



INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL
MID-CYCLE VISIT
SCHOOL PROGRESS REPORT

929 Second Street
Brentwood, CA

Liberty Union High School District

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Accrediting Commission for Schools
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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This document is also available in a digital format with hyperlinks to supporting documents. Please contact the Independence High School office at (925) 634-2589 to obtain the digital document.

I: Student/Community Profile Data

Independence High School (IHS) is an alternative education high school within the Liberty Union High School District (LUHSD). IHS's primary mission is to inspire all students to learn by providing opportunities for academic achievement and personal success. The school motto is Inspiration, Dedication, and Graduation.

IHS is located on the Community Education Center (CEC) campus in downtown Brentwood, California, an East Contra Costa County suburb of the San Francisco Bay Area. Brentwood (2020 population of 67,144) has transitioned from a traditional farming town to a suburban city and bedroom community where many families commute out of the area for work. Our district (approximately 8,200 students) and school serve the communities of Brentwood, Byron, Discovery Bay, Knightsen, and Oakley.

IHS was formally approved as an alternative high school/program of choice by the State of California Department of Education (CDE) in the year 2000 and is currently under the Dashboard for Alternative School Status (DASS). The school's initial WASC Candidate Report was in 2004, and since 2006 IHS has earned three consecutive 6-year accreditations while undergoing significant changes along the way.

IHS is an option for students 16yrs and older or for those with extenuating circumstances. The referral/application process generally starts with the comprehensive site counselor unless entering LUHSD from out of district. We serve students who have experienced academic, behavioral or personal difficulties; these students may not have been able to function comfortably at the comprehensive high school or simply desired a smaller school setting with individualized attention and less onsite contact. Our school and programs typically support students in a variety of ways; one to one, small group, and a traditional classroom setting with interaction and collaboration delivery format where students may work at home or within the confines of the school setting. All applications are reviewed by the director and approved students and families must go through an orientation process and sign a master agreement before they officially began with IHS.

We consider IHS to be a hybrid independent study model, designed to meet the needs of our students using an individualized instructional approach to learning with a rotating academic format (The Wheel, 2013). The Wheel is made up of a team of single subject matter teachers in English, Social Science, and Science. The Wheel replaced the traditional independent study model that consisted of one-to-one instruction with a multiple subject matter teacher. Math and several electives continue to be taught in a traditional classroom setting, much like at the comprehensive sites.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a full Distance Learning Plan (DLP) was developed and in March 2020 IHS began serving students remotely. Our DLP was refined over the summer months and we began the 2020-21 school year with a newly adopted DLP that included platforms such as Zoom and Canvas. A newly created online application process ([IHS Transfer Application](#))/([Solicitud de transferia IHS](#)) is now available on all district websites for ease of access.

Student Enrollment

Enrollment fluctuates throughout the year because of the open enrollment policy and the fact that we are reliant upon family choice. For example, according to DataQuest, in 2017-18 IHS served 450 students throughout the year, and according to our data system (AERIES) we saw no more than 288 at any given time. In 2018-19 DataQuest reports that we served 361 students throughout the year, and AERIES calculated no more than 265 at any given time. IHS supports our district comprehensive sites and will also accept new district enrollees from similar type schools outside of the district. We primarily serve students grades 10-12, but will accept ninth grade students under special circumstances. Returning students and families participate in walk-through registration days prior to the start of the school year (exception: 2020-21).

IHS began the 2020-21 school year with 179 students (82 percent in grades 11-12). With the uncertainty of the pandemic and a “safe return to school”, IHS continues to prepare and support the district with any student placement needs. California Basic Education Data System (CBEDS) data for the 2019-20 (below) highlights the diversity of IHS’s student population. The diversity of the student population at IHS and district are very similar in comparison.

	Total Enrollment	Hispanic /Latino	Amer. Indian	Asian	Filipino	African Amer.	Pacific Islander	White	Multiple
2019-20 CBEDS	202	34%	1%	1.5%	1.5%	7%	.5%	52%	2.5%

Attendance

Attendance (ADA) is based on work produced through both the independent study program and seat time classes. Our independent study work can be accepted and accounted for up to one month after its due date. Attendance rates for IHS have remained steady with a slight increase since 2017 (77.60%), 2018 (81.5%), 2019 (81.69%) until 2019-20 when the pandemic and full distance learning played a major role in less work completed (77.59%).

Depending on their academic needs, most students are required to attend school an average of six to eight hours per week and work independently at home an average of 25-30 hours per

week. Academic classes (including The Wheel) are 90 minutes long. Students are required to attend each class/appointment in its entirety.

