

**SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**  
**WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**  
**CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**FOR**

**RIVERSIDE POLYTECHNIC HIGH SCHOOL**

5450 Victoria Avenue  
Riverside, California 92506  
Riverside Unified School District  
March 9-12 2014

**Visiting Committee Members**

**Mr. Rod Raschke,**  
Chairperson  
Assistant Principal, Edison High School

**Dr. CK Green Ed.D.**  
Assistant Principal, Tustin High School

**Ms. Michelle Halimi**  
English Teacher, Beverly Hills High School

**Ms. Stephanie Heflin**  
High School Asst. Principal, Los Amigos High School

**Mr. Jeff Jordan**  
Principal, Walnut High School

**Mrs. Dawn Michelle Lam**  
Teacher, El Rancho High School

**Mrs. Mary L. Meredith**  
Resource Specialist/Teacher, Temecula Valley High School

**Mr. Yousef Nasouf**  
Principal, Orangeview Junior High School

**Chapter I: Student/Community Profile**

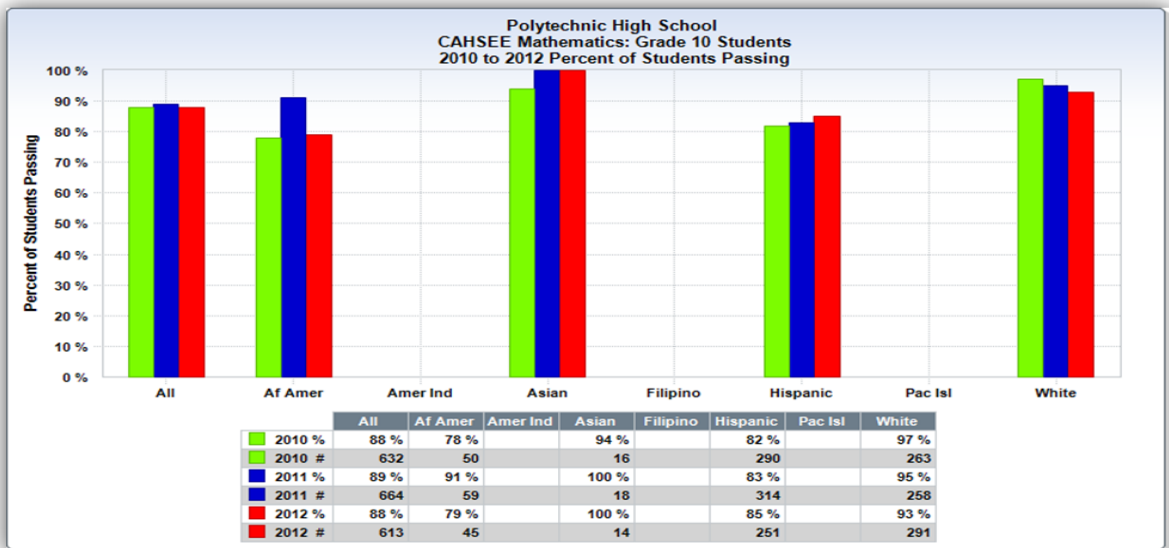
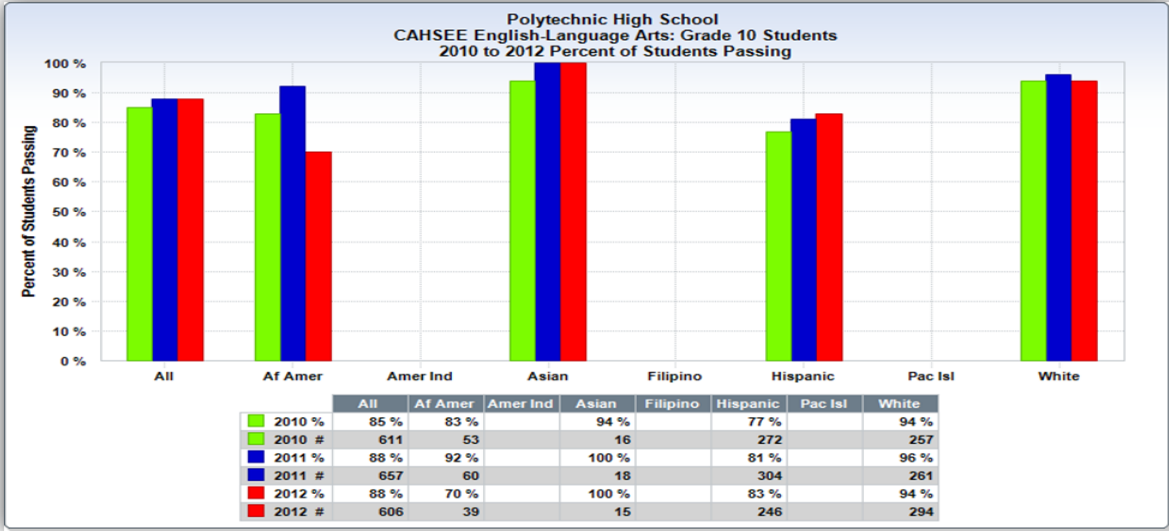
Located in Southern California’s Inland Empire, Riverside currently has a population of approximately 313,000 residents and is ranked the 12th most populous city in California. Polytechnic High School is one of the five comprehensive high schools in Riverside Unified School District (RUSD), the 15th largest district in California enrolling approximately 43,000 K-12 students in 47 schools. Of the five comprehensive high schools, Poly High School is the oldest and has the second largest population of 2,859 students. The population has remained rather consistent and so have the demographics. Poly’s student population is approximately 50% Hispanic, 35% white, 9% African American with the remaining 6% made up of several other groups. Since 2008, the ethnic demographics of Poly have slightly changed with an increase of Hispanics and a decrease in the white population. African American and Asian populations have slightly decreased, while the Pacific Islander populations, as well as other ethnic population percentages have remained rather constant. The dichotomy of Poly’s populations, seems to be that of “the haves” and the “have nots.” Poly is the “home” school for students from Riverside’s “eastside,” which has a history of racial conflict, gang violence, drug abuse, and other forms of criminal activity, as well as the “home” school for many of Riverside’s wealthiest and most educated families.

