

# Alternative Education Schools - BUSD Board Report

January 2020

## Palisade Glacier High School Bishop Independent Study Keith Bright School



### 2019-2020 LCAP Goals

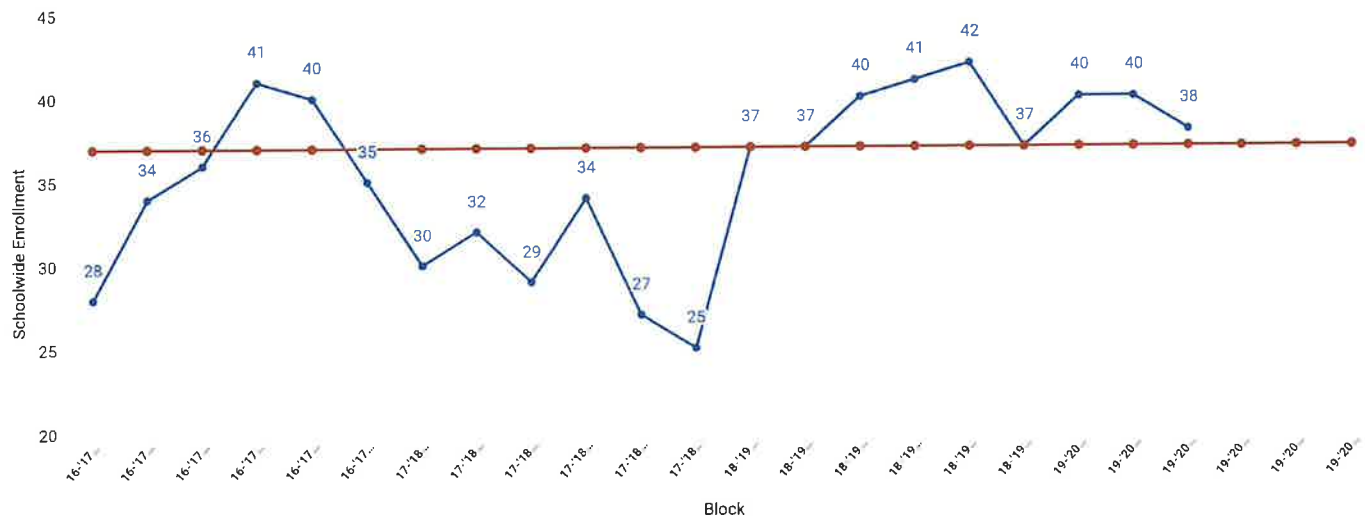
- Goal 1:** Prepare students with the skills to excel in college and career.
- Goal 2:** Increase the quality of instruction for all students by deepening implementation of the Common Core State Standards.
- Goal 3:** Ensure all student populations achieve annual measurable academic growth.
- Goal 4:** Implement a plan to increase students' sense of feeling safe and connected at school.

