



Accrediting Commission For Schools

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DONALD G. HAUGHT, Ed.D.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Recommendation for a Term of Accreditation

MARILYN S. GEORGE, Ed.D.
ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Name of School Visited: BELL HIGH SCHOOL
Address of School: 4328 BELL AVENUE
BELL, CA 90201
Name of District: LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SD
Form Used in Self-Study: FOCUS ON LEARNING - WASC/CDE
Visit: SIXTH SELF STUDY
Date of Visit: 4-12-99 to 4-14-99
Accredited Grade Span: 9 - 12
Enrollment: 4,540

The Visiting Committee's CONFIDENTIAL recommendation to the Accrediting Commission:

	A Term Of Accreditation For Six Years: A term of six years with a written Progress Report to the School's governing board on the critical areas or major recommendations listed in the Visiting Committee Report. Upon review and formal acceptance by the board, the report will be filed with the WASC Office.
	A Term Of Accreditation For Six Years With A Review: A term of six years with a complete Progress Report on critical areas or major recommendations and a one day on-site review by a two member committee to be completed not later than the third year of the six year term.
X	A Term Of Accreditation For Three Years: A term of three years with a full self-study and a full on-site visit during the third year.
	A Term Of Accreditation For One Or Two Years: A term of one or two years (circle one or two) with a complete Progress Report and revisit to serve as a "warning" that unless prompt attention is given to the critical areas or major recommendations accreditation may be denied.
	Denial Of Accreditation: Denial of accreditation based on conditions detailed in the Visiting Committee Report.

NOTE: The Commission reserves the right to grant terms of accreditation other than those above, including a recommendation for a full self-study at any time. Such action will follow a Commission review of the Visiting Committee Report. In the event of a formal appeal, this document will be provided to the school principal.

VISITING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Scott K Mangrum *SMangrum*

Harvey Hoyo *HHoyo*

David M. Chavira *DChavira*

Van Salcedo *VSalcedo*

Rachel Quizon *RQuizon*

Maria Sobera *MSobera*

Gayle Darc *GDarc*

Type or print name

Signature

MAURICE SHAW *MSHAW*
Committee CHAIRPERSON

4/14/99
Date

DOCUMENTATION AND JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

Mr. Maurice R. Shaw
Chair Name

Bell High School Bell, Ca.
Name and City of School Visit:

(619) 522-8948 (619) 435-0244 Not applicable
Chair's Work Phone Chair's Home Phone Alternate number during end of June

I. Complete sections A through E:

- State the Visiting Committee rating (Highly effective, effective, minimally effective)

highly effective: The results of the self-study and the visit provide evidence of (1) the achievement of a high degree of student learning with respect to the category of criteria and (2) a strong operable school improvement process not requiring external monitoring.

effective: The results of the self-study and the visit provide evidence of (1) the achievement of student learning with respect to the category of criteria; and (2) the need for some minimal outside monitoring to support the school improvement process.

minimally effective: The results of the self-study and the visit provide limited evidence of (1) the achievement of student learning with respect to the category of criteria and (2) the necessity for outside monitoring to support the school's improvement process.

- Provide a brief narrative rationale that describes the degree to which the school supports student learning through each category of criteria. (refer to Chapters IV & V of the Visiting Committee Report)

The Committee finds that the school meets the specific WASC/CDE Criteria Categories as follows:

A. Vision, Leadership, Culture

Visiting Committee Rating:	Effective
Supporting Area(s) of Strength:	# <u>2,3</u>
Supporting Critical Area(s) For Follow-up:	# <u>1,2</u>
Narrative Rationale:	

The school has a participatory governance system, which empowers the staff and provides for community input. Some staff members stated that the governance system, highly promoted by the UTLA, would sometimes make decisions that are not in the best interest of the students at the school. Staff and administration are mutually supportive.

The direction of the school is heavily influenced by the performance standards instituted by the district. The present direction of the district in eliminating remedial courses and social

promotion is causing some real difficulties in a high school where students are reading on an elementary level and struggling with English.

B. Curricular Paths

Visiting Committee Rating:	Minimally Effective
Supporting area(s) of Strength:	#
Supporting Critical Area(s) For Follow-up:	# <u>1,2</u>
Narrative Rationale:	

While ESLR's have been adopted, the Visiting Committee felt that there was limited awareness of continuing an on-going effort in integrating the ESLR's to drive the curriculum. There is also limited evidence to demonstrate changes in student learning since the ESLR's were established.

The Visiting Committee found that true curricular paths were at a low level of development at Bell High. Aside from the early development of the Multilingual Teacher Career Academy, no true career paths exist.

C. Powerful Teaching and Learning

Visiting Committee Rating:	Minimally Effective
Supporting Area(s) of Strength:	#
Supporting Critical Area(s) for Follow-up:	# <u>1,3,6</u>
Narrative Rationale:	

A variety of strategies and resources were evident in the advanced level academic courses. Unfortunately the same could not be said of classes below this level. This view was voiced initially by parents at our opening meeting. Visiting Committee members often found class time devoted to students copying materials from teacher presented work. Notably the English Department has taken some steps in staff development, to address this situation, but there is a need to focus schoolwide on substantial improvement in this area.

