



# Colorado's Unified Improvement Plan for Schools

**PALMER HIGH SCHOOL UIP 2019-20** | School: PALMER HIGH SCHOOL | District: COLORADO SPRINGS 11 | Org ID: 1010 | School ID: 6680 |  
Framework: Performance Plan: Meets 95% Participation | Draft UIP

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## Executive Summary

If we...

### IMPROVE TIER 1 INSTRUCTION AND PLC WORK

#### Description:

Tier 1 instruction needs to be strengthened to meet the needs of our students, including gifted and talented students. PLCs are dedicated weekly meetings where teachers meet to improve their instruction. Good Tier 1 instruction and PLCs are connected to provide the best lessons to increase student achievement and growth. Teachers will need to rebuild their curriculum to embed PSAT/SAT standards to prepare students for the April tests. These standards can be embedded into our MYP courses and Junior level core content courses. Our goal is to engage "all" students in good first instruction that is standards based, rigorous, varied, and replete with purposefully planned, targeted, and strong instructional strategies. Teachers will collaborate in their PLCs to support one another and create MYP lesson plan units designed to engage students to access depth of knowledge through critical thinking and inquiry. Teachers will have the opportunity to utilize AVID strategies to help bring students access to deeper thinking and the ability to apply their knowledge.



## Then we will address...

### PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES ADAPTING TO NEW HIGH STAKES TESTS

#### Description:

With the new 2020 standards and the skills assessed on the College Board Suite of Assessments, teachers will need to continue to rebuild their curriculum to embed these standards and skills to prepare students. They will need to monitor their students for growth from August through April, using quality quarterly assessments and use interventions when students are not growing. Palmer teachers will use MYP unit planners to plan and deliver quality instruction replete with inquiry and authentic literacy to engage their learners.



### SCHOOL CULTURE

#### Description:

Staff continues to work on improving the skills necessary to engage students who come to school with a variety of challenging situations.



### ALIGNED COURSES AND GRADING PRACTICES

#### Description:

Palmer 9th and 10th grade MYP courses need to have more consistent curriculum, assessment, and grading practices. Students can be in the same grade level and have the same class, yet have a very different learning experience. Teachers need to have autonomy to deliver their instruction in their own style; however, their assessments and grading practices need more uniformity.



## Then we will change current trends for students

### PLCS AND TIER 1 INSTRUCTION IMPROVEMENT

#### Description:

Teachers lack the consistency in executing the relationship building and structures it takes to face the difficult classroom challenges with students from poverty. Research indicates that relationships and consistency and structure are two key factors to support struggling students to achieve academically.

Through our departments and PLCs, we need to focus on creating data driven lessons that are aligned to new state and college board standards and deliver them with a structured and rigorously engaging environment. Our goal is that teachers will utilize AVID instructional approaches to strengthen Tier 1, which will make Tier 2 work easier and more targeted, helping us achieve our intentional building desired state and focus to engage "all" learners.



Access the School Performance Framework here: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/performance>

## Improvement Plan Information

### Additional Information about the school

Our current SPF rating is Meets 95% Participation with 58.9/ 100. Last school year, Palmer teachers collaborated and focused on our two strategies, but our SPF decreased by 5.4 points from 64.3/100 to 58.9/100. We worked purposefully in PLCs to embed College Board skills into our curriculum and deliver rigorous and focused tier 1 instruction. We decreased in two out of three Indicators, falling short in Academic Achievement and Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness. As Palmer continues to adapt to our changes, we will continue to focus on strengthening our connection of Professional Learning Communities with good Tier 1 instruction. We will continue to work hard to improve our student achievement and prepare our students for college and career and workforce readiness. We will also continue to focus on our FRL, ELL, and Special Needs students to close the achievement gap.

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## Narrative on Data Analysis and Root Cause Identification

### Description of School Setting and Process for Data Analysis

Palmer High School is located in the heart of beautiful Downtown Colorado Springs. This location benefits Palmer's students, providing them with the opportunity to experience

being a citizen in an urban environment, while getting a taste of a college like atmosphere. Instructionally, Palmer students are challenged by teachers who plan purposefully to

deliver rigorous instruction. There is a positive academic climate at Palmer. Palmer has been nationally ranked by Newsweek and US News as a top American high school.

Palmer High School has an IB/MYP/DP program, many AP classes, a nationally recognized Tutoring Center and a highly educated teaching staff. We have implemented core

MYP courses for all ninth and 10th grade students. We have AVID 9th through 12th grade Elective courses and AVID instructional strategies are being utilized in our Core departments.

Currently, 1578 students are enrolled. We have a diverse student body with 777 white, 557 Hispanic or Latino.

