



Accrediting Commission for Schools Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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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: Golden Gate Community School

School Address: 1111 Stoneman Ave Pittsburg, CA 94565

Grades Reviewed 7-12

School Type(s): Dependent Community School Charter
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)

Initial Visit Chair: Kim E. Marshall, Ed.D.

Initial Visit Team Member(s): Ms. Laurie Fracolli

Date of Visit: 22 March 2018

Introduction

Write a paragraph summarizing the important information found in Part I and II of the *Initial Visit Application/School Description for California Public Schools*.

Golden Gate Community School (GGCS) is a small dependent charter school that provides successful learning experiences for all students in an alternative educational environment. The school staff assists students in reaching their academic and career goals by implementing teaching strategies and techniques, which enable students to succeed personally, socially, and educationally. The school's motto is: "We are here to do good things for other people"

The school delivers 100% of its instructional program on line. The school utilizes the online curriculum of Odyessyware. It is the school's grade level curriculum for each subject. All students have access to this online curriculum at school and at home via the Internet. It is used not only to teach all grade level subjects, but Odyessyware is also used as the school's credit recovery/credit acceleration program for high school students.

Additionally, through Google Classroom, all students have access to teacher created lessons, research projects, and the Core Subjects supplemental curriculum. Further, the school has board-approved textbooks that it uses to supplement all subjects with and when appropriate. The school creates a culture of caring and love of which, students want to be a part. This caring culture builds relationships that help students to move through their journey in life. The school's motto is: "We are here to do good things for other people".

The Golden Gate Community School opened as a charter school in July 2017. However, the school has operated as a community school since the late 1970's. The school serves eighteen school districts throughout Contra Costa County, with a total of four sites located in Rodeo, Brentwood, Martinez, and Pittsburg. The Pittsburg site houses two classrooms and the school office.

The student population usually comes from one-parent households. Sixty-five percent of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. The school's largest ethnic population is Hispanic followed by African American. Currently thirty-eight percent of students are Hispanic, twenty-seven percent are African American, twelve percent are Caucasian, seven percent other and twenty percent not specified.

There are currently 118 students enrolled at all four sites. Nineteen percent of all students are English Language Learners (ELL) and twenty-six percent of all students have Individual Education Plans (IEPs). The school is very proud of its students the services it offers them. The Principal stated that the school strives to build lasting relationships with all students. As a result of this commitment, the Principal indicated that students return to the school whenever they need something. All of the school's services are available to all students throughout their journey in life.

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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
state**

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard A: Mission Statement: The mission statement of a quality online program clearly conveys its purpose and goals. It serves as the basis for the program's day-to-day operations, as well as a guide for its strategic plans for the future. Communications between and buy-in from stakeholders is a critical component of a mission statement. [iNACOL Standard A, 2009]

ments from the school application (optional):

The school's mission is to ensure academic improvement and successful transition while promoting pro-social skills. The school has three overarching goals that focus on the eight state (LCAP) priority areas related to its mission:

1. Foster respectful and collaborative school cultures that promote students' social emotional well being and increased engagement. (Priorities 3,5,6)
2. Provide programs and support to address students' specific needs in order to increase their learning and to be prepared for a successful transition to their district school and/or to be college and career ready. (Priorities 2,4,7,8)
3. Ensure that all students have access to the appropriate instructional staff, standards-aligned curriculum resources and safe facilities to ensure an environment conducive to learning. (Priority 1)

The School's three Learner Outcomes:

The school developed these outcomes and all school stakeholders agreed upon them prior to petitioned the state and were added to the Charter Petition after input from all stakeholders to include teachers/staff, students, and parents. Many parents and most staff attended multiple board meetings in support of the petition.

Every Student will be technologically literate by

Demonstrating competence in the use of computers and,
Using technology to access relevant information for educational goals.

Every Student will be a responsible citizen by

Understanding how actions affect them, others and the community,

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Demonstrating skill in resolving conflicts and,
Contributing time, energy, and talents to improve the quality of life for themselves,
their school, and community.

Every Student will be a self-directed learner by

Using effective goal setting strategies to create positive goals,
Being able to evaluate their educational transcript and,
Exhibiting good study/work habits.

The school's outcomes were agreed upon before the staff submitted the petition to the state to become a charter school. These three outcomes were added to the Charter Petition after input from all stakeholders to include teachers/staff, students, and parents. Many parents and most staff attended multiple board meetings in support of the petition.

Regarding parent participation, the school believes home/school communication is a critical factor for student *success*. Administrators, teachers and staff contact parents/caregivers to notify them of student progress, events, and activities on a regular basis. However, the school sees parent participation as an area for improvement. The school believes it needs to increase its parent involvement throughout the school year.

