



Chapter 4 SCHOOL CULTURE

Question #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?

Strengths	Evidence
1. Parents are involved in school committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Green Team, SOS, WASC, Drug and Alcohol Committee, High School Task Force, textbook adoption, Site Council ▪ WASC, PADAC, SST, SARB process to involve parents ▪ Different parent networks organized to help parents feel connected (i.e. LGBTQ parents, Parents of Color) ▪ Booster Clubs & Sports Awards nights
2. Communication with parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Summer mailings (in Spanish and English), school marquee, newsletters and emails sent home regularly, Gunn website, <i>The Oracle</i> ▪ Rick Jacobs (ELL teacher) has a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) issued by the state of California ▪ Teacher Webpages ▪ PTA events & parent lectures ▪ Graduates come back to speak with parents ▪ Gunn Sports info. night for incoming middle school parents ▪ BTSA program works with new teachers to improve parent communication ▪ Attendance dialer that calls parents and attendance letters sent home ▪ Freshman parent night, BSA/Latino parent outreach to keep parents informed ▪ Nurse works with home/school transitions ▪ Parent Education nights
3. Connection with several outside resources within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child & Adolescent Center (CHAC) in Mountain View ▪ Stanford Med. School 101 shadowing program ▪ Community Service Opportunities ▪ Career Exploratory programs ▪ Work Experience program ▪ Agreement with Stanford to help Special Ed. Students ▪ Adolescent Counseling Services (ACS) and ASAT (Drug/Alcohol Services). School psychologist refers students to outside professionals with 3 free visits ▪ Journalism students collaborate with students from other schools ▪ Palo Alto City Library collaboration with PAUSD ▪ Kepler's Bookstore collaboration with Gunn's Library
4. Parent involvement and support in school events and organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Portfolio night for parents of World Language students ▪ International & Career Weeks ▪ American Math Competition proctoring ▪ Parent volunteer network (e.g. parent chaperones, Service Day) ▪ PIE (Parents in Education) ▪ Living Skills and Focus on Success guest speakers; College & Career Center volunteers and presenters
5. Parent involvement in making educational decisions for their students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent-teacher conferences ▪ College Pathways ▪ Guidance Office nights for parents about college

5. Parent involvement in making educational decisions for their students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent-teacher conferences ▪ College Pathways ▪ Guidance Office nights for parents about college ▪ Back-to-school night ▪ Parent surveys ▪ IEPs (Individualized Educational Plans)
6. Encourage parents and community members to be on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tutors for Focus on Success and Academic Center ▪ Parent volunteers for Special Ed and Visual/Performing Arts program ▪ Career Professionals speaking in work experience
7. District-wide parent involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local community centers display student art
8. Current curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Living skills taught in several classes
9. Help a diverse set of students connect more with Gunn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Freshman orientation ▪ Ed connect ▪ College Fair