193 Black or African American, 21 Asian, 19 American Indian, and 11 Pacific Islander students. We have 107 special education students and 56 English Language Learners

Moreover, the schools' students are primarily from low income homes with 54.7%, of the student body eligible for free and reduced priced lunch (up from 43 percent in 2013) and a student mobility rate of 23 percent.

47.6% of Palmer's students in 2018-2019 were permitted in from outside our boundary. 32.6% were In-District permits while 15% were out of district. 2019-2020 permits have very similar percentages to last year's.

A summary of IB and AP program demographics includes the following:

MYP/ IB:

Grade 9 general population has 51% students of color, while MYP Honors has 28% students of color. Grade 10 general population has 51% students of color while MYP Honors has 33% students of color. Grade 11 general population has 48% students of color while Full Diploma has 27% students of color. Grade 12 general population has 52% students of color while Full Diploma has 45% students of color. Course Candidates include 39% students students of color.

AP:

AP students demographic data includes 278 students enrolled in AP classes: 64.7 white, 23% Hispanic, 6.5% Black, 3.2% Asian, 1.8% American Indian, and .07% Native Hawaiian.

Palmer High School administration and teaching staff is dedicated to improving expanded access to upper level courses for all of our students.

District 11 is conducting a pilot at one traditional high school in 2018-2019 to determine equity in course taking by disaggregated groups. This pilot will assist in the ongoing alignment of course codes used by District 11 and those used by CDE and will allow a thorough and accurate reporting of Course Taking Pattern analysis.

The following is our Mc Kinney-Vento protocol:

The parents/guardians of all students who enroll in District 11 fill out enrollment paperwork that includes questions about the family's living situation. If parents/guardians indicate that they are living in a potentially McKinney-Vento eligible situation, an enrollment follow-up letter is given to the family to gather further information. Both the enrollment form and the follow-up letter are faxed to the Title I office for a determination of McKinney-Vento status. Schools are notified either way (eligible or not eligible). In the event that a family becomes eligible for McKinney-Vento during the school year, school secretaries/data processors/registrars/liaisons are trained to inform parents/guardians of their right to remain at that school, regardless of where the family is currently living, with district-provided transportation, if the residence is outside the school of origin's attendance areas or in a transported zone.

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## Prior Year Targets

**Provide a summary of your progress in implementing the Major Improvement Strategies and if they had the intended effect on systems, adult actions, and student outcomes (e.g. targets).**

Palmer High School missed most prior year targets despite implementing a positive and effective professional development plan focused on Jensen's book, Poor Students. Rich Teaching. We also rolled out our PBIS, Pride Honor Strength campaign which positively recognized colleagues and students throughout the year. PLCs worked to engage "all" of our students and planned purposeful and engaging lessons. Palmer High School Intervention, Special Education, and English Language Development departments planned to train our targeted students on the College Board Suite of Assessments and WIDA test taking strategies and content through Study Skills classes and all content classrooms, teaching students how the tests should be taken (bubbling in answer sheets and reading text to respond etc...) and the content skills tested using preparation materials.

The data from our SPF does not necessarily show the intended effect of our strategies for Academic Achievement and Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness; however we did have positive growth with our Math Students with Disabilities and English Language Proficiency, which can be attributed to our teachers in Intervention, Special Education, and English Language Development departments embracing and executing the strategy to prepare our students well for their assessments.

Overall, we need to improve our efforts with providing solid tier one instruction and focusing our PLCs on the Quarterly Data that will guide good first instruction.

**Based on your reflection and evaluation, provide a summary of the adjustments that you will make for this year's plan.**

For the 2019-2020 school year, we will be continuing with our Major Improvement Strategies, focusing primarily on Improving Tier 1 instruction and PLC work. We no longer have our Building Leadership Team due to mass cuts to our staff; however, we will continue with the concepts of the book study from 2018-2019 while rebooting ourselves as an IB World School with a whole school MYP Program.

One major adjustment is that we will work even harder to take AVID school wide. Our hopes are to dive deeper into professional development on WICOR and AVID organizational skills so that students can access the structural knowledge and classrooms will focus on the IB attribute, Inquiry. We want our students to critically think and engage in Authentic Literacy with discussion and writing that digs deep into inquiry and depth of knowledge. We will showcase these strategies at monthly site team meetings and staff meetings. We also want to build a video library of instructional strategies, where teachers can access methodologies and engage in online blogs about them. We also want to provide monthly lunch trainings focused on relationship building and behavior in classrooms.