Visiting Committee comments:

The school's ILP calls for stakeholder participation. As a result, the school administration and faculty listed parent involvement as an area for improvement. Regarding parent participation, the school believes home/school communication is a critical factor for student *success*. Administrators, teachers and staff contact parents/caregivers to notify them of student progress, events, and activities on a regular basis. However, the school sees parent participation as an area for improvement. The school believes it needs to increase its parent involvement throughout the school year.

The IVC learned that the school has invited parents to attend several functions at the school that include a pancake breakfast held in December 2017 at all four school sites and two theme based projects (focusing on character education) held on November 20, 2017 and the next one to be held on April 19, 2018. The school adopted two themes for the year and students present a book they have read to their parents at each of these two theme-based functions. This school year the fall 2017 theme was "Change Requires Effort" and the spring 2018 theme is "Justice Requires Restraint." Students selected one of three books from each theme. The books offered in the school's character education program depend upon the students' age and grade. Books are different for middle school and high school students. Many parents attended the November 20, 2017 character education presentation.

The school also held during this school year basketball games among the four school sites and parents were invited to attend and watch their students compete in basketball games. Also, the school offered parenting classes to all parents.

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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.

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard B: Governance Statement: Governance is typically provided by a Board of Directors, an Advisory Board or an ISCHOOL Board. In a quality online program, governance and leadership work hand-in-hand, developing the operational policies for the program and its leadership and staff. [iNACOL Standard B, 2009]

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

A comprehensive assessment system will focus on student performance as the key component to demonstrate student success and competency using multiple assessment measures. GGCS will administer the mandated state assessments as an independent entity and also meet any required state performance standards developed. GGCS will use statewide performance standards as required by Education Code Sections 60602, et seq. GGCS will conduct an annual evaluation of student academic performance to determine if students are achieving academic levels that are at least equivalent to or exceeding those achieved by students in similar type schools, both within the county and across the state. To ensure that students are achieving proficiency in state grade level content standards, the school will,

1. Fully implement California State Board of Education common core adopted standards-aligned instructional materials in English Language Arts (ELA), English Language Development (ELD), Mathematics, History-Social Science, and Science along with targeted interventions.
2. Align the course of study with state grade level Common Core State Standards.
3. Train teachers and the principal on materials-based (Math and ELA/ELD adoptions) and researched-based strategies.
4. Implement and monitor classroom curriculum and instruction to focus on standards-based instruction and research-based instructional strategies.
5. Provide a comprehensive computer-based credit recovery system aligned with state content standards for students to make up credits for courses they have failed in past semesters/years.
6. Evaluate student progress in ELA and mathematics with Renaissance Place tests, using results to target specific areas needing additional instruction.

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7. Increase by 2 percent the number of long-term students who make Math Pre-Post Test learning gains.
8. Increase by .5 percent the participation rate and number of students who demonstrate progress toward proficiency in statewide academic assessments

In addition to encouraging parental/caregiver involvement through ILP development, and with student updates, parental/caregiver involvement in the governance of GGCS will be encouraged to participate in classroom observations, meetings with teachers/administrators, volunteering, student absence notification, providing information on student achievement, examining instructional materials used in their child's classes, being informed of their child's progress in school and who to contact if a problem arises, receiving information about academic performance standards/proficiencies/skills their child is expected to accomplish, being informed in advance about school rules/attendance policies/dress codes/procedures for visiting the school and participation in the annual LCAP stakeholder meeting process.

Visiting Committee comments:

The school listed developing additional formative assessments in ELA and Math to complement its current assessment system. The school provided several statements as to how it will show students achieving proficiency in state grade level academic content standards; thus, indicating the degree to which students are learning and being academically successful learners. The Initial Visiting Committee learned that the school's Renaissance Test for math and English (a pretest and a posttest) were administered to all students. During school year 2016/2017, the posttest results reflected the LCAP data for 2016/2017. The school was very pleased with the student growth in math between the pretest and posttest held during the last school year.

Results from the Renaissance pretests and posttests showed moderate gains in overall student academic achievement in Reading (all students) of three percentage points between school year 2015/2016 (63%) and school year 2016/2017 (66%). In math a significant growth in achievement between school years 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 showed a 16% growth in math, 2015/2016 (53%) and 2016/2017 (69%). Again, the results fluctuate dramatically with a small student population, student attendance and departure dates from the school.

It still is significant that the IVC heard and read the results covering the last three school years (2014-2017). Results among differing student backgrounds indicated the degree of improvement or lack thereof. The school divided the students in four areas that included EL Learners, Low Income students, Foster Youth and Special Education students.

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School administration and faculty indicated in the school wide report that it needed to enhance parental engagement. An area for improvement focused on the development of a parent engagement plan. The Initial Visiting Committee discussed this area and concluded that the school had begun developing its parent engagement plan based on the following: a) intake/exit parent/student meetings were held to ascertain students' participation in school and their academic achievement and social behavior upon departure from the school.

