

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

INITIAL VISIT
VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT —
CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

This form is to be used in conjunction with the *ACS WASC Initial Visit Procedures Manual for California Public Schools* and is to be used for all California Public and California Charter Schools. Note: Criterion A6 pertains only to California Charter Schools.

Part I

Name of School: Marin's Community School

School Address: 1111 Las Gallinas Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94903

Grades Reviewed: 7-12

Enrollment: 58

School Type(s): Alternative

Comprehensive, Community Day School, Alternative Education/Continuation, Independent Study, Charter School, Home Study, Online Distance Learning, etc. (if more than one school type, list approximate percentages)

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Date of Visit: April 4, 2019

Introduction

Marin's Community School (MCS) is one of the four alternative education programs operated by Marin County Office of Education. MCS was founded in 1980 and serves some of the most marginalized students in Marin County in grades 7-12 who need a smaller, more personalized environment to learning. Many of the students have experienced severe trauma, have poor attendance, are credit deficient and/or have behavioral challenges. Referrals are made to the school from local districts through the Student Attendance Review Boards (SARB), expulsions and Marin County Juvenile Probation. MCS operates in tandem with Phoenix Academy Charter School, which provides an opportunity for students to opt-in to the MCS program or remain at school passed their contract with local districts.

Marin's Community School is located on the Marin County Office of Education campus in the residential community of Terra Linda in San Rafael, California. The school moved several times since 1980 before being housed in a new facility that was built five years ago.

The school serves students throughout Marin County. The county population is 261,000. While the demographics in Marin County are predominantly white (80%), 93% of the students are students of color and 72% are socioeconomically disadvantaged, reflecting inequities that are prevalent throughout Marin County. There is also a large immigrant population in the area.

Over the last four years, the enrollment at MCS has fluctuated between 43 and 70 students. Enrollment by ethnicity has been mainly Hispanic/Latino over the last four years. Currently the school serves 64% male students and 36% female students. Fifty seven percent of the students are English Learners and 72% are socioeconomically disadvantaged. Students in special education make up 14% of the enrollment with 3% foster/homeless.

MCS has recently joined the National Student Clearinghouse to retrieve data on the school's graduates since the tracking of students is difficult and has historically never been done.

In March 2017, MCS began a redesign process to revise their mission and vision. They plan to grow and attract a more heterogeneous population over time so that they can directly address racial inequities and improve academic outcomes for students. Now in their second year of the redesign the staff is continuing to align policies, procedures, curriculum, talent and resources.

Marin County Office of Education has recently received a waiver from the State of California to combine their four alternative programs into our Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). The data included in the WASC report is a combination of data from all four schools.

Category A: Organization

A1. Vision and Purpose Criterion: The school has a clearly stated vision and mission (purpose) based on its student needs, current educational research, the district Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), and the belief that all students can achieve at high academic levels. Supported by the governing board and the district LCAP, the school's purpose is defined further by schoolwide learner outcomes and the academic standards.

Selected statements from the school application:

Mission: To empower each other to follow our passions and lead purposeful lives.

Vision: We will prepare ALL students with the knowledge, skills and habits needed for success in college, career and life. By deeply engaging each student through personalized learning experiences, our students will master rigorous academic content and develop skills for the modern workplace. Our students will become conscientious global citizens as they solve real world problems and strengthen their connections to other people and the environment. Through our collaborative, supportive and inclusive environment, our diverse students will develop their social and emotional skills and find individual pathways to achieve their goals.

Schoolwide Learner Outcomes:

- 1. All students are prepared for success in college and career upon graduation.*
- 2. Academics: Students will master content knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in the modern economy.*
- 3. Mindsets, Essential Skills and Habits: In addition to academic mastery, all students will develop essential social and emotional skills...*
- 4. Personal Goals: All students will identify a postsecondary path to lead a healthy and purposeful life that allows them to follow their passions and become financially independent.*

Visiting Committee comments:

The school has a clearly stated mission, vision and Schoolwide Learner Outcomes (SLOs) that were collaboratively developed by stakeholders and communicated extensively to the members of the school community. The mission, vision and SLOs are included on the school's website and handbook, are a part of the admissions process, are addressed at every

parent meeting and inform the strategic plan.

There is consistency between the school vision, mission and SLOs, the students learning needs, the school program and ongoing school improvement process. These statements were developed and aligned with student and school community needs. They come out of the school's improvement process, routinely reflecting the school's strengths and areas for growth to continually improve.

