

SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

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

FOR

HENRY M. GUNN HIGH SCHOOL

**780 Arastradero Road
Palo Alto, California 94306**

Palo Alto Unified School District

March 9-10-11, 2009

Visiting Committee Members

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Chapter I: Student/Community Profile

Community

Henry M. Gunn High School is located 35 miles south of San Francisco and 14 miles north of San Jose in Santa Clara County, Palo Alto is a community of approximately 61, 200 residents. Palo Alto is the home of Stanford University and an excellent community college, Foothill Community College. The high tech industry that is at the heart of the Bay Area's Silicon Valley has its roots in Palo Alto. A large percentage of city residents are professionals in the high tech industry, education, health care, retail and service industries.

Henry M. Gunn Senior High School is one of two public high schools in the Palo Alto Unified School District. The District has twelve elementary and three middle schools in addition to the two high schools. Gunn is a four-year high school with an enrollment of approximately 1900 students in grades nine through twelve. The student body reflects the community's high socio-economic status and educational level. Community support for education has deep roots and has enabled PAUSD to maintain excellent academic and extra-curricular programs.

Demographics

The 1900 students in Gunn High School's 9-12 programs are predominantly Caucasian (48.6%) with 32.9% Asian, 5.3% Hispanic, and 1.7% Black. Other ethnicities are Filipino (.8%), Pacific Islander (.4%), Native American or Alaska Native (.1%) and No Response (10.1%). The White population has declined by 15% since the last WASC. There has been a significant increase in the number of students/families who identify as mixed race or decline to state their race. Well over 30% of Gunn's families report that their primary language is a language other than English. Among these are Mandarin, Spanish, Korean, Russian, Hebrew, Japanese, Arabic, Armenian and Welsh. 106 students (6.1% of the student body) receive free or reduced cost meals at Gunn High School.

Special Programs

Gunn High School provides several specialized programs to assist students in their academic achievement. Among these are AVID/Focus On Success offers support for students who are identified through a teacher referral system as being in need of extra help. There are 15 sections with 15 students per section (105 students).

Gunn also offers an Opportunity Program to freshmen and sophomores who are not thriving in the regular program or who feel that a comprehensive high school does not meet their needs.

Gunn's Academic Center is a place where students can go during prep periods, lunch, and before or after school to study and receive tutoring in most subjects. The Center is heavily used (200 plus students most days).

The Special Education Programs serve 162 students on campus. In addition there are a further 6 students in a post-secondary transition program. There is a disproportionate number of Latino (32.6%) and African American (46.9%) students enrolled in Special Education compared to White students (10.5%). While the number of African American students enrolled at Gunn High School is very small the percentage of them in Special Education has grown 34.1% in 2002/03 to 46.9% in 2006/07.

Staff

Gunn High School has a certificated staff of 141. This includes 4 administrators, 6 counselors, and two psychologists with a 129 teachers. There is 75 classified staff. The number of under-represented minority staff has increased in both categories. Almost a third of the teaching staff teaches less than the full five period day. Two teachers are currently working via emergency credentials or waivers.

Facilities and Class Size

Significant improvements in the facilities that house extra-curricular activities have taken place and/or are underway. These include Sprangenberg Theatre, major renovations of the whole athletic complex to include new baseball, new softball, and new practice soccer/lacrosse field. In addition a bond was passed in 2008 that will provide funds to replace the swimming pool complex. Palo Alto is a Basic Aid District and as such has been able to provide a per student spending level of approximately \$10, 215. By contract class size average cannot exceed 28.5 and Gunn High is staffed as this level. Most teachers were well below the contractual average in 2007/08.

Academic Performance Data

Analysis of aggregated data shows Gunn students score well overall. Gunn's API has shown improvement between 2005 (API of 885) and 2007 (API of 899). Significant subgroups of White and Asian students have shown an improvement in performance that is above the school as a whole. NCLB/AYP accountability measures show that a high percentage of White and Asian students are performing at "proficient" levels in English language Arts and Math than minority groups. Asians and Latinos do better in math than in English: African Americans, a very small group, do better in English than math. Gunn's statewide API rank has consistently been at 10. In a typical year 75% to 80% of Gunn graduates go directly to four-year college/university after high school. A further 15% enroll in a community college.

Disaggregated test data indicates:

- In regards to STAR testing African American students do better in Language Arts than math (56% were either Advanced or Proficient in English compared to 33% Proficient in math in 2007) but a high percentage of this very small group are Basic or below in both areas.
- 21 of the 39 African American students are in Special Education, ELL or the School Lunch Program.
- Of the 85 Latino students, 68 were in special programs, 24 of them in ELL and 20 in Special Education. 60% of Latino students were Basic or below in math in 2007.
- Gunn students perform well on the CAHSEE but again disaggregated data show that under-represented minority students have more difficulty passing the test than either White or Asian students.

Chapter II: Progress Report

Since the last self-study the school has undertaken to address all of the critical areas of follow-up. The areas are as follows:

1. Development and implementation of a plan that provides for enhanced collaboration focused on facilitation of inter and intra-departmental articulation as well as successfully addressing the action steps specified in the first goal of the action plan. Several of these steps per the Action Plan are listed in summary form which is intended to enhance and reinforce the learning experiences of students:

- Development of common in-departmental grading policies
- Development of common assessments and grading rubrics for departmental portfolios
- Creation of a portfolio by course and by department including at least 4 common assessments
- Create at least 2 common assessments by course
- Development of a school wide focused staff development plan

2. There is a need for the site administration and guidance departments to develop, and initiate an assessment process that will provide for evaluation of various new programs and courses of study that have been implemented in order to ensure that the learning needs of students are being effectively met. Some of these programs are as follows:

- Avid
- Focus on Success
- Academic Center
- Tutorial programs
- The addition of various career related curricular experiences

3. There is a need for the school administration and leadership team to lead an effort to review the existing school mission in order to ensure that it is in alignment with State Standards supportive of an connected to contemporary educational research and beliefs and that schools purpose is further defined by ESLR's that support the mission.

4. The site leadership and counseling staff need to lead collaborative effort with stakeholders to develop a means of reducing the level of academic stress experienced by students while maintaining desired academic opportunities in a less time intensive manner. Areas of exploration should include but not be limited to the following:

- Exploration of alternative bell schedules including school day and school year reconstruction
- Coordination of departmental assigned testing days
- Coordination of inter- and intra-departmental time intensive homework assignments
- Development of interdisciplinary common course assignments or projects
- Provision of opportunities for students, staff and parents to learn about stress reduction techniques.

5. There is a need for site leadership to lead in the process of revisiting and reviewing the action plan to include the critical areas of follow-up cited by the WASC Visiting Committee and to ensure that the action plan is supported and integrated on a school-wide basis.

Each of the above areas was incorporated in the school wide action plans and addressed with specific steps developed as part of the plan. A brief summary of progress made in each area is provided below:

Area 1: Development and implementation of a plan that provides for enhanced collaboration focused on facilitation of inter and intra-departmental articulation as well as successfully addressing the action steps specified in the first goal of the action plan.

Area 2: There is a need for the site administration and guidance departments to develop, and initiate an assessment process that will provide for evaluation of various new programs and courses of study that have been implemented in order to ensure that the learning needs of students are being effectively met. Gunn High School took on 5 tasks to address these two goals:

Task 1

Collaborate in the development of programs, new courses and assessments to continue to improve Gunn students' abilities to meet California Content Standards, PAUSD ESLR's and to pass the required CAHSEE:

With the assistance of the District Steering Committees, each department examined course content, Standards, ESLR's and assessment practices. There has been a thorough revision of course descriptions, some important changes in curriculum, and changes in textbooks to reflect State Content Standards and to better meet student needs. The process of revision means that the ESLR's, and District and State Standards are now articulated for each course. Student writing and oral presentations, including the assessment rubrics for individual assignments provide information on student achievement and whether or not they meet the standards.

Departments have been working to develop common assessments and to ensure that there is consistency among teachers of the same subject area. Close collaboration within departments in developing common grading rubrics and other common assessments is insuring consistency.

Each quarter Instructional Supervisors receive details about the grade distributions for every class and every teacher in their departments and they monitor them closely to help teachers achieve the desired consistency.

