are also part of our French and Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Program (DLIP) and our Math Academy, an accelerated math program that begins in fifth grade and prepares students for college-level mathematics courses in high school.

Pasadena High School boasts a staff of 94 certificated team members (1 principal, 3 assistant principals, 3 TOSAs, 4.0 counselors, 2 school psychologists, 1 librarian, 1 school nurse and 79 teachers). More than half of the faculty holds Master's Degrees. Teachers participate in monthly professional development led by administration. Pasadena High School is a Community School, and through that grant we have hired a truancy intervention and prevention specialist and a senior community advocate. Also through this grant, PHS is in the process of hiring a full time Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention Specialist. In addition, we have expanded tutoring offerings across campus and have started an eSports program through the Community Schools grant. Professional development topics are in collaboration with the Instructional Lead Team.

[Community Schools Initiative](#)

[Academies/Pathway Programs](#)

[Educational Support Programs](#)

[Course Offerings](#)

2: Significant Changes and Developments (1 page maximum)

- Include a description of any significant changes and/or developments that have had a major impact on the school and/or any specific program changes since the last self-study visit. (For example, we have a new classroom building for science that just opened, or we have a new district leadership with different district goals).
- Describe the impact these changes and/or developments have had on the students, school, and/or staff.

Staff and Assignments

Over the past three years, Pasadena Unified School District has experienced significant transitions in central office leadership, directly influencing the direction of programs and leadership at Pasadena High School. Since the last WASC visit, there have been changes in key roles, including Superintendent, Chief of Human Resources, Chief Business Officer, and Chief Academic Officer. Interim appointments and subsequent permanent placements have provided continuity, despite periods of vacancy or transition. These shifts have played a critical role in shaping district priorities and support structures impacting school sites.

At the school level, Pasadena High School has experienced significant leadership transitions over the past three years. The principal role has changed hands multiple times, with a new principal appointed in 2024 who brought a renewed focus on collaboration, student-centered learning, and campus culture. Since then, efforts have been made to unify staff and strengthen safety measures across the school.

The assistant principal team has also seen several changes. One assistant principal served through 2021–2022, followed by another who remains in the position as of 2024–2025. A long-serving assistant principal has provided stability since 2021, briefly leading the Special Education Department before returning to her campus role. Another assistant principal joined in 2024–2025 to fill the temporary vacancy during that period.

Other assistant principals rotated through from 2021 to 2024, with a new addition currently serving in the role. Collectively, the team has prioritized improvements in discipline systems, instructional support, and overall school safety.

In athletics, leadership has remained relatively stable. The Athletic Director I position changed hands twice from 2021 to 2024, with a new director beginning in 2024. Meanwhile, Athletic Director II has remained constant throughout the four-year period, ensuring consistency and support in the athletic program's operations.

These leadership changes reflect Pasadena High School's ongoing growth and dedication to continuous improvement. The evolving administrative team has prioritized academic achievement, wellness, equity, and collaborative professional practices to serve the students and community more effectively. It is the plan of the district to keep the current leadership team at Pasadena High School intact for the 25-26 school year.

Impact of the Eaton Fire on Pasadena High School Students

The Eaton Fire has had a profound impact on the Pasadena High School community. Over 130 PHS students and over 20 PHS staff from Pasadena, Altadena, and Sierra Madre have lost their homes or have been displaced, creating significant emotional and logistical challenges for both students and their families.

In response, Pasadena High School and the Pasadena Unified School District have mobilized additional socio-emotional support resources, bringing in extra psychologists and counselors to assist affected students. Support has also been provided by external agencies, including the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE), who have contributed staff and services to help meet the increased needs.

Community and organizational support have been critical in helping students recover. The PTSA organized a "Backpacks and More" event, distributing free backpacks, school supplies, toys, and other necessities to thousands of K-12 displaced students. Mission Oak High School in Tulare County launched a gift card drive to provide financial assistance directly to impacted families. In a particularly generous gesture, actor Steve Carell, in partnership with Alice's Kids, covered the cost of prom tickets for all Pasadena High School seniors, ensuring that students could still enjoy a memorable milestone despite the hardships they are facing.

Through these combined efforts, the school community has shown resilience, compassion, and a commitment to supporting every student during this difficult time.