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## Current Performance

- Last year, Palmer High School focused on the following two strategies:
  - Tier 1 instruction needs to be strengthened to meet the needs of an ever changing student body. PLCs are dedicated weekly meetings where teachers meet to analyze data and plan to meet students' needs. Good Tier 1 instruction and PLCs are connected to provide the best lessons to increase student achievement and growth. With the advent of the College Board suite of assessments, teachers will need to rebuild their curriculum to embed PSAT/SAT standards to prepare students for the April tests. These standards can be embedded into our MYP courses and Junior level core content courses.
  - Palmer already has a wonderful school culture steeped in years of academic and student life success. However, with our changing demographics and 2017 cultural shifts, we need to improve our culture for both students and staff. Our Culture and Climate Committee branched off into 4 groups: Marketing, Building and Classroom, Activities, and Recognition. The Marketing group has already launched our new logo and next steps will be to start recognizing students and staff. Our BLT has taken on staff climate with our Jensen book study, and staff is remarking on what a positive kick off to the 2018-2019 year we have had.

Our 2018 SPF was at **MEETS** 64.3/100.

During the 2017-2018 school year, Palmer teachers collaborated and focused on our two strategies, raising our SPF 11.5 points from 52.8/100 to 64.3/100 by working purposefully in PLCs to embed College Board skills into our curriculum and delivering rigorous and focused tier 1 instruction. We increased in all three Indicators, falling short in Academic Achievement despite an increase of 3.6 points in this indicator.

During the 2018-2019 school year, Palmer teachers worked on the two bulleted strategies above and despite our efforts, decreased by 5.4 points, retaining **MEETS** status on the SPF but falling to 58.9/100. Compared to the 2018 SPF, Palmer decreased by 2.2 points in the Academic Achievement Indicator/ **Approaching** and 4.7 points in the Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness indicator **Approaching**, while increasing 1.5 points in the Academic Growth indicator/ **MEETS**.

## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The highlight of Palmer's Academic Achievement is that we reached **MEETS** for All students CO PSAT EBRW with a mean score of 462.2 which earned us 6/8 points. We were **Approaching** or **Does Not Meet** in all other groups for the Academic Achievement indicator.

For CO PSAT EBRW English Learners we were **Does Not Meet** despite increasing our Mean 3.5 points to 390.4. For CO PSAT EBRW Free/ Reduced Lunch Eligible we were **Approaching**, dropping 7.7 points to a mean of 429.2. Our Minority students category was **Approaching** dropping 5.6 points to a mean of 436.9. Finally, Students with Disabilities dropped 17.1 points to a mean 342 **Approaching**.

We fell short for CO PSAT Math for All students with an **Approaching** mean score of 435.8, dropping 5.6 points. For CO PSAT Math English Learners, we were **Does Not Meet** dropping 3.1 points to a mean of 381.2. For CO PSAT Math Free/ Reduced Lunch Eligible we were **Does Not Meet** dropping 9.7 points to a mean of 409.1 points. For CO PSAT Math Minority students we were **Does Not Meet** dropping 9.9 points to a mean of 411.7. For CO PSAT Math Students with Disabilities we were **Does Not Meet** even though we increased 12.1 points to a mean of 341.6.

For CMAS Science, we were **Approaching** dropping 18.4 points to a mean of 596.7. For CMAS Science English Learners we were at **Does Not Meet** despite increasing 4.6 points to a mean of 501.1. For CMAS Science Free/ Reduced Lunch Eligible we were **Approaching**, dropping 5.1 points to a mean of 581.7. For CMAS Science Minority students we were **Approaching** despite increasing 4.8 points to a mean of 579.5.

**Delving into the subcategories for Achievement, we have our work to do. If we could hold stable in CO PSAT Evidence Based Reading & Writing, increase the school mean 15 points in CO PSAT 10 and increase the school mean 15 points in CMAS Science, we will improve to an overall **MEETS** category for the Academic Achievement Indicator.**

## ACADEMIC GROWTH

The highlights of Palmer's Academic Growth is that we saw the best MGP numbers overall among the district's High Schools. Overall, we reached **MEETS** with 1.5 point increase.

We scored **MEETS** for all students for both CO PSAT/SAT EBRW with an MGP of 50 which was **MEETS** with a 6 point MGP decrease. For CO PSAT/SAT Math we had a 51 MGP, which was **MEETS** with a 2.5 point decrease.

Our greatest increase in student groups was an outstanding 30 point MGP increase in CO PSAT/SAT Math Students with Disabilities and an amazing 27 point

MGP increase in ELP English Language Proficiency. In both of these subgroups we were **MEETS**

Looking at the student groups, we scored the following:

#### **CO PSAT/ SAT EBRW**

Our English Learners scored **Approaching** with an MGP of 44.

Our Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible scored **Approaching** with an MGP of 45.

Our Minority Students scored **MEETS** with an MGP of 50.5.

Our Students with Disabilities scored **Approaching** with an MGP of 46.