The school uses the Design Thinking Process to tackle big problems such as refining the master schedule and developing the culture. At least three times each year the school stakeholders review the vision, mission and schoolwide learner outcomes. The school's leadership places a high value on the innovation process and regularly communicate that everything has an expiration date.

A2. Governance Criterion: The governing board (a) has policies and bylaws that are aligned with the school's purpose and support the achievement of the schoolwide learner outcomes and academic, college, and career standards based on data-driven instructional decisions for the school; (b) delegates implementation of these policies to the professional staff; and (c) monitors results regularly and approves the single schoolwide action plan and its relationship to the LCAP.

Selected statements from the school application:

The board's duties include:

- 1. Delegate the authority to execute established policies to the County Superintendent and determine how adequately the policies were implemented.*
- 2. Determine the scope of work that the County Office of Education conducts including the number of types of special school to operate.*
- 3. Approve the courses of study and curriculum for County Office of Education departments and programs.*
- 4. Approve offers of employment.*
- 5. Adopt an annual budget.*
- 6. Secure sites for special school buildings and approve building plans.*
- 7. Approve, as required by law, contracts entered into by the County Superintendent.*
- 8. Act on all matters as required by law.*

Visiting Committee comments

As county-operated alternative school, the school is governed by County Superintendent Mary Jane Burke and the Marin County Board of Education. The school's vision, mission and schoolwide learner outcomes are aligned to the Board of Education policies and bylaws.

The Board of Education is responsible for governance and the responsibilities listed above, while the Superintendent and her staff are responsible for the implementation of policies and programs. As the school began their redesign process the co-administrators negotiated an MOU with the Superintendent outlining the extent to which school leaders can make key decisions at the school. During the visit with the Assistant Superintendent and Board Member, it is clear that there is on-going communication and alignment of vision between the school leadership and county office.

A3. Leadership: Empowerment and Continuous Planning and Monitoring Criterion: Based on student achievement data, the school leadership, parent/community, and staff make decisions and initiate activities that focus on all students achieving the schoolwide learner outcomes, the academic standards, and the college- and career-readiness standards. The school leadership and staff annually monitor and refine the single schoolwide action plan and make recommendations to modify the LCAP based on analysis of data to ensure alignment with student needs.

Visiting Committee comments:

The processes and procedures for involving staff in shared responsibility, actions and accountability to support student learning is effective. The school leadership involves all stakeholders in the development of the mission and vision as well as the LCAP and Single Plan for Student Achievement. Whenever possible the leadership uses a shared decision-making process in order to gain the greatest amount of support and buy in from the staff.

The school takes measures and has practices in place to create effective structures for internal communication, planning and resolving differences.

The school planning process has ensured that the voices and ideas of parents, students, staff, board and community members have been included. The school works with many community based organizations and business partners to support student learning and to strengthen the school community.

In order to ensure that the analysis of student achievement of the critical learner needs, schoolwide learner outcomes and academic and career readiness standards impact the development, implementation and monitoring of the single plan and the LCAP, the teachers have identified fourteen cognitive skills to teach and assess school wide during the school year. Teachers also use the Cognitive Skills Rubric to guide their assessment and feedback to students. The school uses competency based grading giving students multiple opportunities to become proficient. Powerschool Learning is used as a learning management system. Teachers also integrate social emotional activities into their daily lessons.

A4. Staff: Qualified and Professional Development Criterion: A qualified staff facilitates achievement of the student academic standards and the schoolwide learner outcomes through a system of preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development. There is a systematic approach to continuous improvement through professional development based on student performance data, student needs, and research.

Visiting Committee comments:

Marin's Community School has procedures to ensure that all staff members in all programs are qualified for their responsibilities through employment policies and practices, staff background and training. All information for staff is located on the personnel department's web page. There is a systematic approach to continuous improvement through professional development based on student performance data, student needs and research. The school uses data to gauge the effect of professional development on student achievement: assessment data and grades in Powerschool Learning, observation data from classroom walk throughs, unit and lesson plans, coaching conversations, student-staff-parent surveys, attendance data, Transforming Education surveys, measures for Academic Progress Data. Data needs to be more formalized and presented longitudinally in WASC reporting.