Poly is not a Title I school and therefore does not receive any schoolwide or targeted assistance.

Poly is not identified as a Program Improvement school. RUSD became a program improvement district in 2007.

Since 2010, Poly has not met their annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for AYP in one or more significant subgroups.

School Year	API	Growth	Statewide Rank	Similar School Rank
2012-13	765	04		
2011-12	761	-11	5	3
2010-11	773	4	6	6
2009-10	768	42	7	7
2008-09	726	15	5	3



Number of Students Passing Advanced Placement Tests

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Test Taken	1070	1077	1212
Test Passed	496	510	661
Percentage Passed	46%	47%	54%

**SAT Score averages over 3 years**

Year	Grade 12 Enrollment	Number Tested	Percent Tested	Critical Reading Average	Math Average	Writing Average
2011-12	625	310	49.60%	503	523	505
2010-11	613	261	42.58%	503	526	512
2009-10	613	264	43.07%	515	530	516

**Percentage of Students approved for CSU Early Assessment Program**

Test	# Taken	# Ready	Percentage Conditionally Ready	Percentage Ready
Early Assessment Program English	596	154	15.6%	26%
Early Assessment Program Math	364	40	55%	11%

**Percentage of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students that Meet the “A-G” Requirements**

Academic Year	2010	2011	2012	2013
Percent	35%	36%	40%	38%
# of Students that meet “A-G”/ Total # of 12 <sup>th</sup> graders	201/559	180/ 492	219/ 543	207/ 537

Poly has several programs to support students academically and emotionally. They have AVID, Puente, and the Heritage Plan to encourage students to pursue college after high school. In addition they have a Hospitality Academy which encourages students to pursue careers in the culinary arts. There is also a JROTC program.

Critical learner needs were not indentified in this chapter.

## **Chapter II: Progress Report**

In May 2013 there were major changes in the administration of Poly; the principal was replaced by an interim principal. By the fall of 2013 a new principal, Dr. Roe, had been named and all but one of the assistant principals had been replaced. With the change in administration there has been a change in the attitudes at Poly; there has been a shift to an attempt to be more inclusive of all stakeholders. A sense of Poly PRIDE has been reborn.

In addition, there was changes at the district level; the former superintendent left and an interim superintendent appointed. Changes have been made in other district office positions and a new school board member was elected.

In 2008 the visiting committee listed five areas of focus for Poly.

1. Strengthen Poly's Professional Learning Community practices to improve student achievement.
2. Students will be independent, reflective learners who take responsibility for their own progress as a result of enhancing communication among all shareholders.
3. Increase student achievement through instructional strategies, intervention and support programs with an emphasis in success in Algebra and reading comprehension skills across the curriculum.
4. Develop a culture of P.R.I.D.E. through effective schoolwide policies that promote accountability, campus cleanliness, school safety and school spirit.
5. Prepare students for post-graduate opportunities by increasing career technical education program options for students.

These were reiterated in the 2011 mid-term visit.

1. Explore ways to provide additional time within the structure of the school day for full implementation of PLC's.
2. Continue staff development for implementation of PLC's at Poly High.
3. Continue to develop strategies to communicate with all shareholders, including those who have language and technology barriers.
4. Continue to explore and expand specialized intervention programs that focus on reading comprehension and Algebra.
5. Continue a culture of P.R.I.D.E. through effective schoolwide policies that promote accountability, campus cleanliness, school safety and school spirit.

Progress has been mixed on these areas; in some cases, there has been substantial progress while in others there has been little progress.

### ***Action Plan Item One***

*Explore ways to provide additional time within the structure of the school day for full implementation of PLC's.*

Since the current self-study was prepared the RUSD and the teachers association has reached an agreement to establish districtwide collaboration time. The details of the when and how frequently are being worked out.

***Action Plan Item Two***

*Continue staff development in PLC's with the Poly High School staff.*

Since the Visiting Committee came in 2011, very little has done to establish PLCs. A lack of focus and accountability measures impacted the ability to fully implement PLC's at all levels. While there are some high functioning PLC's on campus, there are others that are ineffective. For each core department that boasts of PLC teams doing well there are those needing additional assistance. Although most teachers on staff enjoy and learn from collaboration, there are still some who do not value the PLC process or collaborating with their colleagues. Due to the mixed results in establishing PLCs, the administration and department leaders have shifted focus and are working on the establishment of Data Teams to enhance the development of PLCs.

***Action Item Three***

*Continue to develop strategies to communicate with all shareholders, including those who have language and technology barriers.*

Poly High School has made significant progress with communication efforts with the community. They maintain a website that promotes access to Aeries Parent Portal and a strong presence with social media. Poly High School has its own Facebook and Twitter feed. In addition, Dr. Roe has Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn feeds all connected to the website. Parents, students and community members can interact with Dr. Roe directly on Poly High School Principal's Forum. In 2013, with assistance from the district, Poly unveiled the "Poly App" for the iPhone to further help reach their stakeholders. Currently, more than 48% of the traffic that hits on the website and social media comes from cell phones. The parents report they receive a wealth of information. However, they indicated that some segments of the community are unaware of or cannot access the information due to language or cultural barriers.