Special Needs Students

Per Education Code, if a student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), it must specifically provide for enrollment in independent study. Prior to a student being referred to IHS, an IEP team holds a meeting to determine whether the placement is in the best interest of the student's academic, social, and emotional needs. Over the years our school has attracted a SPED population of approximately 10% of our total student population (not including those on 504's). In 2019-20, IHS supported twenty-four students with special needs (12%). Not only do we see specific learning disabilities, we also see a variety of special needs including mental and physical health conditions that prevent the student from attending a daily school program. All transfer students with an existing 504 plan are re-evaluated and a new, amended or exit plan is deemed appropriate by the 504 team. Due to the nature of our program and the existing supports provided, most 504 students that transfer, easily transition out of the plan. As an example, in 2019-20 we began the school year with eleven new 504 student transfers. Based on the embedded supports provided, the October CBEDs count resulted in only four remaining students who needed the additional support a 504 plan would offer.

IHS is committed to providing the highest quality of service to any student who requires additional assistance. Currently, we provide one full-time special education teacher to support the delivery of services and accommodations required. The district also provides other special services professionals such as psychologists, marriage-family therapists, speech pathologists, etc. as needed. Each student with an IEP is automatically scheduled into a Tutorial Support class/appointment (90 minutes per week) unless otherwise noted in the IEP. The appointment with the special education teacher is primarily one-to-one support.

English Learners

IHS does not typically serve a large population of English Learners (EL). The support offered is generally for EL levels three and beyond. In 2019-20, we supported twelve EL students (6%). According to the CDE data, twenty-six students (13%) were considered Fluent English Proficient and two that were originally classified as EL were later Re-designated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) by the end of the school year.

Socio-Economically Disadvantaged

At the end of the 2019-20 school year, the socio-economically disadvantaged (SED) student population was 29% of the total student population. The percentage of SED students tends to increase with our overall enrollment.

Foster and Homeless Youth

Multiple laws passed within the past decade imposed duties and rights related to the education of dependents, wards of the court in foster care and homeless youth. According to the data from CBEDS, the IHS foster youth population has remained very low in the past three years with zero qualifying in 2018-19, one in 2019-20, and with one currently enrolled at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year. The homeless population has fluctuated in the last few years with CEBEDS data reporting nine students in 2019, five in 2020, and one currently enrolled at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year; we anticipate an increase in the population by the end of the school year.

IHS follows district guidelines and board policies and complies with all laws and provisions such as [AB167/490](#), [McKinney-Vento Act](#).

Suspension Rates

According to DataQuest in 2017-18, IHS suspended 1.1% of the total student population, and 2018-19, 0.3% of our students were suspended. Although enrollment in 2019-20 was significantly lower, the suspension rate unofficially stayed under 1% (.9%). IHS has not had an expulsion since the year 2011-12. The very low suspension, expulsion, and truancy rates are one of the clear benefits of a small school and a testament to the culture created by staff and students. The staff also realizes that the significantly lower amount of time students are on campus compared to a traditional site may lead to less behavioral challenges.

Mindfulness and the ability to connect and engage with students in a non-judgmental environment has led to positive behavior outcomes. As a school of choice, our supportive environment encourages and facilitates both good behavior and academic proficiency. IHS strives to be proactive in minimizing the potential for any student to be suspended through the use of systems such as our Response to Intervention (RTI) that was previously used through 2019, and our newly adopted [Multi-Tiered Systems of Support](#) (MTSS).

Graduation

The CDE revised how graduation and dropout rates are calculated beginning in the 2016-17 school year. Instead of one-year graduation and dropout rates, a Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate is calculated that also accounts for dropouts. As an example, as DASS school, students that transfer from a non-DASS school to IHS as a fifth year senior and graduate in that year are counted in our graduation rate. For the 2017-18 school year, IHS had a cohort graduation rate of 82.9%. In 2018-19, the cohort graduation rate decreased to 76.7%, yet our SED and Hispanic population increased by about 3% into the high 80-90.5% graduation rate. The 2019-20 school year data has yet to be officially calculated (based on DASS).