### PGHS Enrollment & Attendance Through Block 3

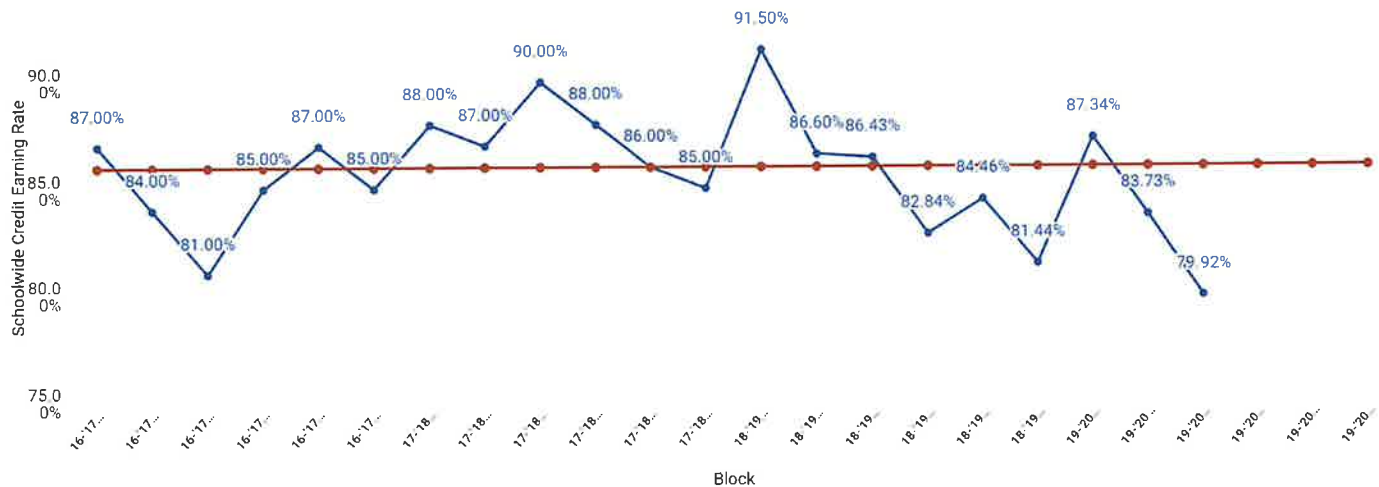
(LCAP Goal 3: Academic Growth, Goal 4: Safe & Connected at School)

Enrollment has stayed steady at PGHS for the past 2 years. We recently transferred in two 16-year old sophomores who are extremely credit deficient. All of our other students are 11th and 12th graders seeking to graduate in 2020 and 2021. By the end of February we should have 2 more PGHS graduates - one 4th year senior and one 5th year senior.

PGHS Enrollment by Block (Fall 2016 - present)



PGHS Attendance Rates by Block (Fall 2016 - present)



Attendance took a dive this past block at Pali, hitting the lowest mark we've had in years. While illness is certainly a substantial reason for the increasing number of absences we're seeing, it's not the whole picture. Over 90% of our student body this year comes from families with low socioeconomic status. As we know, poverty creates all sorts of hurdles to students being able to come to school on time, ready to learn. Our continued work in trauma-informed practices is critical to us being able to establish a school culture where students come motivated, feel successful, and are supported emotionally as well as academically. Finally, we have many students this year who are 18 years old, disqualifying them from SARB accountability. It's difficult to find consequences (to balance incentives) to students who are still in high school but no longer minors under their parents (and the school's) direct guardianship. As we don't want these students to drop out of school altogether, we try our best to simply GET them to school and finish up their high school graduation requirements.

### Top 5 Credit Earners for PGHS Block 2

The following students make the Top 5 list this past block for their high credit earnings. 9.14 credits were "possible" to earn in class this block. These students worked hard in and out of class to go beyond the 9.14 credit ceiling!

1. **Paulina - 12.79 credits** (140% credit earning rate, transferred back to BUHS at the semester as an on-track Senior)
2. **Kobe - 11.99 credits** (131% credit earning rate, Science Camp Counselor for 2 weeks!)
3. **Sierra - 11.47 credits** (126% credit earning rate, Science Camp Counselor)
4. **Hadley - 9.71 credits** (106% credit earning rate, Science Camp Counselor)
5. **Matthew - 9.64 credits** (106% credit earning rate, may graduate 4 months ahead of his class)

PGHS Credit Earning Rates by Block (Fall 2016 - present)



### Trauma-Sensitive Strategies

*(LCAP Goal 3: Academic Growth, Goal 4: Safe & Connected at School)*

The PGHS staff continues to spend time during staff meetings and professional development days about and finding ways to incorporate trauma-sensitive strategies at school.