***Action Item Four***

*Continue to explore and expand specialized intervention programs that focus on reading comprehension and Algebra.*

Algebra continues to be a major concern and area for growth for Poly High School. From an intervention standpoint, minimal efforts have been made to ensure that students are placed appropriately and have access to timely interventions. The main focus has been on the articulation of the mathematics program with the feeder middle school. Algebra support classes have been added at Poly.

***Action Item Five***

*Continue a culture of P.R.I.D.E. through effective schoolwide policies that promote accountability, campus cleanliness, school safety and school spirit.*

Poly has made significant progress in the area of establishing a culture of P.R.I.D.E. The changes in administration resulted in clarification of what P.R.I.D.E. really means. As a result of increased student and parent involvement and better communication with all stakeholders there have been significant improvements in the culture at Poly. The addition of new athletic facilities

and new paint around campus there are improvements in the cleanliness of the buildings. However there is still a need for more work to bring the campus up to date.

### **Chapter III: Self-Study Process**

#### **School Mission**

With academic, emotional, and social support, Poly High School will ensure that all students reach high standards of achievement by instilling *Poly* “**PRIDE**” in every student.

A unique feature at Poly is the existence of two sets of student learning outcomes. The external ESLRs were developed by the staff while the internal ESLRs were developed by over 200 students.

#### **POLY HIGH SCHOOL EXTERNAL ESLRs**

##### **Proficient users of technology**

- Incorporate technology skills into academic disciplines
- Apply computer skills in vocational and business occupations

##### **Responsible, reflective learners**

- Demonstrate concern and involvement in community issues
- Demonstrate respect for other cultures’ individual rights and property

##### **Independent and self-motivated citizens**

- Set and strive to achieve goals
- Develop a personal sense of self worth

##### **Diligent critical thinkers**

- Formulate solutions based on analysis
- Reason logically

##### **Effective communicators who work collaboratively**

- Participate in a democratic process
- Convey ideas in a clear and coherent manner when speaking and writing

#### **POLY HIGH SCHOOL INTERNAL ESLRs**

##### **Passion**

- Ignites the fire that drives us to defy our expectation

##### **Respect**

- To admire, appreciate, and accept people for who they are

##### **Integrity**

- Together we have the courage to face the truth

##### **Determination**

- We keep moving forward and relentlessly drive ourselves and others to achieve greatness

##### **Extraordinary**

- Empowering ourselves to defy the expectations of the ordinary

Comment on the school's self-study process with respect to the expected outcomes of the self-study.

1. The involvement and collaboration of all staff and other stakeholders to support student achievement

Staff, students, and parents were actively involved in the preparation of the self-study. They were members of the various focus groups and home groups. Parents and students were members of several focus groups. Based on our interviews it appears that all groups on campus were represented in the focus groups and home groups.

2. The clarification and measurement of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do through schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards (*note the selected schoolwide learner outcomes examined by the school*)

The Student Learner Outcomes are divided into two groups External and Internal. The external SLOs were previously developed by the staff. In 2013 these were supplemented by the student developed internal SLOs. Both are focused on instilling Poly P.R.I.D.E.

3. The gathering and analyzing of data about students and student achievement

The Riverside Poly staff has access to a variety of sources of data both formal and informal. This data is used to a varying degree of effectiveness by the staff. In some cases data is used to direct and modify instruction, in others it is not.

4. The assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning in relation to schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards and WASC/CDE criteria

The WASC self-study addresses all areas of the school program. The criteria sections address the specific areas of the program and provide evidence of the findings. There are no clearly stated areas of need that directly connect to the goals of the action plan.

5. The alignment of a long-range action plan to the school's areas of need; the development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the plan.

The Action Plan is not aligned with all needs identified in the criteria sections of the report. It focuses on several very broad areas and lacks specific goals. The school has been asked to refine their action plan to make it more specific, especially in the areas of student need such as algebra and reading comprehension.



## Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

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

#### A1. Organization Criterion

*To what extent does the school have a clearly stated vision or purpose based on its student needs, current educational research, and the belief that all students can achieve at high levels?*

*To what extent is the school's purpose supported by the governing board and the central administration and further by schoolwide learner outcomes and the academic standards?*

PHS has an established vision and mission of what students should know and perform. The vision and mission have been developed through the school's Strategic Plan and are tied to the district's vision. The Strategic Plan has three stated goals: 1) Excellence in every classroom, 2) Shared leadership opportunities for all Stakeholders, and 3) Explicit systems and structures to support problem solving and organizational capacity. The vision is aligned with the stated Strategic Plan noted above, and the Mission Statement is embedded into what PHS calls their Internal and External Expected School Wide Learning Results. The external ESLRs were previously established, while the Internal ESLRs were developed by students. In order to set up the Strategic Plan and the Vision and Mission goals, the organizational structure of PHS shifted. What used to be a management style (top down approach) has shifted to a shared leadership style (Inside out approach). Through observations and discussions it was evident that the Board of Education is clearly supportive of the schools leadership and goals. These activities are guided by a clear professional development plan.

A calendar has been produced to continue conversations after the formal WASC visit, and begin to move conversations into focusing on the transition into the Common Core from the State Standards. Leads in Focus Groups from WASC will transition into roles of leaders in the Common Core transition. Also, collaboration between the Poly PTSA, administration, and the Riverside Office of Education organized the Parent Engagement Leadership Initiative (PELI) training. Through this training, parent leaders increased their knowledge of the Strategic Plan, Vision, Mission and continued to help in the process.

