

## CRITICAL NEEDS – CHAPTER II

As the academic data indicates, Connecting Waters Charter School has experienced marginal improvement in some areas. The number of students who pass the CAHSEE the first time has increased, but we are still lagging behind the state in our proficiency rates. Although our AMO rates have risen schoolwide and in all subgroup categories, the increase has been insignificant.

### **Mathematics:**

Our eighth grade students who take algebra have proven successful; however, the upper grade levels are lagging behind in achievement. We will continue our CAHSEE intensive program which, based on the data, appears to be successful, and we will continue to focus on mathematics for grades 2-8 and Algebra 1. Algebra is the cornerstone to many skills and disciplines; therefore, our students need to have a strong grasp of algebraic concepts and principles and demonstrate mastery of the algebra standards. The stakeholders want to continue our gains and increase our proficiency in these areas of mathematics.

The academic performance data suggests improvement, including:

Grades 2-8: 20% less of our students scored proficient than the students in the state

An average of 64% of students scored below proficient on the math CST  
87% of the Hispanic and Economically Disadvantaged students scored below proficient and

70% of the White and Economically Disadvantaged students scored below proficient on the math CST

8<sup>th</sup> grade: Only 30% of our 8<sup>th</sup> graders are ready to take algebra 1 and 44% scored below proficient on the algebra 1 CST

9<sup>th</sup> grade: 89% of students score below proficient on the algebra 1 CST  
38% of students who took the algebra 1 CST were Economically Disadvantaged and 96% scored below proficient

10<sup>th</sup> grade: 93% of students score below proficient on the algebra 1 CST  
61% of students who took the algebra 1 CST were Economically Disadvantaged and 99% scored below proficient

11<sup>th</sup> grade: 96% of students score below proficient on the algebra 1 CST  
44% of students who took the algebra 1 CST were Economically Disadvantaged and 100% scored below proficient

## **1. Improve Student Achievement in Mathematics grades 2-8, and any student taking Algebra I**

**ESLR: Mathematical Thinkers (Math).** “Student applies mathematical principles and operations to solve problems.” Student demonstrates knowledge of basic skills, conceptual understanding, and problem solving--

- with numbers and operations.
- in geometry and measurement.
- in functions and algebra.
- in statistics and probability.
- Student solves problems with problem formulation, problem implementation, and/or problem conclusion.
- Student communicates own knowledge of basic skills, understanding of concepts, and ability to solve problems and understand the mathematical communication of others.

### **English/Language Arts:**

The data reveals an overall trend of improvement in achievement in ELA over grades 2-10. However, we are concerned with the decrease in proficiency of students in grades 2, 3, and 11. Although we are in the range of proficiency with the district, CWCS still lags behind the state. The stakeholders agreed that ELA will continue to be an area of growth as we focus on our schoolwide action plan.

The academic performance data suggests improvement, including:

An average of 51% of the students in grades 9-11 scored below proficient on the ELA CST

10th grade CAHSEE: only 67% of our Economically Disadvantaged students passed the CASHEE ELA from 2007-2010 only 11% of the ELs passed the CAHSEE ELA

9th grade: 61% of the Economically Disadvantaged students scored below proficient on the ELA CST

10th grade: 71% of the Economically Disadvantaged students scored below proficient on the ELA CST

11th grade: 81% of the Economically Disadvantaged students scored below proficient on the ELA CST

9th- 11th CST: More than a 37% of the students tested in grades 9-11 were Economically Disadvantaged

**2. Improve Student Achievement in English/Language Arts grades 9-11**  
**ESLR : Effective Communicators (Reading/Writing).** “Student will read and write effectively.” Student:

- reads actively and derives meaning from written media.
- reads extensively for a variety of purposes.
- writes using grammatically acceptable English.
- adjusts tone and style of writing for purpose and audience.
- supports statements using well-rounded facts, theory, and opinion.
- separates fact from opinion.
- logically reaches conclusions based on sufficient evidence.
- clearly and succinctly states key points.
- organizes ideas in a variety of ways.
- demonstrates creativity through style, organization, and development of content.

**Science:**

Although the stakeholders were encouraged by the steady increase in proficiency by approximately 20 percent from 2007 to 2010 as shown by the data, we observe that our students lag behind the district and the state rates by 3-15 percent in science. Through interventions, CWCS will focus on enhancing the scientific skills of all students.

The academic performance data suggests improvement, including:

Grade 5: nearly 50% of our 5th graders scored below proficient

Grade 8: nearly 60% of our 8th graders scored below proficient

Grade 9: 66% of our 9th graders scored below proficient on the Earth Science EOC

Grade 10: 64% of our 10th graders scored below proficient for Life Science

Grade 11: 80% of our students taking chemistry scored below proficient

Only 11% of our high school students are taking higher level science courses and only 2% are Economically Disadvantaged

**3. Improve Student Achievement in Science grades 5, 8-11**

**ESLR: Scientific Thinkers (Science).** “Student applies scientific concepts and skills to explain his/her world and find solutions to its problems.” Student:

- observes, compares, orders, and categorizes characteristics and behaviors.
- communicates ideas.
- relates factors of differing objects and events, and infers about unknown or unseen processes.
- applies knowledge and thought processes to explain his/her world and solve problems.
- demonstrates recognition of the interrelationships among the scientific themes (energy, interactions, patterns, change).

CWCS agrees that to ensure continued success for all students, the above three critical academic needs will be the areas on which we will focus our school action

plan and intervention strategies. The CWCS leadership agreed upon these critical areas of need then presented them to all stakeholders for review. There is a gap in performance in all areas between our white subgroup and all other subgroups. The white students out-perform our Hispanic and socio-economically disadvantaged students in all three critical areas of need. It will be the focus of CWCS to close this achievement gap.