

# **SAMPLE**

## **SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

**WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES  
CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**FOR**

# **SUCCESS HIGH SCHOOL**

**100 Any School Drive  
Any City, CA 95000**

**California Unified School District**

**March 26–28, 2007**

### **Visiting Committee Members**

Kay Williams, Chairperson  
Associate Superintendent, California USD

Fred Jones  
Teacher, North Valley High School

Amy Chang  
Teacher, California High School

Robert Hernandez  
Resource Specialist, Los Angeles High School

Alice Smith  
Teacher, Sutter High School

Bill Oniki  
Assistant Principal, Enterprise High School

John Ethringer  
Teacher, San Mateo High School

## Chapter I: Student/Community Profile (2 pages)

Briefly summarize the most critical information from the student/community profile that impacts the school. Include the following:

- Brief description of the students and community served by the school.
- School's analysis of student achievement data (e.g., *CAHSEE*, *AYP*, *API*, *AP*, *college SAT*, *graduation rates*, and *Program Improvement status*).
- Other pertinent data (e.g., *attendance rates*, *size of EL/LEP population*, *teacher credentialing*, *class size*, *dropout rates*, *programs for students*).
- ➔ **Note:** Show data in chart format and comment. Include sections of the profile that show student achievement findings and interpretations.
- Comment on significant findings revealed by the profile and/or pertinent data that were not included in the profile.

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\_\_\_\_\_ High School, established in 1963, is one of four comprehensive high schools in the \_\_\_\_\_ School District. \_\_\_\_\_ High School is located in the community of \_\_\_\_\_; the enrollment of this culturally diverse school is 1780; the school is clean, modern and safe with adequate certificated and classified staff and district support. The demographics of its student population have changed over the past decade. The current composition of the student body is 43% Hispanic, 23% White, 15% African-American, 14% Asian, 3% Filipino, 1% Pacific Islander and 1% other. Over the past five years, the percentage of Hispanic students has decreased by 4% and the percentage of White students has decreased by 6%, while the percentage of African-American students has increased by 3% and the percentage of Asian students has increased by 6%.

Eligibility for participation in the free and reduced lunch program includes 38% of all students. The percentage of the student population identified as English Language Learners (ELL) is 24%. The percentage of ELL students whose primary language is Spanish has decreased in the past five years from 22% to 16%. Native speakers of other languages, most notably Vietnamese and Cambodian, have increased from 2% to 8% of the ELL population. Students who fall under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) equal 9% of the student population; student in the Gifted and Talented Program (GATE) equal 23% of the student population. The breakdown of the GATE population shows the following: White and Asian/Pacific Islander students comprise 60%, Hispanics students 32%, and African-American students 8%.

Mobility rates are low; the approximate percentage of the student body that begins and ends the school year is 90%. The actual daily attendance rate is 95%. The four-year dropout rate is 3.9%, while the one-year dropout rate is .9%. Though suspension and expulsion rates have continued to drop over the past five years, the African-American suspension rate has increased from 12 % to 26% of the total percentage of students suspended in the same time period.

Indicators of student achievement are many. Overall the school recognizes that it must increase reading, writing, and math proficiencies across all areas and must involve students in more challenging learning experiences that involves critical thinking skills and application. The redesignation rate of students from Limited English Proficient to Fluent English Speakers has risen from 21% two years ago to 29% this year. The percentage of seniors completing the UC “a-g” requirements has remained constant at 36% for the past two years. Over 90% of students participate in extracurricular activities.

Scores on statewide testing show several issues related to student performance. Last year CAT6 results indicated that a high percentage of students, especially African-American students, are below the national average on tests of reading, language and math. This year CAT 6 results indicated increasing achievement levels by African-Americans and Hispanics but declines for the Asians/Asians-Americans and the socioeconomically disadvantaged students. California Standards Test (CST) scores for 2004 showed approximately 35% of students proficient or above in English Language Arts at all grade levels, which was an increase at all grade levels from the previous year. Math scores showed approximately 13% proficient or above, science approximately 37%, and social studies, approximately 28% proficient or above. Last year the school’s Academic Performance Index (API) showed substantial gains were made with schoolwide growth of 28 points, Hispanic students increasing by 40. This year schoolwide API target goals were met; there were significant gains made by the African-American. Over the last three years the EL students did increase slightly (3.5%) in the number of students scoring at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile for grades 9–11. The school has met all the criteria including significant subgroups for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for 2003 and 2004. In the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), as more students were tested in 2002–2003, the percent passing both exams decreased slightly from 2000–2001 (86% in English and 67% in math) to 2002–2003 (81% in English and 62% in math). The school is working to strengthen its cohort group analysis, especially by subgroups.