Ongoing monitoring of the schoolwide action plan will be by the PRIDE team, which consists of: parents, community stakeholders, students, and teachers. Due to the aforementioned PELI training, parents and community will play a larger role in the decision making process. Communication will continue through different formats that include: social media, principal's letter, and the WASC self-study, which is an ongoing eDocument. PHS's commitment to communicating with Stakeholders is founded in transparency, being systemic and deliberate.

#### A2. Governance Criterion

*To what extent does the governing board have policies and bylaws that are aligned with the school's purpose and support the achievement of the schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards based on data-driven instructional decisions for the school?*

*To what extent does the governing board delegate implementation of these policies to the professional staff?*

*To what extent does the governing board monitor regularly results and approve the single schoolwide action plan and its relationship to the Local Educational Agency (LEA) plan?*

Riverside Poly High School belongs to the Riverside Unified School District (RUSD). RUSD has policies and standards in place to support schools and their work towards student achievement. Policies have been established through the collaboration of all district shareholder groups and consistently reviewed by district and school site personnel. All changes are reviewed by stakeholders and school site groups before implementation. District Board of Education and district administration reviews test data and criteria to monitor student progress and data is delivered to site administrators who pass it on to department chairs.

Currently, there is a concerted effort between Principal Dr. Roe, Poly PTSA, Riverside Council PTA and Riverside County Office of Education to focus on student achievement through the involvement of parents and families. Parents were trained in the Parent engagement Leadership Initiative (PELI) training program in a trainer of trainers process. The PELI program focuses on nine different topics that brought the team closer together and able to create an action plan that could be brought back to Poly High School. Parent leaders can now play a more integral part in the Single Plan for Student Achievement as well. To focus on student achievement, RUSD and Poly are working collaboratively to provide Data Team professional development for the teachers.

### **A3. Leadership and Staff Criterion**

To what extent based on student achievement data, does the school leadership and staff make decisions and initiate activities that focus on all students achieving the schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards?

To what extent does the school leadership and staff annually monitor and refine the single schoolwide action plan based on analysis of data to ensure alignment with student needs?

Many changes have taken place at Poly High School since the last WASC Self-Study, especially in the past year. In May of 2013, the principal at the time left Poly and began an administrative shift leading to the placement of a new principal, Dr. Roe, and three of the four assistant principals being new. Currently there is an interim Superintendent while a search for a permanent superintendent is taking place.

During Dr. Roe's first 90 days as principal, many conversations took place amongst stakeholders around three questions:

- 1) What would you like to see preserved at Poly?
- 2) What would you like to see changed?
- 3) If you were the new principal, what would be your three biggest priorities?

A social media blitz took place focusing on these three questions, and the results of the survey along with targeted conversations with community members, alumni, parents, students, and teachers led to dramatic changes that shifted the strategic goals of PHS.

Students have been a focus to getting to be more involved in decision-making at PHS. Prior to the shift in principals, students' voices were primarily represented by the ASB. Dr. Roe and the

administration focused on having more student representation across the population, including a Principal's Cabinet and a Student Advisory Council. These two entities along with Link Crew, Renaissance, and the Associated Student Body is leading the change on campus representing a variety of student voices and building more leadership capacity amongst the student body.

#### **A4. Leadership and Staff Criterion**

To what extent does a qualified staff facilitates achievement of the academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes through a system of preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development?

A variety of professional development opportunities are provided through the district and on the Poly campus. Since RUSD is a Program Improvement District, which meant that all math and ELA teachers were required to attend 40 hours of professional development, with an optional 80 hours of follow up which included a stipend if finished in its entirety. RUSD hiring policies ensure that teachers are appropriately placed within the district. PHS has staff that is highly qualified as well as afforded opportunities for professional development.

In moving forward, PHS is progressing from a top-down leadership model to one that focuses on an inside-out model (shared leadership). With the new administration, the approach is to "go slow to go fast." This commitment has helped get the staff on board to move forward in the transition to the Common Core and Data Teams on which current trainings are based. Due to the shifts that promote shared leadership, Poly and RUSD has the capacity to monitor and implement the plan for student achievement.

#### **A5. Leadership and Staff Criterion**

To what extent are leadership and staff involved in ongoing research or data-based correlated professional development that focuses on identified student learning needs?

In 2013-14, PHS began a comprehensive professional development plan that involved staff in Common Core, Data teams, and Rigorous Curriculum Design that will continue into the 2014-2015 school year. In all of the shifts to the Common Core, significant time will be needed for teachers to train and collaborate on lesson design and implementation.

#### **A6. Resources Criterion**

*To what extent are the human, material, physical, and financial resources sufficient and utilized effectively and appropriately in accordance with the legal intent of the program(s) to support students in accomplishing the academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes?*

Resources allocated to PHS are limited. Currently, PHS receives limited categorical funding through Economical Impact Aid (EIA) funds. RUSD is supportive in helping PHS to support programs that offer students additional programs to meet the needs of students. Funding is overseen by administration and the School Site Council. Administration oversees the monitoring of spending through categorical funding, as well as budget and expenditures resulting in correct use of funds. PHS, SSC, and ASB follow the school's process for recording spending and expenditures. PHS has had some site improvements, including a new aquatics facility, painting of buildings, and a new stadium.

The district is currently working with the school on ensuring that the needs are met for the school and students for the implementation of the Smarter Balanced Assessments. The focus is that all students will have access to devices in order to complete the online components. Existing challenges include permanent computer labs and a possible solution may be rolling classroom labs. Future technology purchases need to be devices that support the SBAC assessments, as well as support student learning and engagement.