#### **CO PSAT/ SAT Math**

Our English Learners scored **Approaching** with an MGP of 46.

Our Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible scored **Approaching** with an MGP of 49.

Our Minority Students scored **Approaching** with an MGP of 49

Students with Disabilities scored **MEETS** with an MGP of 56..

#### **ELP**

Our English Language Proficiency (ELP) scored **MEETS** with an MGP of 57.

Our On track to EL Proficiency scored **Approaching** with a 37.5% which was an increase of 7.5%.

Last year's narrative included: "The prospects for improving Academic Growth for our English Language learners is good, as our ESL department plans to implement an appropriate amount of College Board skills practice into their lessons." This happened within our SPED and ELD department and their hard work paid off.

#### **POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS**

Palmer had an overall **Approaching** for PSWR, scoring 16.5/30, which is a decrease of 4.7 points We scored **Approaching** for All students for CO SAT EBRW with a score of 498.9 points dropping 16.5 points. We scored **Approaching** for All students for CO SAT Math with a score of 479 which is a 19.5 point decrease. With Dropout, we scored **Approaching** for All students with 2.6% which is an increase of .6% For Matriculation, we scored **Approaching** for All students with 60.1% which is an increase of 3.1%. While we scored **MEETS** for All students for Graduation with an 90.6% which is an increase of .9%.

Looking at the student groups for each area, the breakdown is as follows:

#### CO SAT EBRW

Our EL scored **Does Not Meet** with a rate/score of 413.7. We need an decrease of 10.5 points. We need a score of 458 for **Approaching** .

Our Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible scored **Approaching** with a rate/score of 479. We need an increase to 501.3 for **MEETS**

Our Minority Students scored **Approaching** with a rate/score of 485.7. We need an increase to 501.3 for **MEETS**

#### CO SAT Math

Our EL scored **Does Not Meet** with a rate/score of 388.4 We need an increase 439.9 for **Approaching**

Our Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible scored **Approaching** with a rate/score of 459.8. We need an increase to 488 for **MEETS**

Our Minority Students scored **Approaching** with a rate/score of 462.8. We need an increase to 488 for **MEETS**

#### Dropout

Our English Learners scored **Does Not Meet** with a rate/score of 6.3% which is a 4.9 percent increase. We need a 5.0-2.0 score to reach **Approaching** .

Our Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible scored **Approaching** with a rate score of 2.6%. We need a rate score of 2.0 to .5 to reach **MEETS** .

Our Minority Students scored **Approaching** with a rate score of 2.3%. We need a rate score of 2.0 to .5 to reach **MEETS** .

Our Students with Disabilities scored **Approaching** with a rate score of 4.7%. We need a rate score of 2.0 to .5 to reach **MEETS** .

#### Matriculation

2 year Higher Education Institution No Rating at 16.9%.

4 year Higher Education Institution No rating at 39.3%.

Career and Technical Education No Rating at 4.4%.

#### Graduation

Our English Learners had a rate of 7yr **MEETS** with a rate/score of 93.1% which is stable.

Our Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible had a rate of 6yr **MEETS** with a rate/score of 86.9%.

Our Minority Students had a rate of 6yr **MEETS** with a rate/score of 91.2%.

Our Students with Disabilities had a rate of 6yr **Approaching** with a rate/score of 76.9%. We need to be below 85% to reach MEETS

Department chairs and administration have worked together to make sure that PLCs create solid Quarterly Assessments and use their data to measure student growth and plan to differentiate for students who are not growing.

2019-2020 Quarterly Benchmark data is as follows:

Quarterly Benchmark data for Palmer's four core departments is as follows:

#### World History/ Geography 9th grade

255 students tested on 5 Paragraph Essay with multiple choice questions (SAT style) on the Renaissance

Pre-Test/ 0-7 MYP Criterion Rubric

0-4 92%

5-7 8%

#### US History 10th grade

213 students tested on 5 Paragraph Essay Historical Essay Pre-test

IBO 1: 3%

IBO 2: 11%

IBO 3: 31%

IBO 4:42%

IBO 5: 11%

IBO 6: 2%

IBO 7:0

### English 9th Grade

Two paragraph analytic short-constructed response (0-4 MYP Criterion Rubric)

Using Language in Writing

Advanced 4: 7%

Strong 3: 29%

Getting there 2: 38%

Not Yet 1: 7%

Not yet 0 (Not submitted or INC: 19%

Opinion and Analysis of the text

Two paragraph analytic short-constructed response (0-4 MYP Criterion Rubric)

Advanced 4: 2%

Strong 3: 13%

Getting there 2: 49%

Not Yet 1: 19%

Not yet 0 (Not submitted or INC: 17%

### English 10th Grade

254 students took paragraph test with annotated text

In Progress: 4 students

Partial Proficient: 101 students

Proficient: 117 students

Advanced: 32 students

English 11th grade

196 students took a Literary Analysis assessment

In Progress: 19 students

Partial Proficient: 41 students

Proficient: 74 students

Advanced: 59 students

Biology 9th and 10th

Fall Formative Assessment. All students taking Biology at Palmer.

