

CRENSHAW HIGH SCHOOL  
LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PURSUING EXCELLENCE  
REVISIT REPORT  
May 3, 1995

**Revisit Committee**

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WASC 27356

## **I. Introduction**

### **A. General Comments about the school and its setting.**

Crenshaw High School is a public comprehensive high school serving grades 9-12. It is located in the Crenshaw District, a middle income segment in southwest Los Angeles. Crenshaw High School is one of forty-nine comprehensive high schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Two magnet schools are located at the school: Gifted/High Ability Magnet and Teacher Training Magnet.

Some of the grades 9-12 students who live in Crenshaw High School's area of attendance still choose to attend private schools or participate in the District's integration program. However, with the 1994 implementation of the District's Open Enrollment Policy, students not living in Crenshaw High School's attendance area have gravitated to Crenshaw High for many reasons, including the school's reputation of a high percentage of its students attending, and completing, nationally recognized four year colleges and universities. As a result, there was a waiting list for Open Enrollment Permits for the 1994-95 school year at Crenshaw High School.

For the 1994-95 school year, Crenshaw High School has an enrollment of 2,693 students with the following ethnic distribution: .1% Native American; 1% Asian; 79.6% African-American; and, 19.2% Hispanic. These students are distributed between the comprehensive high school and magnet programs as follows: 2,179 students in the comprehensive high school; 313 students in the Teacher Training Magnet; and, 201 students in the Gifted/High Ability Magnet.

### **B. Significant changes or developments that have affected the school.**

The following significant changes have occurred since the last full accreditation:

1. At the beginning of the 1994-95 school year, the site became a Los Angeles Educational Alliance for Restructuring Now (LEARN) school. As a result, the school has committed to a restructuring process which includes development of outcome-based assessment procedures and an overall instructional climate built in collaboration with staff, students, parents, and community at large. An Instructional Transformation Team (ITT) was formed a year ago and has, in association with faculty, staff, parents and community members, developed vision/mission statements as well as schoolwide expected student learning results (ESLR's) which reflect the evolving culture of the school.

2. In October 1994, the school requalified for Chapter I monies. With the assistance of Student Council, the number of students who completed Free and Reduced Lunch forms was raised from 300 to 1,657 students. \$800,000 was brought to the school this year with extensive purchases made to update instructional materials and technology including the addition of Internet access and whole school computer networking.
  
3. An additional significant development at Crenshaw High School for the 1994-95 school year was the reconfiguration of the school from grades 10-12 to grades 9-12. Subsequently, the Newcomer Center, the District magnet instructional facility designed to deliver extensive academic, lingual and social orientation for limited-English proficient (LEP) newly arrived immigrant students, was relocated from Crenshaw High School to Belmont High School. As a result, the school is not as culturally diverse as it was during the five years prior to the 1994-95 school year.

## II. Follow-up Process

### A. The follow-up process and progress made at the school since the last visit.

Crenshaw High School is a school in the process of developing and incorporating a transformed culture. The recommendations of the March 1993 Visiting Committee have played an important part in this transformation. The Instructional Planning Committee (IPC) assumed the responsibility of overseeing follow up activities from the last Accreditation.

As a first step, the Visiting Committee Report was distributed to all faculty and staff members. An Accreditation Time Line was developed and distributed. An annual process of reporting progress on the Accreditation recommendations has been established. Inservice was begun on Second to None and the State Frameworks. These actions laid the groundwork for Crenshaw High School to recognize an opportunity in the LEARN program, a local effort of businesses working with the LAUSD to provide support for schools to restructure and improve student achievement.

In the spring of 1994, 88% of the staff voted to become 1 of only 4 LEARN high schools with the approval of the LAUSD Board of Education. The LEARN process sets up a planning and governance structure that consists of the site LEARN Governance Board (similar to a site council) and the Instructional Transformational Team with subcommittees corresponding to the eight components of the LEARN program: Mission, Vision, Beliefs; Governance; Performance Plan/Accountability;

Mandate Plan for Supplemental Services; Expenditure Plan; Parent and Community Involvement Plan; Staff Development; and Evaluation Plan. The philosophy and components of the LEARN program are consistent with the major recommendations of the March 1993 Visiting Committee. Thus, the LEARN process has facilitated Crenshaw High School's accomplishment of these recommendations.

As is discussed in the school's Progress Report, work has been done on addressing all of the recommendations of the 1993 Visiting Committee. The following progress on the Major Recommendations has been validated through campus observation, classroom observation, and interview:

- 1. That the site administration develops a decision-making process which is clearly defined, widely known and delineates the specific role of each person and/or council involved so that services are delivered to students, staff, and parents more efficiently and effectively. This process is to include the follow-up responsibilities for all WASC recommendations.**

Consistent, ongoing efforts have been made to delineate the specific roles in site decision making and to widely disseminate this information. Recent staff surveys indicated a continuing confusion of how WASC, LEARN, and regular decision making processes for the school interface and interact. A chart showing the interrelations was developed and explained at the last site staff development release day. Since it serves solely a planning function, the Instructional Transformation Team will be phased out at the end of this school year. The Revisit Committee strongly recommends that a unified LEARN/Regular decision making body be created to bring these two functions together so that all efforts of the school are coordinated and focused on their goals.