The SAT verbal scores have decreased over the last six years from 491 to 468, math from 486 to 476; the number of seniors that took the most recent SAT test was 46%. The results were below the district, county, and statewide averages. There has been an increase in the total number of juniors of all ethnicities taking the PSAT/NMSQT. In addition, the percentage of students who are taking the most rigorous course of study is increasing. More students are choosing to take advance placement classes and the number of AP test takers has grown by 20%.

Over a third of the certificated staff of 88 have been educators for 20 or more years, with 57% of the staff members holding a Master’s Degree or higher. Sixty-two percent of the classroom teachers have second language certification while 12% hold a special education certificate. All teachers are credentialed. Because of local class size reduction programs in algebra and language arts and the addition of two- and three-hour block classes in English literacy, there has been a recent influx of teaching staff new to the school; over 50% of the staff have been at the school for five years or less. The certificated staff is 79% White, 17% Hispanic, 2% African-American and 2% other, which is not reflective of the student population, especially in the percentage of African-American and Asian teachers.

The school has a variety of resources such as Carl Perkins. There are many new standards-based textbooks and other materials. The school also has additional staff focused on

improving the instructional program and lowering the ratio of students to staff members. Additional classroom teachers for specialized programs have altered the class size ratio. A class size of twenty exists in over 34% of the classes. The district supplies an additional counselor three days per week to augment the school's staff. A peer coach/staff developer and site resource teacher provide on-site staff development. A teacher has been appointed as a math coordinator to assist other math teachers develop instructional lessons based upon student need; a similar appointment will occur in the area of reading.

Community involvement includes informal and formal partnerships. This includes work with local companies and news/media stations. Community leaders are active in the senior portfolio/project process. The local press reports school activities and the school marquee carries messages regarding school events.

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## Chapter II: Progress Report (2 pages)

Since the last self-study:

- Comments on the school's major changes and follow-up process.
- Discuss how the school through its action plan has accomplished each of the critical areas for follow-up, including the impact on student learning.

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As the staff worked to address the growth areas/critical areas of follow-up, the school and its community of learners has changed. Since the last visit by a WASC team, these changes have included: Appointment of a new district superintendent; strengthening of district support through financial and human resources for student achievement; adoption of rigorous state standards; development of statewide focus on pupil achievement and school improvement; major turnover in certificated and classified staff.

The school used Focus on Learning as the protocol for its last self-study. As a result of that self-study and Visiting Committee report, the following growth areas/critical areas of follow-up were identified. These included:

- Higher student achievement in the areas of basic communication skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking
- Greater emphasis on increased competence in mathematical concepts, applications, and problem-solving skills
- Increased use of technology by students as an instructional tool to facilitate the learning, such as communication skills
- Greater student engagement in challenging, learning experiences that result from teacher use of diversified teaching strategies, including technology
- Systematic assessment of student performance for use in improving students' achievement and regularly reporting of progress to all stakeholders
- Improvement of student learning environment by improving respect for diversity and the individual; maintaining a safe and clean learning environment; and increasing staff communication

The responsibility to follow up on these recommendations was shared across the staff. Evidence of the extent of the follow-up was included in the results of the parent, staff and student surveys, in the written self-study, in the dialogue with key stakeholders and focus groups and in the classroom observations of the Visiting Committee members. The staff of the school and, when and where necessary, the school district have addressed the growth areas/critical areas of follow-up in one or more ways.

The recipients of the majority of follow-up on the growth areas have been those students who fall well below grade level in reading and mathematics. The school was able to have the assistance of a site resource teacher. In addition the school was able to lower class size in English and mathematics classes, especially those classes targeting the needs of low achieving students. Lastly, English literacy classes, which are either a 2- or-3-hour block, are focusing on students below grade level in reading, while the 2-hour block algebra classes focus on those students who are below grade level in mathematics.