	Honors Biology		Grade Level Biology	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Advanced (90-100%)	0 (0)	37.0% (50)	0 (0)	2.2% (6)
Proficient (70-89%)	31.5 % (40)	50.1% (68)	4.9% (6)	26.3% (36)
Partially Proficient (60-69%)	25.2 % (32)	10.4% (14)	8.9% (11)	20.4% (28)
Not Proficient (0-59%)	43.0% (55)	2.2% (3)	86.2% (106)	41.6% (57)

Algebra 9th grade

Unit 1 exam

Earned passing grade on exam: 90%

Did not pass: 10%

Unit 2 exam

Earned passing grade on exam: 80%

Did not pass: 20%

Integrated Math (10th grade)

## Unit 1

Advanced: 11%

Proficient: 26%

Partial Proficient: 28%

In Progress: 35%

## Unit 2

Advanced: 18%

Proficient: 19%

Partial Proficient: 35%

In Progress: 28%

## Algebra 3/4 11th grade

### Unit 1

Advanced: 24%

Proficient: 24%

Partial Proficient: 26%

In Progress: 22%

### Unit 2

Advanced: 34%

Proficient: 28%

Partial Proficient: 18%

In Progress: 12%

Palmer High School teachers worked hard in PLCs and in their classrooms to implement College Board skills into lessons and prepare all students for rigorous classroom content and state assessments. Our academic growth scores were good while our academic achievement scores did decrease. Our challenge is to continue working on the 2020 Colorado Standards and College Board skill implementation through solid backwards designed lessons, using the MYP framework, AVID strategies as well as new tools from Jenson's book, Poor Students, Rich Teaching and our staff meeting Professional Development. After last year's College Board suite of assessments, we have a plethora of data and test resources that we can utilize to modify and improve our teaching. Our work ahead for Academic

Achievement, Academic Growth, and Post Secondary and Workforce Readiness is to continue improving performances for our English Learners and Students with Disabilities. Our Curriculum/Intervention team will continue to support our ELL and SPED departments by exposing students to College Board material and provide them with practice test taking skills and endurance.

## Trend Analysis



**Trend Direction:** Decreasing

**Notable Trend:** Yes

**Performance Indicator Target:** Academic Achievement (Status)

Palmer High School saw an decrease of 5.4 points in Academic Achievement, with mean scale score declines in CO PSAT EBRW of 2.1 points (Still reached Meets), 5.6 points in CO PSAT 10 (Approaching), and an 18.4 point decrease in CMAS Science. For the 2020 Assessments, we need to see 15 point mean increases in CO PSAT Math and CMAS Science while remaining stable with CO PSAT EBRW.



**Trend Direction:** Decreasing

**Notable Trend:** Yes

**Performance Indicator Target:** Academic Achievement (Status)

CO PSAT EBRW student subgroups saw mean score declines in Free/ Reduced Price lunch Eligible of 7.7 points, Minority students 5.6 points and Students with Disabilities 17.1 points with an increase of 3.5 points with English Learners. CO PSAT Math saw declines in English Learners 3.1 points, Free/ Reduced Price lunch Eligible 9.7 points, Minority students 9.9 points with a gain of 12.1 points with Students with Disabilities.



**Trend Direction:** Increasing

**Notable Trend:** Yes

**Performance Indicator Target:** Academic Growth

Palmer High School saw a 5.4 point increase in Academic Growth in 2018 and continued that trend in 2019. Our MGP was the highest in our district's high schools. Our overall increase in this indicator was 1.5 from 2018. In subgroups, CO PSAT/ SAT students with disabilities the MGP rate increased 30 points to 56 MGP while in ELP English Language Proficiency, the MGP increased 27 points to 57 MGP.

**Trend Direction:** Increasing



**Notable Trend:** Yes

**Performance Indicator Target:** Academic Growth

Last year, our Special Education collaborated to expose students to College Board practice materials through their Study Skills classes. Our Special Education Math teacher collaborated with math department teachers, using the co-teaching model to teach our students and prepare them for the College Board assessments. Their efforts paid off resulting in an unprecedented 30 point MGP increase in CO PSAT/SAT Math.