Staffing

Currently, the IHS staff is comprised of fourteen (14) certificated and six (6) classified employees. Specific positions are listed below:

Certificated / Credentialed

- 1 full-time director/principal (Administrative Services Credential)
- 1 full-time counselor (Pupil Personnel Services Credential)
- 9 full-time certificated Core Subject teachers (Single Subject Credential) – one of which holds an Education Specialist Instruction Credential
- 1 full-time General Education Development teacher (Multiple Subject Credential)
- 2 part-time/hourly certificated teacher (retired/various credentials)

Classified Staff

- 1 full-time lead secretary
- 1 full-time shared secretary (Community Education Center)
- 1 full-time registrar/data technician
- 1 full-time shared campus supervisor (Community Education Center)
- 2 full-time shared custodians (Community Education Center)

Professional Staff Development Programs and Opportunities

IHS has focused on building community throughout the school by restructuring our independent study classrooms into Small Learning Communities (SLC) with the academic wheel format and utilizing the practices of Professional Learning Communities (PLC). Our staff collaborates to support student success through weekly professional learning workshops, PLC, SLC, departmental collaboration, school-wide staff meetings and Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meetings. ILT serves as a “steering committee” that shares the vision for the school, while members are responsible for implementing school-wide initiatives for instruction and implementation of school-wide enrichment and support for students and staff. Staff participates in various district, school and individual professional development activities throughout the school year. Specifically, at IHS every Wednesday is a dedicated PD day with a morning 8:00AM – 9:00AM period as well as a mid-day teacher collaboration hour (built-in time by principal). These practices not only allow training, but also give us an opportunity to facilitate the sharing and exchanging of ideas and best practices.

In addition, our district has been working over the last couple of years collaborating on the MTSS approach and more recently (2019-20) contracted with EPOCH Education (diversity, equity, inclusion) and McRel International (strategic design for improvement). IHS specifically began working closely with McRel in the fall 2019 collaborating on developing a more student-friendly version of curriculum.

School Safety, Cleanliness, and Facilities

IHS is located on a shared campus with Liberty Adult Education and the Gateway program (community-based instruction for adults 18-22 years of age with special needs). Although the main building is approximately 100 years old, it is a well-maintained and a safe campus for our students, staff and community. IHS is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and staff. The IHS daily student population is primarily housed in 8-10 classrooms (a ‘hallway and a half’ as we like to tell our students).

The school has a comprehensive [School Safety Plan](#) that is evaluated and updated on an annual basis by the SSC. All staff members are provided with emergency procedures and information. Disaster drills (lockdown, fire, earthquake, bomb threat, active shooter, etc.) are practiced regularly to better prepare staff and students in the event of an emergency. The last [Williams Compliance review](#) by the Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE) was conducted in 2018 in which IHS earned an “Exemplary 100%” rating. Although a yearly Williams Compliant review is no longer required, IHS continues to plan for it and the director conducts yearly safety inspections with district Maintenance Department to ensure a compliant facility.

We support a safe school environment by posting laws pertaining to non-students and visitors on campus. Additionally, staff is dedicated to being visible and vigilant in and around the classrooms. We also have a full-time campus supervisor who monitors the entire site, makes frequent classroom visits several times a day and works closely with the Brentwood Police Department and our School Resource Officer. The director has access to and monitors the campus-wide video camera surveillance system. This is a valuable and useful tool for safety and to help prevent occasional vandalism. As reflected in the [California Healthy Kids Survey 2019-20](#), IHS stakeholders continue to feel safe, supported and connected to the school.

Co- Curricular and Extra-Curricular Activities

Students are fortunate to have the opportunity to request enrollment in courses provided by the district (at comprehensive sites) as co-curricular. Each student’s approval is based on their specific graduation requirements and individual needs, such as continued enrollment in a specialty course (e.g. academy pathway, visual and performing arts, etc.). At IHS, we offer a student leadership class and often adjust our activities, clubs and social events based on the student population at the time. Some of our mainstay activities include, Back to School BBQ, Poetry Out Loud (POL), Spill the Tea, Multicultural and full inclusion months, Essay and Art contests, Be Kind month, Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) and the IHS Life After High School (LAHS) assemblies. Some students participate at the amateur level in extra-curricular activities outside of school such as motocross, parkour, acting, modeling, equestrian, etc. Extra-curricular activities such as high school athletics are not permitted while attending IHS (board policy).

Technology

Data collection and review of assessments and grades has been supported by both technology in the classroom and available through programs such as Illuminate, Data Director, Aeries, the new CA Dashboard, etc. Parents and students have the ability to view progress through the Aeries Parent Portal and now Canvas.

Students have all day access to the IHS Study Hall/computer lab that is equipped with at least twenty computers and several printers. Additionally, each classroom is equipped with at least two additional computers and printers and our math classrooms have two carts containing 25 laptops per cart. During full distance learning, the district supported all students and families in need of technology devices (laptop, Mifi). In the 2020-21 school year, we continue to distribute technology devices and support students and staff with their individual needs such as a laptop, Mifi and the additional resources found on our website: [Device and Internet Access](#), Access to Online Curriculum and other helpful instructions and tutorials surrounding technology needs ([Zoom Access](#), [IHS Clever to Canvas Tutorial](#), [Uploading Assignments](#)).

