

SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

FOR

**DEVELOPING VIRTUE SECONDARY
SCHOOL**

**2001 Talmage Road
Ukiah, CA 95482**

April 21 – 24, 2013

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Chapter I Student/Community Profile

Local Community

Developing Virtue Secondary School (DVSS) draws students from the United States, Europe, the Pacific Islands, and Asia. DVSS students bring perspectives from their native countries into the classroom. This lends a global awareness and richness to the classroom. DVSS provides students with the education they will need to thrive in the global economy of the world. All DVSS students participate in Mandarin Chinese classes with most graduates of the school speaking, reading, and writing Mandarin Chinese. Students gain an appreciation of Chinese traditions, culture, and literature. Even though DVSS is a small school, most academic school years DVSS have one or two teams winning the right to compete nationally in the Chinese Culture competition, a true measure of the strength of the Chinese department.

Incorporated in 1876, Ukiah is located 110 miles north of San Francisco in the northern coastal region of California. The area is centrally located between Eureka to the north, San Francisco to the south, and Sacramento to the east. Ukiah is situated in the Yokayo Valley, surrounded by pear orchards and vineyards, just an hour drive from Mendocino on the California coast. Situated on the outskirts of Ukiah, DVSS campus is located on the grounds of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, a 488-acre Buddhist monastery and international community.

DVSS Campus

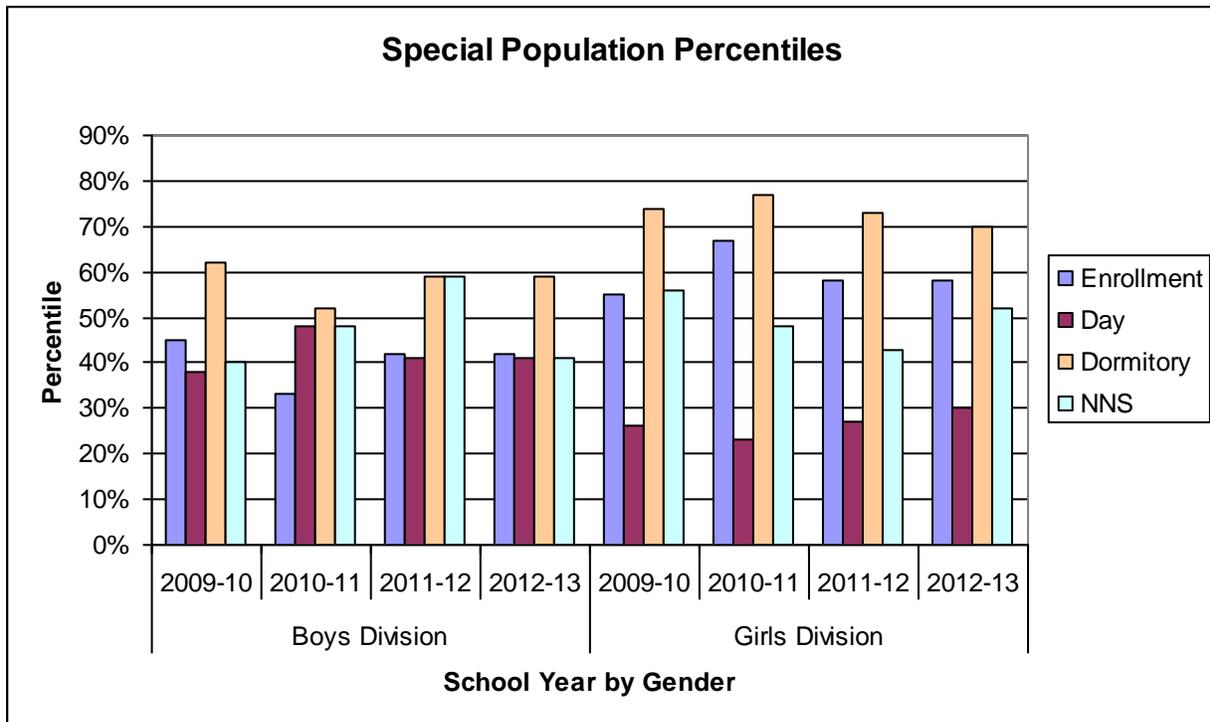
DVSS schools educate boys and girls separately, creating an environment conducive to academic and personal growth. The boys division is housed in a two-story building, and the girls division is housed in two two-story buildings. Each division has its own library and computer lab, and shares a science lab and a visual and performing arts complex that include an art studio and an art gallery/music practice room. Each division has its own basketball court and athletic field. The schools share in the use of the main ceremonial hall, community kitchen and dining hall, and Daoyuan Lecture Hall.

The grounds also houses a monastery, a convent, Dharma Realm Buddhist University, a university library, a vegetarian restaurant, an organic farm, a senior center, a bookstore, and residences for families and boarding students. With landscaping originally designed by Luther Burbank, the scenic campus abounds with myriad varieties of trees and native plants and includes a pine forest, a creek, and a wetland, making it home to a diverse population of birds and wildlife. Surrounded by mountains and farmland, the clean air and landscape of Mendocino County provides an ideal environment for fellowship and study.

Student Demographics

DVSS have roughly a 40/60 split of boy and girl students for the past four school years as seen in Figure 1. There is rarely mixing between the two divisions of the school. The day students, which come just for classes and extra-curricular activities, and the boarding students, who live in the dorms and keep a regular daily schedule, attend class together. A number of DVSS students are learning English as their second or third language. To address this issue, English Language Development (ELD) courses and sheltered courses are provided. These students are shown as NNS, standing for Non-Native (English) Speakers. They comprise from 40 to 60 percent of the DVSS student body. Boy’s division dormitory students comprise 40 to 60 percent of the division enrollment while the girls division has a higher percentage of dormitory students, in the 70 to 80 percent range.

Figure 1.



National Origins

Students attending DVSS come mainly from the United States, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Malaysia. These four areas account for 90% of the student body. The US Customs and Immigration Service trusts DVSS School to issue I-20s in order for foreign students to get student (F1) visas. During the past five years, students from Canada, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Australia, Taiwan (ROC), Malaysia, US, China (PRC), Hong Kong, Singapore, and Germany have attended DVSS.

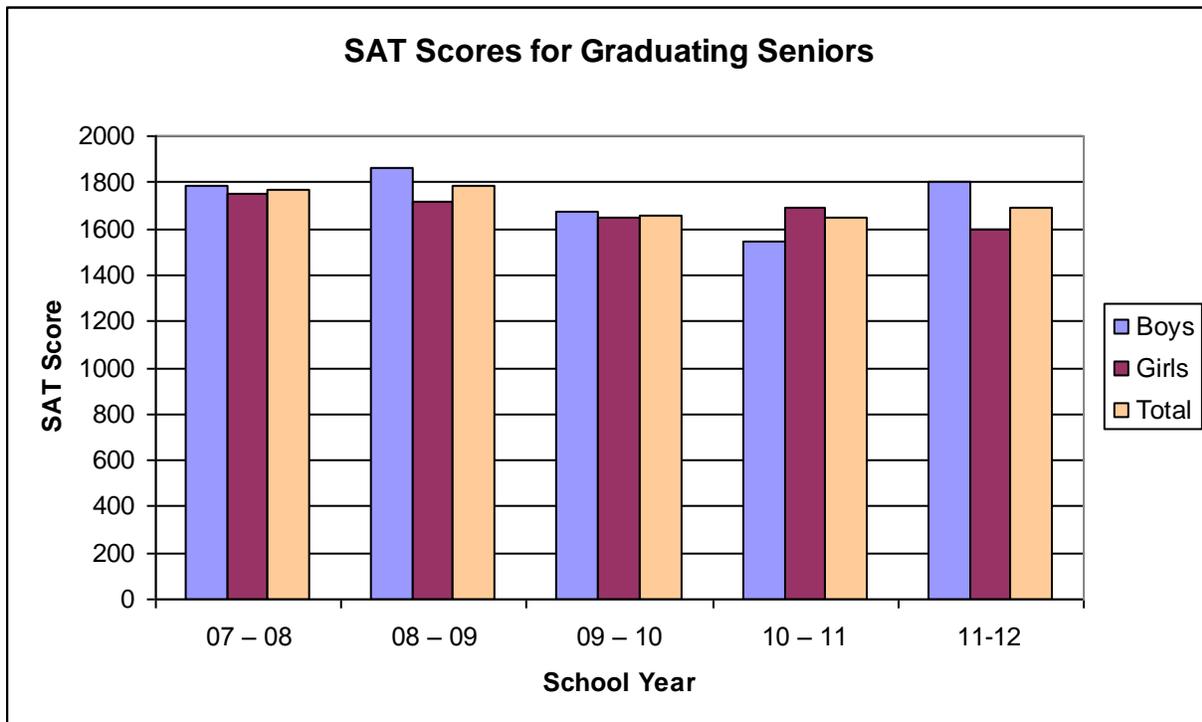
Student Performance

DVSS understands that SAT, Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and Advanced Placement (AP) examinations do not accurately measure academic performance of the student body. DVSS student portfolios and benchmark analyses provide a more comprehensive coverage of students' achievements.

SAT (formerly known as the Scholastic Assessment Test)

DVSS participation and scores on the SAT, PSAT, and AP examinations give indications of overall student performance. Not all DVSS students take the SAT or AP courses. For seniors graduating in 2010, all but two took the SAT. For school year 2011-2012, only 11 of 20 students graduating took the SAT, 5 from boys division and 6 from girls division. Those students applying for the four-year colleges/universities take the SAT. For those attending a community college, the SAT is not required. Average SAT scores for graduating seniors applying for University of California and other prestigious colleges fall generally in the 1600-1800 range. To give an idea of where DVSS students fall, the 2009 average for college bound Asian/Asian American students in California was 1602. DVSS SAT scores have averaged more than that for the past five years, as shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2.