Task 2

Collaborate on a variety of teaching methodologies and strategies:

All new teachers are required district training on Elements of Instruction (EO1), Level 1. It focuses on the classroom competencies required of effective teachers. EO1 is the teaching model at Gunn High School and effectively used, EO1 strategies actively promote equity in the classroom and lower student stress levels. The major theme of Gunn's professional development during the 2006/07 school year was EO1, specifically, differentiating instruction to address student stress, equity issues and the achievement gap. The Instructional Council created an observation form so that every observer will be given immediate feedback in the form of a written positive comment before the observer leaves the classroom.

Professional Development Thursdays, Instructional Council and staff meetings, and Staff Development days are all used regularly and consistently to move professional development and school goals forward. Four Professional Development Thursdays, one in each quarter, provide teachers the opportunity to focus on things important to them such as Freshmen Transition, Stressed out Students, the Ethics Club, Peer Observation and Interdisciplinary Collaboratives, Technology and the Mission Statement.

A Research Paper Committee was established as a sub-committee of the Instructional Council. The Instructional Supervisors of Science, Social Studies, English and Special Education joined the Librarian on the Committee. This created a school wide standardized format for research papers.

Task 3

Continue to improve students' ability to meet California state content standards and District ESLR's:

A weekly two hour prep session taught by a Gunn math and English teacher were held each week for a four week period before the test is given. By June of 2006 only 7 students (Special Education) out of a class of 419 had not passed the CAHSEE. Gunn also hired a sixth guidance counselor which allowed the counselor-student ratios to drop allowing for increased attention to students at risk of not passing and advising them on ways to prepare for the exam. In the fall of 2008 Plato was purchased which is designed to help students prepare and practice the skills necessary to pass CAHSEE. The last improvement was the purchase of California Finish Line to be shared with Special Education teachers. In 2007 only one student an ELL student failed to graduate because of not passing the CAHSEE. There were no failures to graduate because of CAHSEE in the class of 2008.

Task 4

Close the Achievement Gap:

An achievement gap still exists for Latino and African American minority students. Analysis of the data shows that well under a fifth of students at any grade level did not make adequate progress in or more subjects but that for well over half of them this was only in one subject. It is apparent that there is a disproportionate number of African American, Hispanic and Pacific Islanders on the D/F list compared to White and Asian students.

Ongoing and consistent efforts are being made to engage students, teachers and parents in school wide efforts to close the achievement gap. A main focus for ongoing staff development is closing the achievement gap. A handbook on pre-assessment strategies entitled Getting to Know Your Students is distributed to all new staff. The Latino Parent Group meets regularly to discuss ways to assist underachieving students and to disseminate information about support services. The African American parent group fused with the Latino parents into a single entity, The Parent Network for Students of Color. Gunn has appointed an African American counselor to work with all students in the College Pathway Program which is designed to coordinate the efforts of the District's schools in addressing the achievement gap.

Task 5

Improve articulation vertically and horizontally between classes, programs and the middle schools:

One staff development day each year is used by departments to work on curriculum articulation with the middle schools. Evening orientation meetings for parents are held at Gunn to afford parents the opportunity to meet with Instructional Supervisors before deciding which courses their ninth graders should take. To help in the transition to high school, Gunn introduced a required three-morning orientation for all incoming ninth graders. Link Crew is also another program that works with the incoming 9th grader orientation program to make the incoming students feel welcome and to ease their transition to a new school.

Area 3: The site leadership and counseling staff need to lead a collaborative effort with stakeholders to develop a means of reducing the level of academic stress experienced by students while maintaining desired academic opportunities in a less timely intensive manner. Gunn High developed two tasks to address this area:

Task 1

The school will foster and encourage participation in extra-curricular activities that have intrinsic value for the individual:

A high percentage of Gunn students participate in athletics, journalism, robotics, theater, music and choir and other extra-curricular activities/programs. A number of new extra-curricular activities that enhance opportunities for student involvement have been provided. These include:

- Slam Poetry Team
- A number of “open mic” events that draw a large range of participants and viewers
- New Speech and Debate and Model UN clubs
- A new Quiz Kids Team that made it to National in 2007
- Student produced (and sometimes student written) One Acts and brown bag theatre productions
- Large cheerleading team and new dance team
- New computer club for girls
- Many new clubs formed by students

Task 2

Lower the level of stress for students, staff and parents:

Student Stress: During the 2004/05 the Stressed Out Students Committee (SOS) working in conjunction with Stanford University met multiple times and put together a student survey that was designed to understand the cause of student stress that was identified as an area of concern in the last WASC. Students identified homework load as one of the main causes of stress. Professional Development Thursdays were opportunities for the staff to discuss this issue and to read articles about homework load and the desirability (or otherwise) of limiting the number of Advanced Placement courses a student may take. There is no one size fits all policy on this issue that would work for every teacher and student. Discussions within each department are lively and valuable. The SOS Committee using a modified assembly schedule format allowed students to discuss issues of concern to them that cause stress with their peers. They produced a video of interviews with a cross section of students called My Life in High School. This new approach to the topic of stress reduction and management was very well received. A source of stress to both students and staff has been textbooks! Textbook Tracker

was purchased in the fall of 2007. Students and staff love the new system. Stress levels have significantly been reduced all round.

Living Skills Course: In the fall of 2006 a Living Skills course was re-introduced to the curriculum. It provides an avenue for helping the students who take this course deal with potentially stressful areas of their lives. Great emphasis is placed on helping students develop coping skills to better maneuver through difficult personal and peer situations.

Code of Integrity: The Code of Integrity was revised by the Ethics Group at Gunn High to deal with instances of cheating and plagiarism among students who respond to pressure and stress by taking short cuts. Gunn bought a site license for Turnitin.com and about a third of all teachers use it.

Staff Stress: Staff stress was discussed at the start of the 2006/07 school year. The Gunn staff spent some time talking about school-savvy etiquette, expectations of meetings, dealing with parent complaints, working with colleagues and support personnel and handling differences of opinion among colleagues. These were reviewed again at the opening of the 2007/08 school year.

Also discussed and revised was the Mission Statement: The mission of Henry M. Gunn High School is to foster a community of creative thinkers who will acquire the knowledge, skills, values and integrity to:

- Be resilient, responsible, respectful, contributing citizens
- Lead rewarding lives which pursue personal excellence and life-long learning

It was also determined that Gunn's rotating block schedule works very well for most people and that there was no desire to change to a different schedule.

Parent Stress: Improve communication between home and school is always an issue. Spotlight is sponsored by the PTSA. There is also the Gunn Connection, a PTSA web site for emails information about all manner of things to parents who subscribe to this free service. There is also InClass, Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD)'s online classroom resource. Laptop computers are made available to any teachers thru a PTSA grant for any teacher agreeing to use InClass.

Area 4: Students of all races, ethnicities and genders will feel supported, challenged and included in the Gunn Community. 4 Tasks were developed to meet this goal:

Task 1

Reduce drug and alcohol use among Gunn students:

In April of 2006 the PTSA paid for and mailed home to every family a booklet about alcohol use and abuse by teens put together by the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office, SCC Health Department and the California Office of Traffic Safety. There is also a zero tolerance policy regarding drug and alcohol use at school and school events which is strictly enforced. A breath analyzer is used at dances to discourage student drinking at these events.

Task 2

Gunn High School will continue to support students of all races, ethnicities, genders and socio-economic status:

Gunn High school has been able to take two groups of approximately 65 students to diversity training retreat annually – one in the early fall and one in the spring from 2001-2007. Only one

group went in 2008. The program is effective in improving school climate and new teachers are strongly encouraged to attend. The District promoted and Gunn is part of the Not In Our Schools anti-hate campaign that was launched in the spring of 2006 following anti-gay incidents in the District and anti-gay graffiti appearing at Gunn. The Living Skills class includes discussion of race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic issues and ethical behaviors as do most English and social-studies classes.

Task 3

Provide a comprehensive selection of courses, programs and support systems that will allow students to access a wide variety of career paths:

The College and Career Center continues its efforts to make students aware of the various resources and programs available to them to enhance their knowledge of possible career paths. All sophomores attend an orientation and information session in the College and Career Center. The Center has purchased a new career search engine called Naviance that helps students identify their strengths, abilities and interests in regards to college choices and careers. Gunn also operates a Career Technical Education (CTE) program (10 units of CTE are required for graduation) that is specifically designed to give students insights into skill sets directly applicable to specific fields of employment.

