MID-CYCLE VISIT
VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

for
Koinonia School
5980 Webb Street
Loomis, CA 95650

Placer County Office of Education

Full Self-Study February 24-26, 2014

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Visiting Committee Members
Sharon Loucks, Chair
School Administrator

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I. Introduction

Koinonia Community School is located in the town of Loomis (population approximately 7,000), which describes itself as a quaint, family-oriented, suburban community located along Interstate 80, 25 miles east of Sacramento, in Placer County. Loomis is close to diverse recreational opportunities; the town is only ten minutes from Folsom Lake and a little over an hour away from either Lake Tahoe or the San Francisco Bay Area. The estimated median household income is $78,000. The school opened in 1999 at its current location in downtown Loomis. The building was previously a church, but thanks to extensive remodeling, the classroom is bright, cheery, and conducive to learning.

Students are placed in the Koinonia Group Homes by court-order for substance abuse. Many of the students have a history of familial substance abuse which contributes to excessive dropout rates, chronic absenteeism and homelessness. Additionally, most of the incoming students demonstrate academic skills that are below grade level. Through collaborative efforts with the Placer County Children’s System of Care, including the Probation Department, Youth and Family Services, Foster Youth Services, and local volunteer organizations, Koinonia offers students Wraparound Services on and off site.

Of the 24 currently enrolled students, there are presently one 8th grader, two 9th graders, three 10th graders, seven 11th graders, and eleven 12th graders. There are 13 males and 11 females currently enrolled, and our enrollment is 29.17% White; 62.50% Hispanic; 4.17% Asian; and 4.17% American Indian/Alaskan Native. While most students are English-only, there are currently four English Learners and four Redesignated English Proficient. At this time, five student (16%) receive Special Education services.

Koinonia offers an academic program that consists of both ELA and math through a direct instruction delivery model. This delivery model also includes opportunities for collaboration (interdependent study teams) and independent learning. To support students in learning social science, science, and electives, students have access to an accredited on-line distance learning program called Cyber High. Students also participate in C-STEM instruction to support their access to skill development that prepares them for college and career, particularly as it relates to programming and robotics. The combination of direct instruction, on-line learning, and C-STEM provides a robust academic program for these high risk students. The classroom is well staffed with Koinonia Child Care Counselors, a general education teacher and a specialized academic instruction teacher. Together, this team establishes and maintains a safe learning environment where students’ academic, social, and emotional needs are met cohesively.
Koinonia continues to utilize College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM) as its adopted math curriculum. NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is used to regularly assess progress in reading, language usage and math. The assessment data provided from MAP is analyzed by leadership and site staff and then used to develop goals and govern changes to instruction. This process is supported by an Instructional Coach who works directly with the site general education teacher to support data analysis and changes to instructional practices. The process of ongoing self reflection and data driven interventions is evident based on interviews of both PCOE management staff and site staff.

While the previous math curriculum heavily relied on direct instruction, CPM encourages students to make sense of mathematics through frequent work in study teams. When solving complex problems, students benefit by working interdependently in these teams: sharing information, insights, and expertise; providing clarification to each other; analyzing; building on each other’s ideas, and productively critiquing each other’s work. By working in teams, students can access higher-level, more sophisticated problems. Furthermore, many tasks are simply more interesting when done within a team, leading to more persistence and therefore more success. The teacher structures and directs the teams by clarifying instructions and offering guidance. In addition, the teacher gives targeted lectures or conducts whole-class discussions as appropriate. Throughout this year, greater emphasis has been placed upon the eight Common Core State Standards for Mathematical Practice which are currently posted in the front of the classroom. Students will apply the practices in their study teams.

Placer County Office of Education, in partnership with the Yolo County Office of Education and the UC Davis Center for Integrated Computing and STEM Education (C-STEM), is part of a grant to offer computer programming and robotics instruction to all students. The new Computer Programming and Robotics course provides students with the fundamental knowledge of computer programming for solving applied problems. The topics include programming constructs, data types and declaration of variables, expressions and operators, selection statements, repetition, flowcharts for algorithm development, functions for modular programming, linear regression and curve fitting, processing data files, animation, robotics applications, and applications in math and science. The emphasis of the course is to introduce the students to software development concepts. This course also focuses on algorithm development and computer programming for solving applied problems in C-STEM, such as solving problems in algebra and robotics. Considerable attention is devoted to program design, task decomposition, testing, debugging, and software reuse. This course also introduces students to the working principles and foundational knowledge of robotics. Students learn to control a single robot and multiple robots by graphical user interface, pose teaching, and computer programs in C/C++. Students write robotics programs to perform various tasks based on the sensory
information of robots. Through problem-based projects, students develop critical thinking, problem solving, computational thinking, effective communication, and teamwork skills.

To support the academic environment at Koinonia, students engage in a Positive Peer Culture (PPC) that is inherent to managing student behavior at both the school and the group homes. Student self-regulation, peer-regulation, and the support from the Child Care Counselors (group home staff) allows the teacher to focus on academics. This cannot be overstated, as it is critical to the efficacy of the teacher and the academic program.

