

MENDOCINO HIGH SCHOOLS
MID-CYCLE REPORT - REVISED

10700 Ford Street

Mendocino, California 95460

Mendocino Unified School District

April 23, 2026

Accrediting Commission for Schools
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

CONTENTS

1: School Description..... 3

2: Significant Changes and Developments..... 4

3: Engagement of Educational Partners in Continuous School Improvement……. 5

4: Progress on the Implementation of the Schoolwide ActionPlan/SPSA/LCAP/ CIP/CAEP…… 6

5: Revised Schoolwide Action Plan/SPSA/LCAP/CIP/CAEP..... 10

1: School Description

Overlooking the village of Mendocino and the Pacific Ocean, the original Mendocino High School was dedicated in 1894. Recently remodeled, the high school facility is an inviting and functional campus. The Mendocino High School and Mendocino Community High School together serve 160 students from Mendocino Unified School District and neighboring districts. Mendocino High School offers a traditional college preparatory program, while Mendocino Community High School is a smaller "school within a school" that offers students a close-knit, family-like learning community.

Mendocino High School is 60% socioeconomic disadvantaged, 78% white/15% Hispanic, has a 5% homeless population, and 17% of students are in Special Education.

For a small school, Mendocino High School offers a rich diversity of classes, including a fully developed Career Technical Education (CTE) program with six pathways of study. Two annual CTE fairs invite in the community and showcase student work and performances. We also support a robust dual enrollment program through Mendocino College and were recognized as a California Exemplary Dual Enrollment School in 2023. Most recently, we have added a Patient Care pathway through Mendocino College that will lead to EMT certification. A thirty year running program, Alternative Education Week, takes place during one week in the spring where students break from their regularly scheduled classes to participate in unique educational experiences and adventures on and off campus.

Many of the programs we have developed over the years, from a standards-based grading philosophy to a multi-tiered system of supports for academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs, have served our students well, resulting in excellent graduation rates, college placement, and some of the top standardized test scores in the county. We were ranked as one of the nation's Best High Schools by U.S. News and World Report for 2025-26. We continue to build on and improve our systems as well as supporting the many varied needs of our students. Together, we strive for Excellence, Perseverance, Investment and Citizenship. Be EPIC!

The Mendocino High Schools have shown strong progress in the area of student social-emotional well-being and continue to post strong academic achievement scores. State test scores in English, math, and science remain some of the highest in the county. We have made substantial progress in student support, academic rigor, and college/career readiness. While A-G eligibility rate has dropped, the College and Career Index (CCI) has increased with our investments in CTE and dual enrollment. Data show strong gains in student behavior and social-emotional well-being with overall student mental health improving in almost every category on the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) since 2021. Suspension rates have lowered as alternatives to suspension are utilized. Behavior incidents reported through Behavior Intervention Forms (BIFs) are lower than pre-2020 levels. Student engagement and meaningfulness of school remain areas of focus. Chronic absenteeism rates remain high since 2022 with rates between 20-25%, which is similar to or lower than the county average.

2: Significant Changes and Developments

In 2024, the District made severe cuts that affected programs and administrative support at the high school. The continuation school (Sunrise) and the independent study program (Mendocino Alternative School) were both cut. An administrative assistant position was also cut along with 0.4 FTE of the school counselor (currently backfilled by a grant). District level cuts also created extra strain on the site, including the elimination of the maintenance supervisor and a custodial position, responsibilities that now often fall on site administration and office staff. This is in addition to district cuts over the last decade that have disproportionately affected the high school according to district analyses. Enrollment at the high school has remained stable in the last three years, while district enrollment continues to decline. In 2025, we had turnover in the physical sciences position and the school counselor. Both positions were filled. In 2026, we will be hiring to replace a retiring social science teacher.

Construction on the campus upgrade, which began in 2021 directly after returning to in-person instruction, is in its third phase (installation of photovoltaics and deferred maintenance on woodshop and performing arts center continue). With all programs settled into their new rooms, instruction has returned to normal. The renovated main campus and upgraded gym and tech center have been an important morale booster and asset to the community. The new spaces are much more efficient, practical, and inhabitable. New construction coinciding with the elimination of the maintenance supervisor has made for some challenges with malfunctions in the new systems not being addressed in a timely manner.