Areas of Growth	Possible Solutions
1. Streamline Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A more personal touch in communication ▪ Filtering important information being delivered to parents through internet ▪ Help ALL parents feel connected to Gunn (Connect to parents coming from East Palo Alto-Voluntary Transfer Program) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update Gunn Web page with new information and provide appropriate/designate staff to maintain the site; contain current information and make it easier to navigate; provide a search box to allow users to search the site quickly ▪ Provide a main calendar to parents of events, information, etc. ▪ Keep communication personal for parents: Parent conferences, notes sent home, phone calls, Back to School night second semester ▪ Use EdConnect to contact parents ▪ Have meetings in multiple languages ▪ Have more families subscribe to Gunn Connection <p>The following items currently exist, however not all staff were aware of these resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have subscriptions to Gunn Spotlight for parents that are interested ▪ Written communication in multiple languages; ask bilingual students/parents to help with process of translating ▪ Provide a categorized FAQ, and organizational chart (who to go to with your questions) ▪ Identify parents that do not have access to internet ▪ Have parent information night before freshman orientation ▪ Guidebooks that guide parents through system of Gunn
2. Written communication sent to parents in more languages for parents not speaking English or Spanish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hire more personnel for translating into other languages ▪ Parent forums: Q and A sessions in small groups
3. Need a system to target/identify parents who do not understand Gunn's system (i.e. schedules, academic success, etc.) and provide them assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update the Gunn website to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assistance available through video ▪ Add a "Frequently Asked Questions" section ▪ Gunn's graduation requirements clearly stated
4. Improve communication to parents of students that fall into the "achievement gap"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue College Pathways
5. Continue to improve transition from Middle School to High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have transition meetings at the middle schools to help parents feel less intimidated about high school
6. Lack of diversity within the parent volunteer network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reach out to these parents to feel more connected; Diversity from within the parent volunteer network
7. Continue to reach out to students & parents who are not connected to internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a buddy system to help parents to feel connected ▪ Lack of internet, iConnect district program could grow ▪ Parent meetings for culturally diverse group
8. Provide an opportunity for departments to share and collaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ During provided department meeting time, allow teachers to meet with other teachers (intra/inter-department) to encourage collaboration
9. Helping parents advocate for their students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Help diverse parents advocate for their students in a balanced fashion
10. Educate parents on course selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better inform parents of class selection process by offering multimedia examples (i.e. video of auto class)
11. Continue to build current curriculum to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Voter registration, checkbook balancing, paying rent, etc. (i.e. Independent Living

integrate life skills

Curriculum, Work Experience Curriculum)

Question #E2:

To what extent is the school a safe, clean and orderly place that nurtures learning? To what extent is the culture of the school characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement?

Strengths	Evidence
1. Gunn is a safe school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Campus supervisors and carts to provide mobility; Campus walkie-talkie system; Use of campus PA system; Student resource officer ▪ Code red drill, lock down procedures, etc. ▪ Safety plan submitted to Instructional Council ▪ All classroom have fire extinguishers and a first aid kit ▪ Living Skills curriculum covering first aid, drugs and alcohol ▪ Two AED's on campus ▪ Several teachers and students first aid certified ▪ Self defense unit in PE ▪ Visitors procedure through main office ▪ Zero tolerance for bullying (cyber-bullying included) and hazing ▪ Use of equipment to scan for alcohol at dances for all that enter
2. Gunn is a clean school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Official Green Business (i.e. recycling, etc) ▪ Gunn Beautification Day ▪ Number of Janitors on campus to help clean the school ▪ Lack of "tagging" on campus ▪ Campus beautification for students as disciplinary measure ▪ Maintenance dept. does a great job to keep campus clean and good repair, in addition to going above what is expected to make the campus visually appealing
3. Gunn is an orderly school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Every teacher has classroom rules ▪ Student handbook is concise and clear ▪ Daily announcements and bulletin ▪ Front office staff ▪ Health Technician
4. Gunn is a school that is characterized by trust and emotional safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Camp Everytown for identity safety training for students ▪ Every 15 Minutes program <i>(a two-day program focusing on having students think about drinking, driving, personal safety, and the responsibility of making mature decisions. Along with alcohol related crashes, it focuses on the impact that their decisions would have on family and friends.)</i>, ▪ Not In Our Schools Week <i>(A week designed to help students increase understanding and encourage discussion about diversity and race relations at Gunn High School. A campaign to promote acceptance, awareness, and identity safety at our school)</i> ▪ Identity safety training for staff through workshops offered by district and staff development ▪ No randomlocker searches ▪ No metal detectors for students ▪ SOS committee/assembly/programs ▪ Open campus ▪ Prep period for students ▪ ACS and CHAC services available for students ▪ Confidential history of violence list
5. Gunn is a school characterized by professionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluation process ▪ Instructional Council meets regularly ▪ Quick e-mail responses ▪ Tenure standards ▪ Highly qualified teaching staff
6. Gunn is a school characterized by high expectations for all students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School Report Card ▪ School profile (track students after high school) ▪ Tutorials available to all students