Currently the school has several teachers who do not possess a credential for the subject area that they teach, however, have experience and education to be qualified to teach the subject. The school employs a paraeducator and makes use of several community volunteers. The student teacher ratio is 10.7 students to 1 teacher. There are provisions for small schools relating to teachers teaching out of their credential area.

A5. Resources Criterion: The human, material, physical, and financial resources are sufficient and utilized effectively and appropriately in accordance with the legal intent of the program(s) and LCAP to support students in accomplishing the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes.

Selected statements from the school application:

Our school moved from a participation based system to a competency based system of earning grades and credits, with an emphasis on learning rather than work completion. Percentages are based on 38 students continuously enrolled from Oct. 1, 2017 through march 1, 2018.

74% made progress in English

81.6% made progress in Math

87% made progress in Science

66% made progress in Social Studies

Actual attendance rates were: Q1 = 69% Q2 = 62% Q3 = 59%

Visiting Committee comments:

Throughout the school year, the leadership engages stakeholders in a variety of ways to align financial resources to LCAP goals. The LCAP goals dictate action steps that are aligned fiscally. The leadership and staff along with MCOE staff are actively involved with monitoring and updating goals.

There are school processes in place for making purchases and auditing financials. The facilities were built five years ago and are well maintained and provide a safe environment. The school has 1:1 Chromebooks on campus. The school follows policies and procedures for acquiring and maintaining instructional materials and equipment

NOTE: CRITERION A6 APPLIES TO CHARTER SCHOOLS ONLY.

A6. Resources Criterion [Charter Schools Only]: The governing authority and the school leadership execute responsible resource planning for the future. The school has developed policies, procedures, and internal controls for managing the financial operations that meet state laws, generally accepted practices, and ethical standards. The school is fiscally solvent and uses sound and ethical accounting practices (budgeting/monitoring, internal controls, audits, fiscal health, and reporting).

Visiting Committee comments:

N/A

Category B:
Standards-based Student Learning: Curriculum

B1. Rigorous and Relevant Standards-based Curriculum Criterion: All students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes. Through standards-based learning (what is taught and how it is taught), these are accomplished.

Selected statements from the school application:

Our teachers develop lesson plans each day with learning goals that include content, skill,

and social and emotional goals. Teachers and learning coaches are beginning to use a common language to discuss social emotional skills and are developing common routines and practices to explicitly teach and give feedback to students on their social and emotional development. We have adopted the SCALE Cognitive Skills rubric as the foundation of our curriculum (See SCALE Cognitive Skills). All teachers are explicitly teaching and assessing students' development of cognitive skills through project based units.

While every core lesson includes a standards-based content learning goal, we have more work to do to differentiate content learning goals by grade level. In math, we are beginning to use Khan Academy to support the level of content differentiation that is required to teach grades 7-12 at our small school. Over the next year, we will update our courses of study to reflect our curriculum updates.

Visiting Committee comments:

Marin's Community School is transitioning from an older traditional model for alternative county schools where students earn credits through active participation, work completion and positive attendance. Under newer leadership, the learning model has been redesigned to a competency-based system, with learning and mastering skills and content the priority for earning credit.

As MCS moved from participation-based grading and credit to the competency model, they determined they needed a learning platform to better scaffold and show progress, especially for students with deficiencies in content, skills or credit. MCS tried Summit Learning, however found it wasn't suited to student needs because it lacked cultural relevance for their diverse, high-needs, transient population and didn't have the flexibility in rigor to meet students at their level. Students expressed frustration, and MCS decided to replace Summit with PowerSchool Learning as a new learning management system (LMS) that gives them more flexibility to adapt learning integrating the SCALE skills rubric, Project Based Learning (PBL) and Common Core standards. Teachers are working to design learning progressions aligned with standards and authentic assessments. Rigor will be assessed using 4.0 scales as outlined by Marzano, adapted to align to Common Core content standards and other learning objectives. Teachers collaborate on projects for students using a shared calendar.

The framework for MCS instruction is a culturally relevant pedagogy, which is in alignment with

MCS School Values of Multiculturalism, Achievement and Resilience. MCS strives to develop academic mindsets, uses the Ready for Rigor framework, assigns no homework and embeds trauma-informed strategies.

MCS is supporting college and career readiness for students by forming personalized learning plans and partnering with organizations including College of Marin, the Community Center of Marin, TAY Radio Marin and others to offer students internships, jobs, guest speakers and chances to apply their learning in community projects.