Advanced Placement (AP)

In both 2010 and 2012 DVSS has had a National AP Scholar. A National AP Scholar is a student who has passed 8 AP examinations with a score of 4 or 5. Nationwide, the availability of AP programs and accessibility to students has been expanding. DVSS also shows an expansion of the AP program over the past five years. As shown in Figure 3, from school year 2005-2006 through the school year 2010-2011, the number of AP tests taken through high school has increased from a low of 1 in 2005-2006 to a high of 4.25 in 2010-2011. The year 2010-11 saw a large change in the number of AP exams taken by the girls' division students. When one looks at the percent of tests which obtained a passing grade of 3 or more, shown in Figure 4, the quality of the AP classes for the in 2009-10 are questioned as DVSS students with passing scores fell below the California percentiles. This anomaly corrected itself the next school year. This is clearly seen in Figure 4 which compares DVSS to both California Schools (shown as CA) and all AP students, shown as Global.

Figure 3.

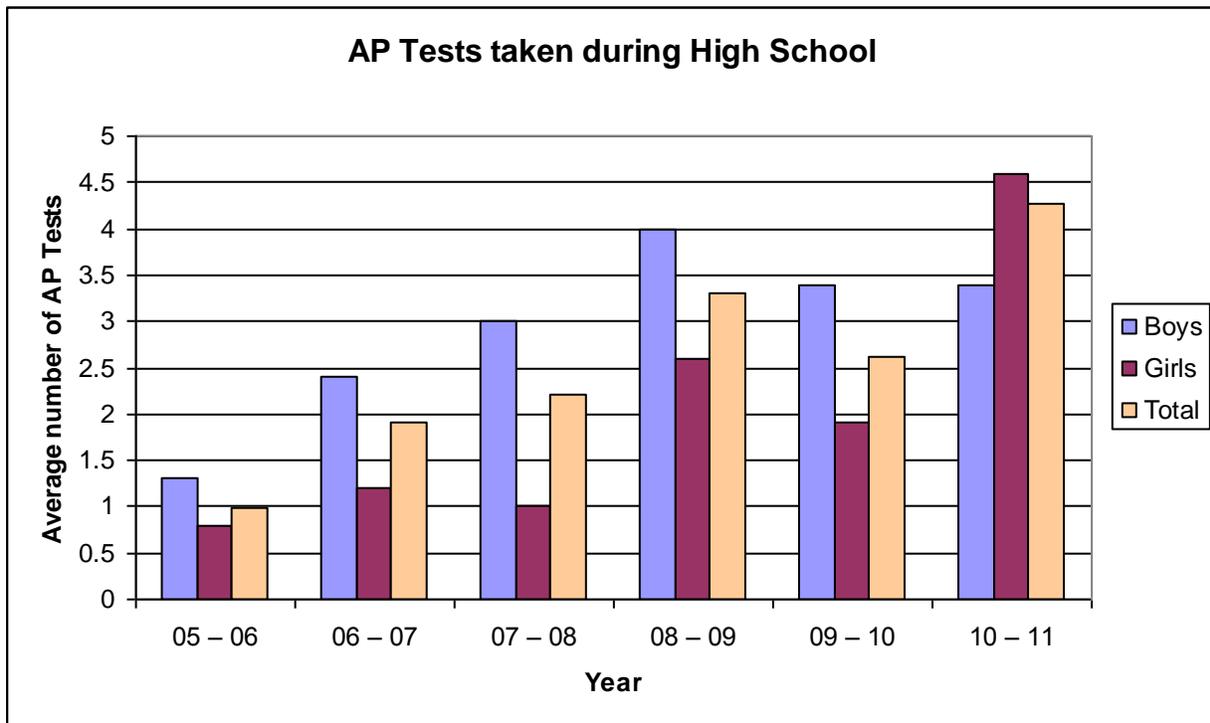
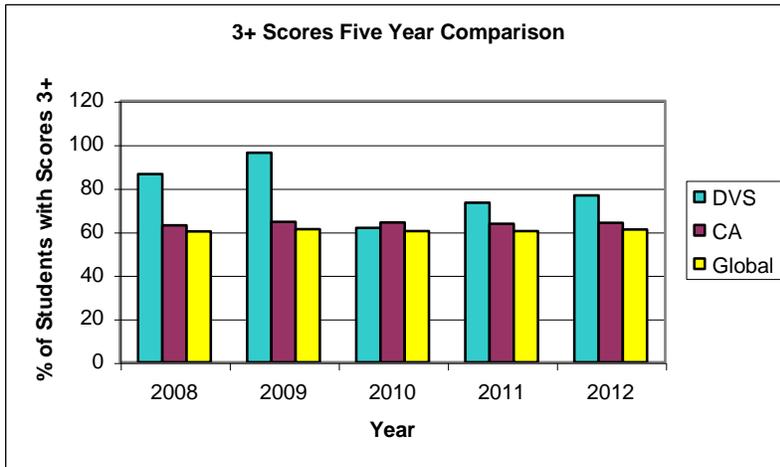
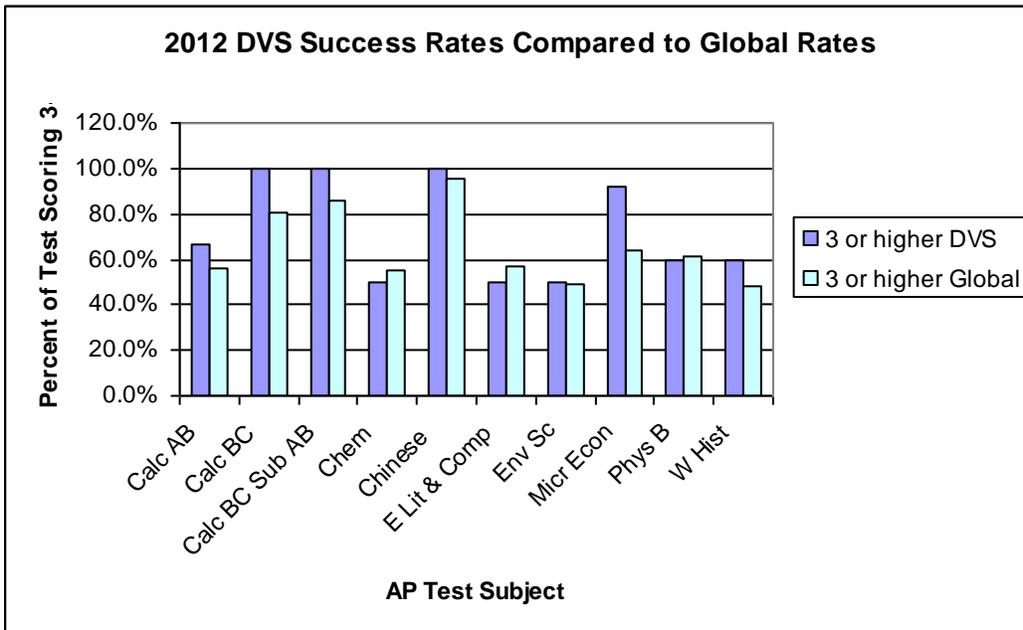


Figure 4.



Only in school year 2009-10, shown as 2010, did DVSS percentiles fall below the California average of students making 3 or higher in the AP examinations. Overall, the school has shown progress in the academic preparation of students for college/university. Looking more closely at the success rates for school year 2011-2012, one finds that DVSS exceeds the Global success rates in all subjects except Chemistry, English Literature and Composition, and Physics B, as shown in Figure 5.

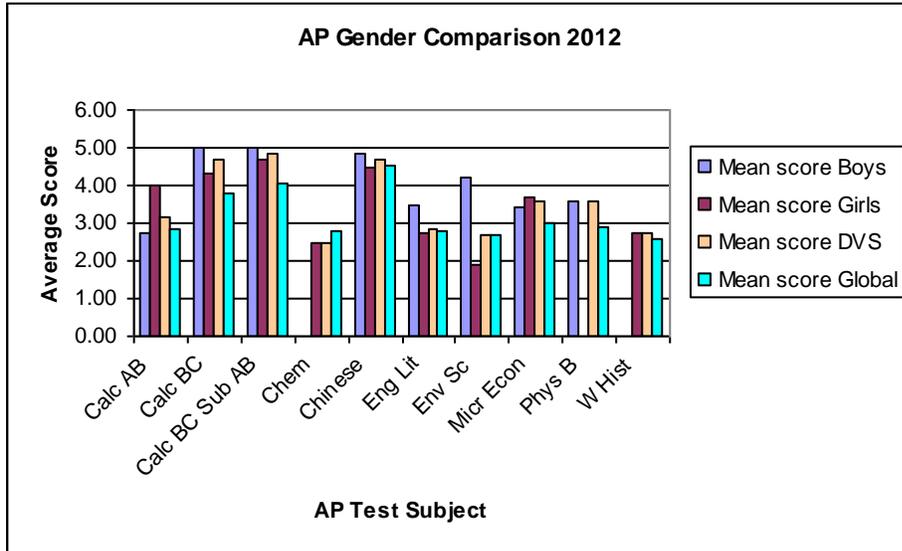
Figure 5.



The divisions are approximately equal in all subjects except for Calculus AB and Environmental Science, where there is an imbalance between gender scores as shown

in Figure 6. As the same teacher and curriculum was used for both divisions, best explanation, given the students who took the examinations, is a difference in the quality of the students in these classes. That is the case for 2012.