**Trend Direction:** Increasing

**Notable Trend:** Yes

**Performance Indicator Target:** Academic Growth

Last year for ELP the trend decreased and indicated: "Does Not Meet scores for English Language Proficiency and on track EL proficiency are very low. The Access testing last year could have run more smoothly. We are working on improvements to our process." The Assessment coordinators and ELL department embraced this trend and collaborated to prepare students better and provide an excellent testing environment.



**Trend Direction:** Decreasing

**Notable Trend:** Yes

**Performance Indicator Target:** Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness

Palmer High School saw a 4.7 point decrease in the Post secondary & Workforce Readiness indicator. Declines occurred in All students CO SAT EBRW (-16.5 points) dropping to Approaching and All students CO SAT Math (-19.5 points) dropping to Approaching. The All students Drop out rate increased by .6% dropping to Approaching, while the only Meets category was Graduation with nearly a 1% increase for All students.



**Trend Direction:** Decreasing

**Notable Trend:** Yes

**Performance Indicator Target:** Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness

Palmer CO SAT EBRW and CO SAT Math saw declines in All student and all subgroups except for a plus 3 point increase in EBRW minority students.

### Additional Trend Information:

Palmer High School data trended down last year. Although we still maintained Performance, increasing in Academic Growth, we declined in Academic Achievement and Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness.

For the Academic Achievement Indicator, we need to increase our median scores for CO PSAT Math by 15 points and CMAS Science, while maintaining stable on CO PSAT EBRW.

We need to remain stable with our Academic Growth indicator, while increasing MGP in all Approaching subgroups.

For Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness, we need to increase rate scores in CO SAT EBRW and Math, decrease dropout rate and maintain Graduation rate.

## Priority Performance Challenges and Root Causes

### Priority Performance Challenge: PLCs and Tier 1 Instruction Improvement



Teachers lack the consistency in executing the relationship building and structures it takes to face the difficult classroom challenges with students from poverty. Research indicates that relationships and consistency and structure are two key factors to support struggling students to achieve academically. Through our departments and PLCs, we need to focus on creating data driven lessons that are aligned to new state and college board standards and deliver them with a structured and rigorously engaging environment. Our goal is that teachers will utilize AVID instructional approaches to strengthen Tier 1, which will make Tier 2 work easier and more targeted, helping us achieve our intentional building desired state and focus to engage "all" learners.

#### Root Cause: Professional Learning Communities adapting to new high stakes tests



With the new 2020 standards and the skills assessed on the College Board Suite of Assessments, teachers will need to continue to rebuild their curriculum to embed these standards and skills to prepare students. They will need to monitor their students for growth from August through April, using quality quarterly assessments and use interventions when students are not growing. Palmer teachers will use MYP unit planners to plan and deliver quality instruction replete with inquiry and authentic literacy to engage their learners.



#### Root Cause: School Culture

Staff continues to work on improving the skills necessary to engage students who come to school with a variety of challenging situations.



#### Root Cause: Aligned Courses and grading practices

Palmer 9th and 10th grade MYP courses need to have more consistent curriculum, assessment, and grading practices. Students can be in the same grade level and have the same class, yet have a very different learning experience. Teachers need to have autonomy to deliver their instruction in their own style; however, their assessments and grading practices need more uniformity.

## Magnitude of Performance Challenges and Rationale for Selection:



The challenge that we face is to increase student achievement and growth on PSAT/ SAT. The way to increase achievement and growth is through good tier 1 instruction focused on the target of our standards through data driven instruction that is the focus in our content area PLCs. Our intentional building desired state and focus is to engage "all" learners.

In the Spring of 2017, a team of students created a climate survey and our students participated in the survey. With the results, we started to take the feedback and plan ways to improve the culture and climate of Palmer High School. During the 2017-2018 school year, our culture and climate team began planning on making positive changes to our school. Some of the feedback from the 2017 survey was that some students did not feel that they had good relationships with teachers. Our teachers reflected on this feedback and shared the difficulty of engaging a new generation as well as a disengaged, impoverished population. Our SPF 2018 data reflected some positive trends from last year, and we still have our work cut out for improving English Learners, Free/ Reduced lunch eligible, minority students as well as Students with disabilities.

Several implementations occurred in the 2018-2019 school year at Palmer that facilitated our teachers to engage "all" learners. The Building Leadership Team (BLT) was developed in the Spring of 2018. Interested teachers wrote an interest letter and their department teachers chose the top responses. The top responses became BLT members, who would represent them. We had representatives from Math, English, Social Studies, Science, Electives, MYP, and Counseling as well as an Assistant Principal and the Principal. This team worked hard to develop professional development focused on engaging our students. The PD was through a book study of Eric Jensen's, Poor Students, Rich Teaching. Teachers embraced the study and incorporated some strategies to kick off the year. This important work helped us engage our less performing sub groups. It also gave us a chance to increase our daily average attendance which had fallen the past few years.

