



NORWALK-LA MIRADA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

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All three NLMUSD comprehensive high schools receive high praise

Norwalk High Earns Highest WASC Accreditation

Norwalk High School was recently recognized by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) with a six-year accreditation – the highest accreditation possible. Norwalk High's high marks follow Glenn and La Mirada high schools, which also received six-year accreditations in 2012 with mid-cycle visits just completed this year.

The WASC accreditation process is a voluntary review conducted by a committee of professional educators that aids education institutions in developing and sustaining effective programs and assures the community that an accredited institution has met internationally recognized standards of quality and effectiveness.

"The WASC visiting committee was impressed with the high expectations we have established for student achievement, our personalized approach to teaching and learning, and the level of collaboration Norwalk High has with all stakeholders," said Norwalk High Principal Ryan Smith.

"We are so grateful to our students, parents, staff, district leadership, and community partners for coming together through this process to show the visiting committee what being a Lancer is all about! Smith said."

According to Ginger Hovenic, WASC Director of School and Member Relations for Southern California, the WASC visiting teams ask schools to how they demonstrate creative, collaborative problem-solving and decision-making surrounding five areas:

- Governance: How do we operate as a school, and how does each member of the staff give input?
- Curriculum: What do we teach and how do we make decisions regarding curriculum? If an online curriculum is in place, how was it vetted, is it relevant to our students, and does it support our student expectations and outcomes?
- Instruction: How do we teach the curriculum? Is there one way all teachers use to work with all students, or is there a variety of techniques such as the use of large or small groups, lessons that are

teacher directed, online courses, and/or blended learning groups — all designed to engage all student populations?

- Assessment: How do we know that students are learning? What tools do we use to monitor the progress of all student populations including special groups?
- Student Culture: What is the personality of the school? What activities and opportunities do we offer to students at each grade level and as a whole school? What makes our school unique, and how it is connected with the School-wide Learner Outcomes? How are parents and community members involved?

School Board President Jesse Urquidi is proud of the results all NLMUSD high schools had to show for their WASC reviews.

“To have all three of our comprehensive high schools receive the six-year accreditation is a tremendous accomplishment and testament to the staff teamwork at each of the schools,” he said.

Both La Mirada and Glenn high schools earned their final three years of the accreditation term from preliminary visits in March 2012. According to Glenn principal Greg Puccia and La Mirada principal Bill Seals, the visiting WASC committees commended the schools for their data-based decision making and improved communication throughout their school communities to provide high-quality programs, rigorous instruction and high levels of student achievement.

Newly appointed superintendent Dr. Hasmik Danielian is pleased with the WASC reviews.

“This is such clear validation of the hard work that Norwalk-La Mirada staff is engaged in to ensure that all of our graduates are well prepared for both college and career,” she said.

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