<p>6. Gunn is a school characterized by high expectations for all students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School Report Card ▪ School profile (track students after high school) ▪ Tutorials available to all students ▪ In compliance with No Child Left Behind ▪ Graduation and UC Requirements ▪ Clear expectations on teacher syllabi ▪ AP and honors classes offerings ▪ 4 year plan for each student ▪ Focus on Success, Academic clubs, College and Career center, Foothill Middle college to provide additional support for students
<p>7. Gunn is a school characterized by its focus on continual school improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building renovations ▪ Technology upgrades ▪ District and site specific professional development ▪ BTSA for new teachers ▪ Professional development Thursday ▪ Peer observation group ▪ Many grants applied for and received ▪ School plan which stems from Department plan which stems from teacher goals ▪ Parking lot improvements (biking cages, etc.)
<p>8. Gunn creates a safe community: eliminating bullying, drug, and alcohol abuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No hazing tolerance ▪ Breathalyzer at dances ▪ Social Norm survey ▪ Drug and alcohol assembly ▪ Living Skills curriculum

Areas of Growth	Possible Solutions
1. Enforcing Visitors procedure in the Physical Education area and for the facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post signs that encourage all visitors to check-in at the main office ▪ Require visitor identification with visible ID card ▪ Prevent community members using school facilities during the school day ▪ Better sign-in policy for community members using facilities during school day ▪ Provide PE teachers to contact administration
2. Lighting on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase lighting in areas such as Village, back parking lot, etc.
3. Improve cleanliness of eating areas and bathroom facilities (also well stocked)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As we continue to grow, increase janitorial staffing to clean multiple times per day; to help clean the floors on a regular basis; to maintain fields (irrigation, etc); to keep areas well stocked ▪ Hire Janitorial staff of both genders ▪ Educate students to keep the campus clean (more signs)
4. Positive and safe student/staff connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify an area or room where students can go as a Safe Room
5. Time for collaboration needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide teachers time to collaborate
6. Improve student tardiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement stricter, consistent tardy policy ▪ Educate staff about current tardy policy and create agreement to enforce current policy
7. Health technician and counselors have a large case load	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase physical and mental health staffing ▪ Increase the size of the health office
8. Enhance new teacher training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a professional development curriculum that better addresses teacher needs
9. Doors that lock only from the outside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Install doors that lock from inside and out
10. Bells and PA systems not working across campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify areas where bells and PA system are not working on campus and fix.
11. Staff/Student Shadow in order to improve understanding of student life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Possibly implement a continual program to encourage teachers, parents, and board members to shadow students.

Question #E3:

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

Question #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?