In 2023, we were recognized as a California Exemplary Dual Enrollment school for our work with Mendocino College to offer students access to college courses. Subsequently we were awarded a CCAP and a MCEC grant for a total of $350,000 to improve and expand our dual enrollment program. We have added dual enrollment CTE courses in woodshop and in 2025 we added a dual enrollment patient care pathway that consists of medical terminology and EMS classes and will soon include an EMT certification course.

Per California graduation requirements, we implemented a semester Ethnic Studies course that is offered with Life Choices (college and career readiness program) as part of the freshman seminar. The course was developed in conjunction with community input. We also onboarded with the California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI) and went live in the fall of 2025.

3: Engagement of Educational Partners in Continuous School Improvement

The schoolwide action plan is maintained on an annual basis through the Site Council, composed of staff, parents, and students. The Site Council updates the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) and oversees accountability for progress on the action plan. Site Council will recommend new actions annually to keep the schoolwide goals relevant and moving forward. Throughout the process, local and state data are utilized to inform actions. Students are surveyed in 9th and 11th grades every other year using the CHKS and additional student and parent surveys are used as needed to inform schoolwide decisions. Parents and students were surveyed this year to determine areas of critical need. Student government representatives prepared the student survey. In the fall and winter of 2025-2026, both staff and the Site Council went through a process of analyzing data and generating areas of critical need which were then prioritized and compiled into a single list of eight areas of focus within the three schoolwide goals. These areas served as the basis for the updated action plan presented in this report.

4: Progress on the Implementation of the Schoolwide Action Plan

Goal 1: Strengthen MTSS to Support All Students

While we have structures and supports in place, there is a need to increase the efficiency and accountability of our intervention program to reach all students and involve stakeholders. We will expand our multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) through the existing structures of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), ASPIRE (intervention system), and Personal Success Period (PSP) to promote academic excellence, positive behaviors, and social-emotional well-being for all students. We will also explore research based models to ensure we are using our special education resources as efficiently as possible to support student learning.

Team structures for monitoring student academics, behavior, and social emotional well-being were modified to ensure all students are receiving timely interventions. The newly reconfigured Tier I/II Data Team meets biweekly to monitor academics and behavior, using metrics (grades, behavior, attendance) as triggers for referring students for interventions through our ASPIRE process and for goal setting with advisors. In addition to a weekly special education meeting, a new Tier III Team meets weekly to support the most at-risk cases and includes both special education and counseling team members. Both teams create actionable goals and conduct follow-up meetings. Shared documents are used to track progress and action items. This has had a positive impact on our ability to collaborate and ensure these students are receiving timely and targeted interventions.

Structural changes and training were instituted to address feedback from the visiting committee on our special education program. A weekly special education meeting was created to review cases. Students with IEPs were included in general education advisories in 2023 to reduce the amount of “pull-out” and to give the RSP teacher more time to prep. In 2023, staff training was provided in-house on the implementation of IEP accommodations and modifications. Training on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to support all students was conducted by MCOE over two years. The RSP teacher attended professional development on Assistive Technology, Neurodiversity, and Project GLAD for multilingual learner support. In 2025-2026, special education aides received directed training in coordination with the Mendocino County Office of Education based on the specific needs of our student population. The aides have responded positively to these monthly trainings. Aides have also received ProAct training and the entire staff was trained on Trauma Informed Practices in 2026. While these initiatives have increased staff capacity, it does not fully compensate for losing programs such as the continuation school and the fact the special education program is impacted (24 IEP students, 14 students with 504 plans, three 1:1 students etc.).

Counseling supports were strengthened with the addition of a community liaison focused on substance use intervention through the Fort Bragg Police Department, and access to health care was improved with the addition of monthly on campus access to Blue Door medical services in sexual and reproductive health care starting in February of 2026. These programs are too new to have any results, but the increased access and supports are promising. We especially hope that the community liaison can help students with nicotine and THC addiction to reduce vaping at school, an issue clearly indicated by students.