Financial Data

IHS is directly funded through its ADA and the LUHSD (approximately \$14,000 annually per student). This includes all educational costs ranging from direct salaries of teachers, custodial and maintenance, facilities, utilities, and administration. It also includes the costs of support services such as counseling, library and media services, and special State and Federal categorical funds. Additional funding over the years to support learning include but are limited to the TUPE grant awarded by the CCCOE and a CDE Secondary Specialized (SSP) grant originally awarded in the year 2013-14.

School Purpose/Student Learner Outcomes

Our school purpose is to inspire all students to learn by providing opportunities for academic achievement and personal success. Our students will graduate as self-directed learners who are effective, clear communicators and responsible citizens prepared to compete globally in the 21st century. The [IHS Mission, Vision and Student Learner Outcomes](#) (SLO's) are reviewed every few years or as needed through our Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) which includes representatives from a variety of departments and staff. The process is led by the director and decisions are made by a consensus then recommended to the School Site Council (SSC) for approval. The SSC collaborates and develops our [Single Plan for Student Achievement](#) (SPSA 2020-21) which is in line with district Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) goals, school specific goals (through staff meetings, professional development, etc.), including WASC Goals and/or recommendations.

ELA and Math are aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and mirror those of the comprehensive high school. Since our last visit, IHS has finalized the alignment of the New Generation of Science Standards (NGSS) and most recently the History-Social Science Content Standards (HSS). District Content Coaches have been in place for the past several years in ELA and Math to support departments with the transition of the standards. Additionally, in mathematics, we continue to utilize the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) practice tests and performance tasks to better support students.

Summary of Achievement Data since last visit

Improving performance and outcomes reflective of our school community is always a district wide goal. Over the last several years, IHS has met the State participation requirement on the CAASPP of 95%. With that said, each year we find that students are underperforming in both the ELA and Math portions of the CAASPP. Below are the results of the CAASPP for the years 2018 and 2019). *2020 CAASPP administration was cancelled by the State of California.

2018 CAASPP ELA Results	IHS	LUHSD	State
Standard Met or Exceeded	43.09%	57.53%	49.88%
Standard Nearly Met	34.15%		
Standard Not Met	22.76%		

2018 CAASPP Math Results	IHS	LUHSD	State
Standard Met or Exceeded	7.32%	30.71%	38.65%
Standard Nearly Met	31.71%		
Standard Not Met	60.98%		

2019 CAASPP ELA Results	IHS	LUHSD	State
Standard Met or Exceeded	29.76%	69.31%	51.10%
Standard Nearly Met	34.52%		
Standard Not Met	35.71%		

2019 CAASPP Math Results	IHS	LUHSD	State
Standard Met or Exceeded	9.64%	36.50%	39.73%
Standard Nearly Met	24.10%		
Standard Not Met	66.27%		

According to the 2018 and 2019 CAASPP data, the student performance levels in both ELA and Math show that the vast majority of students are not meeting the standards and fall far below in comparison to the district and State. Additionally, the CAASPP and ICAs and/or IABs results have shown that students generally perform better in the ELA assessments versus the Math assessments (across all genders, socio-economic status, ethnicity and disabilities) but neither subject has seen strong improvement.

As a school, IHS is always challenged with the fact that most of the transient student population are seniors or juniors in high school, behind academically (and state measures) and yet to be exposed to Algebra II prior to the CAASPP. Students enroll throughout the year at all different academic levels. Therefore, although we continue to do our best to improve student performance levels on the CAASPP, our school goals are always centered on graduation requirements and supporting the comprehensive sites.

In the last several years for example, we have seen an average increase of 40% in our junior population between the start of our school year and the third academic quarter just prior to CAASPP testing. With that said, our school district has made a decision to administer the CAASPP (ELA, math and science) to all juniors. This allows IHS very little time to make the impact we feel is necessary to influence more positive assessment results. Looking at scores in the district and at IHS, we believe this may have also led to test-taking burnout and/or loss of motivation, thus lower performance levels during the 2019 administration. The shorter-term nature of our student population makes it harder to draw direct correlations between our curriculum and instruction and student scores.

