

**MID-CYCLE VISIT
VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

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

FOR

CUYAMA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

4500 Highway 166

New Cuyama, CA 93254

Cuyama Joint Unified School District

Original Visit: Nov 2nd to Nov 4th, 2015

Mid-cycle Visit: 04/29/2019

Visiting Committee Members

Brian Jensen, Chairperson
Coordinator, ACS WASC

Consuelo Williams, Director
Ventura County Office of Education

I. Introduction

School Overview

Cuyama Valley High School (CVHS) is part of a small rural community in the Cuyama Valley between Santa Maria and Bakersfield. The school serves a wide geographic region, ranging from small towns, to ranches and farms throughout the valley. The high school has one administrator, one part time counselor, five certificated teachers, one CTE teacher, and one certificated special education teacher contracted from Santa Barbara County, and the Santa Barbara County Education Office provides special education services. Special Education staff includes a resource teacher, school psychologist, speech therapist, school nurse, and one instructional assistant. All special education students are included into core content and elective classes when appropriate. The high school is on a traditional six period schedule that offers a variety of classes from core curriculum, online college courses and vocational education and credit recovery.

Mission Statement

The faculty, staff, administrators and students of Cuyama Valley High School and Sierra Madre C.H.S. are committed to creating a learning environment that encourages all residents of Cuyama Valley to expand their intellectual, creative, and social horizons. We challenge and support one another to realize our potential, to appreciate and contribute to the enrichment of our diverse community, as well as to develop a passion for life-long learning.

Vision Statement

Every student who graduates from Cuyama Valley High School or Sierra Madre C.H.S. will have the skills necessary to achieve their academic or occupational goals.

Student Achievement

Currently, the school is serving 48 students with 92% reporting ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino and 8% as Caucasian. CAASPP data reveals that during the 2018 academic year, 20% of students met ELA standards and 80% nearly met, which is a decrease from the previous year. Additionally, in 2018, 40% of students nearly met Math standards and 60% did not meet.

CAASPP Data

ELA

Year	Exceeded	Met	Nearly Met	Not Met
2018	0%	20%	80%	0%
2017	5.88%	29.41%	29.41%	35.29%
2016	7%	21%	50%	21%
2015	12%	42%	35%	12%

Math

Year	Exceeded	Met	Nearly Met	Not Met
2018	0%	0%	40%	60%
2017	0%	5.88%	17.65%	76.47%
2016	0%	14%	7%	79%
2015	0%	8%	38%	54%

A-G Completion Rates

One of the school's areas of strength is the growth in students who are becoming A-G eligible.

A-G completion rates

Year	Number of Graduates	Number A-G eligible	Percentage
2015-2016	23	1	4%
2016-2017	14	2	14%
2017-2018	12	5	42%
Projected 2018-2019	7	5	71%

The increase in “a-g” eligible students is attributable to several factors including an increase in the number of “a-g” approved courses that are offered to students. Currently, all courses except PE and Agriculture Mechanics are approved. Additionally, there has been a concerted effort to educate staff and students about the importance of “a-g” eligibility, and students are provided guidance on “a-g” pathways in small groups and one-to-one counseling sessions. The counselor also monitors “a-g” scheduling for students each quarter to ensure they are enrolled in the correct courses.

Significant Developments

Student enrollment at the school has been declining for the past three years. In 2015-16 there were 70 students at the school, which has decreased to 48 for the current 2018-19 academic year. Additionally, school staffing has also undergone significant change since the previous visit. For the 2018-2019 school year, only two teachers returned for the year. The rest of the instructional staff this year at the school is new to the school as well as a new superintendent/principal. Administration notes that this has changed the cycle of continuous review and of regularly updating of the schoolwide action plan. According to administration, this change in staff necessitated a re-boot to ensure current staff was updated on the status of the school's WASC process and areas for follow up and the associated action plan. There has been a positive result from the staff turnover. Administration notes that this is in the areas of rigor and effective instructional strategies. Common Core State Standards have been embraced, along with the

creation of a Response to Intervention (RTI) program in the area of ELA. The new staff members have been essential in creating a college/career focused school culture.

The school is making a concerted effort to offer challenging and stimulating electives to all students. With the awarding of the Career Technical Education Grant and the Agriculture Incentive Grant, the entire program was overhauled. The funding has contributed to securing one FTE teacher, one part time CTE teacher, and counseling services. Significant equipment purchases have also been made to support the CTE program including a truck, tractor, plant growth chamber, greenhouse, fodder machine and shed, laptops, and a Vernier data system. The Future Farmers of America (FFA) program has been expanded, with a greater number of students participating in competitions and attending conferences. With the exception of Agriculture Mechanics, all agriculture courses have A-G approval.