The school also had awards BBQ for parents. The students presented instructional projects to their parents at the awards BBQ. The school stated many parents attended the awards BBQ. Further, students and parents serve on the School Site Council.

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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.

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard C: Leadership: The leadership of a quality online program is accountable to the program's governance body, and is responsible for setting and meeting the operational and strategic goals in support of the program's mission and vision statements. [iNACOL Standard C, 2009]

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard D: Planning: A quality online program makes planning, managed by the leadership and staff of the organization a regular part of the program. There are several types of planning activities, including strategic planning, long-range and operational planning, which identifies annual goals. Effective planning is not a one-time activity, but instead should provide opportunities for reflection on how to improve the organization's performance. [iNACOL Standard D, 2009]

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard F: Commitment: In a quality online program governance, leadership and staff are responsible for creating an organization that demonstrates a commitment to attaining the program's goals and mission statement. Everyone within the organization understands the mission statement and works to achieve it. [iNACOL Standard F, 2009]

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard I: Integrity and Accountability: In a quality online program, leadership is transparent in its management of the program, providing regular and timely information on progress towards attainment of goals, alignment with policies and standards, and achievement of student learning outcomes. [iNACOL Standard I, 2009]

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

GGCS teachers/parents develop an ILP for each student that documents his/her current achievement scores and delineating specific areas of need and goals to address them.

The purpose of the ILP is to allow each student entering into the GGCS program to team with their parent/caregiver and teacher to set and monitor obtainable future goals. Student progress will be measured by ongoing review of progress and using Renaissance Place assessments for academic achievement.

Academic assessments will be administered at set points throughout the year for the purpose of assessing student need and growth areas in targeted standards. Students will be assessed regularly in reading and math skills. Data derived from these evaluations will be used to individualize instruction as each student participates with his/her instructor and parent/caregiver to design an ILP.

School site teams (teachers and aides), will meet weekly to analyze data and monitor student attendance and achievement and make adjustments in provision of extra time and support that may be needed by struggling students.

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GGCS conducts an annual evaluation of student academic performance to determine if students are achieving academic levels that are at least equivalent to or exceeding those achieved by students in similar type schools, both within the county and across the state.

The school provided the following information about students who have personally achieved in different areas. They are:

1. We have 21 students working part time with additional students being placed in jobs on a regular basis
2. We have 3 students concurrently enrolled in their local community college.
3. We have one student who is enrolled full time at a community college.
4. We have reduced chronic absences significantly.
5. We have an 81% attendance rate

Visiting Committee comments:

The school indicated a need exists to develop an incentive plan for students to take the school wide testing more seriously and make an honest effort when testing and this could possibly give the school better results and data. The IVC discussed this area with the school principal and faculty. They indicated that employing a positive approach to student testing would likely produce a more positive attitude in students and willingness to apply them when taking a test. The school implemented a student pizza party for those students who took the state tests.

Also, they introduced practice tests to help students better understand testing, its purpose, and how to apply themselves during the conduct of the test. The results of the state testing would indicate that because of the approach taken by the school's faculty and administrator, the efforts on the part of the school for students to better understand how and why to take the tests resulted in increased scores.

The Initial Visiting Committee complimented the school for working closely with students who have academic, attendance and other issues at comprehensive high schools/middle schools. These students have demonstrated success at GGCS because of the school's staff and promoting their motto of "We are here to do good things for other people".

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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.

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard E: Organizational Staffing: A quality online program recognizes appropriate levels of staffing are critical to the success of an online program. Staff should be well-trained in order to successfully meet their performance goals, and are provided with appropriate levels of support, resources, feedback and management. [iNACOL Standard E, 2009]

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

The County Office of Education offers continuous opportunities for professional development. All employees receive three days of training per year well as bi-monthly collaborative training/meetings.

Currently, we are engaged in ongoing training of Arts Integration and the introduction of Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain. We also have bullying prevention and trauma informed practices as ongoing topics as well as Google Classroom. We have teachers participating in countywide committees in ELA, Math and Science and they bring the information back to the teaching staff.

We have allocated funds for an ongoing training in Arts Integration and Culturally Responsive Teaching in partnership with Alameda County Office of Education, and we have allocated funds for teachers to have release time to attend workshops and conferences.

We review student achievement data and professional development alignment to determine success and gaps. We pull formative and summative data multiple times a year to review student progress as well as teacher driven daily formative assessments that are used on a regular basis. We have a school site council and advisory team who develop our single plan for student achievement and our LCAP. As an alternative school, we do not have a state dashboard for student achievement, but we do put together a yearly report that shows three year trends in academics and well as behavior/social emotional indicators. All this information is reviewed with the lens of professional development needs.

The County Office of Education offers continuous opportunities for professional development. All employees receive three days of training per year well as bi-monthly collaborative training/meetings.