In ELA, IHS is in the third full year using Springboard curriculum. It is evident that our students are challenged with the rigor of the material including the writing assessments, and the critical thinking exercises. As a school and district, we made positive strides in ELA performance levels through 2018 but are somewhat perplexed as to why performance levels have since digressed. As previously stated, we believe that in 2019, test-taking burnout and/or loss of motivation may have caused lower performance levels.

In mathematics, due to the nature of our program, we often fall behind the district proposed pacing guide; our in-person instruction time is far less than the comprehensive sites. Additionally, many of our students come to us with truancy challenges surrounding the subject and most do not have a solid foundation in mathematics with little found success. Although we offer daily support in our open math labs, and we require one math lab per week, students often fail to take full advantage of these supports. As previously stated, we believe that in 2019, test-taking burnout and/or loss of motivation may have caused lower performance levels.

Credits earned often fluctuate but the majority of our students somewhat meet the minimum quarterly requirements for an IHS diploma (230). Based on graduation requirements, the average student should earn approximately 12.5 credits (not including math) quarterly. Currently, on average, students are earning approximately three-fourths of that number. As an example, below is a credit summary for students over the last two school years at the end of the first quarter.

2019-20 Q1: 202 students enrolled – 1,397 credits earned

2020-21 Q1: 179 students enrolled – 1,126.50 credits earned

On an average, with 179 students, the total credits earned should be approximately 1,210 credits. Credits earned for Q1 of 2020-21 school year during the COVID-19 pandemic and full distance learning decreased by 83.50.

While acknowledging challenges, we continue to create and implement many different systems, programs, and supports to increase academic achievement. Our MTSS has been refined and our Wheel Intervention Program/Plan (WIP) has been a highly successful when students are on campus. The [School Accountability Report Card](#) (SARC) is updated yearly with the CDE.

II: Significant Changes and Developments

Staffing Changes

Since our last visit, our staffing has changed dramatically (refer to Chapter I Staffing). IHS lost four positions including our Assistant Principal, one English and one History teacher, as well as a special education paraprofessional. Our long-time counselor as well as our special education teacher retired and were recently replaced with transfers new to our independent study model. During this time, we also increased staffing by adding a study hall paraprofessional (tutoring support), but unfortunately after two years the individual resigned and the position is currently no longer available. Additionally, in the 2018-19 school year we solidified our math department by hiring a veteran district teacher to join the team. As noted in our 2018 Self-Study, securing a permanent second math teacher has been a challenge for us over several years. The department is solid and working collaboratively towards a common consistent goal of student achievement.

The impacts of these changes have created additional challenges on office staff and administration. Although this may be the case, IHS staff members have learned to be fluid and flexible. The school has not seen an increase in student enrollment, thus the daily/weekly impact on teachers has not been as impacted. With that said, in order to reach each individual student, the way we teach children has changed and teachers continue to develop and adapt.

Shift to Virtual Learning

The transition to virtual learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 was a somewhat significant shift, but soon we found that due to our already in-place hybrid type model, we were better prepared than our district colleagues at other sites were. Our school was the only school in the district that had been primarily using an LMS – PowerSchool (albeit to a limited degree), enough though that all staff and students were familiar with its basic functionality when we switched to distance learning. IHS began posting assignments and having students submit work online with little challenges. However, this changed in late July/early August when our district adopted the LMS Canvas.

The school board ultimately decided to return to school through full distance learning and the 2020-21 school year start date was postponed and moved to August 10, 2020 (two weeks later). The later start date allowed us to better prepare, adjust our Distance Learning Plan (DLP) and calendar three specific full days of professional development (PD). While this transition was more difficult than in March, faculty and staff had several days of committed training on the uses of Zoom and Canvas and further collaboration on our DLP. The district also provided a stipend for a teacher on campus to become the site's Canvas Coach to work with faculty and students on issues related to the LMS, Zoom and any other technology related questions.

Social-Emotional Learning

Like so many other schools, the transition to distance learning has affected students on a social emotional level. Our personnel are reporting much higher levels of depression and anxiety among our student populations. Faculty are spending more time discussing SEL issues with students in this DL environment than they have in prior years. As a school, we are committing a great deal of time to working with students on these challenges. Faculty have received additional SEL training in the last year, while continuing to work closely with the school counselor and administration to support students' social-emotional needs.

Changes to Curriculum and Instruction

As of the end of the 2019-20 school year, all core subject departments fully transitioned and incorporated new standards/frameworks into their curriculum. Faculty have spent the last 3-4 years receiving professional development and working with curriculum coaches to understand the new standards, create and test new curriculum and then begin the continual revision, test,

reflect and revise process. The social studies department was the most recent department to complete their transition to the new state frameworks after working with the UC Berkeley History-Social Science Project for four years.