Strengths	Evidence
1. Students receive an individualized learning plan to ensure academic success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course catalog shows multiple levels of course offerings • Tutorial period offered weekly • Students create 4-year academic plan with counselors • Focus on Success provides college, career, and academic support • 504 plans, Student Support Team, and Individual Educational Plans • InClass allows students to view class materials on-line • Parent teacher conferences when needed • Sophomore tour of College and Career Center • Differentiated instruction provided across campus • Attendance meetings • Professional development offered at District office • Annual counseling conferences
2. Students receive appropriate support to ensure academic success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case managers for special education students • Full time nurse on campus and health office; access of Speech Therapist; School Psychologist • Academic center: peer and adult tutors available in addition to community/Peer tutors lists for at-home tutoring • Course related field-trips • Conferences for students having difficulties • College Pathway project starting in 2008-2009
3. Students have access to a system for activities and opportunities in the school and the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gunn Café staffed by Orthopedically handicapped students. • Living Skills have 15 hr Community Service Requirement • Service Day • International, Not In Our Schools, Earth, etc. Weeks • Student leadership opportunities (e.g. Student Executive Council) • Students sit on School Board and other community boards • Dances, Assemblies, Rallies, etc. • Tijuana Trip and others service related trips • Theater open to whole school • Extensive sports programs • Wide variety of service and interest clubs offered • A variety of elective classes offered: Independent study, Opportunity program, Work experience program, Exploratory experience, Modified program, Voc Ed classes, Off-site Regional Occupational Program • Internships available through College and Career and Media center • Announcements to inform students • Special dates already printed in Gunn planner • Camp Everytown
4. Students have access to a system for personal support services in the school and the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A caring staff • Coaches • Guest speakers in FOS, Living Skills, <i>The Oracle</i>, Law, Work Exp., etc. • Nurse and ACS to offer support for students • Support staff on campus • Jewish Community Center • Link Crew (<i>student leaders who mentor freshman</i>)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Great opportunity for fitness (sports); Fitness center open after school• College and Career Center• Scholarships awareness• Parent Education nights
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Areas of Growth	Possible Solutions
1. Allow more time for counselors to meet with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Add more counselors; increase staffing ▪ Faculty advisors to help advocate for students ▪ Increase time, money, and space
2. Expand voc ed classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investigate CCOC (Central County Occupational Center) to see if we can offer to Gunn students ▪ Investigate Opportunities Industrialization Center West (OICW) ▪ Offer sports medicine course
3. Informing students how to take care of things themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Time management class offered ▪ Etiquette class offered ▪ Inform student participating in extracurricular that academic comes first ▪ Require Freshman to attend tutorial
4. Help students feel connected to school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create an intramural program (as enrollment increases it will help students feel connected to the school community)
5. Tutorial time not being lost due to special schedules throughout the week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Figure out another time throughout the week when Tutorial can be offered (maybe on Thursday)
6. Internships for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote internship through Exploratory programs
7. Increase student knowledge/awareness of access to all classes and provide students with ample time to make educated decisions about course offerings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase the effectiveness of the Elective Fair ▪ Update Gunn webpage (and other areas for students to gather information) for elective classes to include information to help students select classes ▪ Have students currently enrolled available to discuss to other students info about the elective class ▪ Video profile of elective classes available for students to preview before taking the course (online) ▪ Each student is provided 3 “passes” to preview an actual lesson in an elective course of their interest ▪ Expand the time frame for students to sign-up for classes
8. Continue to assess and improve program Freshman Orientation/Link Crew	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase current discussions and feedback process
9. Continue to assess ways to use technology to reduce printing cost on campus and for students at home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess the amount of student assignments that are printed at home and evaluate cost (department copies vs. student copies)

WASC 2007-09 Gunn High School Focus Group
“SCHOOL CULTURE
& Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth”
In V-I

(Facilitators: Tarn Wilson, Robin Francesconi & Lynne Navarro. Recorder: Daisy Renazco)

Name	Department	Sign-In
Arlena Arteaga	Social Studies	
Marcie Brown	Parent	
Trish Bruegger	Social Studies	
Bill Christensen	Counselor	
Megan Clendenin	Student	
Nicole Cohen	English	
Ed Corpuz	Video Production	
Jack Cusumano	Science	
Jen Dorwin	Special Ed.	
Cynthia Easton	Classified (lib. Asst)	
Sue Ellis	Social Studies	
Ahmad Fayad	Student	
Ellen Feigenbaum	English	
Janet Fox	Special Ed.	
Robin Francesconi	Classified (secretary)	
Kristy Garcia	English	
Meri Gyves	Work Experience	
Lisa Hall	Admin.	
Jessie Hawkins	English	
Norma Hesterman	Classified (volunteer coordinator)	
Hindi Hipp	Classified (budget sec)	
Rachel Haslanger	Math	
Taniko Jackson-Martinez	Student	
Linda Kirsch	Guidance counselor	
Leslie Kousnetz	Classified (SAC sec.)	
Eric Ledgerwood	Science	
Joyce Liu	Student	
Matt McGinn	PE	
Claudia Medina	Classified (SS/Eng sec)	
Lynne Navarro	Social Studies	
Judy Niizawa	Special Ed.	
Casey O'Connell	Science	
Jarrold Pagan	Classified (attend)	
Josh Paley	Math	
Laurie Pennington	Science	
Raudel Perez	Math	
Cindy Peters	Home Ec.	
Ken Plough	Guidance (Opp.)	
Theresa Poon	Classified (secretary)	
Daisy Renazco	Math	
Deb Sanderson	Social Studies	
Trine Sorensen	Parent	
Sarah Stapp	P.E.	
Norma Street	Classified (secretary)	
Sonia Stroessner	Languages	
Todd Summers	Music	
Marc Vincenti	English	
Tarn Wilson	English	