The district is working with all stakeholders and schools to prioritize needs based on the new Local Control Funding Formula and LCAP to meet learner need, Common Core standards and ensure school wide learner outcomes are supported.

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

#### **Areas of strength for Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources (if any):**

- District administration supports and works closely with the Poly administration supporting professional development, establishing a clear vision and purpose, and supporting future infrastructure improvements.
- PHS has shifted to a shared leadership model, which includes all stakeholders
- PHS and RUSD have planned and shared the vision of implementation for the transition to the Common Core, SBAC Assessments and Data Teams.
- The structured plan for transition to Common Core is in place for the 2014-15 school year.
- Internal ESLRS have demonstrated a clear support for the student voice at Poly High School.

#### **Key issues for Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources (if any):**

- Implement a technology plan to support and enhance student learning through active classroom engagement.
- Revisit the external ESLRs (Student Learning Outcomes) and make them quantifiable (What does it look like in each class?)
- Monitor the professional development plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation.

#### **Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:**

- E-document describing the plan transition to Common Core
- Meeting with staff and district personnel

## **CATEGORY B. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: CURRICULUM**

### **B1. Curriculum Criterion**

*To what extent do all students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes?*

*To what extent through standards-based learning (what is taught and how it is taught), are the schoolwide learner outcomes accomplished?*

Rigorous, relevant, and viable curriculum:

Most Poly teachers follow an instructional program that is aligned to the California State Standards. There are a few pockets of teachers that are collaborating with one another with common lessons, and common assessments. Years ago, teachers created district level pacing guides were developed and followed, however with the transition to Common Core Standards these pacing guides are being abandoned to varying degrees. Poly High School currently does not have a school-wide rigorous, relevant, and viable curriculum for all core subjects. It was apparent that the AP and Honors programs have a rigorous curriculum however this does not extend to many no-honors level classes. Through observation and conversations with students it was obvious that the curriculum was not challenging or engaging school-wide. The curriculum reported relied heavily on packet work or worksheets.

Common Core Transition:

Poly teachers are currently being sent to training in Rigorous Curriculum Design to learn more about the transition to Common Core State standards. Some teachers feel that it is best to take it slow and ease into the transition (versus others who have “jumped in” and have had to re-do work); teachers hope to dig deep in to the standards and make the transition correctly the first time. Some teachers are using this “in-between” year to experiment with common core type lessons.

PLC Structures:

At this time, some teachers have been trained in *Data Teams*. With more training, these teachers will become the trainers for the remainder of the Poly teachers, in hopes that all teachers will be trained in *Data Teams* within the next couple of years.

### **B2. Curriculum Criterion**

*To what extent do all students have equal access to the school's entire program and assistance with a personal learning plan to prepare them for the pursuit of their academic, personal, and school-to-career goals?*

At Poly High School, there is an effort to provide equal access to all opportunities offered. Poly has eliminated any “gate keeping”, and is promoting the idea that all students should attempt at least one Honors level or AP course. The school is attempting to create a college and career culture. Students are encouraged to think about possible careers and universities. When students need support and fall within an identified sub group, they are given a personal learning plan. The goal is to increase the personal plans to support more students. Poly High School also uses AVID and Puente to encourage students and offer more support.

**B3. Curriculum Criterion**

To what extent are students able to meet all the requirements of graduation upon completion of the high school program?

Poly provides a plethora of opportunities of students to meet and exceed graduation requirements. According to the school WASC eDocument’s chapter “Student Tracking” Poly High School effectively intervenes and supports students through a myriad of pathways to ensure all students are meeting high school graduating requirements.

**CATEGORY B: STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: CURRICULUM**

**Areas of strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: Curriculum (if any):**

- Wide variety of course offerings
- Special programs such as AVID, Puente, and CTE courses
- PSAT is well promoted and encouraged
- Positive campus culture is translating into future opportunities for curriculum growth
- In some departments teachers are working together collaboratively.

**Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Curriculum (if any):**

- Formalize PLC/Data Teams structure and develop school wide teacher participation
- Develop structured student academic interventions and supports within the school day
- Increase rigor and relevance across all courses
- Create a specific plan for Common Core Transition.
- Increase teacher use of technology in the classrooms as a tool for instruction.
- Increase access to AVID, Puente, Honors, and AP programs

**Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:**

- Master Schedule
- AVID and Puente curriculum
- Test scores
- Classroom observation

## **CATEGORY C. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: INSTRUCTION**

### **C1. Instruction Criterion**

*To what extent are all students are involved in challenging learning experiences to achieve the academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes?*

Poly High School's lesson design is guided by the California State Content Standards and is beginning to integrate the Common Core State Standards. Rigorous Curriculum Design is being used as the model for the development of future lessons. Academic textbooks are used for core content comprehension as well as supplemental support as aligned to the State Standards. Academic lessons, programs and student-based activities are planned to challenge PHS students and meet the State Standards. The Honors and Advanced Placement programs offers rigorous learning environments for Poly students; however this level of rigor does not seem to be consistent across all courses and classrooms. Computer-based technology, such as Haiku, is used by teachers to enhance student engagement and promote asynchronous learning between the classroom and home. Online instruction opportunities are available through a partnership with Riverside Virtual School for acceleration.

The English department posts Essential Questions daily in their classrooms. Learning objectives are posted in other classrooms to help guide instruction, but this practice is not schoolwide. It is stated that results from the student survey reveal that 85% of the students understand the expectations of the academic content standards in California and the expectation of the individual academic performance.

