



**Northwest Association of Accredited Schools
Accreditation Summary**

**Ellensburg High School
Ellensburg, Washington
June 1, 2006**

Ellensburg High School has successfully completed the self-study process prescribed for accreditation through the Northwest and Association of Accredited Schools (NAAS). During the past year, under the leadership of Paul Farris, Principal, the Ellensburg High staff has engaged in a comprehensive school improvement self study consisting of the following elements:

- I. Community/School Profile**
- II. Vision, Mission, and Belief Statements**
- III. Data Collection and Analysis**
- IV. Goal Setting**
- V. Research and Selection of Effective Educational Practices**
- VI. Action Plan Development**

Ellensburg High School commits to an ongoing program and resource evaluation as defined by NAAS. The NAAS standards have been established in the following areas:

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| I. Education Program | VII. Preparation of Personnel |
| II. Student Personal Services | VIII. Administration |
| III. School Plant and Equipment | IX. Teacher Load |
| IV. Library Media Program | X. Student Activities |
| V. Records | XI. Business Practices |

VI. School Improvement

These standards delineate the minimum level of program and resource condition that must exist in a school in order to provide a setting in which quality instruction can take place, and to ensure that all students have a reasonable opportunity to learn. These standards are experience and research based through the NAAS Commission on Schools. In order to maintain continued progress, Ellensburg High School will submit an Annual Report to indicate how well it is accomplishing the goals of the School Improvement Plan, as well as how it is meeting the eleven standards.

The third component of the self study is the State of Washington Accountability Standards. The standards in this strand ask a school to meet student performance requirements as determined by the state. A major factor in determining the accreditation status of a school rests with the ability to have students meet or exceed the state standards as measured by the Washington Assessment of Student Learning. A positive relationship exists between the school improvement plan and the effort to improve student performance in state mandated assessments. As a part of the school improvement process, schools examine student performance on state assessments, identify areas needing improvement, and develop or adopt strategies and interventions to assist students meet the state standards.

The self study process culminated with a visit and assessment by a team of outside educators on June 1, 2006, to validate Ellensburg High School's work. The NAAS wishes to express appreciation to the following educators for their contributions as members of the "visiting site team".

Jim Verhulp	Northwest Association of Accredited Schools
Vicki Kelly	Hanford H.S., Richland
Carl Whitney	Eisenhower H.S., Yakima
Robin Metzger	Kamiakin H.S., Kennewick
Zach Rau	Davis H.S., Yakima
Robert Price	Eisenhower H.S., Yakima
Susan Willis	Cle Elum H.S., Cle Elum
Dan Clark	Kamiakin H.S., Kennewick
Jo Birley	Davis H.S., Yakima
Dave Neumayer	Hanford H.S., Richland
Jamie Whitney	Kamiakin H.S., Kennewick
Sue Brenden	Kamiakin H.S., Kennewick
Cathy Stordeur	Hanford H.S., Richland
Jan Bender	Cle Elum
Jim Wright	Eisenhower H.S., Yakima
Eric Whickwire	Cle Elum
Karen Bailey	Cle Elum
Linda Willingham	Kamiakin H.S., Kennewick
Teresa Knirk	Hanford H.S., Richland
Paula Felton	Eisenhower H.S., Yakima
Cheryl Gavin	Eisenhower H.S., Yakima

Summary of Goals:

This phase of the report summarizes the commendations and recommendations of the “visiting team” in assisting both the operations of the program and School Improvement Plan.

Members of the “visiting team” were divided into goal area teams to complete observations of the school site and conduct interviews of staff and students. Combining the onsite visitation with the information in the Accreditation Report, the Visiting Team members wrote commendations regarding the successes of the program and recommendations to strengthen elements of the program relative to each goal area. Those commendations and recommendations are listed below:

Goals for School Improvement:

1. Increase WASL scores by 3.24% per year for the next three years. (2005 Scores = 71.5% of 10th grade students met WASL standards)
2. Percentage of students who pass the Writing WASL will improve 3% per year over the next three years. (10th grades 2005 scores – 77.1% of students met WASL standards)
3. 6% increase in WASL scores per year. (10th grade 2005 scores – 53.1% of 10th grade students met WASL standards)
4. Percentage of students who pass the Science WASL will improve 5% per year over the next 5 years. (2005 WASL scores reveal 43.8% met WASL standard)
5. To establish an effective freshman transition program to be implemented in the 2006-07 school year.
6. To revisit, revise, design a culminating project that meets state requirements and aligns with EHS mission and goals.