Task 4

Create a school that is safe, clean and orderly:

Gunn High School has been a Green Business since 2005. The Gunn Green Team consisting of students, parents, teachers and administrators meet monthly to discuss better ways to reduce energy, water, and waste and cut down on traffic coming to the campus. In 2007 Gunn entered into an agreement with PAUSD that the school would receive half of all the energy and water savings that were made. In 2006/07 Gunn's share amounted to \$11,000. Students are actively encouraged to bike to school by offering prizes. School Resource Officers provided by the Police Department have provided valuable assistance in dealing with students involved in drug and alcohol incidents and other offenses including harassment.

School Safety: Another half-time campus supervisor has been added because of the growth in student numbers. A school goal has been to reduce the number of harassment related incidents among students over a two year period by 50%. A student centered cyber-bullying video was created and how to prevent and deal with it was the focus of a school wide assembly in the fall of 2008. There have been big efforts to beautify and clean up the campus. Several new flower gardens have been added and the entrance to the school has been enhanced with flowers, trees and shrubs. The campus is much more attractive and there are areas where teachers can take classes and a place where students can go outside to read.

Chapter III: Self-Study Process

Henry M. Gunn High School (ESLR's)
Expected School wide Learning Results

- Demonstrate knowledge of key concepts, principles, processes, facts, and skills in the disciplines of language arts, history-social science, mathematics, science, physical education, visual and performing arts, foreign language, career-vocational education, and health/practical living skills
- Effective communication through listening, speaking, and writing
- Strong research skills
- Ability to integrate knowledge among disciplines
- Reading with understanding
- Critical and creative thinking to solve problems
- Effective use of technology

Henry M. Gunn High School has developed a self-study consistent with the WASC criteria for this process.

Gunn High School utilized the involvement and representation of stakeholders of the school community who played an integral role in collaborating to create a self study reflective of what exists at the school as well as areas of strength and areas in need. This was done in a collaborative manner and process and participants expressed that they were involved, and that their comments and opinions were valued.

Focus groups worked to clarify and define what all students should know, understand and be able to do via ESLR's and academic standards. The ESLR's Gunn has chosen to emphasize were four out of the seven:

- Demonstrate knowledge of key concepts, principles, processes, facts, and skills in the disciplines of language arts, history-social science, mathematics, science, physical education, visual and performing arts, foreign language, career-vocational education, and health/practical living skills
- Effective communication through listening, speaking, and writing
- Ability to integrate knowledge among disciplines
- Critical and creative thinking to solve problems

Gunn High School gathered extensive performance and achievement data and has disaggregated this data so as to provide the opportunity to examine the achievement gaps of under-represented minority students. The self-study presents this data related to student performance and achievement along with analysis of data and related conclusions that were indicated by that analysis.

The Leadership Team personnel collaborated with focus groups and departments to study and review findings and assessment information related to the entire school program and its impact on student learning related to ESLR's, academic standards and WASC/CDE criteria. As a result of this study, discussion and analysis, their action plans items were selected that were representative of areas identified and agreed upon.

The Schoolwide Action Plan was developed by the Leadership Team and reviewed by focus groups to ensure its alignment with the school's areas of needs. A system of monitoring and accountability was also created and included as the action plan to ensure follow through. Each department is also responsible for creating their own action plan as

it relates to the school wide action plan. There is a need to insure that all staff members, including the part-time employees, are made aware of the single plan for student achievement in order to insure school-wide understanding and commitment.

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

Part A: What Currently Exists

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?

A Mission Statement and seven ESLRs were included in the Gunn High School Self-Study. The Mission Statement was developed by the entire staff. Eighty-three percent of the teachers polled strongly agreed or agreed that the mission statement was clear. This statement was not included in the parent or student survey.

The staff believes the students are aware of the ESLRs. All classrooms and public spaces have copies of the Mission Statement and ESLRs. Definitions of each ESLR are located in Chapter 2 of the Self-Study. Each department has aligned the ESLRs with content standards and sample lesson plans for each subject. The Mission Statement and ESLRs were reviewed during a Staff Development Day. A follow up committee continued to work during "Professional Development Thursday" time on the ideas gathered and presented from many stakeholders. Revised versions of both were adopted in the fall of 2007.

- 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?

Every year, Gunn High School reported their accomplishments to the Palo Alto Unified School Board. The Principal discussed how the prior goals were completed. She then introduced the current goals and the action plan developed to meet the new targets. Gathering this information involved many stakeholders on campus. Instructional Supervisors, teachers and administrators submitted their input and ideas to the Principal. These reports were pulled together into a single report that is approved by the School Site

Council and the Instructional Council before being presented to the Board of Education. The Single Plan for Student Achievement was posted on the school Web site and shared with the staff and parent communities.

Last year, the Palo Alto Unified School District developed a Strategic Plan. The new Superintendent, along with the aid of the internationally renowned management consulting firm, McKinsey and Company, surveyed parents, students, teachers, and administrators. Furthermore, they conducted interviews and convened focus groups to gather additional input. Many hours were spent discussing and formulating the new detailed and ambitious Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan was adopted by the Board of Education in May 2008.

- 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?

Multiple measures were used to identify the achievement gap of Latino and African American students at Gunn High School. Teachers, site administrators, and district office personnel began brainstorming causes and solutions to this problem. The following programs evolved from the discussions: AVID/Focus on Success, the Academic Center, Tutorial program, COLORS, and College Pathways Program. Gunn High School has many outstanding students on campus. Individual departments celebrate academic excellence with an awards ceremony and the school recognizes outstanding seniors at the end of the school year.

- 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?

Gunn's certificated faculty is very well educated. The majority hold a MA (or higher) degree. Most are fully credentialed and NCLB Highly Qualified. Approximately, one-third of the certificated staff are without CLAD and/or BCLAD.

Tenured teachers are formally evaluated once every two years by the Instructional Supervisors. New teachers are mentored by departmental Instructional Supervisors, BTSA coaches and Gunn's Professional Development Coordinator. A member of the Superintendent's cabinet also observes each probationary teacher prior to the tenure decision.

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

Gunn High School faculty has many opportunities for professional development. Beginning in 2003, all teachers are trained in Elements of Instruction (EOI). In 2004/5 Gunn's Instructional Council completed the Evaluation Guidelines linking Elements of

Instruction to the PAUSD Teaching Standards. In 2006, Marilyn Bates, the EOI Consultant, returned to work with Instructional Supervisors on observations, supervision and evaluation of teachers. In 2006, she trained teachers in EOI Level 2 and differentiated instruction. In 2007 she trained the Instructional Supervisors and Administrators on the Reinforcement and Refinement Phases of the observation conference.

“Professional Development Thursdays” are quarterly and allow the faculty to work on the Peer Observation and Interdisciplinary Collaborative. Peer Observation Collaborative allows teachers to observe and debrief each other’s lessons focusing on the use of Elements of Instruction (EOI) and Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement (TESA). In 2005, Stereotype Type Threat, Identity Safety, and Stressed out Students were introduced and continue to be addressed in staff meetings. In addition, teachers are encouraged to participate in out-of-district professional development. Some faculty attended the Foothill College’s “Earn While you Learn” program and a variety of conferences.

- 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?

Gunn High School has a systematic approach to data collection and analysis. The school collects standardized schoolwide assessment data on student performance. The school site refers to the standardized data in discussions focusing on programs and services. The school community has made connections between analysis of available data, the school’s vision for ESLRS and academic standards. From the report, it is unclear if schoolwide assessments of student learning are compared to standardized school site assessments (CAHSEE, API, SAT/ACT). Although some data about student success is gathered, the effort is not yet comprehensive.

Gunn has diligently worked to improve the physical plant. The school added a new Science Facility and Library in 2003. Most buildings were re-roofed and painted between 2000 and 2005. To the delight of staff and students, the Bat Cave has been converted to the Fish Bowl. In May 2007, a High School Task Force was developed to look ahead and plan for the projected growth in the District’s high school population. In addition, private donors and the Sports Boosters have raised money to build an all weather track, install lights on the football field and electronic scoreboards on the baseball and softball fields, and paid for the cost of architect’s drawings preparing to replace an old swimming pool. According to the parent and teachers survey, approximately 65% strongly agreed or agreed that the facilities are adequate to support students’ learning needs.