There is some evidence that differentiated instruction takes place within Poly classrooms. However, through both the student survey and conversations with students, it was stated that they wished to have additional structured time for tutoring. Outside of the classroom, the guidance department provides PHS students with additional information regarding expectations and performance in regards to graduation requirements, careers, and college and technical school admissions.

However, instructional practices vary across the curriculum. Through student reports and classroom observations, it is apparent that the level of challenge and engagement varies from class to class. In classes such as AP and Honors courses, Performing Arts, Video Production, and Culinary Arts students report they feel challenged and engaged. Through observations and student conversations there is evidence that in some areas such as the Drawing and Painting, and Ceramic courses do not provide them opportunities to grow or challenge themselves.

## **C2. Instruction Criterion**

*To what extent do all teachers use a variety of strategies and resources, including technology and experiences beyond the textbook and the classroom that actively engage students, emphasize higher order thinking skills, and help them succeed at high levels?*

All curricular areas are being transitioned from the current California State Standards to the Common Core State Standards by, receiving introductory training. In addition, a small portion of the staff has received preliminary training in the “Data Teams” concept to enhance instructional/learning analysis. Current textbooks and supplemental materials are currently being reviewed and researched in regards to alignment with the Common Core. All PHS teachers use Aeries, as well as other online platforms, such as Haiku, to create online instruction.

All teachers are provided with the opportunity to participate in department PLCs. It is evident that some PLCs function more effectively than others on campus. PLCs have to submit agendas and minutes to the administration. This also serves as a way to communicate discussed topics with members of the PLC who are unable to attend the meetings. PLCs function independently and do not have a systematic structure in place.

The report noted that the school uses "high-yield" instructional strategies; however through both discussions with the staff and classroom walk-throughs, research-based strategies were not readily identifiable. Some teachers take the opportunity to integrate technology into their instruction and to assess students' progress. Teachers use Haiku, the internet, Smart Boards, and teacher websites/blogs within their instruction. According to the teacher survey regarding instruction, 98% of respondents state that they deliver effective instructional curriculum, but 66% of respondents said they have the necessary resources, yet 79% stated they use technology to achieve instructional/school-wide goals. There is a stated need that half of the teachers say that further technology training would impact classroom instruction in a positive way.

The teacher survey also noted that classroom disruptions impact instruction and learning. Based on classroom walk-throughs and teacher discussions, it is evident that the most common classroom disruption was the recreational use of cell phones and other technological devices by students.

Due to the location and history of Poly High School, many opportunities exist within the Poly community for students to take advantage of real-world experiences. Opportunities are plentiful through classes, co-curricular activities, and within the community surrounding Poly High School.

### **CATEGORY C: STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: INSTRUCTION**

#### **Areas of strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: Instruction (if any):**

- Advanced Placement, Honors, AVID, and Puente programs provide a rigorous academic environment for Poly students.
- Technology is in place and available for all teachers.
- District support for instruction and Common Core implementation are in place.
- The future use of Rigorous Curriculum Design for the planning of instructional practices.



**Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Instruction (if any):**

- Focus professional development on specific instructional strategies that centers on all students.
- Expand the use research-based instructional strategies in all classrooms to increase student engagement.
- Provide training for staff related to use of technology and its integration into the classroom to enhance student learning and promote student engagement.
- Design a systematic PLC structure in all departments and course alike groups that is driven by student data, collaboration, and instructional strategies to improve student learning and strengthen lesson design.
- Develop a schoolwide plan and policy for technology use within classrooms that meets the district's "Bring Your Own Device" commitment without taking away from instructional time.
- Develop an effective intervention plan to support struggling students

**Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:**

- Classroom observations
- Student group discussions
- Focus group discussions
- Implementation of technology in the classrooms

## **CATEGORY D. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **D1. Assessment and Accountability Criterion**

*To what extent does the school use a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, analyze, and report student performance data to the school staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders of the school community?*

The school staff uses a process assessment to collect, disaggregate, analyze, and report student performance data to all stakeholders. The teachers at Poly use a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate student learning. This includes objective and subjective assessments, oral presentations, rubrics and labs. By utilizing Aeries and Haiku, teachers are able to provide timely information, data, and reports to students and parents. Similarly, the bilingual community liaison and teachers reach out to parents by sending progress reports home, writing emails, and making phone calls home to keep parents informed about students' grades. Data Director and OARS are used to disaggregate data.

Data Teams are being developed. Currently these teams include the Principal and eight faculty members. Training has been provided to each of these teachers who will then train other teachers in their department. The staff is moving slowly through this implementation and plan to apply most of the Data Team strategies in the fall of 2014. This training should build a school wide capacity to have teachers teach and re-teach information while still relevant in the classroom.

Student performance is communicated to the school community online, through the press, and through notices sent home. Most parents report that there is responsive communication directly with the school staff if they have a question about their child's performance. The only complaint about availability of information was that some teachers do not update their online grades and assignments often enough.

### **D2. Assessment and Accountability Criterion**

*To what extent do teachers employ a variety of strategies to evaluate student learning?*

*To what extent do students and teachers use assessment results to enhance the educational progress of every student?*

The school regularly examines standards-based curriculum embedded in their assessments in the core subject areas; some teachers use that information to modify the teaching/learning process.

Effective curriculum-embedded assessments are incorporated in all curricular areas. Assessments are created based on California State Standards. Teachers have stated that there is a need to create more common formative assessments in timely and relevant manner. Moving forward, the Data Teams will allow teachers to create the skills based assessments; this will assist in Poly's transition to Common Core.

Assessment data is used to create intervention support classes during the school-day based on CST and CAHSEE scores. When talking to students and teachers it is evident that there is a need for after school academic tutoring.