[PTSA Backpacks & More Community Event](#)

[Mission Oak HS ASB \(Tulare County\) Pasadena Strong Donation Drive](#)

3: Engagement of Educational Partners in Continuous School Improvement (2 paragraph maximum)

- Describe the process for developing, implementing, and monitoring the schoolwide action plan, such as the SPSA/LCAP for CA public schools, Action Plan/CIP/CAEP for adults or the school's authorized improvement plan, and preparing the progress report.

Our WASC plan aims to align with the SPSA and the [PUSD APPROVED LCAP 24-25](#). The SPSA is revised yearly to provide resources in the areas with the most need. The school receives input from the SSC and ELAC. The [SSC 24-25](#) and [PHS ELAC 2024-2025](#) meet monthly and focus on providing stakeholders with information on our spending practices and collecting input from all members. Their input was used to modify the SPSA, and changes were made to our goals and spending. In addition, the district provides informational training during DAC, DLAC, and LCAP meetings. During these meetings, the district provided input on merging the school and district goals.

Each year, we use the Healthy Kids Survey ([PHS CHKS Student](#) [PHS CHKS Staff](#)) to collect feedback on the greatest needs based on the perception of students, teachers, and parents.

That data is then used to revise the SPSA budget allocations. Teachers also provide input on the school's needs via department requests for materials and technology to enhance student learning. In addition, we had two focus-on-learning meetings per year. At these meetings, the teacher gave input on how well we were implementing our school goals. The ILT team meets periodically to promote dialogue between all the departments and identify needs that can be met by accessing Title I (SPSA) or general budget funds. During staff meetings, teachers are encouraged to voice their concerns to identify needs throughout the school. When needs are identified, money is reallocated to meet the need. The school board reviews the SPSA to ensure our goals align with the LCAP goals. The counseling department provides continuous input on the needs of our students, and resources are reallocated to create interventions or opportunities to increase student achievement.

4: Progress on the Implementation of the Schoolwide Action Plan (4 page maximum)

The purpose of this section is to analyze progress on how the school has improved student success and well-being through the implementation of the schoolwide action plan since the last visit and to determine how those actions impact student learning and initiatives for continuous school improvement.

- Provide a summary of progress on school goals and growth areas for continuous improvement identified in the schoolwide action plan.
- Link and cite relevant supporting evidence and data and explain impact on student learning.

Note: If any recommended growth areas were not included in the school's schoolwide action plan/SPSA/LCAP/CIP/CAEP, indicate why.

Since the last WASC accreditation visit, Pasadena High School (PHS) has made steady and meaningful progress toward fulfilling its Schoolwide Action Plan. The collective efforts of teachers, support staff, counselors, and administrators have resulted in improvements across student achievement, school culture, college and career readiness, stakeholder engagement, professional development, and collaborative instructional practices. This chapter outlines the ongoing work and its impact, as informed by schoolwide data and staff input.

1. All students will improve grade level knowledge and proficiency as demonstrated on CAASPP English and Math assessments with a focus on improving student achievement, especially for English Learners, Latinx and African American students, Special Education and low socioeconomic students.

The first critical area of focus has been improving student knowledge and proficiency as measured by the CAASPP English and Math assessments, particularly for English Learners (EL), Latinx and African American students, students with disabilities, and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. To address the needs of English Learners, PHS offered a Math

Tutoring Program during lunch in the 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 school years. Spearheaded by former math teachers and current EL and Instructional Coaches, the program was promoted through English Language Development classes and communications with EL parents. Although student participation was limited, those who engaged benefited from targeted support. A bilingual instructional aide was also hired to push in into core classes to support EL students. The school also embedded peer tutoring opportunities during advisory and after school to provide additional academic assistance across subject areas.

Teachers across disciplines reported intentional efforts to incorporate reading and writing into the curriculum, particularly in Social Studies classes. Students worked on reading nonfiction texts, expanding vocabulary, note taking, and structured writing tasks. In the Mathematics Department, the focus has remained on strengthening foundational skills while challenging students with critical thinking and problem-solving activities. Special Education (SPED) teachers have continued to adapt and scaffold instruction in collaboration with general education teachers. The recent adoption of McGraw Hill materials for Math and Social Studies has helped address diverse learning needs. Technology platforms such as Read Theory and IXL have been implemented in English classes to target reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary development, while Study Sync use remains an area of ongoing adjustment and alignment to the district’s instructional goals.