The teachers and students believe the school supplies and materials meet the needs of all students and are supported by appropriate funds. There is an adequate supply of textbooks, other resource materials, and technology. Student access to computers significantly increased through the addition of student-use computers in a variety of places on campus. Three mobile labs and most classrooms now have ceiling mounted projectors. The number of teachers with laptop computers has tripled. A wealth of

software tools has been made available to students, teacher, and administrators.

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.

- Gunn has highly-qualified teachers with a high percentage of graduate degrees.
- Teachers take on leadership roles as Instructional Supervisors, within departments and in Professional Development.
- Numerous Professional Development opportunities for teachers at Gunn High School.
- All teachers have been trained in Elements of Instruction (EOI).
- Clear Mission Statement
- The school has a functioning governance structure – ISs, TOSA, Admin. Team
- Clear connection between Board’s policies and vision and Gunn’s Mission Statement
- Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) was developed. Report on progress written and presented annually to IC, Site Council and Board of Education.
- ESLRs are developed and aligned with subjects
- Strong financial support from the Gunn community

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.

- Celebrate student achievement schoolwide
- Need to provide more frequent feedback on staff performance
- Need for facilities to keep pace with the increase of the student population.
- Utilize collaborative time to develop an interdisciplinary curriculum and use Professional Development days to educated mainstream teachers in effective teaching strategies for Special Ed. Students

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

- GHS Self-study
- WASC Progress Report
- Supporting Documents Course Catalog, Student Handbook, Master Schedule, ESLRS, Single Site Plan for Student Achievement,
- School and District Websites
- Focus Group Meetings
- Individual Stakeholder Interviews
- Classroom Visits and Campus Observations
- Schoolwide data analysis

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)?

Students at Gunn High School receive a rigorous academic curriculum aligned with district, state and national standards and state frameworks. All courses are consistent with the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results and meaningful to students. All students have access to a variety of curricular choices that will enable them to meet the graduation requirements. Students are able to take more courses with reduced stress due to a rotating schedule with in a seven-period day. Attending one less class on Tuesday and Thursday provides students additional time for tutoring. The rotation also allows that some classes are offered at various times during the day. All students have choices among a wide variety of classes in both core and in elective curriculum. All students are required to take at one year of career technical education course work for graduation. Curricular paths offered within academic departments provide opportunities to promote student success

The school offers Advanced Placement (AP) and honors courses. A majority of the students are enrolled in one or more AP classes in a typical year. Given that few freshman and sophomores take AP or Honors courses, this means that a majority of upper classmen are taking at least one or more AP and/or Honors courses. There has been a significant increase in the percentage (12% to 32%) of African American students enrolled in Honors and AP courses since 2004-2005. During that time the percentage of Hispanic/Latino students enrolled in Honors and AP courses increased from 27% to 32%. Enrollment of Asian students in these courses has been stable (62% to 65%) while White student enrollment has increased from 46% to 54%. The College Pathways program, which works with both students and parents, was instituted this year with the goal of increasing the numbers of under represented students who are both aware of and prepared to enroll in the rigors Honors and AP courses.

A wide variety of non-AP electives are available beyond the core curriculum. Students have the option of selecting those electives that best meet their individual interests, allowing them to pursue some subjects in depth. Examples of those courses are Biotech, Gunn Robotics, and Regional Occupation Program (ROP) courses; Auto, Journalism, Culinary Arts, Work Experience, Exploratory Experience and Interior Design. The school is planning to implement additional career pathway courses for 9th and 10th grades which will housed in the Industrial Art Building. A new strand in digital technology is designed as a four year pathway.

Students have the opportunity to gain global perspectives from classes in Contemporary World (required for graduation), Art, Music, Literature, and World Language. The Contemporary World class provides students with an expanded perspective by utilizing current news updates from the geographic areas where the events are taking place and analyzing how those events are interpreted in various regions of the world.

Although most students enroll in academic courses that prepare them for college eligibility there are alternative programs such as Opportunities Program, Alta Vista, and Terra Bella which provide standards based curriculum for students who need assistance in fulfilling core course requirements for graduation. Foothill Middle College, Independent Study, and Focus on Success (FOS) provide students with college preparatory curriculum.

Focus on Success contains some elements of AVID and has expanded from two classes to seven classes since its inception. Students spend a portion of the class period with direct instruction from the instructor and a portion is designated as study/tutorial time to facilitate individual student's needs. FOS teachers teach a full class load which includes one or periods per day of FOS. Class size is limited to 15 and there is currently a waiting list for both students to enroll and teachers to teach the class. Students must do an entry interview whether they are referred to or volunteer for the program do to academic, organization, or adjustment difficulties which require additional support. Elective credit is given and students may remain in the course as long as they need exists. Currently there are no state adopted intervention materials or classes that provide targeted strategies during the school day to address the needs of students who are performing at least two years below grade level. The committee did not find evidence of a consistent process for assessing the reading and comprehension level of struggling students.

Reduced class size is provided in 9th grade Math and 9th/10th grade English classes and the school is exploring the possibility of extending class size reduction to other 9th and 10th grade core classes. Courses are designed with attention to district, state and national standards in order to achieve Expected School wide Learning Results (ESLRs).

Teacher autonomy and creativity are valued as evidenced by teacher lesson plans and classroom observations. Most classes the committee observed displayed students who were actively engaged in learning with teachers using differing modalities and a variety of EOI strategies to support their efforts. Math and science have implemented pacing guides and based upon their analysis of student achievement data in an effort to help bridge the achievement gap. The committee concurs with the Self-Study finding for growth that the school continues to examine both content and workload consistency between and among all sections of the same course.

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?

All students have personal learning plans that are viewed as flexible blueprints that allow them to meet or exceed all academic standards and results in the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results. Students create the plan in 10th grade and review it with a counselor on a yearly basis. Assistance in improving student progress and success is offered through Mainstreaming/Inclusion in Special Education, increased enrollment in Focus on Success, and Tuesday Tutorials provided by the rotating schedule.

Students' learning styles, interests, and post-secondary goals are reflected in their personal learning plans, which guide the selection of their courses, their program interest, and their supporting co-curricular activities and experiences. Students have the flexibility to enroll in the appropriate level of class each year. Students receive schedules the week before school starts and can make necessary changes. 9th graders get introduced to school culture, environment via Link Crew and Freshmen Orientation. Efforts are made to accommodate student requests for program changes when their goals, needs, or interests change. Some core courses are offered during Summer School to students who need to repeat a class.

All students are encouraged to attend college after graduation and offered support to achieve this goal. Support is provided through counselor meetings, free ACT courses for Focus on Success, COLORS and College Pathways, Mock SAT tests given in the Academic Center, parent orientations to programs and college application process, the College Pathways Program, the College and Career Center, and the school database tracks the college/university each student attends.

Increased use of technology has been provided by InClass which allows teachers to post grades online where they can be accessed by students and parents. New computer labs aid in supporting student success. The web-based advising system, Naviance, is used by students and parents to conduct streamlined college searches based on academic standing and student interest.

The Library program enriches the classroom curriculum by providing for all students a wide range of print and electronic resources beyond the textbook which foster research and critical thinking skills. Those skills are required for research projects kept in department binders and the Research Paper Project.

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

Upon completion of the high school program, 97% of Henry M. Gunn High School students meet the graduation requirements. The staff monitors progress of students toward these requirements, ensuring student understanding of these expectations. A variety of support structures are provided to sustain the high graduation rate. Upon graduation students are prepared to choose from a variety of options that include college and/or post-high school technical preparation or employment. The Exploratory Experience program the school develops linkages with post-secondary institutions to encourage students of varying backgrounds to gain academic success in order to pursue higher education and professional career opportunities.

Focus on Success, Independent Study, Opportunities Program, and the Unit-shy program for seniors, Summer school opportunities, Alta Vista continuation school, and Foothill Middle College are made available for students when appropriate. A high percentage of students pass CAHSEE by their sophomore year. Staff regularly monitors students who have not passed the CAHSEE and offers them additional support services, including

afterschool CAHSEE prep programs. Counselors keep track of credits and graduation requirements with each student through annual meetings with their students.