Currently, we are engaged in ongoing training of Arts Integration and the introduction of Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain. We also have bullying prevention and trauma informed practices as ongoing topics as well as Google Classroom. We have teachers participating in countywide committees in ELA, Math and Science and they bring the information back to the teaching staff.

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Visiting Committee comments:

The school indicated an area for improvement focused on ensuring that professional development was ongoing in all subjects that teachers are currently teaching. The Initial Visiting Committee spent time discussing the status of professional development for faculty, administration and classified personnel. The purpose of the discussion was to ensure that the school focuses on increasing student academic and social achievement.

The school shared that it planned to focus on subject area training in English and Math. Teachers attended the arts integration program at the Alameda County Office of Education and learned about student study habits and how to improve those habits as well as how to help students to become more focused on the importance of applying themselves.

The school staff also participated in a culturally sponsored event focusing on meta-cognition, the use of the brain to enhance the students' knowledge. Also, the school staff employed collaboration at one staff meeting to discuss the importance of arts integration with all school staff.

The school also had teachers has used the CK-12 online curriculum to enhance and better prepare students for formative assessments and digitized instruction. The school's instructional programs are online and employ GGCS use Odyessyware online curriculum – (A-G), teacher created curriculum and materials in addition to Sacrites and Google Classroom.

Students utilize job shadowing, internships, and mentoring to engage in the application of learned skills and knowledge.

The Initial Visiting Committee learned that the County Office of Education provides professional development opportunities and resources to faculty at GGCS. This support helps and assists classroom faculty and classified personnel in ensuring that all students have equal opportunity to increase their overall achievement at school.

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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 school wide learner outcomes.

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard G: Financial and Material Resources: A quality online program has adequate financial and material resources to accomplish the mission of the organization. These resources are appropriately planned for and expended using sound business practices. [iNACOL Standard G 2009]

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

The allocation of resources has an impact on student learning. We have made technology and professional development a top priority, as well as having assistants in the classroom and additional school support staff such as a probation officer and social worker. Technology allows our students to be technologically literate and allows our teachers to teach more effectively using technology. Because our students are 1 to 1 with computers, we can use Google Classroom and have our curriculum as Odyessyware.

All teachers attended Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative Schools Administrators of California (JCCASAC) conference as well as at least one Distinguished Speaker Presentation. We are currently training all staff on CRT: Culturally Responsive Teaching.

Funds are allocated for professional development and support and teachers are provided the opportunity for ongoing professional development in a wide range of topics.

Visiting Committee comments:

The Initial Visiting Committee met with COE personnel and the school principal to discuss how the COE supports the school with resources that will assist teachers in increasing student academic achievement. The IVC learned that the Contra Costa County Office of Education enthusiastically supports GGCS. The CCCOE Deputy Superintendent came in the morning to listen to our conversation before school began and then returned to hear the exit briefing by the IVC. She had a great deal of information she shared with the IVC. Some of that information included the COE handles all finances for the school that includes the LCAP, Title One funding and general expenses. Also, the COE provides maintenance support and other services such as the WIOA Program, student internships, student salaries, and helping students to enroll in the local community colleges.

The school indicated it had to develop and implement a marketing plan to increase enrollment. The IVC learned that the school currently has an informal plan that includes handouts, updating the school website and through word of mouth which appears to be the most lucrative way for the school to gain more students. This area has brought an increased enrollment to all four-school sites.

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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).

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

With support from the CCCOE communication department, we have developed Logos for each site and the school as well as handouts/mailing for the public. The school's leadership team will be working with other county charters to review their marketing plans and start developing a marketing plan to be implemented in the 2018-19 school year.

Visiting Committee comments:

The IVC discovered that the development and implementation of the proposed marketing plan had to have been implemented as a marketing plan to increase enrollment. Then starting the present school year, the school started its informal plan that includes handouts, updating the school website and through word of mouth which appears to be the most lucrative way for the school to gain more students. This area has brought an increased enrollment to all four-school sites.

The IVC, in conjunction with a conversation with the school's principal and the CCCOE Deputy Superintendent that it is developing a proposed marketing plan to be implemented for school year 2018/2019. The school believes that it is necessary to increase student enrollment in order to maintain its school wide programs.

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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.

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard J: Curriculum and Course Design: A quality online program will have a well thought-out approach to its curriculum and course design whether it develops its own courses and/or licenses curriculum from other educational providers. [iNACOL Standard J, 2009]

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

In regards to the degree to which the school curriculum results in student achievement of the content standards:

GGCS uses a 180-day school year;
GGCS uses Odyessyware online curriculum – (A-G) and teacher created curriculum and materials;
Odyessyware is used for online credit recovery;
Students utilize job shadowing, internships, and mentoring to engage in the application of learned skills and knowledge.