Changes with Professional Development

As previously stated in Chapter I, our district has been working over the last couple of years collaborating on the MTSS approach and more recently (2019-20) contracted with EPOCH Education (diversity, equity, inclusion) and McRel International (strategic design for improvement). Although virtual during the fall of 2020-21 school year, the principal and one teacher continue to participate in EPOCH training. As far as the work with McRel, we specifically began working closely in the fall 2019 collaborating on developing a more student-friendly version of curriculum. Wheel teachers began piloting their first revised assignments when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred and we shifted to distance learning. This school year (2020-21), we have decided to postpone the McRel work, as our priority has obviously shifted to providing a new safe environment through distance learning (Canvas, Zoom) while supporting all stakeholders in engagement and social emotional needs.

Since March 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic, PD days at IHS have primary been used for collaboration and training surrounding our DL plan of action, ongoing trainings surrounding distance learning, and our WASC Mid-Cycle Report and visit preparation.

Distance learning specific action items:

- IHS DLP initially created in March 2020. The DLP was in place through June 2020.
- District DL plan to school board for safe return to school for the 2020-21 school year – July 22, 2020.
- Return to school pushed back two weeks with a start date of August 10 instead of July 22, 2020.
- IHS 2020-21 DLP for the first 3 weeks of school “Go Slow to Go Fast” was initially developed by the principal in July 2020 as the faculty was on summer break. Some discussions and collaboration occurred virtually and through email.
- Districtwide Staff Development Day surrounding distance learning training in Canvas, Zoom, etc. – August 5-6
- IHS DLP refined in person, including how we will onboard students, “Go Slow to Go Fast, distribute schedules, technology, textbooks, and complete all master agreements – August 7, 2020.
- Continued Wednesday PD mornings surrounding topics such as equity and access for student engagement, SEL/culture, instructional strategies and grading classwork guidelines.

- Canvas Coach has held continuous trainings on Canvas, Zoom, instructional strategies, etc. during teacher PREPs and common collaboration time (Wednesday afternoons).
- Currently, we have been in discussions and collaborating (according to district, county and state guidelines) about how our DLP will change when/if we return in January 2021.

III: Engagement of Stakeholders in Ongoing School Improvement

The school community, including staff, students and parents are engaged in the governance of the school through their participation in various site and district committees and councils, including our Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), DELAC/ELAC meetings, School Site Council (SSC), Student Leadership, and Faculty and Staff Department Meetings.

The school community is informed of how they can participate in the school's governance for the first time each school year during walk-through registration. In addition, all information is posted on our school website and social media accounts. Throughout the school year, we invite and remind parents about ways in which they can participate in school decision-making groups such as the School Site Council and the Safety Committee through letters, emails, phone calls and Blackboard Connect Ed messages.

District administration is consulted, and regular meetings are held surrounding the district LCAP to solicit input from all stakeholders several times a year. District administrators have presented LCAP goals to our staff through meetings and emails.

At least annually, the ILT and the SSC collaborates and develops our SPSA in line with district LCAP goals and school specific goals based on our self-study. Implementation and monitoring of our goals and areas for growth are a concentrated effort by all stakeholders.

The WASC coordinator and director/principal, with input from the ILT and all staff members, primarily developed the current Mid-Cycle Report. The whole staff has regularly (during department meetings and/or staff meetings) analyzed the data available and discussed progress on our school-wide goals and areas for growth. This school year we have spent time has a whole group discussing our progress and challenges from the last three years as well as best ways to move forward.

IV: Progress of the Critical Areas for Follow-up

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-Up (from previous WASC Visiting Committee):

1. PLC and SLC meetings are lacking data to identify the effectiveness of IHS' chosen instructional methodologies.

Progress:

As a school we continue to lean heavily on our existing formative and summative assessments (which are done in a wide variety of formats including, oral discussion, written assessments, projects and hands-on application of learning) to determine the extent of effectiveness of our instructional methodologies. While we as a school participate in state and district wide testing, we find these assessments to lack value because of the unique nature of our school. Our student population is highly transient in which often means students are not in sync with district pacing guides. Therefore, scoring from these larger assessments rarely reflects what our students have actually learned, nor do the scores have relevance when received months later when the make-up of our population has once again changed due to transfers in and out of our school during that time.

Several of our departments have piloted different versions of school site entrance and exit assessments to determine what students have actually learned (both knowledge and skills) while at our school. Our English department for example, has piloted using our Read 180 skills assessment as a way to gauge student literacy at the beginning and ending of their time with us. The challenge so far has been the exit assessment; students often transfer, move or leave quickly thus making it challenging to get reliable exit data. These topics and challenges continue to be under discussion in departments. It is our plan to have some system of entrance and exit assessment developed within the next year or two.