Focus on Success provides assistance to an average of 200 students daily who need tutoring, computer access, a text book, or a simply a place to study. There is always staff support available to assist students with their needs and requests for help.

An extensive course catalogue, which is available both online and hard-copy, provides students with a list of necessary courses which include AP, Career-Voc Ed, ROP courses, and other electives to help them prepare for post-secondary education and career-technical preparation. Students are provided with several choices about level of college preparatory courses which they elect to take.

Continued investigation of school-to-work programs are linked to program partners (i.e. Veterans Hospital, El Cajon Restaurant), Work Experience, Exploratory Experience Programs, and the Internship Program.

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

- Alternative programs are available for students who are behind in credits and need assistance in fulfilling core course requirements
- A wide variety of academic electives are available for all students.
- The web-based advising system, Naviance, is used by students to conduct streamlined college searches based on academic standing and student interest.
- The Exploratory Experience Program allows students to develop career related relationships with job-shadowing and volunteering.
- Focus on Success utilizes some AVID strategies along with direct instruction to provide academic support for students.

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

- Develop a data-driven cycle of inquiry to support student academic performance.
- Continue school-parent communication regarding College and Career Center programs.
- Publicize the enrollment process for all AP classes.
- Continue exploring the expansion of career tech courses, especially for 9th and 10th grade students in order to provide additional career pathways in sciences and the arts.
- Support students to help pass the CAHSEE by their junior year.

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

- College enrollment statistics
- Course descriptions and course summaries
- Teacher lesson plans
- Guidance department summaries
- Research projects kept in department binders
- Research Paper Project
- Student enrollment in both AP and non-AP electives

CATEGORY C. STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: INSTRUCTION

- C1.** To what extent are all students involved in challenging learning experiences to achieve the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results?

There is a concerted effort at Gunn High School to insure that all students are involved in challenging learning experiences in order to achieve the academic standards and expected schoolwide learning results.

Teachers include the use of mobile tech labs in classrooms, LCD projectors are used in most classes. There is a new language lab; computer art projects are used in the Art Department, Computer application and programming courses are offered at Gunn HS. In Engineering and Biotech classes students are using a variety of computer technology during class and in science labs. There is use of DVDs in the Social Science Department, internet research and CD for information in Auto Technology; use of digital media labs in the Video Production and Advanced Journalism classes.

There are a variety of electives to offer challenging learning experiences (including new electives and career technology electives). Teachers and students reported a variety of elective classes that provide challenging learning experiences which included a list of classes: Environmental Science, Video Production, Advanced Broadcast Video production, Biotechnology, Computer programming & Applications, Engineering Tech, Auto Tech, Study Skills (Sp. Ed), and Astronomy.

Integrating knowledge between disciplines included cross-curriculum teaching for Cyrano de Bergerac between French & English class; English Department uses history, languages, theatre, music, and art into study for novels; English and Theatre class putting on performances of Shakespeare and Dramatic Lit.; American Studies class (English/History); creating power point presentations for classes in Computer Apps. Class; video production class creating videos for other classes; students film school events, lectures, and public service announcements; Engineering Tech focuses on professional communication in writing and speaking; use of math and computer applications to analyze data in science classes; path levels offered for math and science; five different languages taught; outside reading projects and current events in English/

History to incorporate reading in daily lives; high enrollment in advanced & elective math courses.

Gunn High School offers 21 sections of AP classes across the curricular areas of Social Science, Math, Performing Arts, English, and Science, and World Language. The majority of upper classmen take at least one or more AP/Honors courses. There has been a significant increase in the percent of African American students enrolled in Honors/AP courses since 2004/05 (20% increase); enrollment of white students has increased 8% over this 4 year period. Gunn students perform well on AP tests, i.e. 94% of all tests resulted in students earning 3 or above, resulting in receiving college credits; 51 % of scores were top scores of five giving evidence that students were well prepared for these examinations. Three quarters of Gunn graduating students scored three or higher on one or more AP test during their high school years. Most of Gunn students take one or more standardized test for college admission purposes (SAT, ACT & SAT subject tests). The average Verbal, Math, and Writing SAT scores are more than 150 points above the national & California averages. Gunn's tenth grade students take the ERB Writing Assessment Program which measures student performance against students in similar high schools; 74% of test takers performed above grade level in 2007/08 as compared to 39% in 2002/03.

Gunn offers Focus on Success Program to help students be successful and improve their student performance in their classes: In 2007 there were 7 sections supporting a total of 141 students during the year in the Focus On Success Program.

Research Paper Committee created a standardized format for research papers. Departments represented were: Science, Social Studies, English, Special Education and the librarian was represented on the committee.

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?

Most Gunn teachers use the District's online communication tool to post class notes, homework, grades, and communicate with students and parents. There are student computers in every classroom and teachers use and are encouraged to use technology in the classroom to engage students in learning. There has been a significant increase in student access to computers (Academic Center, library, Focus on Success Program, and classrooms). Almost every classroom has a ceiling mounted projector or has access to projectors on carts to use for instruction. The number of teachers using laptops for instruction has tripled since 2002/03. There is a variety of computer software & subscription tools that are used by teachers (Turnitin.com, United Streaming, Naviance, & PLATO). There is a concern by parents that they would like the school to devise a method of better communicating student grades to parents. There has also been some conversation and discussion with the District Office regarding a new grade reporting system to be used within the district.

The Science Department uses PowerPoint presentations and video streaming. The Math Department has incorporated geometric sketchpad activities in Algebra, geometry, trig, and calculus, to address students who learn best through visual channels. The Science Department is equipped with new demonstration equipment, probe ware, computers, and projectors that allow teachers to access and use exciting materials available via the Internet. Science has been focusing on differentiating instruction through Closure and Active Participation strategies (challenge questions, grouping students, and group summaries)

The English Department shares “Limelight Lessons” at each Dept meeting and shares grading rubrics. The English Department encourages full student participation in discussions, projects, presentation, and building portfolios. They discuss multiple samples of student work to further support consistency. The English Department focuses on the components of a student’s ability to read and think critically; they encourage full student participation in discussions, projects, & presentations.

The Math Department has reviewed their pacing guides to better reflect the recently adopted textbooks. Common assessments were written and reviewed by teachers teaching Geometry/Algebra 2, Alg2/TrigH, Trig/Analytic, Intro to Analysis & Calculus and Analysis H. Adjustments have been made in the remedial programs for students struggling with Algebra 1.

World Languages Department continues to develop common rubrics and assessments for oral and written work. They use generic rubrics for portfolio projects for all languages & have developed levels 1-4 for portfolio projects. World Language teachers meet weekly or bi-weekly to share teaching strategies, projects, and tests.

There is collaboration between Departments to address common best practices and the use of a variety of teaching strategies. Teachers are required to attend Elements of Instruction, (EOI), level 1 which focuses on classroom competencies for effective teachers. Instructional Supervisors have worked with a consultant to implement differentiation of instruction. EOI is the teaching model at Gunn HS. EOI has made staff aware of the need to differentiate instruction, assessment, and offer students a variety of ways to demonstrate mastery of material (e.g., Group projects, discussion, debate, role-playing, PowerPoint presentations, video, podcasting, journaling, and web-based research).

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

- Departments have worked to develop common assessments & best practices to ensure consistency among teachers.
- Effective use of Technology-assisted learning across curricular areas.
- Use of a wide variety of electives to offer challenging learning experiences
- Teachers collaborate to share instructional strategies, teaching methodologies, and integrate knowledge between Departments

- Gunn HS offers a number of AP courses to all students across the curricular areas
- Gunn HS offers special programs to support student learning, e.g. Focus on Success, Special Education, Tuesday Tutoring, and the Academic Center

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

- Find more effective ways to better communicate student progress to parents
- Continue to find ways to make learning more relevant to students & see connections between the things they are learning in connection with the outside world
- Students and staff need to continue to learn how to use computer software tools effectively in the area of instruction.
- Continue to support new and part-time teachers in utilizing a variety of teaching strategies and modalities through Instructional Supervisors, department members, and EOI.

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

- Visiting Committee Observations
- Focus Group Meetings
- Gunn High School WASC Self Study
- Staff Interviews
-

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?