In regards to Partnerships:

GGCS partners with agencies that operate Workforce Investment Act Programs.

In regards to collaborative strategies used by administrators and teacher to examine curriculum design and student work:

All teachers work collaboratively through the Leadership Team;
The Leadership Team concentrates on curriculum design and implementation;
The teacher collaborates via Google Classroom to and creates share lessons.

In regards to planned processes for curricular review and evaluation processes:

Credit by courses by quarter was described.

In regards to current process for articulation with both feeder schools and local colleges and universities:

GGCS has a Youth Development Counselor who meets with students regularly.

In regards to the post - graduation plans for the school's graduating class:

GGCS goal is to place every student who graduates in either a Community College or a training program somewhere in the state.

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Achievements:

January 2018 was projected for first adult graduate.

Areas for Improvement:

GGCS highlighted the following items for improvement:

- The need to strengthen our partnerships with the Community College
- Ensure students stayed on track to graduate
- Implement a better credit recovery to ensure students got back on track to return to district.

Visiting Committee comments:

GGCS students use a variety of digital curriculum that is both standards-based and achievement based. Every student works at his or her own academic level in all content areas. GGCS Teachers share their knowledge and experiences with learning apps, like Kahoots, and Google Classroom to assist in meeting the needs of their students.

Teachers at GGCS would benefit from a focused plan for ongoing staff development and leaning opportunities that would enrich their teaching and learning. The current book study related to the brain is a great start for conversation and shifts in teaching.

In an effort for students to stay on track for graduation, a multi-tiered system of support is evident at the school. Addressing the needs of the “whole child” with academic, behavior and social/emotional issues is apparent at GGCS. All staff communicates on a regular basis to provide updates and services as needed. Instructional Aids are a valued addition both in the classroom and serving as needed on the campus with daily support.

With a focus on Project Based Learning, a consideration may be to utilize a Graduation by Demonstration outcome as part of the Academic BBQ and/or graduation expectation.

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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.

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard H: Equity and Access: A quality online program's policies and practice support students' ability to access the program. Accommodations are available to meet a variety of student needs. [iNACOL Standard H, 2009]

Selected statements from the school application(optional

In regards to how the school provides for career exploration, preparation for postsecondary education, and pre-technical training for all students:

The Youth Development Specialist meets with every student to develop a college/career plan;
Performs a variety of specialized activities;
Trains and assists students in development of short and long term plan;
Interviews and assesses students in order to identify needs and interests;
Provides technical assistance to students for financial aid and scholarship opportunities;
Serves as a liaison between the County Office, school districts and employers.

In regards to students' access to a rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum:

GGCS has access to Odyessyware, textbooks, and Google Classroom.
Additional websites and apps used include Kahoots,
Brain Pop, Apple TV, C-K12, Ted Talks, Estimation 180, Kahn Academy, YouTube, Sacrates and CNN News.

Plans for Academically Low Achieving students:

2% Increase of long-term students in Reading pre and posttest scores;
2% increase of long-term students in Math pre and post test scores;
5% increase in participation rate and number of students who demonstrate progress towards proficiency;
During 180 instructional days, students will receive full academic services in core content, behavior interventions, afterschool tutoring, and use of an integrated arts and technology approach;
During enrollment, students are administered a standards-based assessment and placed in intervention class if 2 or more grade levels below, or below 6th grade.

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Plans for Learning and Behavioral Interventions for students:

GGCS provides SST meetings

For habitual truant attendance , an SST meeting is scheduled every 4 weeks

Plans for Academically High Achieving students:

GGCS goal is for all students to graduate

Students are to be concurrently enrolled in community college

Goals and Plans for EL students:

Recruit staff with proper training and qualifications

Use standards-based ELD curriculum

Use appropriate strategies and structures to meet needs of EL learners

ILP's specified for increased literacy

Goals and plans for Students with Special Needs:

Students shall receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Special Education program are provided and monitored as the IEP is written.

In regards to the degree parents, students and staff collaborate with a student ILP:

GGCS reviews ILP's at the end of each quarter

Parent meetings are scheduled as needed

The Youth Development Counselor (YDC) schedules an appointment with each student to plan college and/or career.

The YDC follows up weekly with students to assist and support student on their plans.

Achievements:

- Three students graduated from Discovery Challenge Academy
- Four students concurrently enrolled in local Community College
- Twenty –one students are currently working part time

Areas of Improvement:

- GGCS will review policies to ensure students are getting back on track and staying on track

Visiting Committee comments:

GGCS students use laptops for daily instruction. Interviews with students highlighted the many people who help them with academic, behavioral and social problems that may arise during the school days.

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Teachers are continuously using data to help inform instruction and meet the needs of the students. Informal and formal assessments are administered in class to ensure that concepts are taught and academic growth is ongoing.