Staff development funds were used for a variety of staff development activities to improve and diversify teaching methodologies. Over the past six years, the topics covered on these staff development days focused on student assessment, program improvement and varied teaching methodologies. With over 62% of the staff holding CLAD or comparable certificates, strategies for students with language barriers are well known and used on a daily basis.

Technology has been addressed in many ways since the last accreditation visit. A major “leap” in the area of technology occurred from the past funding under the Digital High School grant in which computer labs and necessary infrastructure were able to be upgraded and expanded. The school now has a technology plan and there are now five computer labs and two mobile computer carts containing 20 laptops each. When the funding was available through the Digital High School grant, teachers in selected departments were provided a laptop for classroom management and for preparation for instructional delivery. Technology has played a major role in the development of enhanced classroom management strategies including “feedback” to students regarding academic progress.

The school shows evidence of great care and on-going maintenance provided by school and district staff. The infusion of bond dollars has created up-to-date classrooms and modernized facilities. The safety of students and of staff is evident in the presence of security personnel, in two-way communication in every classroom and in the results of the staff, student and parent surveys.

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**Chapter III: Self-Study Process (1–2 pages)**

- Include a copy of the school’s expected schoolwide learning results.
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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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- Comment on the school’s self-study process with respect to the expected outcomes of the self-study.
    1. The involvement and collaboration of all staff and other stakeholders to support student achievement
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All stakeholders, including staff, students, parents, and community members, were actively involved in analyzing data, assessing needs, and developing the action plan. The results were used to identify growth areas to be addressed. New staff members were added to the focus groups, and two of the three staff development days were used for the WASC self-study process. The Leadership Team members were trained in the *Focus on Learning* process in order to become more effective team leaders. Focus group teams and home group teams reviewed the guide questions and shared perspectives, ideas, and concepts during “conversations.” During these “conversations,” evidence, including student work, was collected and analyzed. The parent group developed a survey to be administered to parents of students in the English literacy and algebra programs to determine if parents felt that these programs were “making a difference” for their children. Parents contributed to the focus group discussions when they were able to be present. Support staff members developed an interview questionnaire to elicit more detailed responses from students regarding the school and its programs. The student group met regularly and participated in focus group discussions.

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2. The clarification and measurement of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do through expected schoolwide learning results and academic standards (*note the selected expected schoolwide learning results examined by the school*)
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The original expected schoolwide learning results (ESLRs), written in 1996 were reviewed. The vision statement and ESLRs were refined with input from all stakeholder groups. The ESLRs were rewritten so that they aligned with state standards and could be measured through such means as standardized test scores, senior portfolios, progress reports and semester grades. For this self-study, the Leadership Team chose to focus on two ESLRs, as follows:

1. Effective communicators who read, write, and speak clearly, creatively, and effectively and who listen attentively and critically.
2. Critical thinkers who analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information to solve problems and who apply math concepts required in everyday situations and in the workplace.

These ESLRs were chosen because they reflect the identified critical academic needs based on the data analysis. In addition, these ESLRs focused attention on student performance areas measured by the state's standardized testing program.

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3. The gathering and analyzing of data about students and student achievement
  4. The assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning in relation to expected schoolwide learning results, academic standards and WASC/CDE criteria
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The district provided assistance with student data collected from internal and external sources. For the most part, these data were disaggregated and provided the staff with a good starting point for data analysis. Departmental team members collected student work to review and to analyze. The findings derived from this analysis were shared within focus groups. It is from the resulting discussions that the areas of strength and relative weakness in the existing program were identified. These areas became the priority areas of the action plan.

It is very clear that the stakeholders spent a great deal of time reviewing the entire school's program in relation to the ESLRs, to the state standards and to the WASC/CDE criteria. The stakeholders used the self-study process as a methodology for the development and implementation of a school improvement plan. This clarity is evidenced in a review of the self-study timeline (included in the preface of the self-study) and of the agendas and minutes of meetings that were referenced in the timeline. The WASC/CDE criteria rubrics were used as the starting point of discussions regarding the quality of programs offered to students at the school.

