



ALTA VISTA HIGH SCHOOL MID-CYCLE REPORT

1325 Bryant Ave., Mountain View CA 94040

Mountain View Los Altos Union School District

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**Accrediting Commission for Schools
Western Association of Schools and Colleges**

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1: School Description

Background of School: [Alta Vista High School](#) (AVHS) serves as the continuation high school for the Mountain View Los Altos High School District and Palo Alto Unified District. AVHS is located in Mountain View, a diverse Silicon Valley community with over 85,000 residents and a range of home languages and backgrounds. AVHS was relocated 18 years ago to a campus specifically designed for at-risk students, reflecting the district's commitment to supporting learning. The facility offers a clean, safe environment and includes essential amenities, ensuring that AVHS can effectively serve its student population while addressing challenges such as overcrowded housing and limited resources.

Our district and school site are deeply committed to student success, and as such, our [district goals](#), mission, and [school-wide learner objectives](#), and [school safety plan](#) are centered around supporting all students, including those at our continuation site. Through a focus on inclusivity and tailored support, we aim to create an environment where every student has an opportunity to thrive.

Enrollment and Demographics Data: With our current enrollment, our school staff is very small and many of our staff members have multiple roles at our site. Our staff consists of 1.0 FTE Principal, 1.0 FTE Program Support Specialist, 0.8 FTE Community Resources Coordinator, 1.6 FTE Instructional Aides, 0.4 FTE College and Career Advisor, 6.0 FTE Teachers, 0.3 FTE Custodian, 1.0 FTE [CASSY Counselor](#) (as of 2024, .8 previous years), a 0.4 FTE Food Services, and a wellness counselor intern twice weekly.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Our district has a committee called the [Family Partnership Council](#), which consists of teachers, board members, parents, classified staff, and administrators. This committee was established to enhance communication, gather feedback, and promote collaboration between families and our district. At our school, we have an administrator, a teacher, a classified staff member, and a parent serving on this committee. In addition, over the last two years, our district has also had a [Mountain View Los Altos Student Advisory Committee](#). Last year, our school had four students participate, and this year we have three students involved. This committee is composed of selected student leaders from across our MVLA high schools, serving as an advisory group for the Superintendent.

Academic Data: Over the past three years, our school has made significant changes to its curriculum. Previously, our courses only met district graduation requirements, limiting graduates to community college or trade school options. With the new principal, we now have many A-G approved [courses](#). Our focus has shifted to better preparing students for post-high school plans. We provide not only district-required courses but also in-seat A-G courses and AP classes through [acellus.com](#). However, we've struggled to offer a diverse range of elective courses. To address this, students may take additional classes at nearby [Mountain View High School](#), community college, or participate in our Hip Hop Academy. Some teachers have also recently increased [CTE](#), Fine Arts, [Practical Arts](#), and elective offerings to give students more in-seat class options. For students interested in trades, MVLA grants 1-2 seats annually at [Metro Ed](#) and up to 10-12 seats at MVLA Adult Ed ([Eye Care Tech](#)).

Social and Emotional Data: Alta Vista deeply cares about the overall wellness of every single student. It is fully committed to ensuring that all students, along with their families, receive the social, emotional, and mental health support needed to overcome risk factors and to thrive. The entire AVHS staff implements strategies and SEL curricula in the classrooms to address the whole child. From the first interaction with our front office, staff actively practice trauma-informed practices with students and families. Referrals to outside providers are completed by the Community Resources Coordinator as needed. Students actively have a voice in the services offered through school-wide surveys, wellness room contribution lists, and interviews.

2: Significant Changes and Developments

Leadership Changes: Three years ago, the most significant change at AVHS was the leadership transition. Bill Pierce had served as principal at Alta Vista for 26 years and had previously been a counselor there. When Suzanne Woolfolk took over, she stepped into a role that had been defined by Bill's long tenure and contributions. Transitioning into such a significant position can be challenging, but Suzanne managed a seamless adjustment. In her time as principal, she has been attentive to what has worked well for our school and, with the support of the staff, has made necessary changes to improve areas that were lacking. Over these past three years, she has prioritized attendance and curriculum development. Additionally, this year brought another notable change in leadership with the appointment of MVLA Superintendent Eric Volta. The impact of this transition is expected to unfold over the coming years.