B2. Access to Curriculum Criterion: All students have equal access to the school's entire program and are provided assistance with a personal learning plan to meet the requirements of graduation and are prepared for the pursuit of their academic, personal, and career goals.

Selected statements from the school application:

Every student meets at least twice per year with our college and career specialist and two times a week with an advisor to develop a plan of action for students to graduate and meet post-secondary goals. High school students each have a "Credit Roadmap" that outlines how many credits in each subject students need to graduate. Our college and career specialist plans

field trips, college visits, career days, and internship opportunities based on students' interests and opportunities available (See Credit Roadmap attached).

Visiting Committee comments:

School leadership at MCS places a special emphasis on a student-centered approach, as evidenced through the changes in mission and vision and adapting curriculum and instruction to be responsive to student needs (i.e. moving away from Summit Learning to other resources).

Personalization and differentiation seems to be a strong focus at MCS, with teachers designing courses and learning to make student progress transparent and to give students ownership in their learning using skills rubrics, culturally relevant approaches and blended technology such as Khan Academy paired with class instruction. The competency-based model allows for students to progress at their own pace, and demonstrate proficiency through multiple attempts and constructive feedback.

Special populations at MCS have been steadily increasing over the past several years in the areas of English Learners and socioeconomically disadvantaged. Of all students enrolled, 93% are minority and 72% are socioeconomically disadvantaged, and 57% of students are English Learners. Foster/Homeless Youth enrollment fluctuates from year to year, but even at 3% is no doubt a significant number in such a small school population. Currently 14% of students are Special Education.

- The Special Education teacher works with classroom teachers to ensure IEP accommodations are honored and leveraged for student success.
- EL scaffolds and supports are integrated into classes, and MCS has identified continued EL support and designated instruction in English as a priority for the future.
- With nearly three quarters of the school population qualifying for free or reduced lunch, tailoring services and learning to meet the needs of these students is key for MCS. To meet this need, MCS has partnered with community organizations such as the Multicultural Center of Marin to mentor students, organize service learning, offer authentic applications of project based learning and to arrange guest speakers.

Students and their families at MCS each meet with a college and career specialist upon enrollment to assess their progress thus far, credit deficiencies and goals. Together, they create a personal roadmap for the student to fulfill credits and work toward post-graduation goals. The

personalised roadmap is a student-friendly excel sheet outlining credits needed (“What you need”) and credits earned (“What you have”).

Throughout the year, MCS administrators and teachers regularly contact parents and families to share student progress and successes. A student support team meets weekly to connect students to additional supports including therapy, group counseling or other resources. IEP teams meet annually to review goals and progress.

Students have several resources to pursue academic goals using the newer competency model as well as personal and career goals. Each year, students can participate in two career day events where they are exposed to a wide range of internship and career opportunities in partnership with local businesses and organizations. Students also work with the college and career specialist to identify internship opportunities in the community, including mechanics, electricians, medical clinics and child-care facilities. In a college and career elective class, students can create resumes, practice interview skills, understand finances and make career plans. Some students also complete a “Passion Project” that simultaneously fulfills credit requirements while offering students a chance to customize learning based on their interests and cognitive skills.

Category C: Standards-based Student Learning: Instruction

C1. Challenging and Relevant Learning Experiences Criterion: To achieve the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes, all students are involved in challenging learning experiences.

Visiting Committee comments:

Teachers post standards-based content, cognitive skills and social/emotional learning goals on boards as well as communicate expectations to students. Expectations and progress are outlined on rubrics, and students receive color-coded scores in competency-based gradebooks in Powerschool Learning. Students receive feedback on their work and have multiple opportunities to improve performance.

Additionally, teachers use tools to help assess learning progress and re-teach as needed, including PowerSchool Learning to group students for workshops.

Relevancy is an area of focus for MCS, with an effort to tailor learning experiences. Teachers attempt to understand the whole student and address their needs to help create a better learning environment. Teachers understand many students have experienced trauma and severe anxiety, and are flexible in making changes to instruction, student groupings and activities to alleviate stress. There is an open approach to breaks and walks or support strategies with learning coaches. Teachers work with students and learning coaches to use resources such as PowerSchool Learning, LightSail and Khan Academy to help students learn and progress academically. MCS partners with Marin County Juvenile Probation who provide a full-time therapist and Bay Area Community Resources in addition to better support students' mental health needs in both group and individual settings.

C2. Student Engagement Criterion: 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 for college, career, and life.