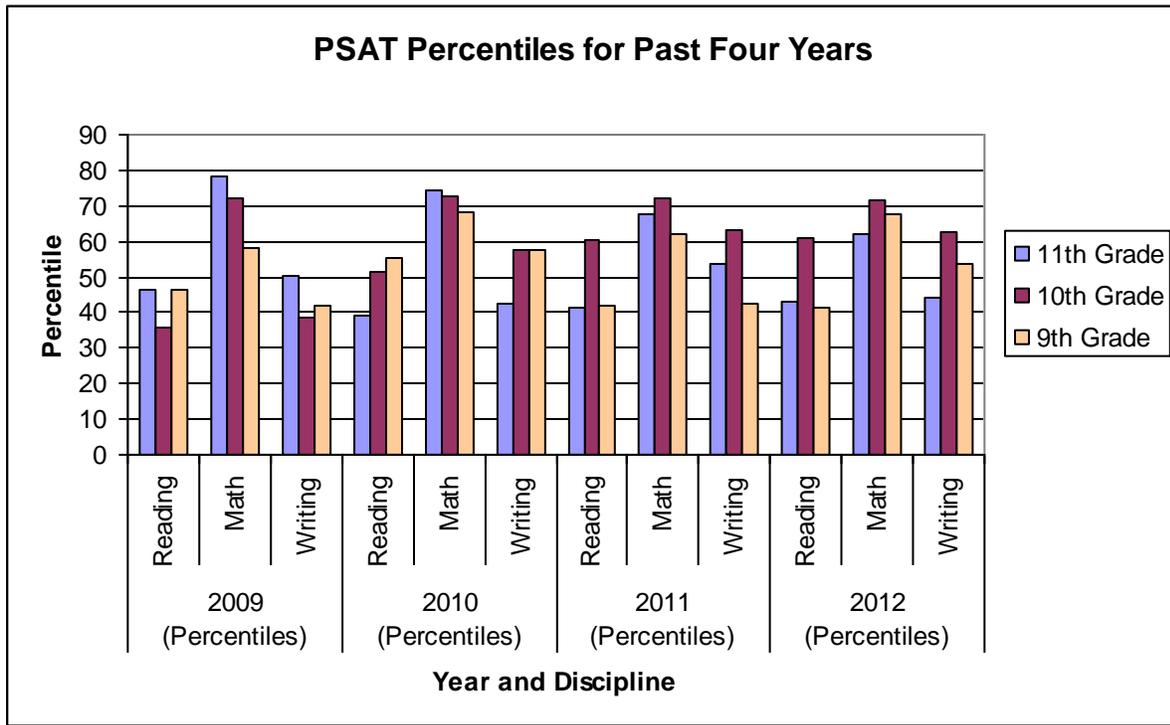
Figure 6.



PSAT/NMSQT

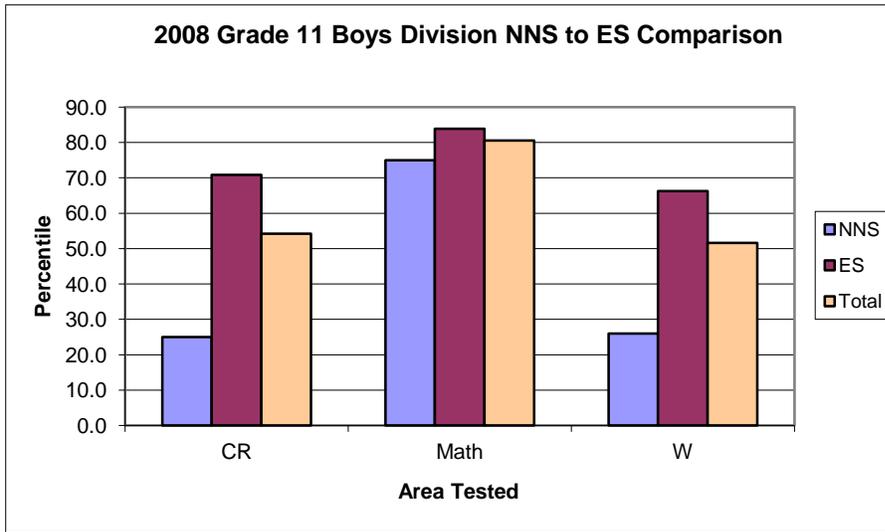
In terms of preparation, DVSS students take the Preliminary SAT/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT) every year so that they are familiar with the testing format. Volunteers visit the school to help prepare students for the SAT, and the students also prepare on their own. Figure 7 shows DVSS percentile scores for the past four years. DVSS students excel in mathematics but are only average in English language skills. The mathematics percentiles for every grade are over the 50-percentile value. This indicates that DVSS students score above the average of those taking the PSAT. Critical reading and writing scores tend to be from 40 to 60 percent with the writing scores slightly better than the critical reading scores. With excellent teachers in DVSS English department, this difference is not in curriculum or instruction. The numbers of DVSS students who speak other languages at home are at the heart of this difference. Mathematical skills do not rely as heavily on language mastery and are easier to learn for foreign students, hence the better scores.

Figure 7.



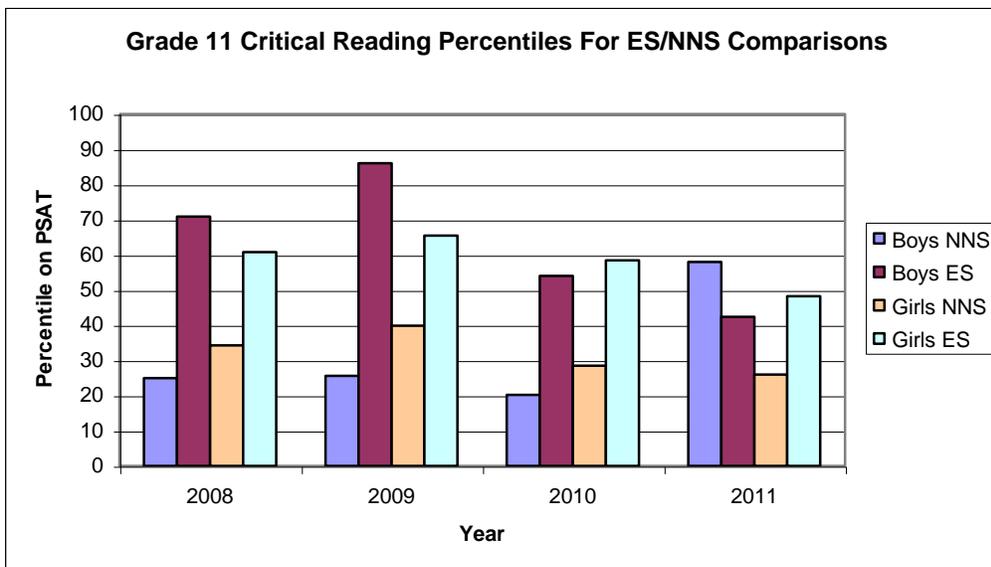
To test the hypothesis that foreign students do not test as well in the critical reading and writing sections of the PSAT DVSS disaggregated data by English Speakers (ES) and Non-Native (English) Speakers (NNS). The following figures, Figure 8 and Figure 9 exemplify this disaggregation. Figure 8 shows the PSAT scores for 11th grade students in 2008. As this grade is compared to other students at the same grade level it should be freer of bias than that for other grade levels. Figure 9 shows the percentiles for critical reading for 11th grade students.

Figure 8.



These data clearly support the hypothesis. Math scores for the two groups are very near the same. However, both the critical reading and writing scores show a significant difference between the two groups. The only anomalies in the data are the critical reading percentiles for boys division in 2011, Figure 9, where NNS students performed better in critical reading than those reared in an English Speaking household. All of the NNS students came from a country having a background in English so they were unusually strong.

Figure 9.



Summary

Most of DVSS data comes from relatively small sample sizes. Thus, data seem to be more random than would ordinarily be the case. However, there are some trends that have been established:

1. AP Trends: DVSS has increased the number of AP classes available to students and participation in AP courses during the past six years. The most dramatic increases have been in girls division. DVSS expects the trend of increasing the number of AP classes available to students will continue over the next six years.
2. Enrollment Trends: Even though total enrollment in elementary and secondary school dropped 10% this school year (from 207 to 188), due to the worldwide economic slowdown, DVSS expects that applications will continue to rise over the long run. Both universities and parents of school age children know DVSS better. Therefore, DVSS is planning to expand the facilities for boys division of the school.

Overall, DVSS has high expectations for student learning and conduct and teaches students to live a healthy and mindful lifestyle. Character development is identified as the one of the main focus of the school and comprises three of the four Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs). DVSS staff have expectations for students academically as well.

Chapter II Progress Report

DVSS has made progress on all action plans to varying degrees of success. The 2007 school wide action plan indicated seven specific goals identified by DVSS as growth areas.

Goal 1: The school will develop formal procedures to address the school's Action Plan: schedule collaborative meetings; monitor improvement processes; collect, analyze and communicate student profile data and use it to evaluate admissions and guide local recruitment; and ensure adequate budget and facilities for school development.

The 2013 self-study noted five tasks accomplished pertaining to Goal 1:

- DVSS established a formal review process with the publication of DVSS Review Process.
- DVSS holds bimonthly collaborative meetings on teacher work days and during department meetings.
- DVSS developed a monitoring system to collect, analyze and publicize data.
- DVSS allocates school budgets to support action plan by continuing to expand curriculum offerings and support all school programs.
- DVSS manages facility expansion through the parent organization (Dharma Realm Buddhist Association) each year.

Goal 2: The school leadership will develop and implement a program for recruiting, mentoring, supporting, and retaining volunteers; bringing in qualified, more fully compensated faculty as needed; and effectively incorporating and training all volunteer and salaried staff members.

The 2013 self-study noted three tasks accomplished pertaining to Goal 2:

- DVSS developed a Volunteer Handbook in 2008, formulated a recruitment initiative, developed Public Relations materials, and placed them on the World Wide Web. Recruitment began in March 2009 and is ongoing. As a means to attract faculty, we have also begun a Fellowship Program with Dominican College. DVSS has implemented a Mentor program for the past three years. Previously, DVSS held a summer orientation "Teach from the Heart" for three summers, and are considering continuing this program based on faculty feedback in a recent survey.
- DVSS monitors and supports Volunteer Benefits Program by performing this iterative task annually. The annual budgets incorporate salaries and benefits for faculty and staff personnel. The benefits for fulltime volunteer teachers include a monthly stipend, health insurance, medical support, travel stipend, free tuition for children, college loans for children, and teacher training.
- DVSS continues to hire, support, and retain salaried faculty (preferably credentialed). Most of DVSS hiring of salaried faculty during the past six years

relate to the expansion of the AP offerings of the school.

Goal 3: To implement a system for on-going improvement and monitoring of the science laboratory and library research resources.

The 2007 library research resource goal was to implement a system for on-going improvement to library research resources. The 2010 three-year revisit noted (1) a cataloging process was in the works with a target date of Fall 2010 for completion, (2) DVSS budgeted for yearly new book purchases and accepting quality donations, (3) students are using the Mendocino County library and Mendocino College library when enrolled, and (4) indicated upgrades in library furnishings have occurred with an increase in Chinese books.