Behavioral referrals (BIFs) declined sharply from 372 (2021–22) to 153 (2024–25), and suspension rates are under 6% thanks to alternatives to suspension and restorative approaches

to discipline. We implemented positive buttons as a way to recognize students displaying EPIC (Excellence, Perseverance, Investment, Citizenship) behaviors. There are a few teachers who use the buttons with fidelity and students are excited to get the buttons unlike other ideas, like tickets, that we have done in the past. Consequences for receiving a 1 in Citizenship or Work Habits at grading periods have been established in policies, such as the athletic policy. This gives an extrinsic motivation for students and helps keep academic grades based on mastery of standards. Even if these policies do not deter, the marks provide feedback so that we can work individually with students through advisory (self-improvement forms) and in the classroom.

Student mental health has improved greatly since 2022, with most measures of student well-being showing positive changes on the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS). School Climate Indicators have almost all improved in 2025 over 2023 data. Overall, student mental health has improved in almost every category since 2021. In many categories, MHS is reporting more positively than the state average.

Chronic Absenteeism rates remain high post-2020. Levels remain between 20-30%, which is similar or lower than the county average but remains higher than the state average, which is declining. We have adopted resources from the county to reinstate a SARB process, offering both supportive measures and setting the tone that students are legally obligated to attend school. This has been used in 2025-2026 to mixed success.

Targets for Goal 1 (4 of 6 targets met)

1. Reduce the number of BIFs from ’17-’18 levels and keep suspension rates under 6% for all groups. (Met)
2. Increase access to social emotional counseling for all students through counseling services and PSP. (Partially Met)
3. Continue to reduce substance use at school as measured by California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS). (Partially Met)
4. Increase positive response percentage on the SCRC and move the Boredom Profile toward Low Boredom/High Value. (Partially Met)
5. Reduce the chronic absenteeism rate as measured by the state to below 10% as a total population. (Not Met)
6. Maintain or decrease the recent rate of D’s and F’s in Math, English, Science, and Social Science for all students compared to 2018 values in Aeries analytics. (Met)

Goal 2: Cultivate Academic Rigor and Excellence

Due to many factors, both internal and external to the school community, there is a need to cultivate a culture of rigor that values the importance of sustained effort and academic excellence. To support staff and students in improving rigor, we will utilize professional learning community strategies with fidelity to create a culture of excellence amongst staff and ensure student learning, and we will explicitly teach students perseverance and resilience.

Staff worked in PLCs to align essential standards, create assessments, and integrate UDL practices with collaboration peaking in the 2023-2024 year and declining some since. Staff has indicated a desire to return to more collaboration and calibrating rigor and grading could be a good topic for reintroducing proper PLC practices. Most teachers apply aspects of standards based grading and some implement it with fidelity, but there is a need for recalibration to ensure consistency. When first introduced close to a decade ago, the immediate impact was

reducing the D/F rate, thanks to a focus on revisions and a growth mindset. Since then, the D/F rate has fluctuated, increasing some in English and science. Staff continue to be challenged with how to approach deadlines and behaviors when not a part of an academic grade, suggesting educating staff on the learning-based grading philosophy at a minimum is necessary.

A–G readiness has been declining since 2022 (by 20 points) but rebounded with a strong academic class in 2025. However, this has been offset by a continued increase in the College/Career Indicator thanks to our strong CTE and Dual Enrollment programs. The CCI score in 2025 was 75%. The normalization of community college may be a factor in declining A-G readiness, but this decline warrants a closer look. AP scores have been above our goal of 65% pass rate four of the last five years and the number of exams taken has been increasing.

Academic dishonesty referrals dropped from 17 (2022–23) to 4 (2024–25) but the advent of artificial intelligence tools has challenged this trend. We started an initiative through the WaiVE project in 2025 to support student learning in AI readiness and fluency. We adopted the aiEDU Readiness Framework to guide student and staff learning. A second cohort of staff will attend the WaiVE workshop in 2026. Increased staff knowledge on AI has prompted some staff to take different approaches to assignments to make the use of AI more challenging for students, while also leveraging and teaching students how to use AI appropriately to assist in work, being aware of the limitations and ethical issues of AI..