Visiting Committee comments:

MCS is developing common language, shared resources including planning tools, curriculum calendars and project templates to develop engaging, standards-aligned learning experiences for students. The competency-based model may motivate students to engage in deeper learning by

having the opportunity to revise and submit work multiple times, measuring their progress in the easy-to-understand and user friendly Powerschool Learning gradebooks that measure growth in specific areas. Giving constructive feedback to students is a key part of this process and students are encouraged to take ownership in the learning process.

Teachers have access to a variety of instructional tools, including Google Apps, PowerSchool Learning websites, LightSail adaptive reading, Khan Academy mathematics, online resources (such as Mathalicious, Three Act Math, BIE, World Savvy, Teaching Tolerance) and online computer simulations to help differentiate learning for students. Teachers use project and problem-based learning to design units. Students are given choice in how they might demonstrate learning and have opportunities to evaluate peers' arguments and work as well.

MCS has strong community resource connections to help make learning more engaging and meaningful to students. MCS plans to expand their partners with community organizations so that more students are engaged in work-based learning and internships. Twice-yearly career days offer students great opportunities to learn about professions, learning programs and job opportunities.

A challenge is the transient student population, with a continual cycle of new students enrolling in the program who are unfamiliar with the competency model and other expectations. MCS is working to better orient new students and their families in this area.

Category D: Standards-based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability

D1. Using Assessment to Analyze Monitoring and Report Student Progress Criterion: The school uses a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, analyze and report student performance data to the school staff, students, parents and other stakeholders.

Visiting Committee comments:

MCS has a variety of data measurements to use in evaluating student performance and growth:

- Classroom level data: Teachers use various assessments and PowerSchool Learning to track performance and identify weekly students of concern for the staff to consider support strategies. Classroom observations give administrators insight into student performance;
- Behavioral data;
- Attendance data;
- CAASPP data;
- ELPAC data;
- MAP data: Students assessed three times per year in ELA and Math;
- Grades and credits: Monitored on quarterly basis;
- Enrollment data;
- Perception data:
 - Transforming Education survey: Taken twice per year by teachers and students to measure culture and climate and social/emotional skills;
 - California Healthy Kids Survey;
 - Internal climate surveys: Twice per year for students to monitor school culture, climate, and engagement;
 - Parent surveys: Twice per year to give feedback on culture, climate and engagement in classes.

MCS uses staff meetings, phone calls to families, mailing of grades and credits and family education events/ELAC meetings to communicate student performance and progress to the stakeholder community.

Very little data or summary and commentary of data was provided in report, although evidence of MCS collecting data and analyzing it was present in their LCAP reports, Silicon Schools Fund and elsewhere. MCS leadership will work to more frequently process and present data for ongoing analysis to inform decisions and instruction, and understands that an accreditation Self Study will require a much more comprehensive approach.

D2. Using Assessment to Monitor and Modify Learning in the Classroom Criterion: Teachers employ a variety of appropriate formative and summative assessment strategies to evaluate student learning. Students and teachers use these findings to modify the learning/teaching practices to improve student learning.

Selected statements from the school application:

2017-2018 Internal Assessments

Growth on Academic Skills ([Cognitive Skills Rubric](#))

74% Made progress a year or more of progress in English

81.6 % Made a year or more of progress in Math

87% Made a year or more of progress in Science

66% Made a year or more of progress in Social Studies.

Visiting Committee comments:

The above snapshot is an example of how MCS teachers use internal assessments to track progress and student growth. Students have everyday access to their progress in PowerSchool Learning, and can access competency-based gradebooks for each class that show the assessed standards and skills and student performance in each specific area. Students have multiple attempts to master the various content and skills before proceeding to new challenges, and expressed appreciation for being able to learn “at their own pace” and for the attention and support teachers give them individually.

In addition to internal assessments, teachers use Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments three times a year to track growth and inform instruction.

Currently participation and completion rates of CAASPP and ELPAC assessments are very low. The staff at MCS is working to identify ways to motivate students to engage with the assessments and complete them. This is a priority they identified for the coming years.

D3. Using Assessment to Monitor and Modify the Program Schoolwide Criterion: The school, with the support of the district and community, has an assessment and monitoring system to determine student progress toward achievement of the academic standards, the college- and career-readiness standards, and the schoolwide learner outcomes. The system drives the school’s program to continually improve and to allocate resources to effectively meet student needs.