Fixschooldiscipline.org does a nice job summarizing this outlook: The goal of creating a “trauma sensitive school” is to reduce problem behaviors and emotional difficulties, as well as optimize positive and productive functioning for all children and youth. When schools are able to address the behavioral health needs of students in a proactive manner, rather than a reactive one, they can increase the resources available to promote educational goals.<sup>1</sup>

At Pali, students continue to learn and practice self regulation strategies in class, reflecting on their effectiveness every 6 weeks when we do our credit contracts and see how we’re progressing academically. For example, a student may decide to try out “hand breathing” for a block. The student would first learn what hand breathing is (breathing in and out as you trace the 5 fingers on your hand, after 5 breaths your nervous system should relax and you should be able to think more clearly). Then at the end of the block, he/she reflects on if/how they used the strategy and if it helped them stay calm and focused. This cycle continues each block.

The PGHS teaching staff started an impromptu book club, using the book “The Deepest Well” by Dr. Nadine Burke-Harris, a pioneer in her work with ACES and providing care for people who have experienced trauma. We feel like we’ve learned a lot about ACES and their impact, but still are seeking to find concrete strategies that are evidenced based and work with students in schools. One thing that continues to come up is the support of a mental health professional. I am working on the LCSS grant to hopefully fill this need for at least 3 years. We are still in need of counseling services for our continuation school students who have often been hit the hardest by ACES.

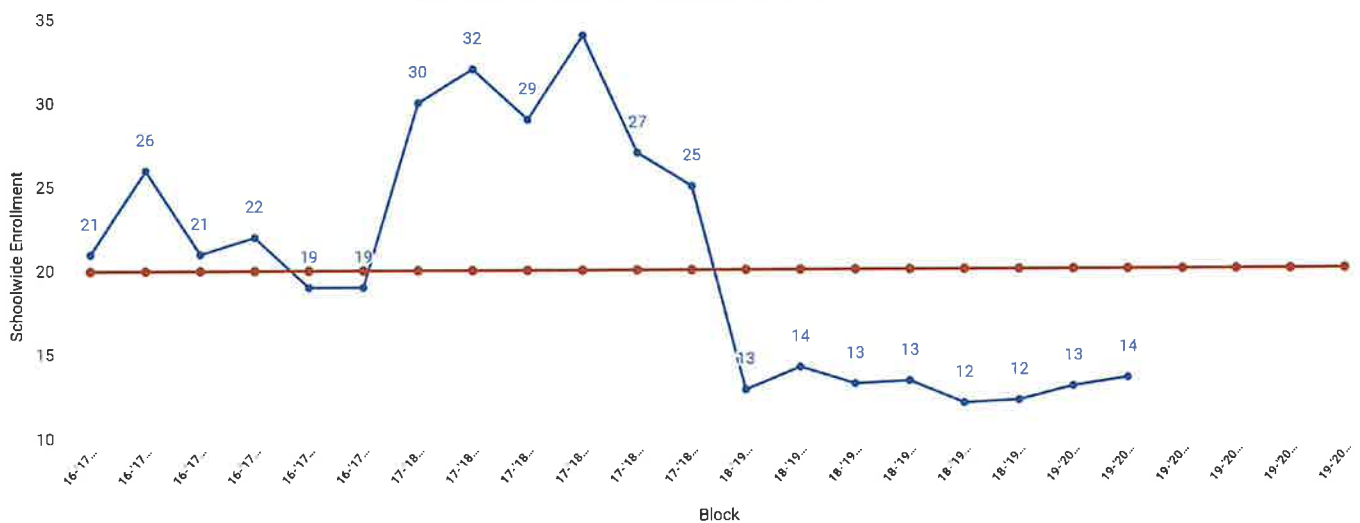
<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fixschooldiscipline.org/trauma/>