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5. The alignment of a long-range action plan to the school's areas of need; the development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the plan
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Using the self-study methodology described above, the focus groups analyzed the areas of strength and relative weakness and identified three major areas for growth, as follows:

1. Employ a systematic use of assessment to guide staff development, modify instruction and improve student achievement of the ESLRs and standards, especially in the core areas.
2. Expand interdisciplinary collaboration and integration of technology in school programs and departmental curriculum, and,
3. Improve the capacity of the school to meet the academic needs of all students.

The Leadership Team formulated a draft action plan based upon these growth areas. The draft plan was reviewed by the focus groups, and minor revisions were made; the final plan was approved by the Leadership Team, the site governing body that will monitor the accomplishment of the plan. (See Visiting Committee Report, page 111, *Focus on Learning Joint WASC/CDE Process Guide, Updated Fall 2004*).

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## Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

### Part A: What Currently Exists (10–20 pages)

Based on the self-study and Visiting Committee findings, for each category:

1. Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources
  2. Standards-Based Student Learning: Curriculum
  3. Standards-Based Student Learning: Instruction
  4. Standards-based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability
  5. School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth
- Summarize an analysis of what currently exists and its impact on student learning.
  - Highlight areas of strength (if any).
  - Highlight the key issues (if any).
  - List the important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues.

#### **CATEGORY A. ORGANIZATION: VISION AND PURPOSE, GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND STAFF, AND RESOURCES**

- A1.** To what extent does the school have a clearly stated vision or purpose based on its student needs, current educational research, and the belief that all students can achieve at high levels?

To what extent is the school's purpose supported by the governing board and the central administration and further by expected schoolwide learning results and the academic standards?

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

- A2.** To what extent does the governing board have policies and bylaws that are aligned with the school's purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results and academic standards based on data-driven instructional decisions for the school?

To what extent does the governing board have delegate implementation of these policies to the professional staff?

To what extent does the governing board monitor regularly results and approve the single schoolwide action plan and its relationship to the Local Educational Agency (LEA) plan?

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**A3.** To what extent based on student achievement data, does the school leadership and staff make decisions and initiate activities that focus on all students achieving the expected schoolwide learning results and academic standards?

To what extent does the school leadership and staff annually monitor and refine the single schoolwide action plan based on analysis of data to ensure alignment with student needs?

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**A4.** To what extent does a qualified staff facilitates achievement of the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results through a system of preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development?

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**A5.** To what extent are leadership and staff are involved in ongoing professional development that focuses on identified student learning needs?

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**A6.** To what extent are the human, material, physical, and financial resources sufficient and utilized effectively and appropriately in accordance with the legal intent of the program(s) to support students in accomplishing the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results?

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**A7.** To what extent has the charter school's governing authority and the school leadership executed responsible resource planning for the future. Is the charter school fiscally solvent and does it use sound and ethical accounting practices (budgeting/monitoring, internal controls, audits, fiscal health and reporting)? **[FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS ONLY]**

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**A8.** Has the charter school developed policies, procedures, and internal controls for managing the financial operations that meet state laws, generally accepted practices, and ethical standards? **[FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS ONLY]**

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**Areas of strength for Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.**

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**Key issues for Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.**

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:**

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**CATEGORY B. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: CURRICULUM**

**B1.** To what extent do all students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results?

To what extent are the expected schoolwide learning results accomplished through standards-based learning (i.e., what is taught and how it is taught)?

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The school reports that state curriculum frameworks and district content and performance standards are utilized in all departments to support student achievement. Student Outcomes (ESLRs) and standards are posted in most classrooms and administrative offices. ESLRs are included in many course syllabi within each curricular area where each objective is tied to one or more ESLRs.

Students reading two or more years below grade level are placed in a one- to three hour block of English Literacy and other appropriate classes. Over half of the student body participates in a magnet program that combines academic, applied academic and field experience. There are AP courses offered in a variety of subject areas. Students that transition from nonpublic settings to the school with a combination of unique and complex learning needs receive support through a special transitions program. Seniors produce both a senior portfolio and senior exhibition that demonstrates their understanding of the school’s learning outcomes or ESLRs. In addition, there are articulation agreements with two local colleges to provide students with the opportunity to earn college credits.

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**B2.** To what extent do all students have access to the school’s entire program and assistance with a personal learning plan to prepare them for the pursuit of their academic, personal, and school-to-career goals?