We have not developed or adopted any curriculum to explicitly teach perseverance and resilience, though these concepts are embedded in our grading philosophy that promotes revisions and a growth mindset as well as embodied in our school student learner outcomes of Excellence, Perseverance, Investment, Citizenship.

Targets for Goal 2 (3 of 7 Targets met)

1. Ensure ongoing fidelity of implementation of a schoolwide grading system that is accurate, meaningful, consistent, and supportive of learning. (Partially Met)
2. Increase portal access for all students and encourage self-monitoring of learning and achievement. (Met)
3. Reduce the number of referrals for academic dishonesty by 50% from prior average levels by 2024. (Met)
4. Be able to present evidence of work and products from PLC teams by 2024. (Partially Met)
5. Average 70% of students A-G ready over three years. (Not Met)
6. 85% or more of students will be prepared according to the state CCI indicator by 2026. (Not Met)
7. Increase achievement in AP courses to a pass rate at or above the state average (approximately 65%) based on the College Board 5-year summary. (Met)

Goal 3: Increase Relevance and College/Career Readiness

In order to inspire our students to be lifelong learners and productive citizens, we will analyze our programs and curriculum for relevance and explore strategies – such as project-based learning, cross-curricular connections, and student empowerment – for making education more accessible and meaningful to our students. We will continue to expand and improve our career and college readiness programs to best prepare our students for post-secondary success.

CTE pathways have expanded and aligned to industry needs. CTE completers rose to 80% in 2025. Work Based Learning continues to grow through community partnerships, providing students with real-world experiences such as doing media for community events or shadowing an architect on the job site.

Dual enrollment was recognized with an Exemplary School Award and continues to expand offerings. A new Patient Care Pathway with Mendocino College was launched in 2025. The pathway consists of two introductory courses, Medical Terminology and Community EMS, and culminates in an EMT certification course. The course is offered as a zero period.

We adopted the California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI) to support college and career readiness. Students use the portal to launch FAFSA and college applications. We will expand the use of CCGI into our college and career readiness program through freshman seminar and annual follow-up modules.

Ethnic Studies was implemented in 2025-2026 in preparation for the incoming class of 2030. The course is offered as a semester along with our college and career readiness course, Life Choices, which together comprise our freshman seminar. The course was developed in conjunction with professional development and community input.

We continue to explore how to better engage students and make their learning more meaningful. The new School Boredom Report is a way to categorize student well-being, with High Boredom/Low Value indicating low well-being. When students report High Value along with High Boredom on the CHKS, as many of our students do, it typically indicates "episodic" or task-specific boredom. Boredom alone is not necessarily a negative factor. However, this profile suggests that while these students believe education is meaningful and want to succeed, they find daily classroom activities or teaching methods unstimulating. It often signals a mismatch in challenge—where students are either under-challenged by easy work or over-challenged by tasks they cannot meaningfully engage with—rather than a lack of personal ambition. While we have taken a programmatic approach to this issue, these data suggest a more classroom specific approach focusing on instructional strategies is warranted.

Targets for Goal 3 (3 of 3 Targets met)

1. Utilize dual enrollment to increase college and career preparedness. (Met)
2. Have 35% of graduates CTE completers by 2022. (Met)
3. Implement a Patient Care Pathway through Mendocino College. (Met)

5: Revised Schoolwide Action Plan (SPSA)

To preserve continuity throughout the accreditation cycle, we maintained the three previous goals with newly identified or reaffirmed critical needs associated with each goal. The needs were identified through staff and Site Council analysis of data and parent and student survey results. All educational partners, staff, students, and parents, were given a voice through this process. Once a list of needs was identified by each group (staff and Site Council), the list was prioritized by vote and then compiled and combined into the “Identified Needs” listed in the schoolwide action plan. From these identified needs, a list of action steps and metrics was created. The action steps will be updated annually through the Site Council.