Curriculum Changes: Over the last three years, our focus on curriculum changes has significantly expanded the academic opportunities available to our students. One of the most notable improvements is the introduction of CSU/UC-eligible A-G coursework, which are courses essential for students applying to a four-year university after graduation. This year alone, we had six students apply to four-year universities; as of early January, AVHS already has four students accepted to seven different programs, while others are still awaiting results. All seniors will complete the [FAFSA](#) and their first community college course and registration with us this spring, as well. For our population at large, over 100 college-prep courses were completed in Fall 2024 (versus their non-CP equivalent options).

MVLA has also partnered with [MetroEd](#), enabling AVHS to send 1-5 students annually to this trades/vocational school that also leads to potential career placement. These students attend core classes with us in the morning and then go to SVCTE for their trade-related electives/science/math in the afternoon, providing them with valuable hands-on experience in their chosen fields.

Moreover, we have facilitated opportunities for our students to take classes at the nearby comprehensive high school. Since our site has a limited number of teachers, students often enroll in elective classes at Mountain View HS, such as Mandarin, AVID, Architecture, Choir, and Chemistry. When students seek courses that aren't available at either of our sites, they have the option to attend local community college classes, with some students taking courses like Introduction to Business and Auto.

We are committed to helping students recover credits in deficient areas through various programs ([Fresh Lifelines for Youth](#), Hip Hop Academy, [Mentor Tutor Connection Program](#), Eye Care, MetroEd, etc.) and incentives. Even though challenges remain with funding and attendance, overall, AVHS has been effective in helping seniors graduate on time. Our team's strong relationships with students have improved attendance rates, particularly among those who previously struggled.

AVHS also has built strong connections with MVLA Adult School, recognizing that many students are eager to jump-start their careers even before finishing high school. For the past four years, we've been offering a health course, Eye Care Technician, through our Adult Ed each spring semester, providing transportation and dinner so that up to ten students each year can attend two evenings weekly completing their Eye Care Technician (ECT) certificate and working toward summer career placement.

With our new principal's leadership, we've been committed to expanding opportunities for our students, ensuring they have a wealth of options as they prepare to graduate and enter the next phase of their lives. With the support of AVHS staff, AVHS now welcomes students transferring voluntarily to attempt to graduate early 1-3 1-2 semesters early, or to attend for only one semester before transfer back to their comprehensive campus as part of the "[AVHS Spring Accelerator](#)" program.

3: Engagement of Educational Partners in Continuous School Improvement

Our WASC action plan is closely aligned with our [SPSA](#) and district [LCAP goals](#). The stakeholders involved include students, parents, staff, and community partners such as Mentor Tutor Coordinator and School Resources Officers. Throughout the year, collaboration on various plans—including the School Safety Plan, SPSA, and LCAP input for our district’s consideration — occurs with our AVHS student leaders, who are part of the MVLA Student Advisory Committee. Last year's group provided valuable feedback, even suggesting that we present our findings to the other two school sites within our district. Unfortunately, this suggestion was not implemented as one member graduated and another returned to their home school site, and our incoming superintendent had a full district welcome agenda planned. However, the committee was eager to communicate our school's mission and the initiatives underway, highlighting that other sites were often unaware of our accomplishments. This indirectly led to our principal's campaign this last fall to encourage district and comprehensive site staff to wear AVHS hoodies on their campuses, and to also view our [AVHS Welcome Video](#) as part of the campaign messaging.

This document was created with the use of staff input, AI, and data collection from Aeries, which is our student information system. During regular weekly staff meetings and professional development days, these plans are actively discussed among our staff. Each staff meeting last year dedicated time to review our SPSA goals, addressing what we have achieved and what remains a work in progress. [Action plans](#) are accessible on our school and district website, ensuring transparency and community engagement.