The mid-cycle progress report was jointly completed by WASC committee members. Members agreed to give written input in different report areas. Committee members were encouraged to review each area and make edits/additions as needed. In addition to the monthly WASC committee meetings, which included stakeholder input, all items in the action plan are also part of PCOE’s Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). During the LCAP process, all stakeholders, including PCOE staff, students, parents and community advisory members are asked for input and to advise PCOE in the development and revision of the LCAP. Stakeholder input is sought through a variety of means including written surveys, meetings held for all stakeholder groups and public hearings to gather feedback on the draft plan and later to approve the LCAP prior to submission to the California Department of Education. The integration of the Single Plan for Student Achievement, the WASC action plan, and the LCAP is evident. District administration reports that greater cohesion has been achieved throughout the county, including Koinonia, as a result of the LCAP process, including the development of a general mission and vision statement.

The mid-cycle progress report was presented to the Superintendent and the Placer County Board of Education during the January 2017 board meeting. During the meeting, the Executive Director of Student Services reviewed progress on the Action Plan and other information related to the mid-cycle progress report.

Interviews of management and site staff reveal a cohesive team-oriented spirit that regards itself as a “well oiled machine” that will continue to “fine tune” the work that is already in progress.
II. Progress on Critical Areas for Follow-up/Schoolwide Action Plan

- Provide an analytical summary about the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section referencing the critical areas for follow-up addressed through each section.
- Note the evidence supporting the progress made and the impact made on student achievement.
- If any critical areas for follow-up were not included in the school’s action plan, indicate what actions have been taken to address these issue(s) and include supporting evidence.

1. Data driven decision making is limited and inconsistent.
   School-Wide Action Plan: Goal 1 - Task 2 and Goal 2 – Task 1

   Progress: Weekly PLC meetings are focused on the evaluation of common formative assessments and trimester MAP benchmark scores in order to better inform instruction. An Instructional Coach meets with the classroom teachers to support goal development based on the MAP data. This process of continuous self reflection serves to create a dynamic teaching model that is always changing to improve student learning and outcomes. To further support these outcomes, teachers have attended professional development related to the analysis of MAP reports in order to better interpret student data and understand individualized student academic needs.

   At the management level, a leadership team meets monthly to review data and determine next steps. This has resulted in a greater sense of focus as to what requires the teacher's attention. The direction provided from the leadership team results in professional development opportunities and has also resulted in a support from an Instructional Coach who serves as a consultant to the teachers who are charged with carrying out the mission identified by the leadership team. This process has formalized Koinonia’s ongoing improvement model, leading to stronger consistency.

2. Revisit the mission, vision and SLOs so that they are aligned with JCCS, KFS and PCOE.

   Progress: The PCOE Student Services Department has developed a mission statement that is aligned with the broader PCOE Mission Statement and is fully supported by the Koinonia Mission Statement and the School-Wide Learning Objectives. The new general mission is aligned with the LCAP and serves to supports Koinonia in achieving their Student Learner Outcomes.
3. The unique nature and size of the school limits the availability of diverse electives.
   School-Wide Action Plan: Goal 3 – Task 1

Progress: Cyber High continues to be implemented more fully to enable students to participate in a broad course of study, including access to a-g courses. In addition to this, a vocational course with content in the areas of programming, robotics and mathematics will continue to be provided to students. Management also reports that a new Career & Technical Education component will be added next quarter which will focus on exploring computer science. Moreover, there has been support from the residential staff in supporting student math skills by utilizing them while cooking at home. While the size of Koinonia has limited their ability to offer more diverse electives, efforts are evident.

4. Both teachers and students would benefit from tying academic standards to the curriculum and instruction.
   School-Wide Action Plan: Goal 1 – Task 1 & 2, Goal 2 – Task 1, Goal 3 – Task 1

Progress: Teachers attend PLCs and staff training that includes lesson writing aligned to the CCSS. All adopted and supplemental curriculum is aligned to CCSS and teachers have been through a series of academic and implementation trainings from spring 2014-present. Lessons are standards-based with the outcome of student application in mind. Formative and summative assessments administered regularly provide data driven feedback on student achievement relating to CCSS alignment and student preparation for graduation and entering the workforce. CPM math curriculum, and the newly adopted California Collections ELA curriculum, combine with ERWC and character based literacy to provide a rigorous standards-based curriculum. Student learning is evaluated using MAP testing and the Curriculum and Instruction team supports teachers by providing them with the professional development needed to adapt their instruction to student needs. The Instructional Coach supports this process as well.