2. Along with meeting with students and differentiating lessons individually, there exists room for growth by identifying potentially problematic lessons which could be identified as needing revision by consistently tracking formative assessments.

Progress:

With the changes in standards and frameworks in the last few years, curriculum has been updated extensively since our last WASC visit. In addition, with the transition to an online LMS it has become easier to make changes to assignments and quickly roll them out within the entire department. As such, nearly all courses have been updated and the few that have not will be in the near future. Department members continue to have ongoing conversations and collaborate regarding assignments and make adjustments as needed. The plan is to get back to working with McRel next school year.

3. Continue to develop individual learning plans including college and career indicators.

Progress:

Our students regularly have individual conversations with their primary teachers to assess their progress toward their personal and academic goals. Referrals to our counselor or principal are made as needed so that students can receive more specialized counseling on their goals or changes to their education plans. These conversations run the gamut from helping students access concurrent enrollment with the comprehensive sites and colleges to discussing other post-high school educational goals and careers. The counselor offers many workshops with the local community college, Los Medanos College (LMC) and before March 2020 has held Life After High School assemblies.

The school ILT continues to discuss and enact various programs, projects and methodologies to increase the number of our students meeting the college and career readiness indicators. This includes allowing access to a career readiness community college class taught by our counselor (dual enrollment); using online district common assessments to familiarize and teach students online and standardized testing skills; increasing access to a-g courses not offered at IHS.

4. To incorporate technology to support instruction when engaging students in the “wheel”.

Progress:

As noted in the above sections, due to the transition to distance learning a great deal of technology has been incorporated into our instruction and based on the success of using the Canvas platform these changes will likely largely be maintained once we return to in person instruction.

Additional identified areas that need to be strengthened (school self-study):

Goal 2: Strengthen student academic achievement in all core subjects.

A. Increase the number of credits students achieve each semester to a level that shows satisfactory progress based on a personalized education plan.

Progress:

We continue to strengthen our supports for students to ensure that they are meeting their academic goals. This includes early and frequent interventions when students are not submitting assignments on the schedule created to achieve their goals. As noted in Chapter I, the average student should earn approximately 12.5 credits (not including math) quarterly. Currently, on average, students are earning approximately three-fourths of that number. These interventions are documented through our [Multi-Tiered Systems of Support](#) with options such as, access to Math Labs, flexible scheduling, counseling services and tutorial support classes.

While these supports are certainly impacting student achievement, we have recognized that this goal as it is currently written, is very hard to track and validate, due to the nature of our transient student population. Therefore, we are wrapping the intent of this goal (which is to increase student achievement and to find ways to assess whether or not our systems are efficacious) into other parts of our goals. We continue to research various ways to support the evolving academic needs of the student and evaluate those supports through all stakeholder meetings.

B. Increase access to and participation in remediation and academic support opportunities, particularly with struggling and underperforming students.

Progress:

Most of our student population could be in some way classified as underperforming or struggling and therefore most of our support options are available to all students. For example, students have daily access to Math labs where our math teachers are available for any questions students may have (required at least once a week). When we have been working in person students have also had daily access to our study hall where they can work, receive tutoring and have access to any technology that would support their academic success. Our teachers have an open door policy, so that if students need help they are generally welcome to drop by at any time to ask questions or get clarification on concepts, assignments or projects. During DL, this has transformed into students often texting, calling or Zooming with teachers.

Our teaching staff also frequently refers students to our counselor and/or principal for conversations to better understand students' needs and provide the student/families with supports that fit those needs. These supports may include enrollment in our tutorial support classes, after school tutoring and/or additional time spent on campus (when available).

In 2018, we introduced Edgenuity online courses as an additional option for credit recovery. Students enrolled in Edgenuity meet weekly with their Edgenuity teacher to review progress and answer any course related questions. Since it is the expectation that students work on their Edgenuity courses for 3-5 hours outside of class time, students have ongoing access to their Edgenuity teacher for questions and other needs throughout the week. Since its inception (as of August 2020), IHS students have earned 1,136 credits through the program. During the 2019-20 (COVID-19 pandemic) school year, credits earned decreased by 730 (see below).