The Staff at GGCS embrace the high- risk student population and relate with compassion and empathy while maintaining a vision for their future including graduation and beyond. Additionally, the staff accepts students where they currently are and provide a structure to set goals and plan for their future beyond High School.

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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.

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

In regards to the degree to which all students are involved in challenging and relevant learning to achieve the academic standards, the college and career readiness standards, and the school wide learner outcomes, GGCS ensures:

- Every student will be technology literate
- Every student will be a responsible citizen
- Every student will be a self-directed learner

In regards to the extent to which students understand the standards and the level of performance expected to demonstrate their knowledge, GGCS uses a curricular approach that is based on the following concepts:

- High expectations of students
- Self- discipline of students
- Academic studies related to real work problems
- Integrated and high level academic content delivered by teachers
- Active student engagement with rigor and challenging learning
- Extra help provided within structured academic system
- Continuous improvement using data informed decisions

At GGCS, Instructional staff members differentiate instruction by modifying lessons to accommodate varying learning styles and strategies based on the text *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*.

Achievements:

- Teachers are on subject matter teams at the CCCOE

Areas of Improvement:

- Continue work on culturally responsive pedagogy
- Develop formative assessments aligned with the content standards to better gauge progress

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Visiting Committee comments:

Every student at GGCS has access to a portable device for digital curriculum and web based programs. It was demonstrated in both classrooms the use of technology and how students interact daily.

With the use of may digital curriculum, creating a system to ensure a continuous improvement cycle using formative data would strengthen the daily teaching and learning of the students based on their academic performance. As students are self-directed to their daily work, ensuring each student is working at their academic level and monitoring progress on a regular basis would be of benefit.

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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.

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard K: Instruction: A quality online program takes a comprehensive and integrated approach to ensuring excellent online teaching for its students. This process begins with promising practices but is equally committed to continuous improvement and adaptation to student learning needs through professional development. [iNACOL Standard K, 2009]

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

In regards to the degree in which teachers keep current in the instructional content taught and research-based instructional methodology, including the use of multimedia and technology:

- members of the staff that choose to do so are given opportunity to participate
- staff trains each other on computer apps.

Teachers at GGCS use coaching strategies on how to think at higher levels and express thoughts in unique ways.

GGCS students demonstrate acquired knowledge at higher cognitive levels by:

- a culminating student presentation
- present a themed project related to a historical figure and present at Awards BBQ

Achievements:

- Student presentations
- Awards BBQ
- Concurrent enrolled students

Areas for Improvement:

- Ongoing training in educational technology
- Develop themes at beginning of the year

Visiting Committee comments:

The IVC determined that the school uses a variety of strategies and resources to augment standard textbooks and other traditional learning materials. The school employs resources such as access to Odyessyware, Google Classroom, additional websites and apps used include Kahoots, Brain Pop, Apple TV, C-K12, Ted Talks, Estimation 180, Kahn Academy, YouTube, Sacrates and CNN News.

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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.

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

A comprehensive assessment system will focus on student performance as the key component to demonstrate student success and competency using multiple assessment measures. GGCS will administer the mandated state assessments as an independent entity and also meet any required state performance standards developed. GGCS will use statewide performance standards as required by Education Code Sections 60602, et seq. GGCS will conduct an annual evaluation of student academic performance to determine if students are achieving academic levels that are at least equivalent to or exceeding those achieved by students in similar type schools, both within the county and across the state. To ensure that students are achieving proficiency in state grade level content standards, GGCS will:

- Fully implement California State Board of Education common core adopted standards-aligned instructional materials in English Language Arts (ELA), English Language Development (ELD), Mathematics, History-Social Science, and Science along with targeted interventions.

The County Office of Education so given the opportunity to participate in trainings and committees offers members of the staff that choose to do. We currently have one teacher on the ELA committee and one on the Science committee.

County has also trained our teachers on the effective use of Google Classroom and is conducting ongoing training this year.

Academic assessments are administered at set points throughout the year for the purpose of assessing student need and growth areas in targeted standards. Students are assessed regularly in reading and math skills. Data derived from these evaluations will be used to individualize instruction as each student participates with his/her instructor and parent/caregiver to design an ILP.

School site teams, meet weekly to analyze data and monitor student attendance and achievement and make adjustments in provision of extra time and support that may be needed by struggling students.

Teachers use formative assessments on a daily/weekly basis to adjust students' curriculum to match their ever-changing levels/abilities.

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Visiting Committee comments:

The school indicated in its Initial Visit School Description Report that a need exists to finalize its supplemental curriculum for ELA curriculum during the current school year. The IVC believes that this area is of major importance to the school. The IVC learned that the school has begun formalizing a novel program based on a thematic approach in literature and using a theme-based that supports student decision-making.