Gunn High School regards assessment as providing important feedback information and has regular formal assessment procedures in place that focus on systematic improvement in student performance relative to academic standards and learning results. This includes disaggregation of student data by subgroups in CST and CAHSEE exams.

CST scores and CAHSEE scores are disaggregated and used to identify achievement gaps. Although the number is low, graduation and dropout rates are not disaggregated for analysis. It is not clear how minority and at-risk students are assessed for receiving intervention that might address the achievement gap. It is not clear whether students with

academic needs are placed only by quarterly course grades or by achievement levels based on multiple assessments.

The School posts the School Accountability Report Card (SARC) and the school profile on the school's web site every year. Gunn High School also uses standard testing means to assess its students (Writing Assessments, CAHSEE, STAR, AP testing and SAT/ACT scores). These assessment results are made available to all stakeholders.

Gunn High School also uses InClass, Blackboard Technology, for creating online learning communities to share information; post assignments, assess student work and to allow access for parents to view student grades. Eighty percent of the teachers use InClass to some degree. Many teachers use other grade-posting programs that can then get uploaded into the InClass program. There is a committee made up of district officials and site administrators which is in the final stages of selecting a new Student Data Management System that is more user-friendly and will be more accessible by staff, students and community at large. When this program is selected, the school will need to have staff development in order to train all shareholders in its use and accessibility.

Warning notices are sent home if a student receives a grade of C- or below and grades are sent home quarterly. Some parents expressed that they would like to have notification sent home before the student reaches a C- but some teachers expressed a philosophical objection that this would cause more student stress by placing even more emphasis on grades rather than the quality of learning in the classroom. Other parents and some teachers would like to consider a six-week grading period rather than a nine-week grading period.

Interventions available for students that are under performing include a Tuesday Tutorial Hour in which students are referred by instructors to attend an after-school (early release) program to help them in their area of concern. Attendance is not required, but the program data shows high attendance numbers in Math, Science and World Languages. The Academic Center (AC) is a central area where students may go during a prep period that they may have. It is estimated that over 400 students visit the Academic Center daily. They may take advantage of help from volunteer tutors from the community and from their peers. Success of this program is measured by attendance levels and observation of students on task. Many students also merge into the library from the Academic Center for study and research.

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

Gunn HS teachers employ a variety of strategies to evaluate student learning. They use portfolios, essays, oral presentations, reports, discussions and debates as well as standard tests. Turnitin.com is a tool used to check for student plagiarism, which is also accessible by the students. All Certificated Staff are trained in Elements of Instruction (EOI) principles. These skills are utilized to meet the needs of students and are based on both formal and informal assessments. Instructors are evaluated on the effective use of these Elements of Instruction through formal evaluations performed by the Instructional Supervisors on campus.

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

Student data, including assessment of student performance relative to academic standards is utilized. The school employs a web-based program called CRUNCHER that analyzes school data through the District Office. Some teachers make efforts to use this assessment data in their curricular and instructional program in order to enhance the student learning processes. The District trains Administrators and Instructional Supervisors in the use of CRUNCHER, however the school wishes to improve professional development aimed at training and informing all teachers on this data analysis process. Students are encouraged to consider their assessment results in relation to their personal learning plans.

Teachers perform both summative and formative assessment strategies to enhance their lesson planning and instruction. The Elements of Instruction (EOI) principles are used to modify lesson plans based on assessment results. Students at Gunn High School are involved in self and peer reviews of essays, projects and reports, and are allowed to make reflective evaluations of their own work and the work of others. Rubrics are provided to the students for this evaluative process. Instructors felt that this area that could receive further attention.

Grants have provided some Science classes and Social Studies classes with an Individual Audience Response System (Clickers). This system allows students to respond anonymously to prepared questions or surveys by instructors that are then projected for classroom viewing. This is another informative means of assessment that the teachers use to design their lesson plans and instructional goals.

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 school wide learning results?

Gunn High School establishes levels of accomplishment for the academic standards and the Expected School-wide Learning Results and assesses student progress through school-wide instruments such as STAR/CST and CAHSEE. These tools give a broad view of how students and subgroups are performing and making progress through their high school term. They examine a variety of indicators to assess student learning, from individual class data, data from courses or subject areas and also from dropout and college entrance rates.

The school reports its data analysis to a wide variety of shareholder groups, including via the School Accountability Report Card (SARC). Gunn HS sends home warning notices for students with a grade of C- or below. They also send home quarterly grades. Gunn employs its Guidance Counselors to follow student progress, and individual departments are responsible for making sure the ESLRs are covered in a thorough manner, with periodic evaluations by Instructional Supervisors. Some support systems are in place to monitor students and give extra help to them as they need it (Tuesday Tutorials, Academic Center, 504 plans and IEP's). Further support systems include Student Support Teams (SST), student/parent/teacher conferences and Study Skills classes.

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

Teachers and administrators analyze data to modify Gunn HS programs based on students' needs. They have incorporated an expanded elective program as a result of this analysis and have also increased access to AP programs. The school's Master Schedule is built on student requests and staff input. Focus on Success (FOS) is a program implemented to help students learn test-taking strategies, complete homework, organize notes and binders and manage time. Entrance into this program is based on recommendations by counselors, teachers and peers. Students go through an interview process to gain entrance into Focus on Success. There are currently seven sections of FOS with approximately fifteen students in each section. Focus on Success is a skills development and support program and does include a reading intervention component. There are ongoing discussions about how to increase reading skills in low-performing students, and the program would benefit from an intensive remedial program to help students who are struggling with reading skills. Discussions on the assessment of below-basic students in reading and math for placement into intensive, measurable, intervention programs would be beneficial.

A College Pathways Program that supports African-American, Latino, and/or below-basic students was implemented based partly on socio-economic situations; partly on whether the student is the first member of the family on track for college attendance, and partly on whether the student is passing college preparatory course work. The program helps these students access college preparatory classes and even some AP courses. Some students are recommended for College Pathways at the middle school level. New students who fit the profile are added to the College Pathways program.

Support systems based on student need have been put into place, such as an Academic Center for tutoring and student study and SAT/ACT preparatory classes. Various interventions exist based on student need such as Student Study Teams, Individual Education Programs, and 504 Plans. Student surveys (Student Opinion Inventory, Social Norms Survey) are used and analyzed to modify resources at the school.

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.

- The school uses standard state testing tools such as STAR, CAHSEE, SAT/ACT, AP and local assessment tools. The results are then posted on the School Accountability Report Card (SARC) and posted on the school web site.
- Gunn High School employs a variety of strategies to assess the students based on Elements of Instruction (EOI) principles.
- Warning notices are used when a student's grade falls to a C- or below.
- Teachers and Administrators analyze data to modify school programs.

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

- Teachers could benefit from additional professional development aimed at data analysis and access to the “Cruncher”. Teachers unfamiliar with CRUNCHER would benefit from learning how to use the results to design their lesson plans, inform instruction and help in identifying areas of student need.
- Gunn High School would benefit from exploring a more focused form of assessment (or multiple assessments) of student achievement for students who perform below basic in reading and math skills.

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

- Visiting Committee Observations
- Focus Group Meetings
- Gunn High School WASC Self Study
- Staff Interviews

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?

The school leadership employs a variety of strategies to encourage parental and community involvement. The Green Team, Stressed Out Student Committee (SOS), WASC, Drug and Alcohol Committee, High School Task Force, Textbook Adoption Committee, and School Site Council are all standing committees consisting of parents, students, teachers, community members and administrators. Parents and community members are provided additional opportunities to contribute and connect with Henry M. Gunn High School through membership in various clubs and organizations (e.g. LGBTQ Parents, COLORS, and Booster Clubs).

Gunn High School strives to connect with all parents and community members using a variety of methods and media. Summer mailings are sent home in Spanish and English, the school marquee is used to communicate dates and times of events, a Parent Advisory Committee communicates with ELL parents, teachers use individual web-sites, and special nights are organized to inform incoming middle school parents of extracurricular opportunities for their students.

New teachers are mentored, through BTSA, to improve their communication skills with parents, PTA events including parent lectures are scheduled throughout the school year, and both Freshman Parent Night and BSA/Latino Parent outreach are used to keep parents informed of school issues. A mass dialing system is used to inform parents of absences and special events, and letters are sent home to address any attendance issues.