The school also needs to pursue more involvement of community members in the teaching and learning process. The President of the local Chamber of Commerce expressed this concern during one of the Visiting Committee's initial meetings. The school is aggressively pursuing technology as a means to help with instruction. The Committee felt that the school might be relying too heavily on future technology to address the needs of students.

D. Support for Personal and Academic Growth

Visiting Committee Rating:	Effective
Support Area(s) of Strength:	# <u>1,3,5</u>
Supporting Critical Area(s) for Follow-up:	# <u>5</u>

Narrative Rationale:

Bell High School has a fairly comprehensive support program for students. Tutoring is offered at lunch, after school and on weekends. An innovative "niners" program was instituted to help students make that often-difficult transition into high school. EL/SDAIE classes for Limited English Proficient students and Special Education classes for students with special learning needs. Advanced Placement and Honors courses are in place for advanced learners. Computers are readily available in classrooms and labs. A "Computer Boot Camp Training" is provided for students and staff alike. Impact, Healthy Start, TUPE and the Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Program are good examples, which focus on personal health and academic success.

While there are 26 clubs/organizations and 15 interscholastic sports available, there does not seem to be the schoolwide participation that would make these a successful extracurricular program.

E. Assessment and Accountability

Visiting Committee Rating	Minimally Effective
Supporting Area(s) of Strength	#
Supporting Critical Area(s) for Follow-up:	# <u>2,3,7,8</u>

This is a major area of weakness for the school. While the Self-Study indicated teachers utilized a variety of assessment instruments, it was the observation of the Visiting Committee that standardized tests appeared to form the basis of most assessment.

Evidence regarding how knowledge and use of assessments helped to modify student learning was not generally demonstrated. One positive step is the English Department's use of pre-and post-writing assessment from the Language Arts Standards Project to assess student achievement.

Of concern was the placement of the school on the district's 100 lowest performing schools list in 1996-97 and the subsequent placement on probation, with 30 other schools, in September for failing to make gains in the 1997-98 school year in the district's benchmark performance indicators. While the inclusion of some of these benchmarks is debatable, the problem is that the majority of students, in the estimation of the visiting Committee, are not achieving up to their capabilities.

II. Summarize the Visiting Committee's findings for these accreditation expectations.

- The Committee finds that the school meets the accreditation process expectations as follows:
 - 1) The school has the capacity to implement a schoolwide action plan resulting in

ongoing improvement.

The school has established six "Committees of Improvement" which will have representatives from each department, students, parents and classified staff. These Committees will meet over the next five years with the Accreditation Coordinator tasked with organizing and directing the Action Plan implementation.

Of concern to the Visiting Committee is the present uncertainty of the school retaining the position of Accreditation Coordinator and the lack of any expressed alternative plan to ensure the implementation of the action plans. Additionally, there is a need to report to the schoolwide community progress made towards not only the action plans but also the recommendations of the Visiting Team.

Additional factors that may limit the staff's ability to accomplish the action plans are the limitations of the physical plant and the expectations of the district office.

2) The school has addressed the recommendations of the previous Visiting Committee.

Recommendations from the previous WASC Visiting Committee have been addressed to varying degrees. The school has been highly successful at addressing high absenteeism, improving communication with parents, increasing staff technological expertise, acquiring additional computers and expanding the use of technology in the Vocational/Technical arts program. Areas where some progress has been made include improving the instruction of integrated skills across the curriculum and articulation with feeder schools. Areas that were not met dealt with the physical plant and repair of instructional equipment.

It was obvious to the Visiting Committee that the recommendations of the previous Visiting Committee had not been addressed in a systematic manner. The previous Self-Study Coordinator stated that she kept track of when a decision made by the School Based Management Council addressed a recommendation of the Visiting Committee.

3) The school's self-study was appropriately developed with the involvement of individuals as required by WASC.

The Visiting Committee deemed this area as effective. There was significant evidence that all appropriate parties were involved in the development of the Self-Study. This certainly was not an easy task in a Concept 6, multi-track year-round high school in a year where professional development days were eliminated from the schedule.

The only concern in this area was when in the final meeting some Steering Committee members were concerned about some of the data in the Visiting Committee Report and that data was taken directly from the Self-Study.

III. Provide a brief narrative, which summarizes the Visiting Committee's rationale for the recommended term: (If there is an unresolved minority opinion please indicate and explain.)

- **term options seriously considered**
- **reasons for the term recommended**

In the comments reflect upon the following:

- the schoolwide degree to which students are learning
- the capacity of the school to implement, monitor, and accomplish the action plan

The first step in our deliberations was to review the guide questions and rubrics for the schoolwide criteria. Of particular concern to the Committee was the fact that while students in honors courses and above were receiving a good education, the same could not be said for the remaining, and vast majority, of the students. The lack of curricular paths and instructional strategies were also of major concern to the Committee. After reviewing each criteria members were asked, using the documentation worksheet, where they felt the school met the criteria. There was unanimous agreement, with little debate, on the ranking.

The Committee then addressed the recommended term. There was unanimous agreement that a term for "six years", "two years", "one year" or "denial" was not appropriate. Deliberations then centered on whether to recommend a "six year with a review" or a "three year" term. Seven of the eight members, including our student member, felt the "three year" term was appropriate. The one member who recommended the "six year with a review" felt that a three-year would be devastating for the school. The opinion of the remaining members was that three criteria areas ranked in the "minimally effective" range did not justify a six-year term. The final recommendation of three years was unanimous.