The result of the 2018-2019 work resulted in positive Academic Growth with declines in Academic Achievement and Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness.

The 2019-2020 major improvement strategies will continue to focus on good tier 1 instruction focused on engaging all learners, rebooting our MYP whole school approach while finding ways to engage all of our students to inquire and access structural knowledge. We will focus on strong PLCs where teams utilize data from Quarterly Assessments to drive instruction. Teachers will continue with the tenets of Jensen's book. We will strive to make AVID a truly school wide reality by using solid and engaging instructional strategies to give all students access to inquiry and depth of knowledge.

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### Magnitude of Root Causes and Rationale for Selection:

Palmer High School has been in a cycle of adapting to a wide variety of changes throughout the last eight years. The one constant has been change. Veteran teachers, whose methodologies have worked well for years, are currently reflecting on their practice and seeing a need for a new approach to new learners. Now that the College Board Assessments are the primary achievement measurement for grades 9-11, we feel that we will have a constant and a solid measure of our students' achievement and growth. Our staff desires professional development and we implemented a book study for the 2018-2019



school year that will guide them to reflect on their practice and change some approaches. This PD guided them to bring positive change to their PLCs and classrooms and through the important connection of Professional Learning Communities and good Tier 1 instruction, we will continue to work hard to improve "all" students to increased achievement and growth and prepare "all" of our students for college and career and workforce readiness.

## Additional Narrative / Conclusion

Palmer teachers have had success for years but there exists a need to reboot Tier 1 instruction to meet the needs of higher poverty students. Structure, urgency, and meticulous planning is never more crucial. Teachers are engaged in professional development to engage "all" learners and will continue to design lessons to meet the needs of our students. We plan on rebooting our IB World School status as well as our whole school MYP program. Through these programs, AVID strategies, Restorative Justice Practices and more, we will dare to empower our whole students to profoundly impact our world.

## Action Plans

### Planning Form



#### Improve Tier 1 instruction and PLC work

**What will success look like:** Tier 1 instruction needs to be strengthened to meet the needs of our students, including gifted and talented students. PLCs are dedicated weekly meetings where teachers meet to improve their instruction. Good Tier 1 instruction and PLCs are connected to provide the best lessons to increase student achievement and growth. Teachers will need to rebuild their curriculum to embed PSAT/SAT standards to prepare students for the April tests. These standards can be embedded into our MYP courses and Junior level core content courses. Our goal is to engage "all" students in good first instruction that is standards based, rigorous, varied, and replete with purposefully planned, targeted, and strong instructional strategies. Teachers will collaborate in their PLCs to support one another and create MYP lesson plan units designed to engage students to access depth of knowledge through critical thinking and inquiry. Teachers will have the opportunity to utilize AVID strategies to help bring students access to deeper thinking and the ability to apply their knowledge.

**Describe the research/evidence base supporting the strategy and why it is a good fit:** Schmoker's, Focus, Dufour's Professional Learning Communities,

#### Associated Root Causes:

#### Implementation Benchmarks Associated with MIS

IB Name	Description	Start/End/ Repeats	Key Personnel	Status
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Tier 1 improvement

Student engagement

08/08/2019  
05/22/2020  
Weekly

Teachers, Administration



PLC work

PLC focus

08/08/2019  
05/22/2020  
Weekly

Teachers, Administration



Professional Development

Instruction

08/08/2019  
05/22/2020  
Monthly

Administration, Teachers



Positive Culture

PBIS PHS

08/08/2019  
05/22/2020  
Monthly

Martha Higgins, Lara Disney, Terror TV

### Action Steps Associated with MIS

Name	Description	Start/End Date	Resource	Key Personnel	Status
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The BLT's discontinuance redirected our approach to PD for the 2019-2020 school year. During the summer, the MYP Coordinator and some AVID Site Team members collaborated to plan some pre-student PD days. Those PD days were impacted by District plans, so we lost some of our time. A PD including Inquiry, the IB Learner Attributes, and AVID Instructional strategies was delivered in our one, pre-student PD Day. Our plan to conduct PD focused on utilizing monthly staff meetings (all teachers) and AVID Site Team monthly meetings(Voluntary). The monthly Avid Site Team meetings focus on an AVID strategy and then is repeated with the entire staff. Staff have also received trainings on