Student assessment data in mathematics reflects progress as a whole as well as growth for most of the targeted subgroups. On the 2024 CAASPP assessment in mathematics we had an overall increase of 12.2 points. Many subgroups made significant increases as well. African American students made an increase of 45.4 points, Students with Disabilities increased their scores by 16.1 point, Hispanic students made an increase of 5.9 points and white students made an increase of 27.4 points. Our Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students, however, had a 3.1 point decline.

[CAASPP Math 2024](#) [CAASPP Math 2023](#) [CAASPP Math 2022](#)

Student assessment data in English Language Arts reflects an overall increase of 24.8 points. All subgroups made significant increases as well. African American students increased their scores by 88.5 points, Students with Disabilities increased their scores by 60.1 points, Hispanic students increased their scores by 12 points, Socioeconomically disadvantaged students increased their scores by 14.7 points, and white students increased their scores by 37.5 points.

[CAASPP ELA 2024](#) [CAASPP ELA 2023](#) [CAASPP ELA 2022](#)

2. All students will thrive in a safe, supportive environment that fosters community, respect for cultural and individual diversity, and promotes mental health and wellbeing.

The second area of focus has been ensuring that all students thrive in a safe, supportive environment that promotes community, cultural diversity, mental health, and student well-being.

A major highlight has been the development of the Collaboration of Services Team (COST), led by RTI Coach Mr. Arauz. COST convenes weekly, providing a structured space where academic coaches, mental health professionals, administrators, counselors, and community advocates work together to identify and respond to the needs of at-risk students. Other notable accomplishments include the Wellness Center and the Well-Being Center, which offer students access to mental health counseling, restorative circles, and a place to decompress. In addition, classroom teachers and support staff have implemented community-building practices and relationship-focused interventions.

Students and staff report that adult presence and supervision on campus have never been stronger. Counselors now support lunch supervision, and a restroom monitor ensures student safety. Programs and clubs that promote diversity and belonging have flourished. The Brotherhood Assembly continues to celebrate student culture, while LASA and BSU have taken joint trips to promote cross-cultural understanding. The Puente program has expanded to include students from a variety of backgrounds. A key culture shift has also been marked by the creation of “safe spaces,” with many staff volunteering their classrooms and offices as inclusive environments. All staff engaged in anti-racism professional development to reflect on personal biases and promote equity. However, staff did identify a need to improve visitor check-in procedures to prevent unauthorized individuals from accessing the campus.

3. PHS will strengthen college and career readiness for all students by increasing the number of students meeting the College and Career Indicators (CCI) benchmarks and meeting a-g eligibility.

PHS has increased the number of students who are placed in the “Prepared” level on the College and Career Indicator (CCI). In 2024 58.4% of seniors were “Prepared.” This was a 4.9% increase from 2023 when 53.5% of the seniors were “Prepared” as measured by the (CCI).

[CCI 2024](#) [CCI 2023](#)

PHS has taken important steps to strengthen college and career readiness in order to make these improvements. PHS has robust AP course offerings totaling 21 in 24-25 and will increase to 23 in 25-26 with the addition of AP Cybersecurity and AP Research. DUal enrollment offerings are also increasing. In 25-26 the number of Dual-Enrollment courses offered will double as college courses will be offered during the day and after school. Previously they were only offered after school. The Spanish Department, in collaboration with the Instructional Coach and the AP of Curriculum and Instruction developed a more intentional pathway for native Spanish-speaking students to move from Native Speakers 2 into AP Spanish Language and AP Spanish Literature. This work aims to increase access and representation of underrepresented students in advanced classes. Programs like Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP), College Access Plan (CAP), Upward Bound, Puente, Black Student Union (BSU), and Latin American Student Association (LASA) have provided robust support for college applications, financial aid assistance, FAFSA

completion, scholarship access, and parent communication. Additionally, counselors have regularly scheduled academic check-ins with students and ensure struggling students are provided credit recovery options.

4. All parents and guardians feel welcomed at their school, have sufficient two-way communication with their school and are provided with knowledge and skills to successfully support and advocate for their child.

