SAMPLE

FOCUS ON LEARNING

MIDTERM VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

(Name of School and Location)

Midterm Visiting Committee Report

(Date of Midterm Visit)

Midterm Visiting Committee

(Name of team members, occupations)

Introduction *(Please review the current instructions to the school for the preparation of the midterm report with respect to the student/community profile data.)*

General Comments about the School

_____ High School opened its doors in September 1991 as one of three comprehensive high schools in the_____ Unified School District. The community is comprised of local and national businesses as well as large agrarian areas. The student population has grown to the current population of 2,454. An exploding population and inadequate funding available to complete the campus facilities presented significant challenges to this new school. Through the efforts of the school board and community, a $23 million building campaign was secured, culminating in a school including 96 classrooms, a 500 seat Performing Arts Center, a 2,000 seat gymnasium, 6 tennis courts and a pool. Truly a community effort, final details including painting, pulling cable for technology and landscaping were contributed by volunteer parents. Parent support has remained strong, now complemented by an ever-increasing number of business partners including large corporations like Xerox.

(Note: Include information regarding current student achievement; attach pertinent information from the school's data section, including status with respect to governing authority expectations. Examples include meeting or not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress, program improvement school, audit and/or corrective action plan information.)

Student demographics show a wide range of socio-economic, educational and cultural backgrounds. The school meets the needs of this diverse community through a variety of programs, academic, co-curricular and extra-curricular; a 4 X 4 Block schedule has been used since 1997. Student achievement is measured in a variety of ways. The data does show growth in several areas and the school exceeded the API growth target of 9 for 2003 by 11. However, the school did not meet its 2004 API target. As the school has analyzed the results, language-arts is an area of concern. The number of students taking the PSAT, the SAT or the ACT has increased; scores have either improved or stayed the same in all areas. Students have access to an increased number of Advanced Placement classes since 2000.

The school views technology as a tool to create a classroom without walls environment that improves student achievement, motivates students to learn, and prepares students for the future. The school serves as a model for the integration of technology into the program and its use to document progress of students toward student achievement of the content standards and the ESLRs.

Significant Changes

Significant changes that have affected the school since the last visit include:

1. Completed campus facilities that have allowed the school an opportunity to provide a well-rounded educational experience, comparable to any in the state.

2. Significant student growth. The school is currently almost 2,500 students, with an additional 300 students expected next year. The student body has also become more diverse culturally, socio-economically and educationally.

3. Along with student growth, a proportional increase of staffing has occurred. Certificated staff grew from 74 to 100, while classified grew from 37 to 61.

4. A massive technology integration project that has become one of the models in the state. Through a $933,000 grant, combined with _____High School funding, technology is truly an integral part of everything taking place at _____ High School. One of the highlights of this technology evolvement has been the development of the website, which began as an informational site and is now an Internet-based searchable database.

5. A standards-based curriculum is now in place that is complemented by the ESLRs; technology has facilitated the standards-based approach.

6. Changes in the school's 4 x 4 Block Schedule have been necessitated by the rapid increase in student population. Not only are there more classes for students, but a wider selection and more innovative offerings are made available as well.

7. Development of an Information Technology Academy (ITA). Funded through a California Partnership Academy Grant, the ITA will be conducted as a school within a school. This academy has elements of industry, college/university and business contributions, providing an excellent opportunity for students to move directly into industry following graduation or to extend their formal education.

Description of Follow-Up Process

The Leadership Team, composed of the principal, three assistant principals, department chairs, the activity director and assistant athletic director, is responsible for ensuring implementation of the Action Plan. The entire staff is directly and indirectly involved with Action Plan implementation. Each year, annual goals are developed with the expectation of full staff support. Those annual goals have been centered on development of the Action Plan, accounting for the significant progress made in most areas. Progress on the Action Plan is periodically communicated to parents through the principal's newsletter and parent representation on the School Site Council.

Issue-specific ad hoc committees that research and address issues involving school culture, student support, teaching and learning, curricular paths, and assessment and accountability have replaced Schoolwide Focus Groups. The Self-Study Coordinator position and role have been maintained with responsibility for monitoring progress on the Action Plan and working with the Leadership Team to ensure integrated planning.