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Students enter the school with a four year plan already in place based on work done in eighth grade; this has been accomplished through collaboration between middle and high school staff. During the ninth and tenth grade years students have the opportunity to modify their plan. Counselors provide group presentations to cover graduation requirements, course information and college entrance requirements. Students then confer with parents, teachers, and others before making final course selections with their counselors in one-on-one meetings.

Students may select one of seven curricular paths starting with the ninth grade. They may modify their learning plan at any time, as counselors meet yearly with the students. The student survey showed a strong response to the question about counselors encouraging students to enroll in rigorous, challenging courses. In addition, as students transition into and out of the high school there are several programs to assist them. Students seem aware of the link between the work they have accomplished and their career goals.

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**B3.** To what extent are students able to meet all the requirements of graduation upon completion of the high school program?

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Through observation and examination of the programs offered, students should be able to meet all the requirements for graduation. Students enroll in sequential courses that provide a solid foundation for future pursuits. Through the school's programs and support students can gain pre-graduation awareness/tools for what would be needed to continue pursuit of academic and occupational goals.

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**Areas of strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: Curriculum (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.**

*Areas of Strength* (if any)

- Modifications and redesign of the curriculum and instruction have been made to focus on attainment of the academic standards and ESLRs by students.
- Curricular support is available to individual students through a variety of programs.

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**Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Curriculum (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.**

*Key Issues* (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

The key issues include:

- Collaboration between special education and general education teachers needs to occur more regularly regarding student accommodations;
- Increasing reading, writing and math proficiency across content areas;
- Collaboration and communication between all stakeholders to improve achievement of standards and ESLRs by all students.

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**Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:**

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**Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:**

1. Self-study document
  2. Classroom observation
  3. Dialogue with focus groups and key stakeholders
  4. Displays of student work
  5. Report of analyzed student achievement data, including API scores.
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**CATEGORY C. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: INSTRUCTION**

- C1.** To what extent are all students are involved in challenging learning experiences to achieve the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results?
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Innovative instructional methods are used to engage students as learners and encourage them to organize, assess, and apply prior knowledge and show mastery. Examples of curriculum integration and activities that reflect student involvement in challenging learning experiences are evident. Many students are involved in collaborative long-term projects and in projects that encourage teamwork. Students are asked to revise, reflect, and communicate about their work. All students are expected to organize their daily and long-term assignments and activities by using their school planner. However, there is a concern from staff and students on the culture of student apathy toward assuming ownership of learning.

Teachers of the English literacy course, which serves students reading and writing significantly below grade level, confer daily with students regarding their reading and writing skills. The school has SDAIE (Specifically Designed Academic Instruction in English) courses to foster an environment of accountability and rigor for its ELL students. English literacy teachers work closely with the peer coach/ staff developer to learn and implement instructional techniques and practices in which they facilitate student-centered learning and achievement of academic standards and ESLRs.

Teachers function as both coaches and facilitators of learning, as well as working with students as co-learners both in and out of the classroom. In addition, counselors hold individual conferences with students to discuss attendance goals and the relationship between school attendance and achievement. They found that individual conferences with students with poor attendance and poor achievement increased student attendance and academic performance by as much as two grade points.

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- C2.** To what extent do all teachers use a variety of strategies and resources, including technology and experiences beyond the textbook and the classroom, that actively engage students, emphasize higher order thinking skills, and help them succeed at high levels?

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Technology is available to help students improve their skills, apply knowledge, develop hypotheses, explore topics, and work on projects. Technology is becoming an integral tool in the learning process for many students; however, more staff inservice is needed in this area. Some students experience learning opportunities that emphasize higher order thinking skills and integrate academic and applied content. However, more professional development in this area is also needed.

The school supports students assuming an active role in their learning and provides multiple opportunities for them to apply their knowledge in learning situations both in and outside of the classroom. These include technical preparation, school-to-career transition opportunities, competitions, and service learning efforts. Primary source documents, field experiences, simulations, job shadowing, internships, and technology are used to strengthen real world problem solving and engage students in the attainment of the ESLRs.