5. Continue teacher training related to the Common Core State Standards.
   School-wide Action Plan: Goal 1 – Task 1 & 2, Goal 2 – Task 1, Goal 3 – Task 1

Progress: Professional development related to the Common Core State Standards continues to be a priority. The teacher attends a year long, cohort training on Universal Design for Learning and Accessible Curriculum for All to make the Common Core standards accessible for all students. The teacher is also receiving training in C-STEM through UC Davis. Also, the teacher is working with an instructional coach to better understand and implement the Common Core State Standards in the classrooms and also attends a weekly PLC for math.
6. Consistent Collaboration with district personnel.
   School-Wide Action Plan: Goal 1 – Task 2, Goal 2 – Task 1, Goal 3 – Task 2

Progress: In addition to district PLC meetings, the WASC committee is meeting on a monthly basis to collaborate, review progress and revise the School-Wide Action Plan as needed.

7. The use of standardized assessments is dictated by the County; but, there is no evidence that assessments are used to influence curriculum or teaching strategies.
   School-Wide Action Plan: Goal 1 – Task 2 and Goal 2 – Task 1

Progress: Koinonia continues to utilize NWEA Measures of Academic Progress as their standardized assessment tool. NWEA MAP is an adaptive, web-based assessment that prepares students for the statewide assessments as well as gives staff valuable information regarding student learning needs. The MAP assessments are administered three times per academic year. Professional development related to interpreting the assessment results to guide instruction is ongoing, as is the support of the Instructional Coach.

8. Informal assessments are used to determine accommodations for individuals or to drive differentiation; but the use of these assessments is not well documented.
   School-Wide Action Plan: Goal 1 – Task 2 and Goal 2 – Task 1

Progress: Common formative assessments are being utilized to gather information regarding student progress and learning needs in the areas of Mathematics and English Language Arts. Evidence of these assessments is collected and discussed at subject specific PLC meetings in order to better inform instruction. The assessment data is also reviewed with students as part of their Individual Learning Plans that are developed and maintained by the teacher.
School-Wide Action Plan

1. All students will receive the most effective initial instruction in an optimal learning environment. This includes specific learning objectives, modeling, differentiated learning, opportunities for practice and integrated assessment.

1.1 Transition current ELA and Mathematics curriculum to align with the Common Core State Standards.

Koinonia School has implemented the College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM) which reflects the Common Core Standards and is adopted by the California Department of Education.

Koinonia has purchased the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, California Collections. The school has decided to use the tenth grade book to implement the program. It is aligned to the Common Core Standards and adopted by the California Department of Education.

1.2 Continue to use professional development and PLC’s to improve best instructional practices and optimize instruction.

Koinonia School participates in county, district program level professional development. The monthly First Instruction Collaborative includes the Special Education teacher, Career Tech instructors and Koinonia staff. Also instructional staff meet monthly from the Juvenile Hall, Community Day School, ICare, Lincoln Care, ILearn, Career Tech and Koinonia. The Koinonia teacher also belongs to the Del Oro High School Integrated Math I PLC.

2. Mathematics: All students will receive the most effective initial instruction in an optimal learning environment. This includes specific learning objectives, modeling, differentiated learning, opportunities for practice and integrated assessments.

The Koinonia classroom is a large room with individual student desks, a computer lab, a whiteboards and displays of student work. It is staffed with a credentialed teacher and two Child Care Counselors. A Special Education Teacher is available two days a week. Each student has a individualized education plan. Progress towards individual and program goals is monitored using the MAP assessments three times a year. Instruction is delivered whole class and individually. The CPM Integrated lessons are being implemented.
2.1 Participate in Professional Learning Communities in order to develop and implement best practices related to teaching Common Core Integrated Mathematics.

Koinonia School participates in county, district program level professional development. The monthly First Instruction Collaborative includes the Special Education teacher, Career Tech instructors and Koinonia staff. Also instructional staff meet monthly from the Juvenile Hall, Community Day School, ICare, Lincoln Care, ILearn, Career Tech and Koinonia. The Koinonia teacher also participates with the Del Oro High School Integrated Math I PLC.

3. Offer a Computer, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (C-STEM) class so that students can acquire knowledge and skills in problem solving, teamwork, and innovation as well as explore C-STEM careers.

3.1 Successfully implement the C-STEM program.

Students at Koinonia are learning programming and robotics as part of the C-STEM program. The offering is a part of a grant/collaboration with UC Davis. The program involves a professional development network with UC Davis.
III. Commendations and Recommendations

A. Commendations:

- Comment on significant progress the school has made in responding to the critical areas for follow-up and in carrying out the related action plan.

1. The dedicated teaching and support staff provide a rigorous and relevant instructional program.

2. Development of a Leadership Team (First Instruction) to review data, identify professional development, and provided targeted support to school staff.

3. The addition of the Instructional Coach and Coordinator, Assessment and Accountability.

4. The refinement of roles and responsibilities which led to a focus on quality rather than the crisis of the moment.

5. Development of a cycle of continuous improvement.

B. Recommendations:

- Comment on any critical areas for follow-up/action plan sections that have not yet been completely addressed, if applicable.
- Identify any new areas of concerns, if applicable.

1. Continue to evaluate school initiatives using the Hexagon Tool in order to sustain the clear focus on student achievement.

2. Fine tune the continuous improvement process in Professional Learning Communities.

3. Continue the alignment of the ACSWASC Improvement Plan and the LCAP.