The 2013 self-study noted four tasks accomplished pertaining to library research resources:

- DVSS completed the development of the Machine-Readable Cataloging (MARC) data for most DVSS library books.
- Book acquisitions continued to be very satisfactory, while both divisions spend about \$500 annually on new books, are accepting quality book donations, and provide recently acquired books available on request.
- Expand library research options, book search and loan capacity.
- DVSS students acquire Mendocino County library cards at the Ukiah Branch Library. Using school computers, students can search database for information, put holds on books, and have them transferred to the Ukiah Branch. Librarians arrange to pick up and return books as needed. Any student taking a course at Mendocino College has access to the library there. DVSS students and staff are also allowed to borrow books from the Dharma Realm Buddhist University (DRBU) Library.
- Improvements have taken place at the boys division includes new curtains, carpets, shelves, and revolving book racks. Study hall and community service groups have improved at keeping the libraries clean and orderly. DVSS have installed two new computers for student use in the boy's division library. Parent volunteers have been cleaning and dusting regularly. The girls' division library was redesigned with new shelves and furniture. Both divisions also continue to improve their Chinese libraries. All DVSS libraries are being well-used by students and teachers for multiple purposes—reading, research, classes, study halls, socializing and, in rare instances, resting and relaxing.

The 2007 science facilities and infrastructure goal was to continue improving both the facility and the laboratory infrastructure. The 2010 three-year revisit noted sciences rooms now had Reverse Osmosis water treatment and new equipment, such as new dissection microscopes and a digital projector, had been purchased.

The 2013 self-study noted several improvements to the science laboratories:

- DVSS now has 3 science laboratories, a downstairs laboratory for Biology and Chemistry, and two upstairs laboratories for AP Physics and AP Environmental Science.
- DVSS has upgraded science laboratories through a variety of acquisitions ranging from the acquisition of modern heating and insulated windows to wireless internet access, digital projectors, computers, and many teaching tools.

Goal 4: All stakeholders of the school will have more comprehensive data to plan, support, and develop educational programs conducive to the students' academic and character improvement.

The 2013 visit noted all departments have created common benchmark assessments, hold department wide meeting on benchmarks and to analyze data three times per year, and have created a template for recording observations and reflections used widely by instructors.

Goal 5: Teachers will receive professional development and on-going instructional assistance.

The 2007 professional development goal was to ensure teachers receive professional development and on-going instructional assistance. The 2010 three-year revisit noted DVSS counselors attended University of California and Ed Fund workshops, as well as one counselor attending Harvard Summer Institute. Additionally, teachers were trained in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), Backward Design, and on Literacy and Critical Reading Strategies.

The 2013 self-study noted an increase on professional development for teachers of AP course and in curriculum and instruction, specifically benchmarks and assessment data. One counselor has attended additional professional development such as the weeklong Harvard Summer Institute on College Admissions for three summers. Beginning in Fall 2012, a group of selected teachers and administrators (8 members) have been attending a two-year professional development Professional Learning Communities (PLC) aligning with Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The knowledge and experience from this professional development workshop helped develop the action plan found at Chapter 5 of this document.

Goal 6: The school will provide accelerated interventions for English Language Learners (ELL) and students reading below the 6th grade level.

The 2007 ELL goal was to provide accelerated interventions for ELL and students reading below the 6th grade level. The 2010 three-year revisit noted DVSS offered ELL student support classes as well as immersing them in mainstream classes.

The 2013 self-study noted a pilot program based on State Board of Education approved

materials, which was to begin in Fall of 2008, but now it has been changed to be based on California ELL standards. The Pilot program was implemented at DVSS in the Fall of 2009. The school provides accelerated interventions for ELLs and students reading below the 6th grade level. The first task under this goal is to select and adopt an appropriate intervention for ELL students and students in grades 9-12 who are reading at a sixth grade level or below. Since all students were mainstreamed beginning spring 2010, the piloting of the ELL texts—High Point—could not be fully completed in the 2009-2010 school year. According to the DVSS ELL teacher, she finds the text helpful, but insufficient for the course. She has been using many supplementary materials. Moreover, the topics in the book do not always interest the ELL students, who are primarily from Taiwan and China. The adoption of High Point was put on hold to be reconsidered. Since 2010 the secondary school has only accepted ELL students who are mainstreamed.

Goal 7: To expose students and teachers to state of the art technology necessary for the former to be effective in college and workplace.

The 2007 technology goal was to expose students and teachers to state of the art technology necessary for the former to be effective in college and workplace. The 2010 three-year revisit noted integrated and improved technology for instructional use by upgrading servers and computers, adding DSL lines, extended internet and trained staff in PowerPoint.

The 2013 self-study noted upgrades to all servers (content filters, DHCP, etc.) to newer and faster machines, upgraded all desktops in computer labs and replaced CRT monitors with energy-efficient flat panels, installed computers in the library for student research, tripled the Internet bandwidth from 2 DSL lines to 6 DSL lines, and has in-place the infrastructure to add more lines on short notice. We have extended Internet access to all high school classrooms, and increased the use of student presentations via PowerPoint. In addition, all staff were trained in the use of PowerPoint at an in-service in 2008, and staff are incorporating technology in their lessons more often and in greater numbers. Students with library cards may access research database at the local county library, which significantly enhances their research capabilities. All teachers were briefly introduced to the I-Search format of research during one of the monthly in-services in Fall 2009, and several teachers in different departments are piloting I-Search projects in their classes this school year. More comprehensive training in I-Search took place in the Fall semester of 2012.

Summary of progress on the recommendations made in 2010

Since the 2007 full site visit and the 2010 three-year revisit, DVSS has continually progressed on all critical areas for action and has continued to updated the school wide action plan, which has impacted student learning by providing a well-informed staff and ability to isolate learning criteria's for individual students.

Since the 2007 self-study, DVSS has updated and amended the school wide action plan and goals to the WASC Focus on Learning categories resulting in nine specific goals. Table 11 shows that DVSS had eliminated 2 goals ([1] Accelerating interventions for ELLs and [2] exposing students and teachers to technology) from the 2007 action plan.

Table 11.

	2007 Goals	2013 Goals
1	Address Action Plan	Address Action Plan
2	Recruit/Retain Volunteers	Recruit/Retain Volunteers
3	Science Lab/Library Resources	Science Lab/Library Resources
4	Curriculum	Curriculum
5	Provide PD	Provide PD
6	Accelerate interventions for ELLs (Deleted goal)	Assess PD (New goal)
7	Expose students and teachers to Technology (Deleted goal)	Student Services/Opportunities (New goal)
8		Increase Community Involvement (New goal)
9		Create Development Plan (New goal)

Recommendations from the 2010 WASC revisit

According to 2007 VC report, DVSS had made good progress increasing student access to computers. Students are able to apply up to date technology in science classrooms and teachers were incorporating technology into assignments.

The use of advanced technology was increasing and was being used creatively. However, it was noted that students needed individual access to the Internet providing them with a technology component to the improvements of the science facilities. The science department needed to buy additional science equipment, train staff, and integrate the new technology into the science curriculum.

Exposing students and teachers to technology, a necessary tool to be effective in college and workplace, needed refinement. One of the 2007 self-study action plan goals identified for follow-up was to leverage teacher expertise by increasing the use of technology in the classrooms.

According to the 2010 three year visit report, progress had been made toward the goal to expose students and teachers to state of the art technology necessary for the former

to be effective in college and workplace (Goal #7). DVSS had integrated and improved technology for instructional use by upgrading servers and computers, by adding DSL lines and extended Internet and trained staff in PowerPoint.

Per the 2013 DVSS self-study, technology was no longer an action plan goal. The following was provided: DVSS has upgraded all servers (content filters, DHCP, etc.) to newer and faster machines, upgraded all desktops in computer labs and replaced CRT monitors with energy-efficient flat panels, installed computers in the library for student research, tripled the Internet bandwidth from 2 DSL lines to 6 DSL lines, and has in-place the infrastructure to add more lines on short notice.

The self-study noted DVSS having extended Internet access to all high school classrooms, and increased the use of student presentations via PowerPoint. However the visiting committee observed existing deficiencies in internet access in all classrooms, which aligned with teacher comments. All staff were trained in the use of PowerPoint at an in-service in 2008, and staff are incorporating technology in their lessons more often and in greater numbers. Students with library cards may access research database at the local county library, which significantly enhances their research capabilities. All teachers were briefly introduced to the I-Search format of research during one of the monthly in-services in Fall 2009, and several teachers in different departments are piloting I-Search projects in their classes this school year. More comprehensive training in I-Search took place in the Fall semester of 2012.

According to the Focus on Learning, technological integration is an indicator for how students learn (category B2), noting that teachers whom systematically integrate technology within the school assist students to develop a wide range of technological skills.

Throughout focus group meetings with key stakeholders, it was determined that ELL intervention and support was primarily shifted to the lower grade levels. However, ELL student in the 9-12th are still needed to provide structure for all types of learners.

According to the 2013 self-study, DVSS teachers expressed the need to voice their concerns to pertaining teacher evaluations to school leadership, but were not aware of proper channels to do so. Teacher evaluations are needed to provide staff members a formalized and cohesive process of evaluating teachers in order for the intended ESLRs to be met.

The visiting committee recommends the following:

1. Carry forward the goal to increase the use of technology in the classrooms
2. Carry forward the goal to increase ELL interventions
3. Establish a system to evaluate teacher and volunteer instructors

Throughout the visit, DVSS leadership team updated the 2013 schoolwide action goals to:

	2007 Goals	2013 Goals	2013 Updated Goals
1	Address Action Plan	Address Action Plan	Address Action Plan
2	Recruit/Retain Volunteers	Recruit/Retain Volunteers	Recruit/Retain Volunteers
3	Science Lab/Library Resources	Science Lab/Library Resources	Science Lab/Library Resources
4	Curriculum	Curriculum	Curriculum (Added technology infrastructure and resources)
5	Provide PD	Provide PD	Provide PD (Added addressing the needs of struggling student in academics and language support)
6	Accelerate interventions for ELLs (Deleted goal)	Assess PD (New goal)	Assess PD (Added to develop a more comprehensive system of teacher evaluation)
7	Expose students and teachers to Technology (Deleted goal)	Student Services/Opportunities (New goal)	Student Services/Opportunities
8		Increase Community Involvement (New goal)	Increase Community Involvement
9		Create Development Plan (New goal)	Create Development Plan

Chapter III Self-Study Process

The DVSS school organization for the WASC activities consisted of the Leadership Team, Focus Groups, and Home Groups (faculty, staff, parents, and students). The Leadership Team coordinated the process and provided resources where needed. The Focus Group synthesized and validated the findings of the Home groups. The Home groups collected and evaluated core evidence.

