

**MID-CYCLE VISIT
VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

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

FOR

HALF MOON BAY HIGH SCHOOL

**1 Lewis Foster Drive
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019**

Cabrillo Unified School District

March 3, 2016

Visiting Committee Members

Doug Jones, Chairperson
Assistant Superintendent - Retired, Fresno Unified School District, Fresno, CA

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I. Introduction

General Comments

Half Moon Bay High School is the only comprehensive high school in the Cabrillo Unified School District (CUSD), which serves students from five coastal communities. The district's boundaries encompass more than 200 square miles. The Half Moon Bay community continues to grow as more people in from the tech sectors of San Francisco and Silicon Valley are making their home "coastside." The area still enjoys a large agricultural economy; coupled with long time residents, these families comprise the diverse population of HMBHS. School enrollment has increased by 6%, since 2013 with little change in student demographics. The school attributes part of the increase in enrollment to the improved state economy and the corresponding increase in agricultural related jobs in the area. They also cite increased outreach efforts to encourage middle students considering a private high school to stay in the district and attend HMBHS. Half Moon Bay High School serves students from Cunha Intermediate -- the only CUSD middle school -- as well as Seacrest and Wilkinson schools -- both private schools.

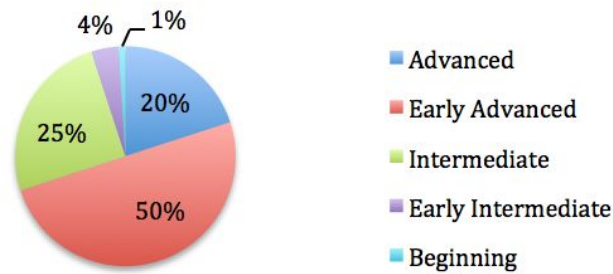
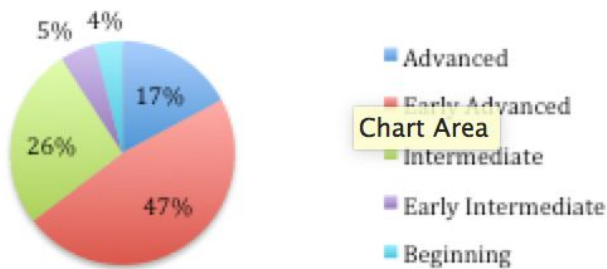
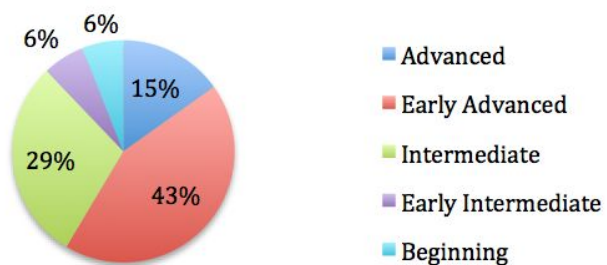
The school enjoys remarkable support from several long standing parent and community organizations, including: The HMBHS Foundation, Half Moon Bay Cougar Boosters, English Language Learner Advisory Council (ELAC), Cabrillo Education Fund (CEF), and Friends of Cougars in Concert (FOCIC). One example of this support is the HMBHS Foundation's funding of five sections of AP instruction.