4: Progress on the Implementation of the [Schoolwide Action Plan](#)

Goal #1: Annually 80% of seniors who are enrolled at AVHS by October 1st and were MVLA or PAUSD students will graduate on time (excluding students with a 5th year per IEP).

In the past two years, AVHS has been proactive in creating action plans aimed at increasing high school graduation rates. This includes strategies like streamlining and encouraging comprehensive site referrals of students sooner to increase graduation odds, providing access to [acceleration programs](#), as well as improving credit recovery options for students facing deficiencies.

One key initiative has been developing a protocol for students from other comprehensive schools to receive [referrals](#) (email to admin with a link to referral form in email) to our campus. Based on past graduation rates and credit-completion pace averages, AVHS has created a data-driven approach to student transfer success. By calculating specific credit deficiency thresholds for different stages of the high school years, we now guide our comprehensive sites on specifically when to intervene with their at-risk students. Our principal also provides their D/F grade lists 2-3 times per year, and highlights students that would specifically benefit from AVHS transfer.

Enrollment in Graduation Requirements

Assumptions in this model:

1. Credit recovery rate: **Students are able to earn 7.5 credits/semester in each course at AVHS** compared to the 5 credits/semester max earned at LAHS/MVHS
2. **Students are enrolled in 5 classes** (can therefore earn 75 credits/year)
3. Students are 10-12th grade
4. Students are able to read at 4th grade level or higher

Enter AVHS:	Absolute min credits for AVHS to grad
Fall grade 10 (< 55 credits)	
Spring grade 10 (< 80 credits)	automatic referral for credits <= 33
Fall grade 11 (<110 credits)	automatic referral for credits <= 70
Spring gr 11 (<135 credits)	automatic referral for credits <= 108
Fall grade 12 (<165 credits)	automatic referral for credits <= 145
Spring gr 12 (<190 credits)	automatic referral for credits <= 183

Our weekly staff meetings on Mondays and our [advisory](#) schedule on Fridays have become central to addressing students' concerns, particularly for seniors who are our priority to ensure they graduate on time. The collaboration among staff has greatly contributed to the success of our students.

AVHS has effectively facilitated credit recovery and earned credits through various programs available on campus. Programs such as FLY, Hip Hop Academy, the Mentor Program, Eye Care, and MetroEd, along with incentives like credits for excelling in SBAC testing or participating in extracurricular activities, have made a positive impact. However, challenges persist, particularly when some programs are unavailable due to issues like funding, scheduling conflicts, or students' attendance. Certain programs require consistent attendance, passing grades, and adherence to specific deadlines. Notably, in the last two years, some teachers have expanded offerings in [CTE](#), Fine Arts, and elective courses, providing more opportunities for in-person classes as opposed to online learning.

Overall, AVHS has made commendable strides in assisting seniors to graduate on time. One central takeaway from Action Plan Goal #1 is the strong sense of community within our AVHS team. Many students who previously had poor attendance at their comprehensive sites are now attending more regularly, highlighting that our focus on building rapport and fostering relationships with students is paying off. [Attendance](#) remains our top priority for ensuring seniors achieve their graduation goals.

Goal #2: Expand access to all students for academic 4 year planning and counseling “...intensive guidance services to meet the special needs of pupils.” (EDC § 48430)

In the 2021-2022 school year, Alta Vista High School took significant steps to enhance student support by expanding the role of an instructional aide to function as a 5-hour college and career advisor. This role has transformed over time from focusing mainly on tracking students' progress toward graduation to providing comprehensive [college and career exposure](#). The advisor now plays a crucial role in assisting students in formulating their post-secondary plans.