- 2. That the site administration and staff, with the support of the District administration, fully implement the State Frameworks in order to improve the instructional program at Crenshaw High School.**

The school has made a major effort to address this recommendation. State Frameworks have been distributed to all staff members and departments have responsibility for progress in implementation. The Mathematics department has made the greatest strides in implementation since the 1993 visit. Mathematics department staff have attended conferences, visited other schools that have implemented the framework, reviewed new materials, received training on these new materials, and developed a phase-in/phase out process that will result in a course sequence that is consistent with the Framework. This is a model that should be adopted by all departments.

Classroom observations by the Revisit Committee showed that despite the inservice already completed, considerable work remains to be done to translate awareness of frameworks into actual change in the classroom. Even in the Mathematics department where such significant change is under-way, there are a number of classrooms where new materials are being used with old methodology--or where new materials are not yet in use. The committee observed numbers of episodes of fine teaching as well as a striking amount of seat work with worksheets. Many students still complete assignments that are teacher and textbook centered. Much of the work observed was still at the knowledge level. Independent individual focused learning, again at the knowledge level, seems to be the norm in many classes. The committee urges the school to direct their efforts beyond awareness and toward implementing the new techniques and curriculum described in the State Frameworks in all classrooms so that students can experience powerful teaching and learning.

3. **That the site administration and staff, with the support of the District, study the recommendations of Second to None the Report of the California High School Task Force, and develop a long range plan for implementation in order to prepare students for the twenty-first century.**

Copies of Second to None have been distributed to all staff members and several staff development days have been devoted to these topics. The staff has established a survey process to measure staff knowledge level on important topics and is using this information to gauge staff readiness to move to new topics for staff development. The LEARN effort is assisting the school to move from an awareness stage to a planning for implementation stage. The Revisit Committee commends the school's efforts in this area and urges that an implementation plan, with whole campus "we believe" statements and time lines, be developed.

4. **That the District, site administration, staff, and students, as was recommended by the last WASC Visiting Committee, develop procedures to provide a graffiti-free, clean learning and working environment which promotes ownership, instills pride, and creates a positive school image.**

Crenshaw High School has made some major efforts to address this recommendation. \$3,200 of the \$8,100 allocated by the District to implement the 1993 Visiting Committee recommendations was spent to purchase a steam cleaning machine to remove gum and graffiti from the cement, especially in the lunch areas. An assistant principal and some students have adopted a stairwell to keep it free of graffiti. A Saturday discipline program has been established where students are used to remove graffiti. Student Council has placed campus beautification as a high priority and has worked to create an atmosphere for students of school pride by cleaning restrooms and monitoring the halls. Campus observation by the Revisit Committee indicates some

real improvements in certain areas of the campus however, the school still has a problem with graffiti and it needs to continue as a priority area.

- 5. That the site administration continue to seek ways to reduce student absenteeism, as recommended by the last WASC Visiting Committee, so that students may benefit from the instructional program.**

Crenshaw has been recognized by the LAUSD this year for raising its ADA rate by 4.1%--the second highest improvement in the District at the high school level. The improvement may be the result of several different approaches tried simultaneously by the school. Improvement in instructional strategies to make school a more exciting place is one goal that has been set. The Leadership class has taken the responsibility of calling tardy and/or truant students to remind them to get up in the morning. As part of an incentive to attract teachers to inner city schools, teachers are given a stipend to call students for attendance purposes. The Revisit Committee urges the school to continue its efforts and seek evidence to evaluate the effectiveness of each of these approaches so that attendance continues to improve.

- 6. That the District, site administration, and Instructional Planning Committee, as was recommended by the last WASC Visiting Committee, examine the current assessment data for measuring the progress on all school goals and objectives and develop a school-wide plan for systematic collection, interpretation and dissemination of the data to provide direction for instructional improvement.**

Formative and summative assessment is an important part of the LEARN plan. The LEARN accountability component of the plan requires the school to indicate those goals, benchmarks, and activities for which the school is to be held accountable. Goals stated must be clearly linked to student-performance. Time targets to reach goals are to be clear and measurable with all actions based on goals to improve student achievement.

The Crenshaw High School LEARN accountability plan is currently under development. The school has identified a staff member, who receives three release periods daily, to be responsible for data collection and analysis. Test score information is being collected and further work time has been planned for this summer to develop baseline data. The school has developed schoolwide expected student learning results (ESLR's) and is at present developing these expected student learning results for departments and specific classes.

The Revisit Committee urges the school to develop information on paired student scores for the CTBS test (students with both pre- and post-test scores) so that student growth can

be demonstrated as will be requested on the new Focus on Learning accreditation format. Further, evidence of program effectiveness and the impact of the school's program on student learning will need to be developed in preparation for the next self-study and accreditation visit.