Student Achievement Data

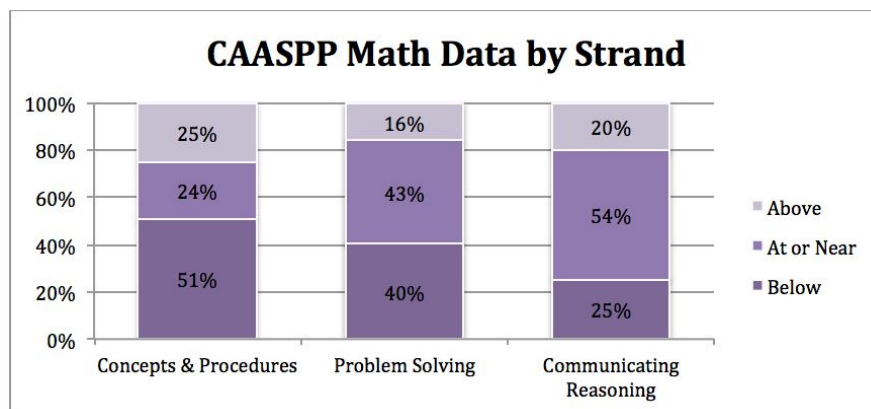
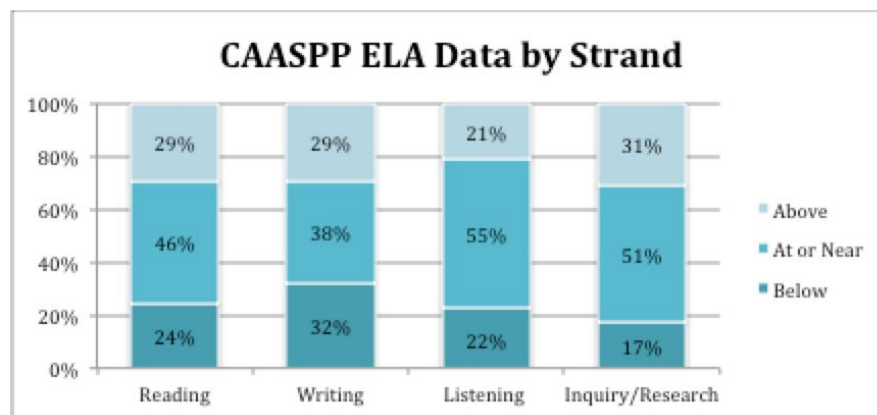
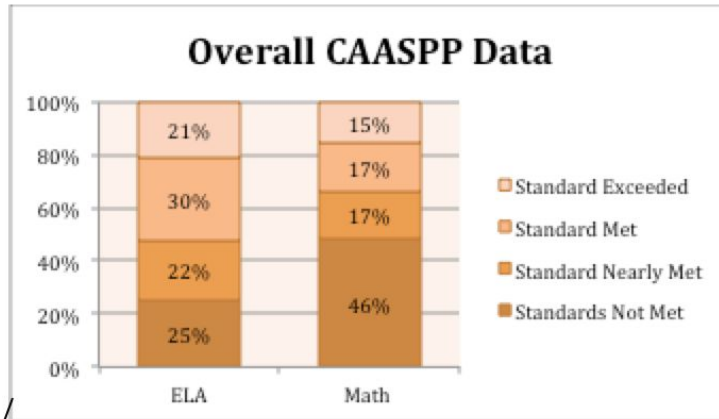
In part because of the transition in state assessments, the school's report only contained English Language Development Test (CELDT) and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) student performance data.

CELDT

Because of the increase in the number of students in beginner and early intermediate levels over the last three years, SDAIE support has transitioned from social science to English classes - alongside ELD support classes. The school's report anecdotally stated that the focus needed to be placed on ELD classes along with English support "to make sure our students can read and write fluently in English upon exiting the High School."

CELDT Overall 2012-2013**CELDT Overall 2013-2014****CELDT Overall 2014-2015****SBAC**

HMBHS administered the first SBAC assessment in the spring of 2014. The report states that the school looks forward to another year of testing “so that they are able to compare and contrast areas of strength and growth.” The report points to mathematics concepts and procedures as an area that will need to be addressed as an immediate priority.

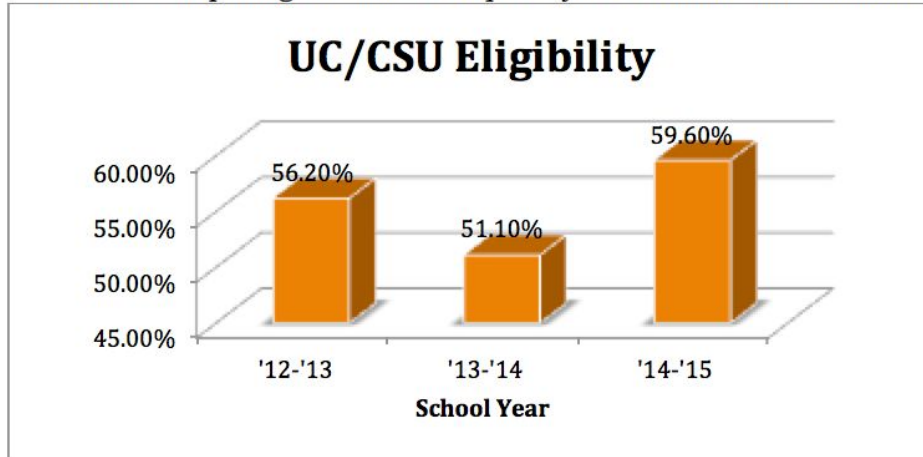


UC/CSU Eligibility

The total percent of graduates meeting UC/CSU requirements increased by 3.4% since the last full visit. During the spring of 2015, HMBHS adopted a new credit recovery program, Compass Learning, that is both UC/CSU approved. It is also more closely aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Additionally, AVID classes are offered to support first-generation, college-bound students. The school credits the Compass Learning program as significantly contributing to the

increase in UC/CSU eligibility.