Again, the school employs a variety of instructional strategies and resources beyond the textbooks that include Odyessyware, Kahoots, research papers and other on-line reading programs. The school also uses the reading program for students who are two or more grade levels below their current grade. The IVC, in discussion with classroom teachers, learned that they modify and accommodate their instruction based on the students' learning levels and progress.

The school is commended for the achievements in the school's reading scores that increased by three percent, math scores that increased by sixteen percent and Special Education math increased by thirty-five percent. The IVC believes that these increases were based on the school's focus on using formative assessments and meeting weekly to analyze data and monitor student attendance and achievement. Thus, making adjustments in their instruction and providing extra time and support to all students but especially to struggling students.

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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.

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard L: Assessment of Student Performance: A quality online program values student academic performance and takes a comprehensive, integrated approach to measuring student achievement. This includes use of multiple assessment measures and strategies that align closely to both program and learner objectives, with timely, relevant feedback to all stakeholders. [iNACOL Standard L, 2009]

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

Most of the data we receive via testing is not a true representation of our student's levels. Although we use this to determine a student's grade level and monitor the program, classroom teacher's formative assessments are considered much more important to a student's progress. Teachers review student work week-by-week, day-by-day, and hour-by-hour. We believe a teacher's assessment of his or her student is much more valid in determining a student's educational needs.

Teacher assessments are used to place a student in our reading program, tutorial program, and determining the level of work each student will receive.

Visiting Committee comments:

The school specified that it must develop a testing incentive plan to motivate all students to take testing more seriously; so that the data compiled are more representative of student enrollment. The school uses a gift card to motivate students to study more and take their formative and summative assessments more seriously. The gift card program is funded by Title One funds and the classroom teachers indicated that this program appears to motivate students to stay on task and study harder.

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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.

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard R: Program Evaluation: A quality online program recognizes the value of program evaluation. Program evaluation is both internal and external and informs all processes that effect teaching and learning. Internal evaluations often are more informal in nature and may provide immediate feedback on a targeted area of inquiry. External program evaluations typically look at the entire program from an objective perspective that will bring additional credibility to the results. [iNACOL Standard R, 2009]

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard S: Program Improvement: A quality online program establishes a culture of continual program improvement. Improvement planning focuses on using program evaluations, research, and promising practices to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness. It fosters continuous improvement across all aspects of the organization and ensures the program is focused on accomplishing its mission and vision. [iNACOL Standard S, 2009]

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

Computer-based credit recovery courses through online learning offer an opportunity for students to utilize technology to more quickly complete coursework and graduate with their peers. Teachers monitor student progress, and plan for support (academic and behavioral) based on needs.

Upon entering GGCS, students will be assessed to determine their individual levels of proficiency in English language arts and math. Results of the assessment will be used to determine course placement and instructional levels that best meet the student's current academic level needs. Weekly seminars are conducted in English Language arts and mathematics to assist students needing intervention strategies to build basic skills.

GGCS staff will use curriculum, textbooks, supplemental materials, and instructional strategies to meet the varied and individual ability levels of students. Each course will meet the state learning standards and instruction will focus on actively engaging students in learning experiences.

Visiting Committee comments:

GGCS spent time during the present school year refining its use of the Google Classroom. Teachers and administrators are continually trained during the year to improve the curriculum delivery Google Classroom.

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**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.

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard Q: Parents/Guardians: In a quality online program, parents and guardians play an integral part in their students' educational life. They work as a team with faculty, administrators, guidance services, and organizational support to ensure a quality educational experience for their students. [iNACOL Standard Q, 2009]

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

Our School Site Council is also our Charter Advisory Committee, our ELAC committee, and to approve the SIP plan as well as the LCAP/LCFF.

Although we get good student and staff participation, we find it every challenging to get parents involved with our SSC.

We stay connected with our community via parent conferences every semester and through the enrollment process. Every parent meets with his or her respective teacher upon enrolling and transitioning out of the program. Through our YD counselor, we have community organizations present in our classrooms. So far this year we have had: Job Corps, Discovery Youth Challenge, Union Apprenticeships and Community Colleges

We hold transition meetings with every parent every semester. We survey the parents twice a year at those meetings for their input. Parents are on the SSC where we review the LCAP, SIP plan, school wide goals and academic standards.

Visiting Committee comments:

GGCS stated that it must develop a plan to increase parent involvement. The IVC heard from staff that the school offers many opportunities for parents to be more active and attending school events, meetings and other occasions. However, due to the parent and student backgrounds, getting parents to be more actively and regularly involved in the school has been difficult.

The IVC, in conversations with staff about the status of its proposed plan for parent involvement, learned that parents participate by serving on the School Site Council, the school's principal greets parents who bring their students to school in the morning, and parents regularly attend more frequently the school wide awards BBQ for parents. The students presented instructional projects to their parents at the awards BBQ.