The responsibilities of the college and career advisor include various important tasks: tracking student progress toward graduation ([ILP](#): Individualized Learning Plan), organizing college and career exposure events like speakers and field trips, providing support for [financial aid applications](#), conducting mock interviews, facilitating the Foothill College dual enrollment program, and connecting students with the SVCTE MetroEd program. Additionally, the advisor coordinates spring break internships, the WEEP program, and the MVLA Adult School Eye Care Technician classes for Alta Vista students. Individual student meetings focus on [post-secondary planning](#), and the advisor also supports the advisory program. This expanded role has significantly improved students' access to information and planning for their futures; however, there is still room for further development to meet the substantial needs of the student body.

Despite the positive impact of the college and career advisor, Alta Vista High School recognizes the necessity for a dedicated academic counselor.

With the expansion of A-G course offerings and senior applicants to four-year universities for the first time in our school history, the demand for academic counseling services has increased. Moreover, the current College and Career Advisor is set to retire in the 2025-2026 school year, highlighting the urgency of appointing a dedicated academic counselor to address the evolving needs of the student population effectively.

College & Career Preparation



- 18 a-g approved courses now taught on campus
- Extensive online honors/AP & elective/career-prep options
- 10,000+ instructional minutes annually *beyond minimum requirements*
- 14 hours annually of professional development specific to continuation high school and at-promise student population
- College & Career Coordinator (part-time)

In the 2022-23 school year following prior WASC recommendations, our principal reached out to district leadership with both detailed [job description and role division recommendations](#), and a request for a credentialed academic counselor in part-time capacity to begin working with AVHS. While this was not granted, renewed request has been made this current school year: an alternative programs counselor that would support AVHS, as well our other MVLA alt programs located at Foothill Community College, and even support students during summer school sessions. We are hopeful that our district leadership, and new superintendent, will consider our students' needs, as the MVLA school board is committed to quality counseling services for all district students.

Goal #3: Take steps to improve school culture.

In the past few years, staff at AVHS has increasingly prioritized improving school culture as an essential foundation for all subsequent work. We've continued practices like substance use education and [CARE conferences](#), while also implementing innovative ideas such as wellness spaces and a variety of positive incentives, all designed to make Alta Vista a welcoming place for students. It's encouraging to see that 80% of students enjoy coming to AVHS compared to their previous high schools, and 83% feel their strengths and efforts are recognized here!

From the 2022-23 school year through the first half of 2024-25, we've held assemblies every semester focused on educating students about [substance use](#), preventing and intervening in related issues. Our district's [tiered behavioral intervention system](#) provides a range of supportive options. This includes Tier 1 universal supports, which encompass student training and family workshops; Tier 2 targeted interventions, like referrals for counseling; and Tier 3 intensive services for those who need outpatient programs. For example, this fall, we introduced a Peer Counselor from Starlight Recovery Services who provides on-site support every Wednesday, focusing on consultation and psychoeducation regarding substance use. We continue to monitor the number of students accepting counseling services, which is gradually increasing.

More broadly, AVHS's strong partnerships and collaborations within the community allow for an array of on-site services and resources. Some important examples are: [The Stanford Teen Health Van](#) monthly visits, Snack Shack (Second Harvest and Community Services Agency donated snacks), Aztec Lounge (Wellness Room), Aztec Boutique (Clothing Closet with new and gently used clothing articles and hygiene products), Alta Vista Serenity Garden, [A La Carte Food Truck](#) (On Wheels Food) once a week, CASSY Counselor, [Pacific Clinics](#) (Both School Linked Services and Prevention and Early Intervention Therapists), [Starlight Substance Use Peer Counselor/Therapist](#), [Mentor Tutor Connection Program](#) (connects students to a mentor), [Cake 4 Kids](#), and most recently, Hip Hop Leadership Academy Program.

In addition to support programs, staff have organized various field trips aimed at fostering a sense of pride and community while promoting college and trade pathways. These trips not only reward honor roll students and those with excellent attendance, but also provide educational field trips to places like [Alcatraz](#), [California Academy of Sciences](#), Oakland Zoo, career-shadowing or onsite visits, and exploring different colleges. Students are excited about these experiences and often discuss who had the opportunity to attend, and what they learned.