Goal 1	**Strengthen Our MTSS to Support All Students**
Rationale	While we have structures and supports in place, there is a need to increase the efficiency and accountability of our intervention program to reach all students and involve stakeholders. We will expand our multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) through the existing structures of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), ASPIRE (intervention system), and Personal Success Period (PSP) to promote academic excellence, positive behaviors, and social-emotional well-being for all students. We will also explore research based models to ensure we are using our special education resources as efficiently as possible to support student learning.
Student Learner Outcomes addressed by goal	2. Perseverance: Use available resources to meet challenges with creativity and resilience. 4. Citizenship: Be a positive, productive, and informed member of local and global communities.
Identified Needs 2026	**Drug Use and Addiction**: We will work to further enforcement, cessation, and counselling efforts to address student substance use on campus and substance use disorders. Parents and students indicate a need for increased enforcement, especially with vaping in the bathrooms. While there are positive trends of decreasing substance use in the data, this remains an area of need. **Attendance**: We will address chronic absenteeism and barriers to attendance, including the need for reliable busing. Other areas of need that relate to this include grading policies around attendance and alternative programs for students unable to attend school regularly for mental health, family, or other reasons. **Master Schedule Evaluation**: We will explore alternative scheduling options that meet the needs of all programs. Scheduling must support student access to programs (i.e. seven periods), part-time staff, intervention, hour minimums, etc.

Action Steps	Annual Measurable Outcomes - Baseline/Actuals	Target Outcome

1. Reduce substance use on campus 1.1. Increase monitoring of bathrooms through frequent sweeps or vape detectors. 1.2. Review balance of correctives and consequences to ensure enforcement of policies protects school culture.	CHKS current AOD use **on school property** last 30 days (9th/11th) 2017: 23%/26% (9th/11th) 2019: 13%/10% 2023: 10%/19% 2025: 6%/11% CHKS lifetime drunk or high on school property - 0 times (9th/11th) 2025: 81%/59%	Reduce substance use on campus year-over-year
2. Provide cessation support for nicotine, THC, and other substances. 2.1. More effectively pair students with the community liaison. 2.2. Include cessation support as mandatory for drug infractions.	Student referrals to community liaison and cessation counseling: No baseline established	Increase referral rate
3. Increase daily attendance by reducing chronic absenteeism. 3.1. Continue to implement the county SARB protocols begun in 2025. 3.2. Work with the district to provide consistent busing, especially to at risk students. See also alt. ed. development in Goal 3.	Chronic absenteeism rate	Reduce chronic absenteeism rate to 15% or below
4. Review master schedule to ensure alignment with program mission and student needs.	Current schedule, proposals	Maintain or adopt a new master schedule

Goal 2	**Cultivate Academic Rigor and Excellence**
Rationale	Due to many factors, both internal and external to the school community, there is a need to cultivate a culture of rigor that values the importance of sustained effort and academic excellence. To support staff and students in improving rigor, we will utilize professional learning community strategies with fidelity to create a culture of excellence amongst staff and ensure student learning, and we will explicitly teach students perseverance and resilience.
Student Learner Outcomes addressed by goal	1. Excellence: Aim for excellence in all that you do. 2. Perseverance: Use available resources to meet challenges with creativity and resilience. 3. Investment: Invest in your future by taking advantage of opportunities to learn and thrive.
Identified Needs 2026	**Academic Rigor**: It is our desire and expectation that no matter which pathway a student pursues, they will demonstrate high quality evidence of learning. We will explore options for students who feel they are not being challenged (adding AP and college classes, advanced language classes, etc.) and continue efforts to calibrate expectations for honors classes and AP exam prep. We will also better educate students and parents on existing options. **Grading**: We will refocus staff on standards based grading, closing loopholes and calibrating expectations. We will examine our policies around deadlines and attendance and what effect those should have on academic grades, while also keeping grades academically meaningful. We will improve communication of our grading philosophy and practices to students and parents.

Action Steps	Annual Measurable Outcomes - Baseline/Actuals	Target Outcome
5. Calibrate courses so that they are appropriately challenging for students. 5.1. Match students with AP and dual enrollment options to meet level. 5.2. Explore additional AP courses, such as a fourth year of woodworking and history.	AP participation (total students) and pass rate (3+) 2022: 23, 69.6% 2023: 24, 62.5% 2024: 36, 80.6% 2025: 42, 85.7%	Score over 65% pass rate while maintaining AP student numbers. Increase dual enrollment (CCAP) participation rate.