Gunn has connected with several outside community resources to improve their educational program. Students are provided with community service opportunities, Stanford Medical Center has partnered with the school to provide a Med. School shadowing program, and Henry Gunn also works with Stanford to provide support for their special education students. Gunn students are provided with work experience opportunities in the community, and students can take advantage of free Adolescent Counseling Service on site. Community drug and alcohol services are also offered to students, whether referred by the school psychologist, teacher, parent or counselor. The Child & Adolescent Center (CHAC) in Mountain View is a resource Gunn can access if additional services are needed.

Gunn parents are encourage to participate in school-wide events including Portfolio Night for the parents of World Language students, International and Career weeks, proctoring the American Math competition, and volunteering as guest speakers in venues like Living Skills and Focus on Success. Parents are also given the information necessary to make educational decisions for their student through numerous parent-teacher conferences, and informational programs such as the Guidance Office's College Nights, and at Back-to-School Night. Gunn parents are also encouraged to be part of the educational process on campus by volunteering for tutoring programs, helping with Special Education and the Visual Arts, and sharing their work/career experience with students through the Careers Professional Program.

Students at Gunn benefit from the required Livings Skills curriculum, which can be taken during at anytime during a student's high school career. Students are also given the opportunity to establish school connections by participating in various programs and activities (e.g. Freshman Orientation, College Fair, the Opportunities Program, Camp Everytown, and the Job Fair).

In recognition of the need to streamline communication and make it more personal; Gunn High School is planning to update the school web-site to make it more user-friendly; provide a master calendar to parents that includes events and information; provide more opportunities for parent conferences; increase written communications sent home; increase the use of EdConnect to enhance dissemination of information; provide more parent meetings and communications in multiple languages, and encourage more families to subscribe to Gunn Connection.

Gunn has also identified the need to provide more opportunities for parent forums and continue their College Pathways Program. The lack of diversity seen within Gunn's parent volunteer network has pressed the school to look for ways to reach out to parents of underrepresented groups and hire more personnel to help translate communications into other languages. Gunn has also recognized the need to improve student transition from Middle School to High School and is exploring the possibility of scheduling transition meetings at feeder schools to help ease parent concerns.

To improve student achievement, Gunn has identified the need to provide an opportunity for departments to collaborate across the curriculum and within their own discipline.

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

The overall physical appearance of Henry M. Gunn High School is a clear reflection of the pride and ownership of all members of the school community. There is a friendly and inviting culture at the school and the school's environment is one characterized by maturity and respectful conduct of its students. Henry Gunn strives to promote a clean and environmentally friendly campus. Students are encouraged to recycle, a Gunn Beautification Day is scheduled annually, and campus beautification serves as a disciplinary measure for minor school infractions. In addition, the Maintenance Department takes pride in keeping a clean campus, and goes above and beyond in their efforts to make the Gunn campus attractive and visually appealing.

School safety is a priority for Gunn High School. Campus supervisors are provided carts to cover the campus and communicate frequently on a walkie-talkie system. A Student Resource Officer provided by the Palo Alto Police Department is available to the middle and high schools in the District and safety drills, including fire and lock down procedures are scheduled throughout the year. All classrooms are equipped with a fire extinguisher and a first aid kit, and several staff members are certified in first aid and CPR.

Gunn maintains an orderly school by employing clear and concise expectations for their students, and communicates those expectations and rules through individual teacher guidelines, and a clearly written student handbook. Daily announcements and the school bulletin provide students and staff with important information that helps the school run smoothly and efficiently. A Health Technician updates all stakeholders on any health related issues, and provides students with individual help when necessary.

The culture at Gunn High School is one characterized by trust and emotional safety. Camp Everytown provides diversity training for all students, The Every 15 Minutes Program sends a strong message about the dangers of driving under the influence, and Not In Our Schools Week is designed to help students develop a sense of understanding, compassion, and acceptance for one another. Gunn also instills a climate of trust by embracing a policy of no random locker searches, choosing not to install and use metal detectors on campus, and maintaining an open campus. Junior and senior students are given the option of scheduling a "prep period." Many students take advantage of this free period to seek help from instructors, work on assignments, make up test and quizzes, and to sit in on classes they may have missed as a result of absences, and extracurricular and co-curricular activities.

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?

Gunn's school culture is characterized by staff professionalism and high expectations for all students. A comprehensive teacher evaluation process is used to help staff increase student achievement. Instructional Supervisors act as coaches and formal evaluators in their content areas. Instructional Supervisors also work closely with administration on summative evaluations and professional development activities. In addition, teachers are required to develop course evaluations students complete at the end of the first semester. The Instructional Council (IC) is responsible for curriculum, instruction and all school policies and procedures. It meets every two weeks. Tenure standards are used to develop

and assist probationary teachers.

Gunn communicates high expectations for all students by ensuring NCLB compliance, informing students and parents of graduation and CSU/UC requirements, clearly stated objectives on teacher syllabi, and multiple AP and Honors course offerings. All students create a 4-year plan with their counselor, and the College and Career Center provides support for students researching post-secondary options. Gunn High School has also created a culture of continuous improvement through building renovations and technology upgrades, as well as a focused professional development plan consisting of biweekly activities, peer observations, and BTSA support for beginning teachers.

Gunn strives to create a safe and drug free community through implementation of a no hazing policy, scheduling anti-drug and alcohol assemblies, providing a Living Skills curriculum, and using a Social Norm Survey to identify school culture and climate issues that need to be address. Precautions are taken at school activities to ensure they are alcohol and drug free (i.e., breathalyzers at dances) to ensure a safe environment for all students.

While Henry M. Gunn is proud of their school culture and climate, they have identified some areas for growth and improvement. Gunn realizes that school safety demands all campus visitors be accounted for; so they are looking for procedures to provide more visible visitor ID, create a more accurate and dependable school sign-in policy, and communicate to the community campus facilities are off limits during the school day. There is also a need for classroom doors that can be locked from the inside and outside to ensure student safety during lock down procedures. Gunn has also identified a need for more lighting in certain areas on campus, and the need to increase janitorial staffing to ensure the campus is kept clean throughout the school day. Student needs suggest increasing the counseling and health staff to ease the caseload of current staff members, and providing students with "Safe Rooms" if they feel harassed, intimidated, or are suffering from emotional distress. Gunn has also identified a need for all classrooms to be equipped with telephones. Finally, there is a need to continue to provide professional development opportunities and collaboration opportunities for the instructional staff. This includes a focused professional development plan designed to meet teacher needs, and time within the schedule for teachers to collaborate.

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

Every student enrolled at Henry M. Gunn High School benefits from the guidance and services of instructional and counseling staffs that provide class scheduling assistance, college and career counseling, and to an extent, support regarding personal/emotional issues. Students create 4 -year plans during their freshman year to pursue their academic goals with the assistance of their counselor, and parent-teacher conferences are held as needed. Sophomores are given a tour of the College and Career Center to assist their post-secondary planning, and teachers adhere to SST, IEP, and 504 student accommodations and modifications. Differentiated instruction is employed across the campus to ensure all students are exposed to a rigorous curriculum and students are encouraged to participate in weekly tutorial sessions. In addition, counselors take

advantage of professional development opportunities at the district office, as well as annual conferences, to meet the needs of all Gunn students. The guidance department has developed an impressive timeline of events, classroom visits, parent information nights, as well as scheduling individual meetings with students, to ensure that all stakeholders are well informed regarding post-secondary educational options.

Students at risk academically are identified and placed in programs like Focus on Success to help them develop the academic skills necessary to be successful at Gunn and pursue college and career opportunities. COLORS and College Pathways have been developed to address concerns about the gap in learning that exists among the major subgroups and minority students. Students that fail to adjust to the complexities of a comprehensive school site can take advantage of alternative education programs via the Independent Study Program, an Opportunity Class, or enrolling in one of two alternative education schools. The Academic Center is available to all students as a place to study, an opportunity to receive tutoring, and a place to work collaboratively with their peers. Students in danger of not passing CAHSEE are offered after school programs to prepare them for the test.

A full time nurse and health office provide for student health needs, and a Speech Therapist and School Psychologist, along with case managers, serve the educational needs of Gunn's students with disabilities. Adult and peer tutors are available to assist students in the Academic Center, as well as providing home tutoring. Finally, students are provided with multiple learning opportunities outside the classroom through course related field trips.