Selected statements from the school application:

Schoolwide Learner Outcomes:

1. *All students are prepared for success in college and career upon graduation.* ▪
Students will develop positive academic mindsets through exposure to a wide variety of careers and education pathways
 - *Students will develop social networks to support them during their post-secondary pathways*
 - *Students will develop the academic, social, and emotional skills necessary to meet their personal goals.*

2. *Academics: Students will master content knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in the modern economy.*
 - *Students will demonstrate proficiency in the [Common Core State Standards](#) , [Next Generation Science Standards](#) , and [California History Framework](#) , through Project Based Learning and individualized assignments.*
 - *Students will develop [cognitive skills](#) , based in the Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards from the [Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity](#) .*

3. *Mindsets, Essential Skills and Habits: In addition to academic mastery, all students will develop essential social and emotional skills such as:*
 - [Self-efficacy](#)
 - [Self-management](#)
 - [Growth mindset](#)
 - [Social awareness](#)

4. *Personal Goals: All students will identify a postsecondary path to lead a healthy and purposeful life that allows them to follow their passions and become financially independent.*
 - *Students will develop a post-secondary roadmap to achieve their goals* ▪ *Students will develop skills such as self-advocacy to get the supports they need to achieve their goals*
 - *Students will develop a sense of empowerment as they see their role in improving their community*

Visiting Committee comments:

MCS crafted student learner outcomes aligned with their mission, vision, and values through a collaborative redesign process with students, parents, staff, community members and board members reflecting on the ideal profile of a graduate for the school. Stakeholder ideas were integrated with research from the Department of Labor, Forbes, CASEL (The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning), Transforming Education, P21 and the

Hewlett Foundation. Based on the community's input and research, MCS developed a new mission, vision and values as well as the Schoolwide Learner Outcomes listed above.

The Schoolwide Learner Outcomes are thoughtful and comprehensive, but may present a challenge with measurement. MCS was advised to consider ways to measure how students are progressing with each learner outcome and reflect on individual student growth as well as overall school growth, and to make measurements of growth and commentary on the implications a regular practice.

Category E:
School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth

E1. Parental and Community Involvement Criterion: The school leadership employs a wide range of strategies to encourage family, business, industry, and community involvement, especially with the learning/teaching process.

Visiting Committee comments:

The Marin's Community School Site Council/ELAC Committee meets at least six times throughout the year to involve parents, teachers and community members in school activities and the continual improvement process. They work closely with their non-profit partner, Multicultural Center of Marin to increase parent participation and to provide services during meetings such as meals, translation and child care. MCS works with community organizations and businesses on a Career Day as well as their School-to-Work program, field trips, internships and guest speakers.

MCS educates and involves parent and community members in understanding the school's purpose, Schoolwide Learner Outcomes and academic standards in many ways. The co-leaders meet with parents upon enrollment. School Site Council Meetings, parent/student/teacher meetings, IEP meetings and MCOE meetings all involve parents throughout the school year. Parents are also welcomed on campus and may call the school and contact teachers at any time. Parents can log into Power School Learning to see assignments and grades. The school's website is in the process of being updated to become a way to more broadly communicate with the community. MCS also uses Remind 101 for text updates to families.

E2. School Environment Criterion: The school ensures that it is a) a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning and b) has a culture that is characterized by trust, professionalism, and high expectations for all students with a focus on continuous school improvement.

Visiting Committee comments:

The school is located on a safe, clean and orderly campus. The facilities were built just five years ago on the Marin County Office of Education campus and are well maintained with modern

furniture and technology.

MCS is flexible and responsive to student needs. As a trauma informed school, there are many structures in place to help students manage stress and develop social, emotional and academic skills. Teachers embed social and emotional learning into daily activities and assignments. On-site therapists use cognitive behavior therapy and group discussions to support students in healthy patterns of thinking and behaving.

The staff is passionate, caring and committed to helping students achieve at high levels. Strong and trusting relationships are developed between teachers and students. The staff problem solves together and value each others' differing opinions and perspectives to come up with collaborative solutions. While there is a strong culture among the staff, they are working to cultivate a cohesive student culture where students feel safe to take risks and support each other. Many students have a difficult time trusting adults and peers due to traumatic experiences that they have experienced. MCS is continuously working on shifting the school's reputation in the community and have seen a shift in that with more and more students are choosing to stay at the school because it serves their needs. There was evidence of students caring for each other, engaging in classroom activities and taking risks during the visit.