Credits Earned Through Edgenuity by Year

School Year	During the School Year	Summer Session	Total Credits Earned
2018-19	475	458	933
2019-20	44	159	203

For students who are interested in or may need an alternative option for graduation, we introduce and discuss our Bridgeway program. Bridgeway is our district high school GED program under the umbrella of IHS that supports all students by preparing them for all four equivalency tests. Students meet daily for two and half hours (AM or PM class) with our GED teacher. On an average, throughout the school year, 30-40 students take advantage of this program. Over the last four school years, we have averaged thirty-four successful GED completers (graduates) through this program (see below). Since 2016, Bridgeway graduates have been allowed and encouraged to participate in the IHS graduation ceremony.

Bridgeway (GED) Graduates by Year

School Year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Total Students	28	39	34	32

C. Continue to support and enhance hands-on learning-based programs such as the OWL and LTP programs.

Progress:

As a school, we continue to guide students towards these two programs which encourage hands-on learning as a means to motivate, engage and provide students real world soft skills. Our Outdoor Wetlands Learning (OWL) program continues to be popular with our students, as we have seen our enrollment in this class at the max capacity (16) for the last three-four years. In this program students learn about the environment and teach ecology to elementary school students using their ecological road show field trips. Our Literacy through Theater and Performance (LTP) program garners the dedication of many of our students, most participating in our Poetry Out Loud (POL) competition, where our students frequently place in regional competitions. All staff continue to support the programs by encouraging student enrollment. Our principal is able to create flexible time throughout the year and in the master schedule so that these programs can flourish. Both programs are financially supported through school funds and grant money.

Goal 3: Ensure that all students are college and/or career ready upon graduation.

A. Continue to improve and expand that LAHS program, giving students more access to resources and knowledge to make viable post-high school plans, including career exploration opportunities.

Progress:

In the last few years, we have continued to build this program by increasing our communication and ties to our local community college – Los Medanos College (LMC). We now have a dedicated liaison with LMC, who works with us to provide regular workshops on how to complete financial aid forms, and to help with information on the career and college related

programs that LMC provides students. We have also enacted field trips to LMC to orient students to the campus. Additionally, our counselor now teaches a cross-enrolled class through LMC called “Intro to Career Exploration” which students are strongly encouraged to take.

We continue to have quarterly LAHS assemblies which showcase colleges and/or careers to provide students with more options for their post high school lives. Assemblies are mandatory for those students working onsite and optional for those learning from home on that specific day. We make every effort to schedule at least one LAHS assembly on each day of the week throughout the school year. Producing assemblies like this have become more difficult to accomplish in our current distance learning model.

B. Focus on building student’s “soft skills” including communication and critical thinking skills.

Progress:

Every department has tackled the need to build student’s soft skills. For instance, our English department has created weekly quick-write activities that focus on SEL as well as encouraging students to participate in scheduled activities such our POL club and competition. As another example, our math department has been focusing on building real world financial skills through teaching budgeting and banking skills. Several of our elective classes also focus on soft skills including our Yoga class which teaches mindfulness for stress reduction. Primary teachers also work with students to create calendars and other tools to increase their time management skills. Student activities such as Spill the Tea create opportunities for staff and students to “be real” and have conversations that spur creative thinking as well as empathy.

V: Updated School Goals and Schoolwide Action Plan/SPSA

Updated/Modified School Goals

Goal 1: Support the social-emotional needs of the student through Social Emotional Learning.

Specifically – Increase the supports of student’s social and emotional needs, while institutionalizing systems for Social-Emotional Learning during distance learning.

- A. Continue ongoing professional development for staff and faculty on the social and emotional needs of our diverse student population.
- B. Find creative ways to build into current curriculum skill sets (including soft skills) that will assist students with navigating daily life.
- C. Create, support and showcase school and student success that brings our school community together in positive ways.

Goal 2: Meet state and federal accountability measures.

Specifically – Ensure ALL students are college and career ready upon graduation.

- A. Increase access to, and participation in, remediation and academic support opportunities with emphasis on those students who are struggling or underperforming.
- B. Continue to support and enhance programs and activities (such as the OWL program and the LAHS program) that provide students with hands-on career related experiences to expand their knowledge of their post high school college and career options.
- C. Investigate, create and/or modify current methods regarding assessment of student learning/progress toward individual academic and career goals such as a personalized education plan (beyond the state CCI).

Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA)

The Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) is reviewed on at least an annual basis by both the instructional leadership team and School Site Council. This plan is in line with district Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) goals, school specific goals (through staff meetings, professional development, etc.), including WASC Goals and/or recommendations. The 2020-21 [Single Plan for Student Achievement](#) reflects changes made based on our learning over the last three years. Only minor changes have been made, with a general focus on condensing and combining goals for clarity and for more effective assessment of progress.