Membership in the Focus Groups (Criteria A, B, C, and D) and Home Groups varied over the course of the study. This variation was due to the availability of people, i.e. not all of the parents or students were available for every instance. However, all stakeholders were involved in the Self Study.

DVSS is a Buddhist school that, in partnership with parents, works to instill and develop in students the core virtues of kindness, filial piety, respect, trustworthiness, fairness, citizenship, integrity, and humility. We create an environment for students to achieve their full academic potential and become outstanding citizens, who contribute to making their community and the world a better place.

DVSS's mission statement supports the purpose of Dharma Realm Buddhist Association (DRBA) as listed in its Articles of Incorporation, which are excerpted below. Second that the purpose for which it [DRBA] is formed are:

To organize and conduct schools and publications, collect books, issue literature of different sorts, and to publish books as a means to diffuse Buddhist culture, comparative religion, philosophy, science, education and other subjects pertaining to learning within any and all of the above-mentioned fields and topics.

To carry on such other activities and intellectual contributions pertaining to the enhancement of religion, philosophy, education, history, literature, science, art, as a part of the fundamental work of the Association.

To engage learned persons as lecturers and instructors to give instructions on the aforementioned fields of human knowledge.

DVSS's mission statement also fulfills the Founder's ideal in promoting ethical education. In the highest form, DVSS and their self-study accurately reflects the school's program for students.

In general, DVSS attracts faculty, staff, parents, students, volunteers, and community supporters who are inspired by the school's purpose (reflected in the school's name), and the four major ESLRs. Students are expected to:

- (1) Manifest the eight core virtues

- (2) To gain an appreciation of their own spiritual wisdom
- (3) To explore and develop their academic potential and talents in the humanities, sciences or arts
- (4) To express a global awareness and appreciate various cultures and religions

The observable evidence reflects a sampling of what all students are doing and producing with respect to the WASC criteria and the school's ESLRs. DVSS has successfully developed a school wide action plan that integrates focus areas and support plans to address identified growth needs. The observable evidence, school philosophy, and intended methods of life may be responsible for the intentional limited access or use of technology. Even with DVSS's chosen school philosophies and lifestyle, DVSS students are still progressing toward schoolwide learner outcomes and ESLRs.

DVSS's process in which they have developed and implemented an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the action plan have been established through five tasks which have been assigned to specific school personnel, identified resources available, established a timeline, means to assess improvement, and a means to report progress and status.

Chapter IV Quality of the School's Program

CATEGORY A. ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT LEARNING

A1. School Purpose Criteria

DVSS has a clear mission statement that states as follows:

“Developing Virtue Secondary School is a Buddhist school that, in partnership with parents, works to instill and develop in our students the core virtues of kindness, filial piety, respect, trustworthiness, fairness, citizenship, integrity, and humility. We create an environment for our students to achieve their full academic potential and become outstanding citizens, who contribute to making their community and the world a better place.”

The DVSS has adopted the following ESLRs:

(1) Practice the core virtues of kindness, filial piety, respect, trustworthiness, fairness, citizenship, integrity and humility.(2) Have a deep appreciation of their own inherent spiritual wisdom through meditation and other spiritual practices and teachings.(3) Explore and develop their individual academic potential and talents in the humanities, sciences or arts.(4) Express a multinational, global awareness and understanding; and show an appreciation and respect for a variety of cultures and religions.

As a result of a review that took place in March of 2012, the DVSS has made minor changes to the mission statement and ESLRs since their last self-study. The addition of the word “community” was added to the mission statement. This addition was for the purpose of adding a focus to the local community. There was also an addition to ESLR #3 in the elaboration section to include the words “write” and “communicate.” (“Have the ability to think, write, and communicate critically and analytically.”) ESLR #4 had the following statements added to the elaboration portion of this ESLR: “Have a basic understanding of major world religions-Have been exposed to a variety of cultures-Have a general knowledge of the history and present qualities of different cultures-Have an understanding of the different levels of global interdependence”.

The self-study states that the mission statement and the ESLRs are displayed in the classrooms and hallways as well as the web site. This was verified after a tour of the class rooms. Each student maintains a folder in which assignments are placed that is specifically designed to help the students evaluate their work to the ESLRs. After a discussion with students and staff it seemed as if the students definitely had an understanding of the ESLRs.

A2. School Governance Criteria

The DRBA is the owner and overseer of the school. The DRBA Board of Education has specific duties to perform, one of which is to “adopt policies which are consistent with the school purpose and support[s] the achievement of the ESLRs for the school.”

The DRBA receives an annual report from the principals at the end of the school year, which includes a report on the school’s progress and its implementation of the ESLRs. After receiving input from the school leadership and faculty, new policies are developed on an as-needed basis.

There are non-voting members of the Board who attend meetings to “furnish coordination and school perspectives...” These non-voting members consist of the principal and a faculty representative from each division (girls and boys) as well as one faculty member who represents the monks and nuns. Statements made by the leadership team indicated the DRBA followed suggestions made by the principals for the school and delegates implementation to the principals.

The DRBA is informed through various meetings to monitor the school’s progress and can address any difficulties in carrying out policies. However, meetings are not scheduled at regular intervals.

A3. School Leadership Criterion

The school leadership actively guides the teachers to integrate the ESLRs into the curriculum and designs assessments to demonstrate the effectiveness on the students. Leadership reviews the school-wide action plan semi-annually and updates the plan annually.

Leadership structures the curriculum, the learning environment, student lifestyle, and activities to focus energy on the ESLRs. The teachers are given substantial creativity, freedom, and flexibility in designing their own curriculum and course schedule as long as they follow the UC requirements and follow the guidelines set up by the leadership.

Teacher’s ideas and feedback for improved student learning and behavior are regularly sought after. Formal and informal meetings occur on a weekly basis.

A4. Staff Criterion

All faculty are hired based on criteria that includes: academic and career expertise in the subject matter, passion for teaching and working with children and the ability to follow the school mission and values. After examining the classroom instruction and interaction, the staff seem very qualified for their positions.

Part of the responsibilities of the staff and leadership is to adhere to and adjust when necessary to the school's purpose and ESLRs. After interviewing the staff it seems that all are committed to all areas of student learning.

The school supports continuing education and ongoing professional development. Some teachers are paid to attend workshops. The school pays for DRBU classes and instructional material for relevant classes. The school offers development training on a yearly basis. Teachers are offered an opportunity to become credentialed through local universities.

A5. School Environment Criterion

The school campus and lifestyle are naturally conducive to learning. It is situated in a monastery serene and free from the distractions of traffic, commerce, and media. Many of the teachers reside on campus and often take time to communicate with individual students who are struggling or excelling. Teachers are willing to mentor, tutor, support and challenge students.

Each person in the school is respected equally regardless of background, race, and physical appearance. The diverse backgrounds, culture, and religion that are found among the faculty and student peers develop a respect and appreciation for the individual differences. Daily interaction between staff and students encourage proper respect, understanding, and awareness of the differences of persons. Trust is reinforced with positive feedback from the staff.

A6. Reporting Student Progress Criterion

The DVSS regularly administer tests such as SAT, SATII, PSAT, and the AP. These test scores are collected and aggregated to provide teachers and the leadership team with data for assessing school progress. The ESLR portfolio was also developed as a more holistic, qualitative marker for the student's progression of the ESLRs. However, the portfolio is more of a folder that is used to hold past work and is not in itself a means of assessing accomplishment, but does measure a progression of work.

Report cards are distributed to the parents twice per semester. Teachers meet with parents to discuss student progress and to support struggling students. Dormitory leaders meet with teachers when resident students do not have parents that are able to attend meetings. Other assessments such as the use of weekly testing and oral writings help to assess the student progress.

The school generates an Annual Report that is disseminated to the Parent Teacher Organization and Board of Education. There are plans to publish academic results on the website.

A7. School Improvement Progress Criterion

“DVSS understands the structured management required to provide for continued improvement of student learning. Responsibilities for implementation are directly assigned to appropriate faculty and staff members. Leadership monitors the accomplishment of these activities through status reports from the parties responsible.” The school leadership meets regularly to discuss the progress of the school.

Upon observation of the boys and girls divisions of the school, there are distinct differences between the two divisions.

Mid-year reviews identify the growth areas or actions that are deviating from the action plan. Small deviations require a greater oversight and awareness of the situation. Significant deviations require a different allocation of resources such as money, time, technology, consultants, or personnel.

As of this point full implementation of a plan for accountability has not been analyzed for effectiveness.

Areas of Strength:

- Clarity of purpose
- DVSS mission in ESLRs inspire and attract parents and students who seek the education offered by the school, as well as drawing community support.
- The school’s name, mission, ESLRs, and program are all well aligned.
- School leadership structures the curriculum, student lifestyle, activities, and environment in a way that facilitates student achievement of the ESLRs.
- School leadership and faculty semi-annually review the operation of the schools to ensure achievement of the ESLRs and involves all stakeholders in the process.
- Teachers design their curriculum to facilitate the achievement of ESLRs.
- Teachers are highly committed and involved in enabling their students to succeed.
- There is a clear and effective governing structure in place for adopting and revising policies as needed in monitoring results of implementation for the successful achievement of the ESLRs.
- The school leadership and professional staff are empowered to carry out the policies.
- Qualified and committed group of teachers and staff who embrace school’s mission and values.
- Improved support and benefits for volunteer teachers.
- Many professional development opportunities for teachers both on and off campus.
- The campus of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas provides a safe, healthy, peaceful learning environment.
- Community service develops students’ sense of responsibility and initiative.