**Bishop Independent Study Enrollment, Attendance, & Credit Earning Rates:**

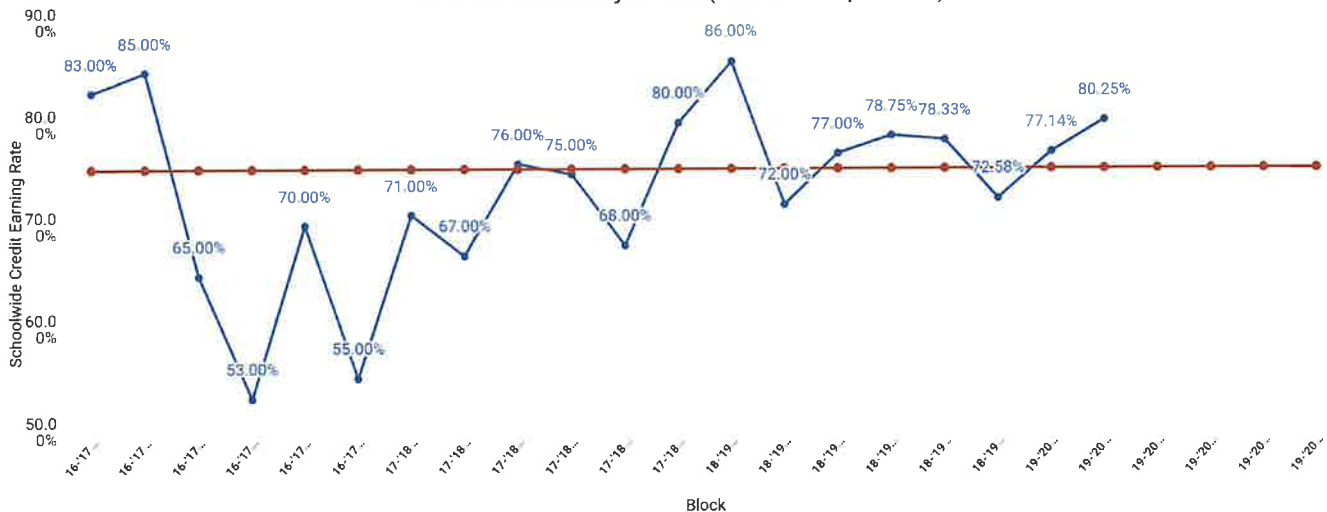
*(LCAP Goal 3: Academic Growth, Goal 4: Safe & Connected at School)*

BIS enrollment has also been steady this year, remaining significantly lower than in years past. We adjusted our BIS appointments to 1 day a week this year instead of 2. This gives teachers more time to meet with PGHS students after school and provide enrichment opportunities. Currently at BIS we have five 5th year Seniors, 6 4th year Seniors, 2 Juniors, 1 Sophomore, and 1 Freshman.

BIS Enrollment by Block (Fall 2016 - present)



BIS Attendance by Block (Fall 2016 - present)



While physical attendance (meaning the BIS student comes to their appointment each week at Cerro Coso) has improved at BIS, credit earning has not. We have several students who come to their weekly BIS appointments not completing all the assignments given to them, resulting in





**Early Intervention Services may be going away at Pali**

*(Goal 4: Safe & Connected at School)*

Jill Patton, long time employee of the Juvenile Probation department, has been providing valuable Early Intervention services at PGHS for the past year and a half. As virtually all of our students at Pali are considered “at risk” in one aspect or another by nature of them qualifying to attend the continuation school, she was able to meet with a substantial number of our district’s at-risk students to provide guidance and support. While Jill is not a counselor, she does have extensive training in conflict mediation, anger management, healthy relationships, and various types of addiction. It’s an understatement to say that she became a huge asset to us at Pali, especially as we don’t have a designated staff member to provide social emotional support such as a school counselor. Jill is changing careers and so will no longer be working for the probation department. I have contacted the head of probation to discuss possibilities for helping fill the gap she’ll be leaving. Hopefully the Early Intervention services they’ve been able to offer us can continue. This program was the reason PGHS named Juvenile Probation our “Community Star” last Spring. Supporting students to stay on track and out of the criminal justice system is exactly the direction we need to keep going in alt ed!



(left) PGHS students rock climbing in the Alabama Hills thanks to the Sharma Foundation grant.



(right) Chava, ICOE’s “Perfect Attendance” winner from PGHS for Oct 1 - Nov 15.