08/08/2019  
05/22/2020

MyAVID website, MYP materials, 2020 CAS,

Lara Disney, Dan Geiser, Alex Madsen, Carolyn Derr, Lossie Ortiz,



Professional Development	<p>Restorative Justice Practices and more on teaching authentic literacy to engage students in critical thinking and inquiry. The plan is to continue these staff meetings and utilize trainings in the few PD days our school calendar has. On October 3-4, some teachers accessed the AVID trainings the district offered at the Tesla building. Teachers who went to the Cultural Relevance traing shared out their experience, which was then delivered at the October AVID Site Team meeting. All Avid Site Team trainings are uploaded into Schoology for all teachers to access.</p>	Restorative Justice Practice	and the AVID Site Team
 Tier 1 Improvement	<p>Teachers really invested in the 2018-2019 Jensen book study and have really tried to incorporate the strategies for relationship building. MYP Whole School approach is expected and the utilization of AVID strategies to give "all" students access to higher level thinking. Administrators are working closely with their teacher caseloads to encourage them to engage "all" students with best practices. Teachers have embraced the 2020 CAS and have worked to deliver them daily.</p>	08/08/2019 05/22/2020	<p>Jensen book, Poor Students, Rich Teaching. MYAVID Website, Schoology, MYP Unit Planners, IB Subject Guides, Quarterly Assessment data</p> <p>Administration, Department Chairs, MYP Coordinator</p>
 PLC Work	<p>Palmer PLCs are continuing with the focus of collaborating to engage "all" learners. PLCs are focused on aligning their classes with solid curriculum focused on the new 2020 standards, College Board Skills and the MYP Framework. Each Department is expected to administer Quarterly Summative Assessments and report their data to the administration. The data is analyzed by the PLCs and the PLCs are using the data to drive instruction. The data is focused on growing the students and the data reports must include a plan for how they will respond when the students do not understand the material.</p>	08/08/2019 05/22/2020	<p>PLC four questions, Curriculum, Assessments, data reports</p> <p>Teachers, Interventionists, Administration</p>
<p>For the past few years, Palmer has implemented a PBIS program, targeted and improving positive culture. Last year and continuing</p>			



Positive Culture

this year, the Pride Honor Strength campaign is recognizing students, Teachers and ESP staff for exhibiting Pride Honor and Strength. There is a thankful board on campus where students exclaim who they are thankful for. Restorative Justice Practices are increasing school wide, being practiced more by students, teachers and administration.

08/08/2019  
05/22/2020

PBIS, Restorative Justice Practice, Terror TV, Schoology

Martha Higgins, Blaine Miller, Alex Madsen, and Laura Beth Waltz.

### School Target Setting



### Priority Performance Challenge : PLCs and Tier 1 Instruction Improvement



**PERFORMANCE INDICATOR:** Academic Achievement (Status)

#### MEASURES / METRICS:



**2019-2020:** Sustain CO PSAT EBRW mean score and increase CO PSAT Math and CMAS Science by 15 scale points each.  
**2020-2021:** Continue to sustain and increase from 2019-2020 progress

**INTERIM MEASURES FOR 2019-2020:** We will continue to focus on being an MYP Whole School, encouraging our students to use critical thinking and Inquiry to gain deep understanding of the content areas. We will also focus on the 2020 standards and the skills that College Board tests assess them on as well as CMAS Science. The quarterly Summative assessments in English, Math and Science will be analyzed in terms of student monitoring toward progress and preparedness for the Suite of Assessments in March and April.



**PERFORMANCE INDICATOR:** Academic Growth

#### MEASURES / METRICS:



**2019-2020:** Score 50 or higher MGP on all student groups.  
**2020-2021:** Continue to sustain and increase from 2019-2020 progress

**INTERIM MEASURES FOR 2019-2020:** We will continue to focus on being an MYP Whole School, encouraging our students to use critical thinking and Inquiry to gain deep understanding of the content areas. We will also focus on the 2020 standards and the skills that College Board tests assess them on as well as CMAS Science. The quarterly Summative assessments in English, Math and Science will be analyzed in terms of student monitoring toward progress and preparedness for the Suite of Assessments in March and April. Teachers will try and focus on baseline data based goals for their student learning outcomes so that they focus on student growth.

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**PERFORMANCE INDICATOR:** Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness

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**MEASURES / METRICS:**

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ANNUAL  
PERFORMANCE  
TARGETS

**2019-2020:** Our goal is to Meet All Students in each Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness Subjects, increasing the rate/scores for CO SAT EBRW, CO SAT MATH, decreasing Drop Out rate, while increasing Matriculation and graduation rates.

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**2020-2021:** Continue to sustain and increase from 2019-2020 progress

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**INTERIM MEASURES FOR 2019-2020:** We will work hard with our Junior class to increase SAT preparedness by giving them ample SAT preparation in Math and English classes. They will use pre and post tests to monitor student progress. Our Deans and counselors will work hard to prevent our juniors and seniors from dropping out, while focusing on students on the graduation bubble to graduate on time. We will monitor our students taking Grad Pointe at Palmer to get them to gain the extra credits they need to overcome their credit deficit.

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