- Diversities of cultures and religions represented among the student and faculty foster a natural respect for differences in the students.
- Individual nurturing and support is given to student to help them meet high expectations.
- Teachers engage one another in open discussion and sharing on a regular basis, promoting an atmosphere of harmony and trust.
- Structured grading period and reporting of grades to students and parents.
- Small class size enables teachers to have ongoing communication with parents and to work with struggling students to improve achievement and challenge students that are performing well.
- Continuous improvement of student learning.
- Alignment of efforts to student learning.
- Budget that reflects efforts in the action plan

Growth Areas:

- Review ESLR rubric and modify/replace the ESLR portfolio process as the means to generate evidence of student ESLR performance to make the process more meaningful for students and teachers.
- Review and improve process for gauging student's ESLR achievement that engages students and teachers in a meaningful process of looking at learning progress and character development.
- Leadership team needs to review the existing process for engaging faculty and staff in school planning.
- New teachers need to be given a more comprehensive orientation to school policies, procedures, and practices, including school action plan items.
- Review and develop a more formal teacher supervision and evaluation plan that promotes teacher's self-assessment/reflections.
- Review and develop a measurable professional development plan in support of promoting the school wide learning outcomes.
- Need more consistent surveys on professional development, particularly to elicit teacher reflections on how strategies presented in professional development inform their teaching and improve student performance.
- Improve on analysis and dissemination of course evaluations (by students) data to give teachers feedback and then follow-up with any interventions as needed.
- Develop a formal systems alignment to monitor and promote school improvement.
- Develop formal process for faculty to deliberate on standardized achievement scores yearly.
- Continue to help students maintain a healthy balance between academic challenge and extracurricular activities, including teaching stress relief and time management methods.
- Continue with more interactive format for semiannual and annual reviews to engage stakeholders effectively.

Evidence:

- DVSS initial visit May 21, 2004
- DRBA Mission Statement (Articles of Incorporation)
- School website
- Department Binders
- Lesson Plans, student work in Dept. binders, ESLR portfolios
- Posters
- ESLR rubric
- Observation
- Faculty and Parent/ Student Handbook
- Class Portfolios
- Community service
- Staff interviews
- School Calendar
- Individual qualifications
- Dominican University fellowship
- School wide action plan
- Emails
- Finance records
- In-service agendas
- Year books
- Event flyers
- Teacher in-services, professional development
- Lunch menus
- Student interviews
- SAT scores
- PSAT scores
- Student work
- Classrooms
- Self-study
- Annual Progress report

CATEGORY B. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT**B1. What Students Learn Criterion**

The self- study indicated that they were exploring PLCs (DuFour and Eckers), Understanding by Design (Wiggins), and SIOP strategies in order to drive curriculum , professional development and instruction. They are continuing to refine and develop a comprehensive and sequential documented program that is articulated across and within grade levels for the improvement of programs, learning and teaching. During the WASC visit the leadership indicated they were still evaluating the different models and how they can formalize the strategies in all classes. The teachers and leadership mentioned that the school does provide numerous opportunities to attend various

professional development and then share out best practices, however that does not necessary lead to implementation across the board.

Academically, the school meets the University of California A-G requirements, and the AP classes adhere to the College Board recommended syllabi. Both the English and Math department have adequately met their goals in order to work on implementing the CCSS within their perspective departments. The focus groups and department meeting notes provided evidence of teachers communicating with each other informally in order to ensure students' needs were being met. In one example teachers are talking about how to make certain that students were prepared for Advanced Placement writing in their subject matter.

Overall, school provides opportunities and evidence that the school-wide learning goals or expected school wide learning (school-wide learner outcomes). The ESLRs were observed by the Visiting Committee to be more explicit in some classes than others. These included quick writes/journaling prompts, particularly in the humanities and visual performing arts classes. The science and math classes noted their focus of the ESLRs was in academic achievement/ CCSS and further exploration of integrating the other three ESLRs is a worthy growth goal.

The school provides a comprehensive curriculum. They are continuing to evaluate and refine the sequential order to ensure students are receiving the support they need to thrive academically while increasing the academic rigor and alignment with CCSS. The process of reviewing content each year is done by the teachers and leadership. Although the academic rigor is present, the continuum of skill benchmarks was not apparent. Currently there is not articulate skills matrix or plan that is horizontally (grade level) or vertically (by subject) aligned. The school has modified the curriculum to meet the needs of high achievers, as well as provided an English as a Second Language (ESL) support in middle school so students can be mainstreamed when they enter college. However discussions among stakeholders revealed that more ESL support needs to be provided at the high school level, and students feel reluctant to take multiple AP classes due to the master schedule.

The examination of student work, portfolios and snap shots of student engagement in learning during the classroom visitations/ interviews provided sufficient evidence the implementation of standards- based curriculum that also addresses the ESLRs. Curricular standards are based on both the CA state standards, CCSS, and the core virtues. The Visiting Committee noted plays and classroom visitations that asked students to reflect on the core virtues of the school. Students indicated that the core virtues were apparent in most classes, however the boys felt that they were not always explicit.

The school has the beginnings of acceptable student learning outcomes of the curricular goals and the ESLRs through benchmarks. For the most part, it is apparent through the focus groups and observations that the math and science depend on the SAT subject tests or the AP exams in addition to the benchmarks and their classroom

assessments. Students also have their ESLR binders that contain a basic rubric that assesses their reflections/ growth in their core virtues. In addition to going over procedures in the beginning of the year with students, the course syllabi and student handbook indicate homework, test, project and exam expectations.

The school has a yearly review and evaluation process of curriculum. Formally, subject teachers, core teachers and school leadership share and discuss curriculum in department meetings or school meetings. During the focus group the teaching staff mentioned that there are many informal curriculum reviews and revisions that occur in talking to each other on a regular basis. One specific example was the beginning discussions of how to support students in lower grades to prepare for the AP World History class.

The administrators and teachers note that collaboration is one of their areas of growth. Although they have had workshops revolving around the PLC model, CCSS, SIOP, ESLRs rubrics and Understanding by Design—it is often difficult to collaborate because of the master schedule, volunteer schedules etc. As the school continues to revise how it analyzes data and curriculum, creating a formalized process is something that came out of the focus group meetings. School leadership noted that collaboration needed to be more teacher driven.

Children with special needs and students who do not want to attend DVSS are not generally admitted into the school. Although it is not noted in the self-study, DVSS decided to move their ESL classes to middle school as a way to mainstream students by the time they were in high school. The school states that all students have access to their challenging curriculum. Despite the AP exams revealing high test scores, both teachers and students mentioned in their focus groups that often times they do not feel they are prepared for (multiple) AP classes, or they struggle in the writing portions.

There are clear policies regarding credits and grades that guide student progression through the program. One of the counselors did note that often times PE and meditation credits are ones that transfer students need to make up. As stated earlier- the percentages in which classwork, exams, homework etc. compromise the students' grades are noted in class syllabi.

The school is currently in the process of developing a way to continue to follow the alumni after they graduate DVSS. There are several alumni who come back to the school and volunteer, or talk to current students about their experiences. There was a summit noted in the self study where alumni participated in a conference with DVSS leaders and the board to assess the school's impact.

B2. How Students Learn Criterion

In their self-study the administrators and teachers mentioned they use a variety of strategies in research-based knowledge and apply the knowledge to improve teaching and learning. All students regardless of background and ability are involved in the learning based on the expected school-wide learning results and curricular objects. Teachers/ volunteers receive professional development surrounding Understanding by Design, CCSS, and PLC models; however there is no formalized process or assessment to measure their professional development progress. Despite the professional developments, not all volunteers who are instructors receive the same training. Teachers have informally helped each other to start the process of meeting the professional development goals.

Teachers are actively encouraged and attend a variety of workshops revolving teaching practice and instruction and further their education. Many mentioned in their focus group sharing what they learned from others was helpful, however there was not always follow up or opportunity for reflection after utilizing the strategies.

Although students have the opportunity to take higher-level classes such as AP, differentiated instruction was not observed in all classes. The leadership team noted that the PLC, UBD, differentiated instruction and other models were still being evaluated to which was best for the DVSS environment. Although thinking maps were a result of informal practice, those were not present in all of the binders nor observed in classrooms.

Administrators and teachers admitted during the focus groups that formal professional collaboration was difficult with the various schedules of volunteers and teaching staff. They do meet regularly as a department and a few times a year as a whole staff. In regards to professional collaboration informal professional development is what is cited in the self-study.

Professional development as a whole was not specifically mentioned in all subjects in the self-study as how they are utilizing what they have learned to better themselves as educators and reflect on their practice/direct instruction. During the focus groups although there is a wealth of knowledge among the leadership team and teachers/volunteers the true purpose, goals, vision and long-range development of professional development was not clear to teachers and volunteers.

Collectively, teachers strengthen student understanding and achievement of the learning outcomes through the use of a variety of instructional strategies. These include rubrics, peer based evaluations, journaling styles, graphic organizers, thinking maps etc. DVSS cites that students are engaged in rough drafts and final draft processes of written work before it is displayed. Students in some classes such as social studies, certain math classes and Chinese are required to submit assignments/use the Internet to research/use the dictionary. The Visiting Committee viewed various art class final assignments displayed in the girls' school, in addition to department binders, and work samples from students. While visiting classrooms students seemed engaged with their

oral recitation lessons, drama Socratic circles, presentations, and science labs. The self-study noted the use of peer or group work. This was apparent in all of the classrooms visited. The art aspect listed in the self-study was not observed in all classes.

The self-study noted that technology was used when appropriate. During the statistics class, science class and study halls is where the Visiting Committee observed computers/ technology being used. One teacher mentioned that due to the concrete walls, they did not have direct access to the Internet and had to use alternative methods to instructing the student. Teachers mentioned that they had access to DVD and TVs for videos etc. During the Sunday study hall the Visiting Committee observed students using the computer for research and homework purposes. Students noted that in they did PowerPoint presentations but technology was more for researching than a teaching tool.