**D3. Assessment and Accountability Criterion**

*To what extent does the school, with the support of the district and community, have an assessment and monitoring system to determine student progress toward achievement of the academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes?*

Assessment results are a part of the decision-making process at both the site and district level. Most teachers are trained to use Aeries, Haiku, and Dashboard. Similarly, Academic English Learner parents and low income parents have been trained in the use of Aeries and Haiku. Most progress is monitored through Aeries, to which all students and parents have access. Teachers can also monitor how students are doing in other classes. Through Haiku, parents and students can also view assignments, resources, articles, student blogs, vocabulary, discussion forums, links to videos, and text resources.

**D4. Assessment and Accountability Criterion**

*To what extent does the assessment of student achievement in relation to the academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes drive the school's program, its regular evaluation and improvement, and the allocation and usage of resources?*

Professional development opportunities are somewhat tied to assessment and their results. In response to college readiness indicators from both ACT and EAP tests, increased sections in Expository Reading and Writing and Intermediate Algebra have been added to the master schedule. Puente, AVID, and Link Crew were enhanced/added to the school to support student proficiency and the development of college and career readiness.

Poly's focus on Data Teams illustrates the importance of creating a school-wide system that will support all learners and drive academic programs.

**CATEGORY D: STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

**Areas of strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability (if any):**

- Communication with students on academic progress is consistent
- Plethora of student data and outcomes
- Most of the staff have received the implementation of Data Teams well. There is a strong acceptance by staff to move forward with the program.
- The use of Aeries, Haiku and other technology to inform, drive, and support instruction

**Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability (if any):**

- Lack of process by which teachers can create timely, meaningful data to inform instruction and intervention.
- A need for timely interventions for struggling students.

- There is a need for the use of pre-assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments.

**Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:**

- Teacher created common assessments in math and biology
- Published test scores in local papers
- Reports sent home to parents.
- Focus Group meetings
- Formal and informal discussions

## **CATEGORY E. SCHOOL CULTURE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH**

### **E1. School Culture and Student Support Criterion**

To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to encourage parental and community involvement, especially with the teaching/learning process?

Riverside Poly High school is the oldest school within the District. This allows for a strong base of community involvement. Examples of community involvement include partnering with local businesses that support many of their curricular and co-curricular clubs on campus. Each year during Homecoming, a large parade is held in the community and ends with large community and school carnival. Science Olympiad and the Robotics team partner with Southern California Edison, Cal State University, San Bernardino, and UC Riverside. The Mock Trial team receives coaching from local attorneys. Guest speakers from the local colleges will attend and support various clubs and organizations.

There are many opportunities for students to be involved on the campus. This includes clubs, academic teams, athletic teams, performing arts groups, and journalism. Poly hosted the Super Bowl for Kids. This is a program that unites various organizations on the campus to work with more than 200 severely handicap students districtwide. Student recognition is important to Poly High School. They have recognized students by giving every student a birthday card, rewarding CAHSEE scores with Club 380, and Link Crew identifying a freshman of the week. A new tradition is to post the photos of the highest academic achieving seniors on the wall in the main office and leave them there until the next school year. These students are honored at a luncheon hosted for them and their parents by the administration.

The school uses a variety of methods to disseminate information about events, programs, and student progress. These include school and district websites, the Bear Broadcast Network, and the use of Social Media. In an effort to encourage more contact with the school and the community, information is sent to parents in English and Spanish. Also, the school has employed a full-time bilingual community liaison. Poly has recently started a Parent Involvement Education program. Also, Poly's Administration and PTSA partnered together to offer the Parent Engagement Leadership Institute (PELI). This is a district program to train parent leaders how to create effective channels of communication.

### **E2. School Culture and Student Support Criterion**

To what extent is the school a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning?

To what extent is the culture of the school characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement?

Poly High School describes their school as incredibly safe. Gates have been added to the front of the school as this helps enforce their "closed campus" policy. There is a requirement that all visitors report and sign-in upon entering the front office. According to the student panel, they didn't express

any major concerns over their safety. In the case of bullying, students stated that they could go to an adult to report it.

In the Focus Group meeting, the members indicated that there is a need for a comprehensive discipline policy which will include communication, consistency, and boundaries. The members also indicated a discipline committee doesn't exist on campus. Finally, it was reported that there is frustration when a discipline referral is submitted by a teacher due to lack of follow-up communication.

The main disciplinary concerns from staff were tardiness, student dress code, and electronic devices. Teachers are encouraged to call parents to communicate their students' behaviors. In an effort to eliminate distractions and promote the use of electronic devices for instructional purposes, staff members need to develop an acceptable use policy to be implemented in the classrooms. It would greatly benefit the staff and students at Poly to address the discipline and attendance issues in order to focus on instructional practices.

Poly High School has recently gone through a major change in school administration. The new administration is working to keep the school safe and orderly. The school and the district work in cooperation with the Riverside Police Department to provide a School Resource Officer (SRO). A major point of emphasis has been placed on the PRIDE program to instill a sense of school spirit and enthusiasm. The result of these efforts has been a renewed sense of trust and professionalism between the staff and the administration.

### **E3. School Culture and Student Support Criterion**

To what extent do all students receive appropriate support along with an individualized learning plan to help ensure academic success?

Many teachers at Poly offer tutoring for students before and after school as well as during the students' lunch time. According to the students, they would like to see a more structured tutoring program before or after school. Other programs to support students are AVID, Puente, Hospitality, Students for Success, Honors, and Advanced Placement. However, it was stated that a department such as math needs a more systematic and school wide structured program to support all students.