Graduates Completing All Courses Required for UC and/or CSU Entrance



- **Significant changes and/or developments since the last full visit.**

The school has developed a number of instructional and curriculum changes since the last full visit. Some of the new programs include:

- "Super Tuesdays" staff development/collaboration six times per year
- Personal Learning Plan meetings conducted by counselors
- Early College program with the College of San Mateo (CSM)
- The CSM first Year Success Initiative
- The Common Core implementation in ELA and Math
- Two teachers on special assignments (TOSAs) to support classroom instruction
- Positive Behavioral Support Intervention (PBIS) to help address the social-emotional needs of HMBHS students
- The Health and Wellness Committee to address the physical and psychological needs of HMBHS students
- Exploration and development of a block schedule
- Development of new SDAIE courses

In addition:

- The staff has had a significant turnover in the last three years. 22-25% of the staff members are new and there is a new administrative team, including the third principal in the past three years.
- The average daily attendance rate has increased by approximately 3.5% across all subgroups since 2012-2013.
- For the 2012-13 school year, the school board approved a policy requiring students to maintain 92% attendance in their senior year in order to walk the stage at graduation and participate in all graduation-associated activities.
- Overall suspension and expulsion rates have decreased by approximately 45% since the 2012-2013 school year.
- The total percent of graduates meeting UC/CSU requirements has increased by 3.4%

since the 2012-2013 school year.

- HMBHS plans to complete a four-year AVID program in 2016-17 with an AVID IV class.
 - Advanced Placement (AP) student enrollment increased by approximately 42% between the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years.
 - Enrollment in AP courses increased by approximately 42% for Hispanic and Caucasian students.
 - At the end of the 2014-15 school year, the district hired Equal Opportunity Schools (EOS) to gather data through surveys on student access and identify barriers to enrollment in Advanced Placement (AP) classes. EOS will use the results to make recommendations for sustaining access and success in AP coursework.
- **Describe the impact these changes and/or developments have had on the school and/or specific curricular programs.**

The teaching and administrative staff turnover has made it difficult to implement and monitor the school's action plan. While the school has made progress in many areas, there is a lack of data available to allow all stakeholders to fully understand the impact of their improvement efforts.

In spite of these issues, the school continues to have a very supportive parent community, and the current staff is in the process of implementing programs that will have a positive effect on student learning. The AVID program will provide the necessary support for students to access more challenging curriculum. More students are attending class and fewer students are being suspended or expelled. Students report they like their school and their teachers, and feel it is a safe, nurturing environment. The teachers and administrators with whom the Visiting Committee met are enthusiastic about their role in the school and committed to the Half Moon Bay community.

- **Briefly comment on the school's follow-up process. Include a description of the committee that has been responsible for overseeing the progress of the school's action plan and the preparation for the visit.**

The school's follow-up process has been significantly impacted by the large staff turnover during the past three years. As stated in the report, over 20% of the teaching staff has been replaced due to retirement or relocation. The current principal is the third since the full visit, and both assistant principals are new within the past two years. In spite of the large numbers of new staff, the school began the mid cycle review process in earnest at the end of the 2014-15 school year.

- **Describe the process used to prepare the progress report.**

The process for the development of the mid-cycle review started at the end of the 2014-2015 school year and continued throughout the summer of 2015. At the start of the 2015-2016 school year, the two teachers plus the administration introduced the mid-cycle review process to the staff at a Super Tuesday event and developed templates in Google Docs for staff to collaborate on specific areas. The two teachers developed assignments for staff members to address the critical areas of follow up. Department team members contributed to the development of the report during the first semester of the the school year during staff collaboration time and Super Tuesdays. The final compilation of the documents and final edit of the documents were completed by two teachers and the administrative team.

II. Progress on Critical Areas for Follow-up/Schoolwide Action Plan

- **Provide an analytical summary about the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section referencing the critical areas for follow-up addressed through each section.**

Recommendation 1: ... a more strategic school wide approach to what most impacts student achievement: *classroom instructional practices*.

- The implementation of AVID at Half Moon Bay and the related training for the majority of the staff has led to an increased focus on classroom instructional practices. As described in the school's report, two Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSAs) support classroom teachers, "by conducting observations as well as supporting the implementation of the common core."
- The Visiting Committee feels that these efforts will assist in the schoolwide approach to improved instructional practices; however, documentation of professional development activities along with training on specific, research based effective practices will provide a more strategic, schoolwide initiative.

Recommendation 2: ...increased observations, support and reflective feedback of instruction by teachers and administrators will move teaching and learning to the next level at HMBHS.

- The school is in their first year of implementing peer-to-peer observations, and TOSAs gather "evidence and feedback from teachers regarding areas of support." HMBHS administrators conduct informal walkthroughs as well as formal evaluations each year.
- While the report concludes that the school "believes that classroom instructional practices have greatly improved," this recommendation requires a more rigorous review of data based on aggregated observations of effective, research based practices mentioned above. Several examples of these effective practices are described in current research and include student engagement, appropriate rigor, and checking for understanding, to name a few.