PHS has continued to improve parent and guardian engagement through digital platforms such as Smore (Weekly Bulletin), Canvas, Aeries, and Parentlink-Blackboard. These systems provide families with real-time access to updates, events, emergency information, grades, assignments, and attendance information. Many teachers have implemented parent communication tools like newsletters and Remind for ongoing updates and two-way dialogue. The PTSA has experienced strong growth, expanding from a few board members to a full leadership board of 12 members. The Weekly Bulletin has been redesigned using Smore to be ADA-friendly and searchable. Social media including Facebook and Instagram has become an effective way to share real-time updates with families. Parents were also supported extensively during the aftermath of the Eaton Fire, with outreach and resource referrals to assist displaced families.

[PHS Weekly Bulletin](#)

[PTSA](#)

[PHS Facebook](#)

[PHS Instagram](#)

In addition, the VC has identified additional concrete, specific growth areas that need to be addressed:

1. It is recommended that PHS develop and implement effective strategies to address the involvement and collaboration of all stakeholders in the WASC self-study in which needs to reflect a thorough, accurate description and analysis of what currently exists at the school, as well as align schoolwide prioritized areas of strength and growth identified by all stakeholders.

PHS acknowledges and appreciates the Visiting Committee's recommendation to enhance the involvement and collaboration of all stakeholders in the WASC self-study process. The school leadership team recognizes that minimal preparatory work for the Mid-Cycle Visit had been undertaken prior to the summer of 2024. Upon assuming the role of principal in the fall of 2024, the current administration immediately prioritized re-engaging the school community in a meaningful and structured self-reflection process.

In the fall of 2024, the principal established a series of focus groups specifically designed to examine the areas of strength and areas of concern highlighted in the prior WASC self-study report. PHS used several “A Meeting” Monday sessions, which provided dedicated time for collaborative discussions and data analysis. This process allowed for an emerging consensus on key strengths and urgent areas for growth.

However, the unforeseen Eaton fire on January 7, 2025, and the subsequent temporary closure of the school, necessitated an immediate and sustained focus on the safety and well-being of students and staff. The shift to emergency response and socio-emotional recovery efforts presented significant challenges to maintaining the initial momentum of the WASC Mid-Cycle preparation. Despite these obstacles, PHS maintained its commitment to continuous improvement and stakeholder engagement.

In the winter and spring of 2025, the School Site Council (SSC), English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC), and Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) played pivotal roles in realigning and integrating the WASC self-study goals with the development of the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA). These collaborative bodies ensured that the schoolwide prioritized areas of strength and growth were reflective of the voices and needs of all stakeholder groups, and that they aligned with the overall mission of supporting student success.

Moving forward, PHS is committed to institutionalizing these practices and expanding the structures for inclusive stakeholder involvement. The school plans to create an ongoing WASC Steering Committee composed of representatives from SSC, ELAC, ILT, parents, and student leadership to monitor progress and ensure regular reflection and adjustment of the schoolwide action plan. This commitment to continuous dialogue and collective responsibility will support a more thorough, accurate, and collaborative self-study process at all stages.

[24-25 PHS Mid-Cycle Focus on Learning Group Work](#)

☰ CATEGORY A: ORGANIZATION: VISION AND PURPOSE, GOVERN...

☰ CATEGORY B: CURRICULUM

☰ CATEGORY C. LEARNING AND TEACHING

☰ CATEGORY D: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

☰ CATEGORY E: SCHOOL CULTURE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT...

2. It is recommended that PHS continue to develop and implement a targeted school-wide professional development plan based on student academic achievement and students’ social and emotional needs. The plan should include a measurement tool on how effective the training was as related to the targeted area (academics and/or social/emotional needs). This plan should include requiring scheduled meetings throughout the year.

Professional development remains a critical component of the school's continuous improvement efforts. Recent years have included training focused on community circles, anti-racism, and social-emotional learning. PD sessions have also supported the rollout of new Math and English curricula. Departments have utilized data from the Panorama survey and other sources to guide conversations about student needs. While there have been positive strides, many teachers shared the need to optimize PD time, particularly to balance attention between academic and social-emotional learning goals. Teachers noted that limited meeting time can make it difficult to delve deeply into curricular planning and assessment practices.