5.3. Explore advanced foreign language options for native and proficient speakers.	Dual enrollment participation (# students) 2021-2022: 34 2022-2023: 81 2023-2024: 53	
6. Calibrate expectation of student rigor 6.1. Review student work samples using PLC strategies. 6.2. Continue to calibrate honors sections building off of framework developed	Establish baseline work samples of rigor School Boredom Report	Improved School Boredom Report by decreasing high boredom responses
7. Provide staff professional development on our grading philosophy and expectations. 7.1. Calibrate deadline expectations. 7.2. Revisit the attendance policy and relation to grading. 7.3. Educate students and parents on grading practices.	Fidelity of standards based grading in gradebooks. Educational communications	80% fidelity of implementation
8. Adopt AI education and guidance for staff and students.	Adopted framework and standards Educational modules	Implement educational modules by 2027

Goal 3	**Increase Relevance and College/Career Readiness**
Rationale	In order to inspire our students to be lifelong learners and productive citizens, we will analyze our programs and curriculum for relevance and explore strategies – such as project-based learning, cross-curricular connections, and student empowerment – for making education more accessible and meaningful to our students. We will continue to expand and improve our career and college readiness programs to best prepare our students for post-secondary success.
Student Learner Outcomes	1. Excellence: Aim for excellence in all that you do.

addressed by goal	3. Investment: Invest in your future by taking advantage of opportunities to learn and thrive.
Identified Needs 2026	**Alternative Education Options**: In 2024, we lost our Independent Study and our Continuation High School programs to budget cuts. We have used Acellus with some positive results, but it falls short of a true program where students are supported in the way and level they require. We need to create an alternative program for these students using available resources or by lobbying the board. **A Meaningful Education**: Student engagement and meaningfulness measures continue to lag our expectations. We will strive to maintain a meaningful academic program for all students such that every day is academically and culturally meaningful. We will ensure programs match student and workforce demand and employ best practice instructional strategies that increase engagement. **Personal Success Period (PSP) Structure**: We will examine the structure of PSP to better fit student and program needs while also making the period more consistent across advisors to ensure all students are receiving support, building community, and accessing resources, including college and career readiness.

Action Steps	Annual Measurable Outcomes - Baseline/Actuals	Target Outcome
9. Utilize resources to create an alt ed program. 9.1. Lobby the board for resources for an alt ed program. 9.2. Use staff to oversee Acellus independent study work. 9.3. Use an alt ed program to engage students with school refusal and provide a safe space on campus	Graduation Rate 2025: 98% Acellus completion baseline - in progress Chronic absenteeism rate	100% Graduation rate 100% Acellus completion rate Reduce chronic absenteeism rate to 15% or below
10. Improve college/career readiness. 10.1. Increase A-G eligibility through course management and credit recovery 10.2. Continue to analyze CTE pathways for career value and professional experience.	A-G eligibility rate CTE Completer rate 2022: 64% 2023: 40% 2024: 79% 2025: 80%	Maintain 65% A-G eligibility Maintain CTE completer rate of at least 70%

10.2.1. Require professional/industry collaboration for each pathway.	CCI rate List of industry partners for each pathway.	Maintain a CCI rate of at least 70% Goal of 10 partners per pathway.
11. Professional development on engagement strategies. 11.1. Emphasize authentic intellectual engagement over compliance. 11.2. Institute instructional norms.	School Boredom Report Classroom walkthroughs	Improved engagement not limited to School Boredom Report Walkthrough observations
12. Improve PSP services 12.1. Fully integrate CCGI tools into PSP to create continuity and increase advisor effectiveness. 12.2. Increase fidelity of advisors working with students on improving poor Work Habit scores.	CCGI access reports: student engagement Work Habit marks of 1 Baseline:	Increase student use of CCGI platform Decrease rate of 1 marks for Work Habits