- 7. That the administration and faculty work collaboratively to develop and implement a systematic, schoolwide plan to provide authentic assessment of student achievement in all courses.**

Crenshaw High School plans to include authentic assessment of student achievement as part of its LEARN accountability plan. Inservice opportunities have been provided to staff on authentic assessment. Some departments have begun to develop authentic assessment processes and procedures. The Mathematics department has developed department wide objectives for each course and all teachers have agreed to have all classes do portfolios. Open-ended questions and journal writing provide the types of assignments that give evidence that students are learning mathematics, not simply basic skills. The Science department has begun to incorporate portfolios into its evaluation procedures. The English department has individual teachers who are working on portfolio development but a unified, department wide approach is needed if the question of "how do you know students are learning?" is to be answered. Likewise, Social Studies teachers have discussed authentic assessment but need to develop procedures to implement it department wide.

- 8. That the administration and faculty develop department and schoolwide action plans to ensure that systematic and consistent application of integrated skills occur within and across the curriculum so that students can master the content of courses.**

Several departments have taken steps toward addressing this recommendation. The Industrial Arts teachers have made the most progress in integrating academic and vocational education courses through the ACE program. The Mathematics department offers the most developed model of integrated skills for an entire department. The department has agreed to regularly incorporate writing into its instruction with the use of open-ended questions and reflective journal writing and a requirement for student oral presentations. The Revisit Committee sees that, while progress has been made on this recommendation, the school has not advanced as far in addressing this recommendation as it has in addressing the other major recommendations.

**B. Composition of the Follow-up Committee and involvement of staff during the time since the last visit.**

The follow-up process committee which prepared the report was composed of members of the Instructional Planning Committee, a group of department chairpersons, coordinators, parent/community member, administrators, and students. The individuals were participants because they are the elected, representative leaders of the instructional team at Crenshaw High School, and in most cases, present at the school at the time of the previous visit. The Instructional Planning Committee was established at the close of the last accreditation, and took the place of the Curriculum Council.

88% of the staff voted to participate in the LEARN process for restructuring. All staff members are assigned to one of the eight LEARN committees which have all been meeting on a regular basis. While not every staff member is an active participant, a level of staff participation that has greatly increased since the 1993 visit is evident.

**III. Commendations (Areas where significant progress has been made.)**

The Committee commends:

1. The principal of Crenshaw High School for her leadership and vision in involving the school in self-improvement efforts as they addressed the 1993 WASC recommendations and focus on improving student achievement.
2. The staff of Crenshaw High School for unifying to make a whole staff commitment to self-improvement through the LEARN-process so that the instructional needs of its students can be better met.
3. The Los Angeles Unified School District for the vision to support and encourage the LEARN process for restructuring, and for providing administrative stability at Crenshaw High School, so that students can experience an improved instructional program.
4. The staff and the students for their unified efforts in seeking Chapter I funding and targeting its expenditure to improve program and resources for student learning.
5. The Mathematics department for making major strides in meeting the WASC recommendations and setting a model of department self improvement for the school so that students can experience powerful teaching and learning.



6. The Student Leadership class for the positive efforts they have made, including restroom and classroom cleaning, wake-up calls for tardy students, and campus beautification effort, to improve the student morale and pride in the school.
7. The staff -and students for their innovative programs such as "Food From the Hood" and the Graphic Arts Programs; for their outstanding choral music program; and, for their resourcefulness in resurrecting the instrumental music program--all of which give students a sense of belonging and involvement in their learning.

#### IV. Recommendations

The Committee recommends that:

1. The administration and staff create a unified LEARN/Regular decision-making body to bring these two functions together so that all efforts of the school are coordinated and focused on their goals for self improvement and student achievement.
2. The departments study the efforts of the Mathematics department and then each develop and implement a plan to insure implementation of the State Frameworks content and methodology in all classrooms so that students will benefit from powerful teaching and learning.
3. The site administration and staff continue its planning efforts for LEARN in order to develop and implement a restructured curriculum and instructional methodology that produces gains in student achievement and prepares students for the world of work.
4. The site administration, staff, and students continue their efforts in graffiti eradication and campus cleanup to provide a graffiti-free, clean learning and working environment which promotes ownership, instills pride, and creates a positive school image.
5. The site administration and staff continue their successful efforts to reduce student absenteeism and seek evidence to evaluate these approaches, then focus on the most successful, so that attendance continues to improve.
6. The site administration and staff continue their efforts to develop a schoolwide plan for measuring the progress on all LEARN school goals and objectives that provides for systematic collection of data, ,, interpretation and ~disseminati6ifof data to gauge the impact of the school's program on student learning. This plan should include an examination of paired test scores (pre and post tests) so gain in student achievement can be demonstrated.

7. The site administration and staff continue their efforts to collaboratively develop and implement a systematic, schoolwide plan, to provide authentic assessment of student achievement in all courses.
8. The site administration and staff continue and expand their efforts to develop department and schoolwide action plans to ensure that systematic and consistent application of integrated skills occur within and across the curriculum so that students can master the content of courses.
9. The Los Angeles Unified School District continue the support of Crenshaw High School's restructuring efforts that has been demonstrated over the past two years and further support these efforts by developing ways of paying for staff conference expenses so that staff members do not have to use their own funds out front and then wait for reimbursement; thereby facilitating the implementation of powerful teaching and learning strategies.