The Poly counseling department consists of five counselors. The student load for each counselor averages over 550 students per counselor. A four-year plan is created by all students with the support of their counselor. AVID students meet with their coordinator twice a year to review and modify their plans. Hospitality students meet with their teachers and parent once a year to review their four year plan.

Poly High School addressed the needs of struggling math students by adding math support classes. The Board of Education has approved an integrated math sequence beginning with Integrated I. The site is also discussing the need to provide "in house" credit recovery.

**E4. School Culture and Student Support Criterion**

To what extent do students have access to a system of personal support services, activities, and opportunities at the school and within the community?

Poly High School provides many opportunities for students to participate. These activities include but are not limited to athletics, performing arts, and clubs. Poly places significant value on curricular/co-curricular activities participation. They offer two periods of ASB student leadership classes with an additional period offered to help Link Crew Leaders support freshmen activities. These two programs are supported by a full-time Activities Director. Starting in the 2013-2014 school year, the Green Machine was established to increase attendance and provide support to Poly athletic events. The establishment of the Principal's Cabinet has been an avenue to allow for students to collaborate regarding school wide concerns. As discussed above students have a variety of opportunities to serve the community and participate in community activities.

**CATEGORY E: SCHOOL CULTURE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH****Areas of strength for School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth (if any):**

- The Poly PRIDE program has created a strong sense of community
- Poly High is offering multiple ways to involve parents, such as the PELI program as well as the school's PTSA.
- Academic Programs such as Puente Program, AVID, Honors, and Advanced Placement courses are available to students.
- The Principal's Cabinet – an opportunity to receive student input.
- Strong Community support for a wide variety of school programs

**Key issues for School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth (if any):**

- Create a clear and concise discipline and attendance policy that is clearly communicated to students, staff, and parents.
- Create a systematic school-wide intervention program within the school day.

**Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:**

- Parent meetings
- Student meetings
- Focus group

## Part B: Schoolwide Strength and Critical Areas for Follow-up

### General Comments:

Poly High School has undergone a major change in administration in the past year which has resulted in a positive change in school climate and culture. This has led to a more optimistic attitude for both staff, students, and the larger school community. The school has developed an ambitious staff development plan that supports the transformation of the school. One major goal of this plan is to develop shared leadership. Additionally the school is beginning to implement the Data Team concept to support their PLC development. In addition Poly is working hard toward the transition to Common Core Standards based curriculum

The school has identified that while many teachers are working toward the full implementation of PLCs there are as many that are resistant to the change in the structure of the school. There is a need to increase student engagement and the rigor of the work in non-honors level courses.

### Schoolwide Areas of Strength:

1. The committed and professional Poly Staff
2. Positive School Culture
3. Effective Communication System
4. Strong District and Community support for the school program
4. Strong AP and Honors program

Poly High School identified the following as critical areas of need transition to Common Core, development of pathways for college and career readiness and continuation of Poly PRIDE. However, there are needs for specific goals focusing on areas of instruction strategies and rigor across the curriculum.

### Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-Up:

The Visiting Committee concurs with the school's identified areas that are outlined in the schoolwide action plan. These are summarized below:

1. Planning for the transition to the Common Core
2. The development of pathways for college and career readiness
3. The continuation of the Poly PRIDE program.

The three areas identified by the school address the needs noted in the self-study and confirmed in our visit. They are however in need of clarification and a more direct focus on the how they will improve student learning.



In addition, the Visiting Committee has identified areas within the current action plan that need to be strengthened. These additional areas reflect the need of the school to include detailed steps into the broader areas of need identified above and in their report. The school has plans that address the areas above but the details of their implementation need to be clearly expressed.

1. Implement a systematic PLC structure with specific goals and strategies to use Data Teams
2. Implement Poly's professional development plan with a focus on specific instructional strategies that promote engagement of all students.
3. Implement Poly's professional development plan to increase the level of rigor in across all courses.

## **Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement**

The current action plan addresses the issues identified by the school but the chart is not clear in its present configuration. Many of the tasks to be completed during implementation of the plan are presented in the supporting narrative accompanying the plan and not specifically detailed in the action plan chart itself. This makes for confusion in determining the specific steps that the school will undertake and the timelines for completion. Although the action plan chart is unclear, the tasks discussed in the narrative address the key issues identified by Poly and lay out a pathway to move the school forward. The actions described in the narrative provide the necessary supports and activities to address the goals. The school's action plan is aligned with RUSD Blueprint for Action and the site Specific Plan.

At the suggestion of the visiting committee, the school is revising its action plan chart into a more user-friendly presentation of the goals and tasks to be addressed over the next few years.

There is a strong level of support for change and moving forward at Poly. RUSD district staff has indicated they strongly support the efforts at the school. The community supports and is very happy with the progress already made at Poly. The students have expressed a very positive attitude and renewed PRIDE in their school. The teaching staff is supportive of the goals discussed in the action plan. There is growing group of teacher leaders and a sense of shared leadership.

### **Potential impediments to the plan are:**

- A significant change in school leadership.
- The resistance of some staff members to the implementation of Data Teams and PLCs.

### **Soundness of the Follow-up Process**

The FOL leadership team will transition to become the leadership of the Common Core Transition Team and the Poly Pride committee. This should allow for a smoother transition in leadership. The goal of nurturing teacher leaders will also improve the support for the proposed programs. All of this provides strong indications that there is the leadership capacity to carry out the action plan.

Monitoring will be provided at both the site and district level by various committees and the School Board. This follow up process should assure that the goals of the plan and the recommendation of the committee are in acted. Although not a formal review the supportive community is committed to school improvement and will require accountability by the school.