Our college and career counselor has actively created planning opportunities for life after high school by developing an A-G class pathway and college application process support, arranging college field trips, and facilitating internship opportunities. This year, six seniors applied to colleges, with four already



accepted into multiple California State Universities. Four-year college admission is a first of its kind at AVHS, new for our Graduating Class of 2025.

Our principal has significantly influenced school culture by fostering a safe and welcoming environment. Her incentive system, student designed "[Alta Dollars](#)," has gained popularity. She has maintained student leadership club involvement while the teacher is on leave, and actively recognizes student achievements during Friday announcements. She also communicates regularly with parents and students through a weekly newsletter that highlights school events and acknowledges honor roll recipients. Her visibility on campus during break times, combined with her dedication to connecting with students on a personal level, has enhanced the sense of belonging at AVHS.

The Mentor Tutor Connection (MTC) program has also been crucial in supporting student well-being. Coordinated by Gina, our mentor coordinator, MTC connects students with caring adults and organizes weekly activities for them to engage during lunch. She has successfully created opportunities for group mentoring, coordinated field trips, and partnered with local agencies for community service initiatives.

Moreover, our floating substitute plays a vital role in student mentoring, assisting with projects, and coaching students through interviews for programs like Tesla's MD. Most of these students have successfully secured positions. In addition, our floating substitute has acted as a Mentor Tutor Connection mentor, working with a Class of 2024 AVHS graduate and continuing that connection into college this year. He has also inspired AVHS students to pursue advanced math and science coursework, and has stayed during after school tutorial time to volunteer his academic support.

Through the Hip Hop Academy, students have found a unique platform for self-expression. In this program, a group of 12 students explored poetic elements while delving into identity formation and the philosophy of Hip-hop. With a 90% overall attendance rate and culminating in-studio recording projects, students were excited to receive free Beats headphones at graduation from this program. This program not only provided an outlet for personal expression but also encouraged one student to seek mental health services, demonstrating the program's profound impact on their emotional well-being.

Notably, we recently launched our first serenity garden, involving students and multiple community organizations in creating a peaceful outdoor space that promotes overall well-being, as well as furthering a sense of campus pride.

Together, these efforts have significantly enriched the school culture at AVHS, fostering a community where students feel connected and supported.



5: Revised Schoolwide Action Plan/SPSA/LCAP/CIP/CAEP

Each year, we consistently reflect on our prior achievements to ensure we are making meaningful progress. The [linked document](#) showcases what we accomplished each year, along with any additions or removals from our action plan. Our three main goals for the [SPSA](#) remain unchanged, but the specific action plans supporting each goal are either in progress, completed, or newly added.

Our goals include ensuring that 80% of seniors enrolled at AVHS by October 1st, particularly those from MVLA or PAUSD, graduate on time (excluding students granted a fifth year under an IEP). We aim to expand access for all students to intensive guidance services that cater to their unique needs, as specified in EDC § 48430. Following the retirement of our last principal, we have identified the pressing need for a credentialed PPS professional on campus as part of our efforts to enhance school culture.

We meticulously [track](#) our initiatives to highlight what strategies are effective and where adjustments are necessary, allowing us to adapt subgoals that support our primary objectives. For example, hiring an academic counselor has been a longstanding goal, highlighted in both our WASC and model school reports. Each year, we present our needs surrounding counseling services—especially crucial this year due to students applying to four-year universities—to the board and district office.

Recognizing the importance of graduation rates, we continuously document our progress. When a subgoal is fulfilled or deemed unnecessary, we introduce a new one. For instance, two years ago, we explored credit recovery programs and tested an online platform called Acellus, which proved successful. Consequently, this item has been removed from our document, and we have shifted our focus to expanding elective options.

In summary, while our overarching goals have remained stable over the last three years, we are committed to frequently evaluating and adjusting our subgoals to address the evolving needs of our students effectively.