This year, a CTE teacher was certified and is teaching Agriculture Animal Science. In 2019, new curriculum was purchased and future plans include building on the existing relationship with Allan Hancock College to offer dual enrollment courses and offering an agriculture foods program. There is one period of online learning is scheduled to meet the various needs of students for credit recovery, as well as advanced coursework.

In the spring of 2018, after two years of planning and construction, an internet tower became operational on campus, greatly enhancing the school's internet capabilities. As a result, teachers have been able to incorporate more technology. All classrooms are now equipped with smart TVs.

PSAT continues to be offered for free every fall to Juniors. This school year the SAT has been offered on campus for the first time ever. All seniors participated in the test this fall, with another date scheduled for April 9, 2019. The grant covers the cost, ensuring access and equity for all.

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

Administration and staff have made progress on the critical areas for follow-up that were left by the last Visiting Committee. At the last visit, the Visiting Committee left the school 18 individual critical areas for follow-up. In order for the school to manage addressing these 18 areas in an efficient and manageable process, the school consolidated the 18 critical areas left into four overarching goals with associated strategies. Discussion with administration and review of the five areas for growth confirm they are inclusive of and have appropriately consolidated the 18 areas to ensure they were addressed.

Goal 1: Increase Academic Performance in English Language Arts.

Addressing this goal has been a primary focus of the current English teacher but has not been limited to the English Department. Administration has provided additional professional development to address this area has provided support in the form of training from the publisher, and one on one coaching. A new teacher was hired for the 2018-2019 school year to provide more rigor, bringing in more diverse teaching strategies, and emphasizing writing. An RTI teacher was brought on board this school year to provide support in all areas of ELA but with a focus on reading. They have provided Tier 2 and 3 supports through pull-out and push-in in the English and Science classes. Teachers across the disciplines have been focusing particularly on

citing evidence in writing. This year the school began MTSS for the entire school district. Folded into that initiative was training for all teachers in Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

Goal 2: Increase Academic Performance in Mathematics

One of the top priorities in meeting this goal has been the retention of a qualified Mathematics teacher. For the past three years, the teacher has received support through one on one coaching, training in assessments, and networking with other Math high school teachers in Santa Barbara and Kern counties. The Math and Science teacher have collaborated on cross-curricular projects throughout the current school year.

Goal 3: Increase the number of English Learners attaining fluency and gaining access to all

To help address this area, administration and staff reviewed a number of data metrics including examining at the reasons behind the number of Long Term English Learners (LTEs), the process for reclassifying English Learners, fidelity of ELD instruction, and access to classes in the master schedule. More training has been conducted on the ELD framework, along with strategies to use in classes. English Learners became adept at knowing “a-g” requirements. With conscious scheduling more current and former ELs are attaining a-g eligible status.

Goal 4: Increase school connectedness through increased student and parental involvement.

Parental communication has improved through the use of social media and the Swift Reach automated notification system. Administration has held conferences with the parents of struggling students. The freshman class advisor held a Freshman Parent Night to acquaint families with high school procedures, a-g requirements, and becoming a class volunteer. In partnering with the Cuyama Valley Resource Center, the school has also started a volunteer program to especially engage Hispanic parents. The school is also regularly hosting guest speakers at the school, and providing opportunities for college trips and other field trips.

III. Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

The school has begun to make progress toward the recommendations left by the last Visiting Committee. There has been some impact and challenges on the school due mainly to significant staff turnover during the last year, administration and staff have been successful in laying the framework to continue to address the areas. Discussion with staff, students, administration, the Visiting Committee confirms their commitment to continue focusing on the areas identified, and acknowledges that progress has been made, although there is still work to do, which administration is aware of and has placed mechanisms in place to continue to make progress.

As the school continues to institutionalize and monitor these strategies, it is evident that the school will continue to make progress, enculturate a culture of continuous improvement, and expand resources to support schoolwide priorities. Staff, students, and administration are committed to the school’s Mission and purpose and are committed to student learning and providing students who would otherwise not succeed in traditional settings, an effective, individualized learning experience.

Recommendations

The Visiting Committee concurs with the recommendations left from the last Visiting Committee and has no further recommendations at this time. Rather the Visiting Committee asks that the school continue to focus efforts at making continued progress toward the critical areas as consolidated into the those four schoolwide growth priorities left at the last visit.