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**Areas of strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: Instruction (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.**

*Areas of Strength* (if any)

- Students have access to academic programs and activities that facilitate effective communication and critical thinking skills, the targeted ESLRs for the school.
- Staff development is being provided in the areas of technology, cooperative groupings and inductive learning.
- Support is available for students to take an active role in the learning and its application

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**Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Instruction (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.**

*Key Issues* (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

The key issues include:

- Culture of student apathy toward assuming ownership of their learning;
- Increased involvement of students in learning experiences across the curriculum that include the use of reading and writing strategies.
- Increased involvement of all students in challenging learning experiences that involves critical thinking, problem solving and application;
- Training to assist teachers in effectively using technology in the classroom to support student achievement.

- Although there are several programs available and the opportunity exists for students to use a variety of resources to enhance their learning experiences, more students need to take advantage of the programs.

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**Important evidence from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following.**

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**Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:**

- Self-study document
  - Classroom observation
  - Dialogue with focus groups and key stakeholders
  - Displays of student work
  - Report of analyzed student achievement data, including API scores.
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**CATEGORY D. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

**D1.** To what extent does the school use a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, analyze and report student performance data to the parents and other shareholders of the community?

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**D2.** To what extent do teachers employ a variety of strategies to evaluate student learning?

To what extent do students and teachers use assessment results to enhance the educational progress of every student?

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**D3.** To what extent does the school with the support of the district and community have an assessment and monitoring system to determine student progress toward achievement of the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results?

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**D4.** To what extent does the assessment of student achievement in relation to the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results drive the school's program, its regular evaluation and improvement and usage of resources?

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**Areas of strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.**

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.**

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following.**

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**CATEGORY E. SCHOOL CULTURE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH**

**E1.** To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to encourage parental and community involvement, especially with the teaching/learning process?

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**E2.** To what extent is the school a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning?

To what extent is the culture of the school characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement?

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[Narrative not included in sample report.]

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**E3.** To what extent do all students receive appropriate support along with an individualized learning plan to help ensure academic success?

[Narrative not included in sample report.]

**E4.** To what extent do students have access to a system of personal support services, activities and opportunities at the school and within the community?

[Narrative not included in sample report.]

**Areas of strength for School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.**

[Narrative not included in sample report.]

**Key issues for School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.**

[Narrative not included in sample report.]

**Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:**

[Narrative not included in sample report.]

**Part B: Synthesis of Schoolwide Areas of Strength and Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up**

- Briefly comment about the previously identified schoolwide strengths and critical areas for follow-up.
- Synthesize schoolwide areas of strengths and list numerically. *Be sure that these can be documented by other sections of the report.*
- Synthesize schoolwide critical areas for follow-up and list numerically. *Be sure that these can be documented by other sections of the report.*
  - ✓ Areas already identified by the school in the action plan sections
  - ✓ Areas to be strengthened within the already identified areas
  - ✓ Additional areas identified by the Visiting Committee. *This includes areas related to student achievement and other profile data, the school program and operation, and the action plan.*

**General Comments**

The stakeholders are commended for the thoroughness in the preparation of the *Focus on Learning* document. All stakeholders assisted the Visiting Committee in the collection and clarification of data that was needed in order to analyze the existing status of the school. The district office administration provided direction, training and other resources to the school. The Visiting Committee found that students were extremely congenial and appreciative of the efforts made to improve the quality of educational opportunities available to them.

**Schoolwide Areas of Strength** (list numerically)

1. The schoolwide sense of commitment to improve the school's instructional program and the achievement of students.
2. The collegiality of the staff, the enthusiastic student body, and the safe and orderly campus.
3. The staff's willingness to explore and try new instructional strategies to increase student achievement.
4. The staff's assessment of student work and the use of the senior portfolio/project.
5. The staff's curricular support that is available to individual students through programs such as English literacy, AVID, specialized algebra courses, after-school tutoring, and the reading/activity classes.
6. The large number of students' participating in academic, athletic, or social extracurricular activities.

The subsequent list of critical areas for follow-up is a synthesis of 1) growth areas addressed by the school in the action plan, 2) suggestions to strengthen these areas already identified in the action plan sections, and 3) additional areas identified by the Visiting Committee.

**Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up** (list numerically)

The Visiting Committee concurs with the school's identified areas that are outlined in the schoolwide action plan. These are summarized below:

1. The leadership and instructional staff establish and employ a systematic use of student performance assessment strategies that will measure the effects of the school's programs and services, guide staff development, modify instruction, and therefore result in improved student achievement of the academic standards and ESLRs.
2. The leadership and instructional staff expand interdisciplinary collaboration and integration of technology in school programs and departmental curriculum to enhance student learning.
3. The leadership in collaboration with staff and other stakeholders improve the capacity of the school to meet the needs of all students.

In addition, the Visiting Committee has identified areas that need to be strengthened:

1. The school leadership in collaboration with staff and other stakeholders refine the schoolwide action plan sections, especially in relation to the impact of the actions on student achievement.

2. The leadership, instructional staff, and other stakeholders increase the use of the results from analyzing student achievement data in the modifying of instruction, particularly in the areas of reading, writing, math and critical thinking skills.
  3. The instructional staff further develop clearly articulated benchmarks for student performance that are linked to the academic standards and expected schoolwide learning results.
  4. The instructional staff members increase their participation in staff development that is sustained over time. The focus should concentrate on the following areas:
    - a. Active, challenging learning experiences for students that involve them in critical thinking, problem-solving, collaborative work, and meaningful application of knowledge and skills.
    - b. Analysis of student achievement data and utilization of the results to modify instruction.
    - c. Effective use of technology in the classroom to support student achievement.
  5. The school leadership and staff develop and implement ways to have a stronger parent, student, and community role in the entire school improvement process.
  6. The school's leadership in collaboration with all stakeholders develops and implements plans to actively improve counseling services and outreach, thereby engaging parents and the community to meet the academic and personal needs of all students. This includes addressing the issue of student apathy.
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## Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement (1–2 pages)

- Include a brief summary of the schoolwide action plan
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The school's action plan was developed as a part of the self-study and focuses on three major components. These components and rationale for each are:

1. Establish and employ a systematic use of assessment to guide staff development, modify instruction, and improve student achievement of the academic standards and ESLRs.  
Rationale: SAT-9 results show mixed results for students in the area of reading and new diploma requirements including passage of High School Exit Exam which includes algebra and state language arts standards.
  2. Expand interdisciplinary collaboration and integration of technology in school programs and departmental curriculum.  
Rationale: Engaging, meaning-centered learning opportunities for students can be developed through increased use of interdisciplinary concepts and technology.
  3. Improve the capacity of the school to meet the needs of all students.  
Rationale: Increased communication and increased stakeholder involvement can benefit students and student achievement by focusing staff, students, parents and community members on the learning process.
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- Comments on the following school improvement issues:
    - ✓ Adequacy of the schoolwide action plan in addressing the identified critical areas for follow-up
      - ♦ Do the action plan sections address the critical areas for follow-up?
      - ♦ Will the action plan steps enhance student learning?
      - ♦ Is the action plan feasible within existing resources?
      - ♦ Is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, schoolwide and system-wide?
    - ✓ Existing factors that will support school improvement
    - ✓ Impediments to improvement that the school will need to overcome
    - ✓ Soundness of the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan.
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The Visiting Committee's concurrence with the action plans developed by the school represent a validation of the general direction of the change agenda being promoted at the school. The school will continue its plan of action to improve student achievement, expand interdisciplinary collaboration and integration of technology, and improve the capacity of the school to meet the needs of all students. They will continue to examine student performance, assessment, and staff awareness to better understand the success of the student through an ongoing evaluation process. The Visiting Committee is confident that continuing this plan that includes the suggested areas to be strengthened is likely to lead to a higher assessment of the school performance in the future. There is a high degree of enthusiasm, support, and professional commitment by the leadership and the majority of the staff.

The school's action plan incorporates important schoolwide issues and relates them to the concepts of the *Focus on Learning* criteria. A possible impediment to the plan would be the lack of commitment on the part of all staff members to adjust their teaching strategies so as to effect successful achievement of higher order thinking skills for all students. The Leadership Team must develop innovative methods to increase parent and student participation and ownership of the plan.

The follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan appears to be adequate. The Leadership Team will be the central facilitating body. The school has demonstrated that they are committed to and involved in ongoing inservice and professional growth, which is focused on the improvement of the learning environment and increased student achievement.

In summary, the school is looking forward to an ongoing celebration of progress. The increased student learning with respect to the expected schoolwide learning results will show the improvement of the educational program and services to the school's diverse student population.

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