Students working and their work demonstrate critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and knowledge attainment and application skills. The school guided by the ESLRs has implemented programs and curriculum that challenge students to think critically and reason logically. The self-study cites in several classes that character development and reflection is a part of the learning process. This was observed in the English classes and the ESLR binders. Additionally the school cites working with other organizations in order to strengthen performance and exhibitions. The group work/team work process was evident in the extra-curricular activities of dance troupes and drumming group during the visit. The students noted these activities strengthen their ability to collaboratively work together.

Through interview and dialogue with student representatives of the school population the Visiting Committee was able to learn about their level of understanding of the expected level of performance based on the standards and the school wide learning results and their perceptions of their learning experience. DVSS reports in response to this prompt in their chapter 1 that students score extremely well on the SATs and AP exams.

Student perceptions were not explicitly elicited as member of a stakeholder group for the self-study; however during the interview process it was clear that student feedback was included in the addition of certain classes.

Student interviews on-site (9 randomly selected students and the ASB council) noted that they love the school; however there are areas to grow. They noted (as did school leadership and teachers) they are often stressed out between the multiple AP classes and extracurricular activities. Often times they feel like they do not have any options other than to take multiple AP classes (some teachers during their focus group mentioned there may be too many AP classes). Students also felt there is not always enough support for preparing them for AP classes, or for English Language learners. In their self-study DVSS noted how they were going to use art, reading/writing across the curriculum and SIOP as some of the various learning styles and student needs

through the instructional approaches used. Although art was not observed in all classes, the writing was evident in observations and student sample work. Overall, in focus groups teachers and students mentioned that they were able to receive extra help if needed outside of the classroom; however with their extracurricular activities time can be limited. Due class size being so small, teachers are generally able to address concerns.

Students use resources for learning beyond the limits of textbooks such as the use of collective activities, projects, and group work. Students have recently gained access of the local libraries, university library on campus, and the different division libraries. Students are also able to access the Internet in order to research projects. As noted in the self- study, community members and organizations also are used for service learning projects to extend curriculum outside of the school.

B3. How Assessment Is Used Criterion

Both school leaders and teachers note that there is no formalized assessment process in regards to the SIOP, literacy, reading and writing across the curriculum models stated in their self-study. There is currently no official vertical or horizontal alignment of skills or expected outcomes to be achieved at each grade level. There are assessments such as tests, speeches, group projects etc.

DVSS teachers use varied class contained assessments, benchmarks, and AP/SAT results to measure student progress. This was evident in both observations and the binders provided for the Visiting Committee. The benchmark rubrics provide a foundation of looking at student data, but how the teachers re-spiral and reteach the curriculum or the goals post benchmark was not explicit on the data sheet.

Overall teachers correlate assessment to the expected school wide learning results, curricular objectives, course competencies and instructional approaches used in order to ensure the students are on pace with their AP exams. Religious classes use the ESLR rubrics in order to assess progress in the core virtues. These pieces of evidence were found in the student binders and portfolio.

Formally how teachers re-spiral and reteach these lessons for was not present. Although there is a reflection data sheet for teachers regarding the benchmarks, there is no clear goal on how to aid students that are struggling. Informally however teachers and core teachers are meeting with students in order to support their academic growth.

Overall, student work and other assessments that demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful learners of the curriculum. The Visiting Committee found evidence in the student binders and in classrooms observations. Students demonstrated various assessment methods such as a Toastmaster format for speeches/ peer evaluations, plays, the traditional exams, presentations etc. Parents also get the opportunity to write feedback on their students' progress on their progress report. Although skills are built through varying assessment, the skills building aspect of

the assessment process at DVSS is not formally assessed (i.e.: there are currently no consistent goals/outcomes among grade level or subject level).

Student feedback is used as part of monitoring student progress over based on the school wide learning results (school-wide learner outcomes) and the curricular objectives. DVSS reports they have a survey for students for each grade level. The boys during the focus group did not recall a formal feedback process, however the girls noted they did received a survey for each class. Overall students felt informally if they wanted to start a club they were able to talk to school leadership. During the interviews students felt that when it came to difficulties with teachers they were not as comfortable to address those concerns with leadership.

Teachers monitor student progress over time and use student feedback as appropriate to determine whether course objectives have been met. DVSS reports that teachers work individually with students in order to improve student work. This was overall evident in the class observations, focus groups and student work. In the girls English classes the Visiting Committee observed was a specific prompt for the students in an English class asking if the teacher had both addressed the ESLRs and where she could improve. Informally the core and general education teacher work collaborate to discuss ways to help individual students. Student surveys also provided feedback.

Additional Findings

Leadership and teachers stated that they would like to eventually get to the place where rubrics match their reading and writing across the curriculum goals as a way to assess students learning and reflect on their practice. Additionally staff and leadership emphasized that these discussions will happen more frequently as CCSS is implemented into all subject matter.

Areas of Strength:

- Curriculum as steadily improved over the last six years
- AP classes have added academic rigor
- International connections provide for a global community of learners
- Continuous effort to ensure teaching aligns with ESLRs
- Working towards integrating arts in all classes
- Community outreach through performances and exhibitions
- More students have challenged themselves to take AP courses and have received average and above scores
- Tutoring and mentoring available to help struggling students
- All departments have shown strong collaborative effort in promoting students' ESLR achievement
- Assessments are being used in all departments

Growth Areas:

- Explore pedagogical tools and review curriculum and articulation based on the CCSS
- Forward each department's respective improvement goals
- Consistent implementation of technology into classrooms
- Improve coordination and communication between teachers and assessing student learning
- Developing a formalize process and expectations on collecting individual data
- Collaboratively look at assessment results department AND grade level wide to make curricular changes and inform instruction
- Orientation for new teachers and volunteers so that they will be familiar with the school's processes (benchmarks, ESLRs)
- Benchmarks/Assessment calendar
- A consistent differentiated approach in order for students to be able to demonstrate content knowledge in utilizing their multiple learning styles
- With the integration of CCSS, the ability to weave career into multiple subjects should be a goal for the next six years. Creating a college and career curriculum/expected learning results for grades 9-12 which includes assessments such as the strong inventory is a suggestion so students are getting a breadth and depth of exposure.
- As reading and writing across the curriculum is something that was noted in their study, implementing consistent SAT vocabulary and test taking strategies in multiple classes may be one way to receive consistency in the majority of their classes when appropriate.
- One area that however that needs to be addressed is the English as a Second Language (ESL) support. Both faculty and students noted that often times they felt they needed additional support other than tutoring, particularly if they taking advanced classes.
- Continuing to find ESL appropriate support services and develop common SIOP strategies
- Continuing to address the student support needs in APUSH
- Integrate the arts across the curriculum
- Continuing to implement Professional development and collaboration (PLC, UBD etc.)

Evidence:

- ESLR Portfolio
- Department Binders
- SAT/AP results (College Board Summary Score Sheet)
- Syllabi (in department binders)
- Sample Student Work/Student Journals
- ESLR Portfolio
- Observations
- Focus Groups

C. SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

C1. Student Connectedness Criterion

Overall, the school provides personalized student support correlated to student achievement of the expected school-wide learning results (school-wide learner outcomes) and the curricular goals as stated in their self- study and action plan.

Moreover the school received professional development, workshops and went over the process of redefining ESLRs in order to better address their priorities for student learning and values. These are outlined in section one of their WASC self-study (pg. 19) DVSS also strove to provide personalized support for students within the context of daily teaching. In their self-study DVSS lists teaching to support different learning styles and providing tutoring in order for students to receive additional support. The Visiting Committee saw peer pair share and group work in nearly every classroom. Additionally the Visiting Committee saw classes in which due to their ability and need, AP classes were formed in order to accommodate the students. DVSS notes in their report (section B) that they are continuing to refine and look for more resources in order to support English Language Learners. According to the self-study they provide ESL classes and they use SIOP practices in their classes (Section B). Explicit SIOP practices stated in the self-study were not observed in all classes during the visit.

Although no formal or documented process exists, overall all stakeholders, parents, students, faculty and leadership agreed that there was individual attention given to students who needed extra support in regards to tutorial. Students also have access to a nurse practitioner, who also consults with the core teachers if concerns about a student's socio-emotional needs arise. The students have multiple adult resources they can turn to, or who will intervene if there is need.

SAT prep was observed only in English class. It was not clear the preparation is also done in other classes. Students and faculty noted that the girl's school has a vocabulary word of the day during their flag ceremony. AP students take multiple tests and their pacing guide is adequate to prepare for the exams. Students noted in their interviews receive college and career informally in their classes, and with their core teachers, however when talking to students many of them still had no idea where they wanted to go to college, or what they wanted to do.

The school continues to use and refine strategies to develop students' self-esteem, a personalized approach to learning, and connections to the learning environment. DVSS has a number of programs in place to support student growth and development, and have listed many in their report as supporting evidence. The effectiveness of each individual program has not been directly analyzed in the self-study, but the focus group reported that the ESLRs binders, consistent self-reflection, and opportunity to participate in a variety of activities have impacted the students. The students also

mentioned in their focus groups that although they would like to see more variety and continued growth in the programs they are benefiting socially, academically and as a person.

There are no specific classroom management or discipline models noted in the study. Classroom observations revealed positive, productive classroom environments in which students were on-task and engaged in learning.

Overall, the school ensures that the support services and related activities have a direct relationship to student involvement and learning. The Visiting Committee noticed a distinct difference between practices the flag ceremony and eating lunch as well as in the students' opinions. The boys felt that the ESLRs and spirituality were not always present in classes where teachable moments and reflection on Confucius' teachings could occur, although Chinese culture was strongly present. The girls felt that through their classes and their extracurricular activities there were explicit examples of the core virtues, Confucius' teachings, and ESLRs present. The female alumni also mentioned in their focus group that because of the school, they made better choices than some of their peers in college.

The school has adequate available services for academic assistance and personal counseling. Although no formal or documented process exists, overall all stakeholders, parents, students, faculty and leadership agreed that there was individual attention given to students who needed extra support in regards to tutorial. Students also have access to a nurse practitioner, who also consults with the core teachers if concerns about a student's socio-emotional needs arise. The students have multiple adult resources they can turn to, or who will intervene if there is need.