Commendations:

Reading & Writing:

1. Strong WASL scores in reading and writing
2. Team scoring of English papers
3. Use of 6 Trait rubric to improve writing
4. 9th grade remediation for reading
5. Skills learned in writing transferred to content areas
6. Using student samples and peer feedback
7. Offering Cornerstone/AP/Honors Classes

Recommendations:

1. Dedicated time for collaboration within and across departments
2. Curriculum alignment with GLE's (scope and sequence)
3. Improved communication between middle and high school for student placement and support
4. Training and support for teachers in reading and writing across the curriculum
5. Support and remediation for freshmen and sophomores likely to struggle on the reading and writing sections of the WASL
6. An assessment tool to assess student reading and writing skills when they arrive at high school (MAP)

7. Improve communication of student data from administration to staff.

Mathematics:

Commendations:

1. The new building is a great environment for learning
2. There is a very friendly and professional relationship between the staff members
3. Students have a positive outlook toward the math curriculum
4. Good collaboration on the WASL prep additions to the regular class structure
5. Forward looking plan to use MAP test in student placement
6. Solid ideas for data driven, research based departmental changes
7. High number of students taking advanced courses such as Cornerstone and Advanced placement
8. Collaboration of department members to align curriculum to Grade Level Expectations

Recommendations:

1. Bridge the gap between the middle school and high school curriculum
2. Implement the plans made to meet the goals as stated in the self study plan
3. Schedule a time for frequent departmental collaboration
4. Plan and take advantage of professional development opportunities
5. Add technology to aid in teaching and learning
6. Identify and implement a program to offer assistance to at risk students
7. Start a math team or math club

Science:

Commendations:

1. Using the WASL data and expectations to drive their freshman and sophomore curriculum
2. Using powerful "Classroom Assessments" to implement and grade common lab notebook formats
3. Promoting the number of junior and senior level science classes
4. Cornerstone, Running Start, and AP classes have strengthened the science department
5. Training school and district personnel in WASL scoring expectations and using these in the classroom.
6. Working on District curriculum alignment
7. Communication within the department on goals and action plans

Recommendations:

1. Investigate interim assessment tools for science beyond WASL such as MAP, RIT Scores, or use of MAP reading and math, etc.
2. Provide more variety of junior and senior level science courses such as Environmental Science, Advanced Geology, Anatomy, Physiology, AP Chemistry
3. Continue promoting more enrollment in junior and senior level science classes, especially for non-science college bound students.
4. Offer support for low readers in science content area and identify classes for remediation for students who do not pass the WASL on the first attempt.
 - a) Tutoring program with a system for requiring attendance. (Tutoring by NHS, Math Club, College Students, etc.)
 - b) Develop Core groups so common problems can be addressed uniformly by all teachers (of that student) throughout the day.
5. Provide a release time for working on District Curriculum Alignment

6. Provide release time for more communication between departments on goals and action plans.

Personalization:

Commendations:

1. The foresight to know that there was a need for improvement and researched programs.
2. Link Crew emphasis in the leadership class next year enables more student/mentor interactions.
3. Positive Link Crew Coordinators who are energized and eager to make a difference.
4. Involvement of the staff is positive
5. Having a parent involved in the beginning of the process.
6. The enthusiasm of the student body and the desire to make a difference.

Recommendations:

1. Vertical alignment with middle school to help understand the students needs in the transition process. (Communication about at-risk students)
2. Attend another school's freshman orientation program to observe the process.
3. Compile accurate data on failing rates, attendance and drop out rates.
4. Professional Learning Community with freshman (team teaching a targeted group or all 9th grade core subjects).
5. Encourage parental involvement throughout the transition process; through mailings, advertisements and meetings.
6. Recommend additional financial support for implementation.

Culminating Project:

Commendations:

1. I-search paper format
2. 4 layers of student choice (Product, performance, career, or academic issue)
3. Project log sheets and rubrics (comprehensive).
4. Layers of execution and catchment (Coordinator, World Affairs class, and advisors)
5. Enthusiasm and support of staff and administrators
6. Introduction to students in junior year.
7. Depth of research in project development by committee
8. Handbook thorough and well thought out

Recommendations:

1. School Board and Superintendent approval of transition from portfolio (scrapbook) to culminating project.
2. Paid/stipend position for coordinator
3. Schedule an advisory time for students to meet with their advisors at least twice monthly
4. Ensure skills needed are taught to underclassmen so students can focus on content more than skills development (true culminating project)
5. Eliminate non-readiness component (10 day leeway)
6. Include grade requirement within World Affairs class to ensure accountability and consider paying written scorers.
7. Refinement of project documentation paperwork (see notes)

NOTES:

Condense Project Log sheets (Pages 71-73)

Add Timeline date to Portfolio checklist (Page 48)

Remove page 42

Add advisor signature page (Page 44)

Place time log in portfolio for evaluators review during presentation.

Add scoring rubric for presentation (After page 69)

Add the summer school requirements (Page 85)

IDEAS:

One way to resolve meeting time issue would be to have staff arrive a half hour early and leave a half hour early.

Reduce your logs, some are redundant

Include a student in the evaluation project

Add a community mentoring component to the senior project

Ellensburg High School has successfully completed the self study component for accreditation. Full accreditation is recommended, assuming there is continued compliance with and maintenance of the eleven standards reported annually to NAAS, each fall.

Jim Verhulp, NAAS Consultant