There is strong internal communication between the co-leaders who strive to communicate to the staff as one voice. There is a weekly informational email communication sent to staff. The co-leaders also provide coaching to the teachers. Staff meetings are held twice per week. Due to the strong communication with parents and community members and the increased use of strategies to involve parents in decision making, the school has seen an increase in parent involvement.

E3. Personal and Academic Student Support Criterion: All students receive appropriate academic support and intervention to help ensure school, college, and career success. Students with special talents and/or needs have access to a system of personal support services, activities, and opportunities at the school. These are enhanced by business, industry, and the community.

Visiting Committee comments:

All students have access to a wide range of academic supports and intervention services to

support them in meeting their academic, social, emotional and personal goals.

Upon enrolling in the school, student strengths, interests and personal goals are identified. The college and career counselor meets with each student to set grade and credit targets for each quarter. There are opportunities for internships, job shadows and special projects based upon student interest. Services for English Learners and students with IEPs are also identified and implemented. The school hosts Career Days and helps students create resumes and provides interview practice. The school has one full time and one part time therapist on campus along with three full time learning coaches to support students social emotional and academic needs. Students and families are also referred to outside counseling services as needed.

MCS has established a competency-based system of learning to monitor students' progress toward mastering academic knowledge and skills.

The school staff identify in a timely manner the appropriate support and intervention services for students. The use of a wide range of schoolwide and classroom based assessments inform next steps in instruction so that all students can master standards-based academic learning goals. During a meeting each week, the staff identifies students in need of supports and determines what supports will be implemented.

Students have access to a challenging, relevant and coherent curriculum. MCS uses Culturally Relevant Pedagogy to ensure that curriculum matches the interests and needs of all students, while providing grade-level skills and content knowledge. Core courses are aligned to the Common Core Standards, Next Generation Science Standards and California History and Social Science Framework.

All students participate in an advisory class twice per week to focus on personal goal setting, developing social emotional skills and strengthening relationships with adults and peers. Students have access to elective classes. The school recently launched several new electives this spring that students suggested offering. Students feel empowered that they got to identify which electives would be offered. As a result of this buy in, students were actively engaged in the classes during the visit.

Ongoing School Improvement

Schoolwide Areas of Strength

1. The Marin's Community School staff is collaborative, dedicated and engages in purposeful professional development to support students in achieving at high levels both academically and social emotionally.

2. Students feel connected to staff and are re-engaging in their learning.
3. There is a strong focus on partnering with community organizations to provide wraparound resources and additional staffing for a full range of student needs including social emotional support, mental health support, transportation, meals, fitness, job opportunities, parent empowerment and more.
4. There is a focus on family relationships and communication, including phone calls, meetings, family education and a new Family and Community Empowerment Specialist role.
5. More students who succeed at MCS are choosing to opt-in to continue with the Phoenix program because it is meeting their educational and personal needs.
6. MCS has been recognized by New Schools Venture Fund and Silicon Schools Fund for their innovative educational design and the first stages of implementation.
7. School leaders have the support of the County Superintendent and the Marin County Office of Education to redesign the school. There is clear alignment between the school and county leaders and a Memorandum of Understanding in place that outlines the autonomies that are needed to operate the school and move the vision forward.
8. MCS is one of a few countywide alternative schools that has moved from a participation/positive attendance grading and credit system to a competency based learning system to support all learners.

Critical Areas for Follow-up

1. MCS needs to develop and implement a strategic plan to communicate with feeder districts and the community at large about who they serve and encourage earlier referrals.
2. The school needs to continue to increase their capacity to address students' mental, physical and personal needs.
3. Courses of study should be updated to reflect the new standards and academic program. As part of this process, learning scales for content knowledge need to be developed in addition to the skill rubrics for each course that align with the Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards and California History and Social Science Curriculum.
4. The school should continue to develop systematic linguistic supports throughout the academic program to support English Language Learners.
5. The school should continue developing stronger orientation systems to support students as they transition into the school.

6. There should be a focus on participation rates on many assessments including CAASPP, ELPAC, California Healthy Kids Survey and MAP tests.
7. Data measures related to attendance, assessments, credit accrual, discipline, interventions, climate and culture, etc. need to be more clearly and consistently analyzed and interpreted to better understand student performance, to inform decisions and to promote the program to the community at large.