The self- study reported all of the various sports clubs and events student organizations create and participate in. The Visiting Committee watched the lion dance group, and got a chance to hear some of the orchestra perform. Students added that they were extremely proud of organizing an event in which 700 people attended at the City of 10,000 Buddhas. The ESLRs are present in activities that the ASB and various student clubs participate and put on in order to enrich the DVSS, local and global community. When asked, all stakeholders, parents, teachers, school leadership, and students could provide direct connections of the co-curricular activities to their ESLRs. Students noted that a larger variety of extra-curricular activities would be preferable, but overall the school leadership is open to their input and ideas. During the focus groups there were concerns about over extension of activities despite core teacher attempts to find a balance of academic and extracurricular.

Overall students acknowledge DVSS provides students with both extracurricular and academic opportunities that will help them grow not only as learners, but also in life. During the focus groups students and teachers indicated that some of students had been placed in classes in which they did not feel prepared. There is a heavy focus on AP exams at the school and there has not been a strategic plan in scaffolding skills to provide students

C2. Parent/Community Involvement Criterion

In the focus meeting it was very apparent that parents are extremely involved in the school. Parents are mandated to 25 hours a year for community service, which they complete in a variety of methods. The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is also heavily involved in fundraising for field trips, support student extracurricular activities, and being a presence on campus. Parents present at the focus group indicated that whenever they had a concern or issue the teacher, dorm supervisor, and school leadership immediately address it. The parents are dedicated to the school's mission, vision, core values and academic rigor.

The community is equally supportive of the school. Many of the teachers are volunteers who teach or help with projects such as cataloging books for the library (girls' school). The school mentioned several organizations they have partnered with to both educate the students and enrich their educational experience. Both in the focus groups and in the self-study alumni mentioned that they often come back and visit DVSS in order to talk to students about their experiences, or to volunteer their time to teach.

The school leadership did mention that one area of growth would be to formalized way to utilize alumni for the parents, school, and local community to understand student achievement of the school wide learner outcomes. Additionally through the PTO there was a recommendation to update the website to make it more user friendly.

Areas of Strength:

- The school and community consists of caring adults, many of whom mentor students and serve as models
- Student have many opportunities to develop ESLR based qualities through active participation of extracurricular activities
- Overall students are participating in at least 2 extracurricular activities – addresses ESLRs, facilitates learning outside the classroom and additional support services.
- The school faculty and staff focus on meeting each student's academic and non-academic needs.
- Partner with local organizations, groups (i.e.: homeless shelter, go green etc.)
- Peer tutoring program provides opportunity for student mentoring and leadership
- Strong parental involvement and support in school program
- Provides opportunities to connect with the immediate, local and global community
- Situated in self-sustaining community of the City of 10,000 Buddhas

Growth Areas:

- Student survey needs to be reviewed, revised and administered
- Data needs to be analyzed and formal intervention is taken school wide
- Improve career exploration and guidance for students

- Creating formal processes for intervention, student feedback etc.
- Expanding the integration of test preparation for the SATs in additional classes
- Improve the school website
- Formalized way to utilize alumni for the parents, school, and local community to understand student achievement of the school wide learner outcomes.
- Continue to increase student service learning in the community
- Continue process to ensuring balance between academics and extracurricular

Evidence:

- Faculty Meeting Minutes
- IEPs
- Advisor Qualifications and Expertise
- Yearbooks
- Interviews
- Student Records
- Club Minutes
- Event Programs
- PTO Newsletter, website
- Student Surveys
- ASC meeting Minutes
- Mission Statement
- Interviews
- Website
- PTO newsletter
- PTO constitution
- PTO minutes
- Student Interviews
- Field Trip requests
- Emails
- Portfolios
- Yearbooks
- Event Programs
- Class Schedules
- Volunteer timesheet
- Focus Groups

D. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

D1. Resources Criterion with Indicators

The school leadership makes decisions of the annual budget based upon data of student development of ESLRs. Funds are allocated to support staff and to purchase qualified instructional materials. Input from all stakeholders is encouraged when developing the budget process. The budget is reviewed by the Board of Education and approved. The budget that was viewed is for the fiscal school year July1 -June 30th of

the year 2012-2013 and sufficient resources are available. Extra resources are available on as needed basis.

D2. Resource Planning Criterion

The finance office was last audited in 2007. The parent organization Dharma Realm Buddhist Association reviews the school's accounts according to procedures for internal control. The accounting staff are all trained individuals qualified for their duties and follow professional business and accounting practices.

The school's grounds are generally adequate to meet the school's purpose, however plans to expand is part of the campus wide Facilities Plan, which spans 30 years into the future. The plan is to include two new trunk lines for increased technical capacity. A new gymnasium is also under discussion and the planning process has begun. The Board of Directors of DRBA has supported the school from its beginning and has continued to pledge support for the foreseeable future. Resources available to the school are sufficient to sustain the school program.

The school receives its finances through tuition, and donations. It does not currently have a marketing plan, however a need for one has been established, and initial planning has begun.

Areas of Strength:

- Resource allocations are aligned with school purpose and learning outcomes and involve input from leadership and staff.
- Qualified financial staff that follows quality business and accounting practices manages the school finances with oversight from the parent organization.
- Facilities expansion has been planned far into the future. Until the plan is accomplished in whole, Buildings and Grounds have made classrooms and offices available as needed.
- The school has been in operation for over 30 years with support from its parent organization.
- Resources for school facilities have been planned and budgeted for the next 30 years. Yearly budgets fully cover the needs of faculty and staff.

Growth Areas:

- Create a systematic structure to ensure that all staff, especially new hires, are consistently nurtured.
- Schedule more school time for planning and collaboration.
- Continue inventory and management of instructional materials and equipment.

- Create a development plan.
- Ensure students focus group provides input to future self-studies

Evidence:

- School board meeting
- Teacher survey

Part B: Synthesize the strengths and key issues from all categories into schoolwide strengths and schoolwide critical areas for follow-up.

DVSS's current nine goals within the schoolwide action plan are similar to goals set during the previous WASC cycles. The schoolwide action plan is aligned with their self-study and represents the same goals for improvement. The goals and insights developed in their self-study not only are more specific in the action that needs to be taken, but explicitly represents a clear direction for the school over the next six years, which will serve as a guide in improving their educational program.

Schoolwide Areas of Strength:

1. Teachers are highly committed and involved in enabling their students to succeed.
2. Qualified and committed group of teachers and staff who embrace school's mission and values.
3. Curriculum has steadily improved over the last six years
4. AP classes have added academic rigor
5. International connections provide for a global community of learners
6. Continuous effort to ensure teaching aligns with ESLRs
7. Improving literacy across the curriculum strategies (pre, during and post reading strategies/SIOP)
8. Working towards integrating arts in all classes
9. Community outreach through performances and exhibitions
10. More students have challenged themselves to take AP courses and have received average and above scores
11. Tutoring and mentoring available to help struggling students
12. All departments have shown strong collaborative effort in promoting students' ESLR achievement
13. Assessments are being used in all departments
14. The school and community consists of caring adults, many of whom mentor students and serve as models
15. Student have many opportunities to develop ESLR based qualities through active participation of extracurricular activities
16. The school faculty and staff focus on meeting each student's academic and non-academic needs.
17. Partner with local organizations, groups (i.e.: homeless shelter, go green etc.)

18. Peer tutoring program provides opportunity for student mentoring and leadership
19. Overall students are participating in at least 2 extracurricular activities – addresses ESLRs, facilitates learning outside the classroom and additional support services.
20. Strong parental involvement and support in school program
21. Provides opportunities to connect with the immediate, local and global community
22. Resources for school facilities have been planned and budgeted for the next 30 years. Yearly budgets fully cover the needs of faculty and staff.

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-Up

The visiting committee concurs with the existing critical areas already identified by the school in the action plan:

1. Implementation of action plan schoolwide for management of effective school development.
2. Continued development and implementation of recruiting, mentoring, supporting, and retaining volunteers to enhance a stable faculty.
3. Further improvements to science laboratory and library research resources in order to align with the school's goals of improving students' knowledge and learning.
4. Plan, support, develop, and align curriculum conducive to the students' academic and character development.
5. Providing teacher professional development and on-going instructional assistance needed in correlation to CCSS and ESLRs to ensure that teachers are making necessary changes to improve student learning.
6. Increase the assessment of teacher and staff professional development in order to provide intellectual, academic, and personal growth of teachers and staff.
7. Improve student services, activities, and opportunities that support student learning and achievement of ESLRs.
8. Increase student involvement in community services for students to appreciate different cultures and religions, and discover real-world applications of what is taught in the classroom.
9. Create a unified development plan to support the school's goal and future growth.

Throughout the visiting committee site visit, the DVSS leadership team has updated the school's action plan to include:

1. Carrying forward the need to improve technology infrastructure and student/teacher exposure to technology.
2. Carrying forward the need to incorporate ELL interventions and assessments across grade levels in regards to vocabulary to support ESL students.
3. Establish teacher and volunteer instructor evaluation process.

Additional areas identified by the visiting committee include areas related to student achievement and other action plans.

1. Improve systems for communications with all stakeholder groups.
2. Establish volunteer substitute teacher list for office staff to improve effectiveness in the classroom.
3. Establish strategies to provide support to student AP readiness.
4. Continue to refine and develop career counseling for students.

Chapter V Ongoing School Improvement

DVSS has selected nine goals for the schoolwide action plan. These nine goals will provide not only the foundation for a clear pathway for schoolwide improvements, but the means to which the goals will impact student learning.

The dedication and desire of the staff is viewed by the visiting committee as a factor that will assist in the implementation of their action plan. The largest impediment to implementing the schoolwide action plan will be the continued improvements and additions to the technology infrastructure and resources.

Considering an appropriate balance between school philosophies and culture, the visiting committee does not find that any further obstacles will impede the implementation, monitoring and reporting to stakeholders about the status of the school wide action plan.

All stakeholders were involved in the development of the school wide action plan and goals set. The follow-up process will be headed by the leadership team. The two co-coordinators, Dharma Master Heng Yin and Mr. Lewis Bostick, are focused and have worked with staff and stakeholders for the past several years in the development of their self-study.