The midterm progress report was prepared primarily by the Self-Study Coordinator, with input from all stakeholders via the Leadership Team, School Site Council, and the various ad hoc committees. The Leadership Team, staff and School Site Council reviewed the report.

Follow-up Process: Progress on Schoolwide Action Plan *(Excerpts)*

The school's action plan addressed the five critical areas of follow-up left by the visiting committee. Progress has occurred in each area as shown in the summaries given below.

Growth Need #1: Establish a mechanism by which students are successfully achieving the ESLRs and a formal and systematic schoolwide assessment plan to evaluate student demonstration of the ESLRs. *(Addresses Critical Areas for Follow-up #2 & #3)*

The school has put considerable effort into developing rubrics to objectively measure student attainment of the ESLRs at the course, department and schoolwide levels. This was accomplished through extensive staff training in rubric development, spurred by the results of staff needs assessment. More work is needed to take this assessment process to the schoolwide level, as the school acknowledges. Their extensive development of technology is providing an initial means of monitoring student progress by providing teachers the ability to post student work on the website that addresses the ESLRs.

Growth Need #2: Develop and implement career paths that outline a school to career plan for all students. *(Addresses Critical Area for Follow-up #1)*

This growth need of the Action Plan has seen the least amount of development. While staff commitment to see the fruition of this growth need has continued, focused time necessary for career path development has been compromised by work in other areas and the loss of key personnel. However, recently the school has taken several definitive steps toward accomplishment of this growth area. A Career Path Committee has been rejuvenated; a School to Career grant has been secured permitting the school to work in collaboration with _____ Community College to research and plan pathways and additional academies; and an Educational Business Partner Steering Committee is in place. These steps, along with the development of the Information Technology Academy will serve the school as an excellent foundation for further development of other career path opportunities for students.

Growth Need #3: Incorporate the use of digital technology into the school community to develop better interdisciplinary curricula that will provide meaningful instruction in real world concepts for all students. *(Addresses Critical Area for Follow-up #4)*

Overall the school has kept its focus on technology as a tool to improve student achievement. A teacher coordinator and mentors provide instruction during SIP training after school and help maintain the network. Both the conference period training and the after-hours training have added the benefit of providing teachers with time to collaborate and share ideas about their use of technology in the classroom. The school addressed this growth need by first integrating technology into the school community and then into interdisciplinary instruction. The schoolwide technology structure and curricular integration is a model for California.

Summary of Significant Progress

_____ High School is rightfully proud of the work and accomplishments it has achieved in the last several years. Despite the significant increase in student body, the addition of many new

staff members, and the significant shift in demographics, the school has capitalized on its energetic staff, enthusiastic parents, involved business community and supportive district office and school board to accomplish the following:

- Development of schoolwide technology structure and curricular integration that is the model for California
- New school facilities which provide an excellent opportunity of curricular expansion for both students and community
- Students are being held more accountable for their learning through the extensive use of the school's website capabilities, access opportunities and expectations for students
- Creative staff development programs that have accelerated staff competence in technology — thus use of technology in the curriculum

Additional Recommendations

The review committee makes no additional recommendations. The school has taken seriously its commitment to ensuring all students are prepared for life after high school. The school has successfully brought the community into the everyday activities and programs of the school, thereby enhancing their support and involvement. The experienced staff members have taken on the role as "informal mentors" for new staff members, assimilating them into the culture of _____ High School and enhancing their opportunities to be successful and appreciated by staff, students and parents.

The staff knows where their work needs to be focused as the action plan serves as a guide. The staff understands the entire focus must be demonstration of greater student achievement. The staff members have recently made very definitive steps to see the Career Path program develop. Given their past track record of "staying the course" the review committee is certain this component of the Action Plan be as fully realized as the other components have to this point.

CONFIDENTIAL ON-SITE REVIEW JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

It is the opinion of the review team that _____ High School has given serious consideration to the critical areas for follow-up contained in the original accreditation report. The school designated the Leadership Team as the entity responsible for carrying out its functions in a timely manner and, from all indications, will continue to function during the next three years. Therefore, we recommend that _____ High School not be subject to any additional visits during the remaining three years of their accreditation period and that no new conditions be imposed.

Signatures of Chair and Member