

Anthony Charter School Responses to Charter School Division Preliminary Report

The following responses are to the given pages and portions of the PED preliminary analysis of parts B-E of the school's renewal application:

1. Pg. 9: Discovery Education Proficiency rates overinflated proficiency rates on Discovery Ed. exceeded PARCC by as much as 57%:

The method used by school in calculating ELA and math proficiency rates on Discovery Ed. Was not rigorous, sound, or permitted by the settlement agreement.

- The school used the two standard error of a scale score as indicated by Discovery Education in good faith to demonstrate one year's growth in conversations held with the Charter School Division in setting such goals. Had a more definitive metric been forthrightly established without the need for the PED or its subsidiaries to defer to Discovery Education Assessments to determine an adequate growth standard, a more rigorous standard might likely have been established.
2. Pg. 10: Department's Standards of Excellence – A-F Letter Grades:
 - While the audit team did not observe the measures taken as described in the school's renewal application, the information therein presented was based on two years of actions previously taken that generated marginal results, at best, in some indicators. The circumstances described the reasons behind the results obtained. The actions hereafter taken this school year were the school's attempts to address the issues of academic underperformance on state-mandated assessments.
 3. Pg. 10- Dual Credit Classes:
 - While the school understands that dual credit classes are of great importance to students and provides them with some exposure to classes on the post-secondary level, the school sought to delay dual credit classes for one semester to provide those students with opportunities for remediation and test preparation classes so they could pass such assessments with an acceptable standard. More specifically— the Biology SBA and PARCC Senior retakes for graduation. The brunt of the students taking these exams were students that opted to enroll for dual credit classes. Many of these students had not passed either exam with an adequate score. The decision to opt out for one semester of dual credit classes campus wide was taken for this reason alone and explained to students and their parents in meetings held individually to express the gravity of the situation and the importance of students achieving passing standards on these exams. Dual credit classes will promptly resume in spring 2018.
 4. Pg. 10- Daily *Consejos* Advisory Course:

- The school reduced the amount of time required in this course for two reasons. One reason was to permit for ample time for remediation in math, reading, and computer applications in order for the students to make improvements in their PARCC assessments for the spring. The other reason was that the *Consejos* advisory course itself is held on a daily basis for those students that exhibited a higher propensity in displaying problem behaviors as indicated by the SSIS (social skills inventory system) survey and take that class under the auspices of a “reading club” class during last period each day. The intent of the class is to work with students to develop the types of attitudes that are conducive to being successful in school and in building better working relationships with their peers and families as well.

5. Pg. 13- Analysis. ACS re-iterated verbatim the indicator describing it along with its metric...:

- The school seeks to make continual improvements in having students accomplish passing standards or demonstrating adequate growth on short-cycle and high-stakes assessments. Consequently, the school has made significant investments of funding in updating a grossly inadequate technological infrastructure so that students and educators alike can incorporate technology into teaching and learning in a concerted effort to bring about the desired changes in math and reading scores schoolwide. Students have already made progress toward becoming active readers rather than passive ones and made gains on software-based platforms like Reading Plus that correlate with the CCSS commonly encompassed in PARCC. In the upcoming semester, the school will implement additional programs to help students make similar kinds of progress in math by using Carnegie math as a supplemental resource incorporated along with instruction.
- While there are issues with how Discovery test scores were reported, the school was led to believe that such methods were acceptable by the Charter School Division in years past prior to the personnel changes that have occurred since the 2015-2016 school year. The methods for reporting such results were not arbitrarily derived by the school and came straight from Discovery Education when the state redirected schools in such a manner for clarification. This raises questions along similar lines with a lack of clarity in that there seems to be some similar issues in determining adequate growth and cut scores with the newly incorporated NWEA assessments. In an effort to determine what would be considered as acceptable for this new battery of short cycle assessments, the school has emailed the PED to ascertain such information and was redirected to NWEA. NWEA redirects the school to PED to find the answer.



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Esteemed members of the Public Education Commission:

All the indications made on the PED preliminary report are correct and require no further revisions. Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the numbers given above at your earliest convenience.

Respectfully,

Jimmy Gonzalez