Recommendation 3: Improve curriculum and supplemental intervention to support ELD/ELL and special needs students, narrow the achievement gap, and provide optimum learning experiences for historically underrepresented students.

- The school implemented Positive Behavioral Intervention Support (PBIS) to provide appropriate interventions for students across all subgroups. The implementation of the AVID program also addresses the academic, social, and emotional needs of all HMBHS students. As stated in the report, "our ELD department chair has been working diligently to support our teachers in the creation of authentic curriculum for our students" in addition to SDAIE course offerings.

Recommendation 4: Continue to develop an array of techniques that help students organize, access, and apply knowledge, including the use of technology.

- The school has made significant efforts to introduce new programs for students including

AVID, SDAIE and PBIS, yet it was difficult for the Visiting Committee to gage the progress of these efforts without applicable data. The school report stated the goal of using AVID and providing professional development opportunities for staff is to prepare students for a 21st century world. The Visiting Committee commends the school for these initiatives and agrees with them that a more systematic approach to data collection is needed to properly document how the school is addressing this recommendation.

Recommendation 5: Continue collaboration toward common assessments, similar coursework, grading, and aligned planning calendars for all subject areas and between departments.

- The school report stated that HMBHS has adopted curriculum maps to support the implementation of the Common Core. The administrative team stated that work is being done to adopt the “new generation science standards” and the social science department has developed common assessments. The school has made progress in implementing the Common Core and will need to develop and monitor the data departmentally. Formative assessments are used by individual departments but have yet to be developed schoolwide.

Recommendation 6: Increase emphasis on vertical articulation.

- The school reports that Thursday meetings have been used for subject area departments to collaborate on the scope and sequence of courses. The school is working with the feeder middle school to develop placement assessments and to adopt common curriculum in alignment with the Common Core. While there is sufficient evidence that the school understands the importance of vertical articulation, as their report says, “the product of these efforts will need to be documented to assess the effect with student learning.” The Visiting Committee agrees with that statement.
- **Regarding evidence supporting the progress made and the impact made on student achievement:**
 - As mentioned in other parts of the Visiting Committee Report and in discussions with the Leadership Team, much of the supporting evidence in the report is anecdotal. Very little data was provided to support the school’s assumptions that each of the recommendations was (or is) being adequately addressed. The Visiting Committee understands that many school leaders are new to the school, and there is evidence that they are approaching the task of improving teaching and learning seriously. Interviews with parents and students provided additional evidence of the school’s efforts to address the needs of all students at HMBHS. From this point on, regardless of personnel changes, the school must adopt a data driven approach to every facet of their improvement efforts as there is no other, objective way to understand the effectiveness of new or existing programs and practices.

III. Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations:

- **Comment on significant progress the school has made in responding to the critical areas for follow-up and in carrying out the related action plan.**
 - Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSAs) have been hired to support classroom instruction.
 - The AVID Program has been implemented to address access to a rigorous curriculum by students in all subgroups.
 - AVID instructional practices are being implemented school wide
 - Positive Behavioral Intervention Support (PBIS) has been implemented to better address the social-emotional needs of all students. The large decrease in suspensions and expulsions can be attributed, in part, to PBIS.
 - The school and district's efforts to enlist outside agencies, such as Equal Opportunity Schools (EOS), to increase student access to Advanced Placement courses is evident in the number of AP sections offered, the number of students enrolled, and the improved UC/CSU a-g completion rate.
 - The Health and Wellness Committee, which includes a broad representation of site, district, and community stakeholders, was formed to address the mental health issues of high school students.
 - The Half Moon Bay community - parent groups in particular - continue to provide a remarkable level of financial support for instructional and extra curricular programs.

Recommendations:

- From Section II above, much of the supporting evidence in the report is anecdotal. Very little data was provided to support the school's assumptions that each of the recommendations was (or is) being adequately addressed... From this point on, regardless of personnel changes, the school must adopt a data driven approach to every facet of their improvement efforts as there is no other, objective way to understand the effectiveness of new or existing programs and practices. Each Critical Area for Followup from the 2013 Visiting Committee Report must be addressed using student performance and behavioral data, stakeholder surveys and interviews, along with all other information resources available to the school. The school's action plan must reflect adjustments to the school's programs based on the examination of these data sources.
- **Identify any new areas of concerns, if applicable.**

The administrative team will need to review the process for engaging all stakeholder groups in the development of future plans for the school. Currently, plans are reviewed with the School Site Council, the Leadership Team and the Academic Council. These groups and the administrative team appear to be the only stakeholders to monitor the progress of the action plan. All stakeholders must have a voice in the school improvement process.

A data collection and review process for the inclusion of parents, students, staff - all stakeholder groups - in school improvement initiatives, must be developed and included in future WASC self

studies.