Other ways the school promotes more parent involvement include after school parent/student/teacher meetings, direct phone contact, and middle school weekly progress reports for parents.

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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.

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard P: Organizational Support: A quality online program has organizational support to oversee the instructional learning environment as it is conveyed through technology. Some organizational support services may be distributed between the programs and other entities, depending on the physical location where the students are taking their online courses. [iNACOL Standard P, 2009]

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

We bought new furniture for all sites to include stand up desks, chairs and casual seating. Every classroom student has access to a laptop, Internet, and Wi-Fi. We have high expectations and one simple rule: Be Cool at School. Teachers are expected to supervise students at all times.

Teachers supervise students at all times when they are on campus. All staff understands the policy and procedures related to safety.

Our entire program is built on relationships that encourage trust, caring, concern and high expectations. A good example of this is the fact that any student, parent or staff member can call the principal on his cell phone if there is a problem. The principal publishes his cell phone number in the handbook and hands it out on his business card. Most teachers do the same. We are here for our students.

Staff and Teachers consistently communicate by E-mail, phone/texting, face to face and at staff meetings. The principal visits sites every week to handle unexpected events and facilitate communication. Parents are called frequently.

Visiting Committee comments:

The school undertook an effort to finalize the behavior plan so that all sites are using consistent interventions, supports for all students, and consequences for disruptive students who do not follow the school wide behavior plan. The school actively supports positive behavior and attendance for all students. The school's counselor/social worker goes to each of the four school sites every week following a regular schedule. The counselor meets with students who request assistance directly or are referred from other school staff.

The Golden Gate Success Team meets weekly and includes the school counselor and other staff. They meet to discuss any student related crises and any incident intervention issues. The school also individual learning plans that better meet the needs of all students. The school supports students through modified scheduling for work or college attendance, concurrent enrollment with the community colleges, college to career counseling/workability/and work experience, mental health counseling, special education services, probation services, after-school tutoring and independent study at the high school level.

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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. Business, industry, and the community enhance these.

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard N: Organizational Support: A quality online program has student support services to address the various needs of students at different levels within the organization. The levels of support are appropriate and adequate for a student's success. [iNACOL Standard N, 2009]

Online Programs: iNACOL Standard O: Guidance Services: A quality online program has guidance services to support students and parents to ensure success of the online program. Depending on the program, these services are either directly provided by the program or a service provider, or in the case of supplemental programs, these services may be provided by the local school. [iNACOL Standard O, 2009]

Selected statements from the school application (optional):

On the curricular side, we offer the choice of art projects, computer projects, research papers, and accessibility to a high end MAC computer at all sites to create beats and music.

As for co-curricular activities, we have a tradition called the Golden Gate Challenge where one site can challenge another site in a sport or an academic event. We have had basketball challenges as well as an across the county Kahoots challenge. These challenges support two of the three learning outcomes: a) technological literate learner (on-line) and b) responsible citizen (sportsmanship).

After school, we have tutoring/credit recovery and two girls groups available to students, which addresses the last learner outcome: ...self-directed learner.

Visiting Committee comments:

The school indicated a need to develop more co-curricular activities. During the visit, the IVC became aware of several school-sponsored co-curricular activities. These include the Kahoots Program, Golden Gate Challenge (the Basketball tournament among the four school sites), and field trips one per each semester, award trips for attendance that included trips to the San Francisco Science Center and the Berkeley Science Center.

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Ongoing School Improvement

School wide Areas of Strength

The Committee commends the school for:

1. Doubling the Graduation Rate for school year 2016/17.
2. Adding an adult independent study program.
3. Significantly reducing chronic absenteeism rate.
4. Significantly reducing the suspension/behavior referral rate.
5. Introducing the school slogan: We're here to make good things happen for other people.
6. Increasing its co-curricular events that include Awards BBQ and parent involvement.
7. Creating a culture of love and caring.
8. Student satisfaction and positive responses about school.
9. The school has currently three students who have met graduation requirements and ten more students scheduled to graduate for school year 2017-2018
10. The Contra Costa County Office of Education for providing funding and opportunities for staff development for GGCS administration and faculty.
11. There is a strong and positive engagement between students and staff in classroom activities.

Critical Areas for Follow-up - The Initial Visiting Committee concurs with the school's identified areas that are outlined in the school wide action plan. These are summarized below:

1. The administration and school staff needs to increase parental engagement.
2. The administration and teachers need to strengthen the process for ongoing formative assessment, which includes project based learning and arts integration.
3. The administration and staff need to establish area(s) of focus for collaboration and staff development.

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In addition, the Initial Visiting Committee has identified areas that need to be strengthened:

1. Finalize ELA supplemental curriculum.
2. Refine and expand “Google Classroom.”
3. Develop a marketing plan to increase student enrollment.

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