Learning walks were implemented during the 24-25 school year. The first learning walk experience included the principal, 2 Instructional coaches and 5 volunteer teachers. The teachers observed were also volunteers. At the end of the Learning Walks the team debriefed and recommended next steps for instructional improvement. These were the recommended steps from this team: Engage students in higher Depth of Knowledge level questions: 1) Include more Check for Understanding strategies in lessons, 2) Include more Check for Understanding strategies in lessons, and 3) Implement a campuswide cell phone policy. A 2nd learning walk is planned for after AP testing in late May or 2025.

In 25-26 we plan to conduct Learning Walks monthly and involve all teachers, counselors and administrators. This will be the basis for leading PD on "A" Mondays throughout the year.

[PHS Learning Walk Schedule for March 20th, 2025 \(Observing Team\)](#)

[PHS Learning Walks SY 2024-2025](#)

[Email to Staff Re Debrief Learning Walks on March 20th](#)

3. It is recommended that PHS continue to maximize the collective efficacy of PLC time to align curriculum, cross-curricular collaboration, and increase the frequency at which common assessments are administered and analyzed to improve all students' grade-level knowledge and proficiency as demonstrated on CAASPP English and Math assessments and A-G completion with a focus on improving student achievement and college and career readiness. Data should be analyzed with a special focus on making sure all subgroups, especially English Learners, Latinx and African American students, students who receive Special Education services, and low socioeconomic students' needs are being addressed to ensure equitable access to all curriculum at PHS.

Finally, Pasadena High School has made strides in maximizing Professional Learning Community (PLC) time. Since 2023–2024, the school has dedicated a consistent three-week cycle for PLC meetings, which has improved communication and collaboration within departments. Data from iReady diagnostics and district benchmarks is used to identify student needs and inform instruction. The Math Department administers common assessments in the fall

and spring across all grade levels. The Social Studies Department has adopted common skills assessments, and AP teachers use AP Classroom data to monitor student progress. Staff report that while PLC time has been beneficial, it remains limited and could be expanded for deeper data analysis and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

PHS has shown a consistent commitment to implementing its Schoolwide Action Plan. The school has made progress across multiple dimensions, from student academic performance and well-being to parent engagement and teacher collaboration. While there are areas where continued focus and improvement are needed, the foundation for a culture of collective efficacy and student-centered learning is strong. PHS remains determined to continue this trajectory of continuous school improvement and equitable access for all students.

5: Revised Schoolwide Action Plan/SPSA Refinements (½ page maximum)

- Based on the findings of the current mid-cycle report, further revise the schoolwide action plan/SPSA/LCAP/CIP/CAEP as needed and include a link to the school's revised schoolwide action plan/SPSA/LCAP/CIP/CAEP.
- Include a brief paragraph of why changes were made.

Pasadena High School's Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) was developed through a collaborative effort of our professional and classified faculty and staff, parents, and school personnel. The plan that follows is a result of this collaborative effort toward increasing student achievement. The SPSA addresses the academic achievement needs of all students and targeted-groups of students, including English learners, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, foster youth, students with disabilities, and racial/ethnic subgroups. The SPSA coordinates all educational services and applicable federal and state funding sources.

There were several changes in the SPSA in regards to the goals. The 24-25 SPSA had 7 goals and we replaced that with 4 new goals. Goals 1 and 2 from the previous SPSA targeted increasing proficiency scores in ELA and Math. We combined those 2 goals and added both increasing scores in CAST and AP tests to make Goal 1. Goal 3, a goal to support EL students was expanded in the new Goal 2 to not only focus on reclassification but putting an extra focus on LTELS. The 24-25 Goals 4, 5 and 7 around reducing suspension, chronic absenteeism and increasing various college and career indicators were replaced with Goal 3 which serves to focus on overall school culture by connecting students through positive school experiences such as engaging electives, clubs, extracurricular activities which we believe will reduce discipline incidents, increase attendance, improve graduation rates and college and career indicators. We hired an MTSS TOSA to help lead the work to improve Tier I instruction and positive reinforcements. The 24-25 Goal 6 was replaced with the 25-26 Goal 4 which is still parent focus but expands to both student and parent activities that prepare them to increase college readiness. Focus will also be on building parents' leadership capacity.