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?

Gunn students are provided access to activities and opportunities on site and in the community. Livings Skills includes a 15-hour community service component, physically challenged students are given the opportunity to staff the Gunn Cafe', and there are numerous opportunities for students to be involved in leadership activities. Service trips, such as the Tijuana Trip, provide students with the experience of volunteering, and a wide variety of service and interest clubs are offered. ROP, electives, Voc Ed classes, Work Experience, Independent Study, and Modified Internships are all offered to meet different student needs. Henry Gunn offers extensive co-curricular and extracurricular programs, as well as providing social venues for their students (rallies, dances, assemblies, etc.). Student leadership opportunities, such as the Student Executive Council, a seat on the School Board, and seats on various community boards are provided by the school, the district, and surrounding community.

Students and families have access to school and community-based support services through a professional and caring staff (teachers and administrators, coaches, aids, guest speakers from the community, Link Crew, support staff on campus, and the Jewish Community Center).

Some areas identified for growth include increasing the amount of Career Technical Education offerings through articulation with the Regional Occupational Center and the Opportunities Industrialization Center. Gunn would like to increase counseling services offered to students by developing more staff to become "student advisors." There is also

a need to help students feel connected to school, perhaps through intramural programs, and to increase student knowledge/awareness of access to all classes and course offerings, updating the Gunn webpage, and allowing students to preview elective programs. Finally, students have identified a need to create a process (in addition to student leadership) that will allow them to discuss school-wide issues with administration and provide a forum for their opinions to be heard, as they believe they are not involved in the school's decision making process.

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

- Henry Gunn High School provides a myriad of support programs for its students.
- Individual four-year plans are developed to help students focus on post-secondary options.
- All stakeholders report feelings of safety and take pride in the appearance of their school.
- A dedicated, compassionate school staff has created a culture of caring.
- There is much focus on the affective and cognitive domain of their students.
- There are many avenues for parents to participate in the school community.
- Students are provided with different avenues to connect to school and community.

Key issues for School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth

- Continue to expand communication and increase parental access to student/school information from home.
- Ensure that collaborative time for teachers is extended throughout the school year.
- Continue the use of current tutorial program.
- Develop an outreach program to recruit parents from diverse underrepresented groups.
- Continue and expand transition programs for middle school parents and their students.
- Develop a venue for students to give administration input and discuss campus and school culture issues, and then report back to the student body (e.g. Student Sounding Board).
- Research safety options concerning classroom security during lockdown procedures.
- Continued development of support programs designed to close the achievement gap among the major subgroups and minority students.

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.

General Comments:

The staff at Gunn High School is commended for their positive attitude concerning this accreditation visit. 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 site office personnel and the Vice- Principals provided assistance and resources needed by the visiting committee. The Visiting Committee was delighted with the students who were congenial and appreciative of the efforts the staff makes to improve the quality of educational opportunities available to them. However, the students are for a variety of reasons believe they are not totally involved in the decision making of the school. We are also appreciative of the Superintendent, the School Board members, and his district administrators for their openness and time spent with the Visiting Committee explaining and clarifying the district support and its relationships with Gunn High School and its learning community.

The Visiting Committee through a process of review of the self-study, meetings with the Focus Groups, observations and interviews has developed several major areas of strength that have schoolwide impact in regard to the enhancement of student learning. These are included in this section along with identified critical areas of follow-up. The Visiting Committee identified six schoolwide key issues, two of which are previously identified both by Gunn High School and the 2003 WASC Visiting Committee. These six key issues need to be followed through in the Schoolwide Actions Plan. The staff needs to update their schoolwide action plan prior to May 31, 2009. The up dated action plan will need to be sent to WASC and implemented by the staff.

Schoolwide Areas of Strength

1. The Academic Center
2. Course evaluations by students which give feedback to teachers, Instructional Supervisors, and Administrators so as to drive instruction
3. Focus on Success & Tutorial Tuesday
4. New teacher support
5. The organizational structure of the school
6. The friendly culture & climate of the school
7. The support of the community in insuring that Gunn High School has the facilities and resources to meet its growing needs

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-Up (School wide Action Plan items)

1. School wide recognition of individual student achievement (A-2)
2. Closing the achievement gap for Hispanic & African American students (A-1,2,3 – # B-1,2))
3. Disproportionate numbers of Hispanic & African American students in Special Education. (A-1,2,3)
4. Students need to be involved in the decision making of the school (C-3)
5. Instructional Supervisors will need to train departments in use of “Cruncher” and any new grade reporting system which is elected for use at Gunn High School (E-1)
6. Gunn High School would benefit from exploring a more focused form of assessment (or multiple assessments) of student achievement for at-risk students who perform below basic in reading and math skills. (E-1 & E-2)

Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement

The school has identified 5 action plan items to address issues coming out of the self-study.

1. To acknowledge and honor the diversity of the Gunn community and provide students with effective choices:
 - Task A-1: Explore introduction of new courses and programs based on student needs
 - Task A-2: Provide support for students in existing and new programs
 - Task A-3: Involve and educate parents of students needing support
2. To maintain and encourage instructional practices that ensure student success:
 - Task B-1: Encourage teacher collaboration and sharing of best practices
 - Task B-2: Increase variety of instructional techniques
3. To maintain a sense of community by streamlining communications, facilitating transitions, and reaching out to those not yet connected:
 - Task C-1: Streamline communications with parents, faculty and community
 - Task C-2: Improve transitions from middle to high school, between grades in high school and pos high school.
 - Task C-3: maintain a sense of community and connections for students, teachers and parents as we grow
 - Task C-4: Improve delivery of counseling and college/career services

4. To maintain academic excellence and a sense of community during a period of growth.
 - Task D-1: Work with DLM architects and District Office to develop a site plan using bond money that will meet Gunn's needs
 - Task D-2: As we continue to grow, we will maintain a sense of community and connectedness
 - Task D-3: Attract, retain and develop highly qualified staff to maintain academic excellence and support new and existing programs.
5. To use data to inform instruction and improve student performance
 - Task E-1: Use data more effectively
 - Task E-2: Provide multiple pathways for students to demonstrate content mastery in all subjects and to reflect on their growth and progress as learners.

The action plan seems feasible within the school's structure. Much of the work will occur within the school's current leadership structure without overtaxing anyone particular resource. It appears that there is school wide support and commitment to these five areas. The School's Leadership Team should be a significant factor in supporting the achievement of these five areas. The faculty and administration's dedication to maintaining the school's climate and culture, and raising student achievement is a strong factor for the continued success of Gunn High School. Their commitment to improvement and maintaining their high standards of excellence is to be commended.

Striving for Hispanic and African American students to close the achievement gap and addressing the disproportionate numbers of Hispanic & African American students in Special Education will require the total support of the district, faculty, students and parents. This is a continuation of recommendations from the previous self-study.

The tasks aimed at maintaining and improving the current programs, new courses and programs based on student needs will hopefully assist all students to reach this goal of ensuring student success. The data provided during the self-study and the past 2003 WASC self-study and recommendations indicates that the school is aware of the achievement gap and will be searching for new ways to support students and parents in improving student performance. Area number 5 in the school wide plan is recognition of the use and understanding of data for the improvement of instructional practices, student success and to provide support for underachieving students.

Communication between home and school can be particular challenging, especially in this day and age of instant communication. Gunn High parents want to be notified of their student's progress as soon as possible and Gunn High School is to be commended for attempting to reach out to their parents along with a strong PTA who monthly sends out information to each parent. The Gunn High community is strong and very supportive of their school. Bond measures have been passed and booster clubs have been formed to insure that the school has excellent facilities and has ample room for growth. Other

measures in this area will need to include school wide recognition of student achievement. Different departments and programs recognize their group of students and their achievements but in regards to whole school recognition that process is lacking. Students do not believe that they are a part of the decision making of the school and in a large school like Gunn students need to identify and be a part of the entire school not just an individual department or program.

The Visiting Committee is confident that the six critical areas for follow up will be met based on the tasks enumerated in the school wide action plan. There is included in the school wide action plan reasonable timelines, sufficient resources, assessment methods, and reporting methods to ensure the feasibility of achievement of the school wide plan. Plus each department has its own action plan based on the school wide action addressing each of the five areas.