Report of the Re-Visitation Committee
Western Association of Schools & Colleges

BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL

Los Angeles Unified School District
Los Angeles, CA

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Re-Visit Committee

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Belmont High School
Accreditation Progress Report

I.   Introduction

A.   A general description of the school, its setting and the population it serves

Belmont High School is located in the heart of downtown Los Angeles. It is one of the largest comprehensive public high schools in the nation and one of nearly sixty high schools in our 700,000-student district. Belmont is characterized as an urban, inner-city high school. The community surrounding Belmont is primarily composed of first generation immigrants who work in service or industry-oriented occupations. Many parents are immigrants who have had both limited economic and educational opportunities in their country of origin. There are over 5,000 students at Belmont with an ethnic mixture of 88% Latino, 5% Asian, 5% Filipino, and 2% African-American. Nearly 90% of the student population qualifies for Title I services. Many students have never learned to read in their native language and have had only limited education before entering school at Belmont. Fifty percent of the students are Non-English or Limited-English speaking. There is also a large Special Education Department with approximately 400 students receiving special services. A high absence and transiency rate negatively affect student graduation statistics. Many students drop out of school because they cannot overcome the ten year gap between them and students who had the opportunity to begin school at five years old. Over half of Belmont students have chosen an affiliation with one of eight established academies: Visual Arts, Travel and Tourism, Law and Government, Performing Arts, Health and Human Services, Multimedia, Science and Technology, and Business and Finance.

Special funding sources like Carl Perkins (federal), School to Work (federal), Title I (federal), State Compensatory Education, and the Program for English Learners (state) support student achievement. New funding sources will support the integration of technology into the curriculum and the intensive staff training that will enable this reform to succeed. (See Section IB for further details on the Digital High School Grant and Proposition BB funds.)

California's new Academic Performance Index is a summary report of 7,000 schools statewide on the 1999 Stanford 9 test, the standardized basic skills test administered each spring. According to last year's results which were published in *The Los Angeles Times* on Wednesday, January 26, 2000, the API for Belmont High School was 464. The school ranks "1" in the statewide decile ranking and a "6" when compared to schools with similar characteristics. A "1" reflects the bottom 10% of schools and "10" reflects the top 10%. The target API for Belmont for the year 2000 is 481. This is calculated by adding, to the 1999 score, 5% of the range between a school's 1999 API and the statewide performance target of 800.

Scores of families have come to the United States seeking better opportunities for themselves and, particularly, for their children. The fact that Belmont scored at least five levels higher in decile ranking when compared to schools with similar demographics would indicate that the children do find those opportunities here.

Among the opportunities is one of the largest and most comprehensive programs for English Learners available. Statistics from the Bilingual Program Survey from December 1999 identified 428 LEP students at Belmont Newcomer Center and 1,953 LEP students at Belmont High School. These students are provided English Language Development through Structured English Immersion (models A and B) and SDAIE instruction. ESL students receive two periods of ELD every day. All LEP students have access to grade level math, science, health, social studies and ECP classes, either through structured English immersion, primary language, or SDAIE instruction. Bilingual paraprofessionals assist and support students' access to the core curriculum in content area classes.

The Newcomer Center at Belmont provides an environment calculated to ease the immigrant student into the culture of a new country and school. Designed for students who have lived in the United States less than one year, the Newcomer program concentrates on English Language Development and other core subjects, but in its small confines, students are given much needed support to help them make a successful transition into this new world.

Nearly 90% of Belmont students qualify for the Federal Lunch Program, the determining factor in allocating funds for the Title I program. This program provides free or reduced cost lunches to students whose family income is at or near poverty level, as determined by federal government guidelines. Title I *eligibility* is based on other factors: a student's academic performance in reading or mathematics, or certain "at-risk" behaviors that put students in jeopardy of dropping out of school. When a student achieves below grade level, as determined by a percentile rank on a nationally normed test, that student is eligible for Title I funds. Title I funds provide program participants with additional teacher and counselor services, teacher assistant support, resources and materials that support their access to, and acquisition of, the district's core curriculum.

College or university is a prominent goal for Belmont students in spite of low scores on the SAT. Belmont students and their parents really believe that education is essential. Reports from colleges show that about 60% of Belmont's graduates actually enroll in a two- or four-year college. More students (40%) are entering the two-year colleges because of the change in the law relating to undocumented students. Most of our

students are unable to afford a four-year college, although 20% of them, through scholarship or loan programs, do attend a four year college. California State University campuses receive the majority of our graduates, while forty to sixty of our recent graduates (annually) continue their postsecondary education at University of California schools and private colleges such as Stanford, Yale, Harvard, Amherst, Pomona, Wellesley and Occidental. The most telling statistic of our students' successes in college is that more than 85% of those enrolling in college continue beyond their freshman year. In 1999 Belmont set new school records for both the total number of students taking Advanced Placement exams and the total number passing those exams. Over 200 students were enrolled in one or more AP classes. A total of 299 exams were taken and the pass rate was 65%. (By far the most successful were those for Spanish Language (98%), Spanish Literature (79%), and Economics (60%). The number of students taking college courses during their vacation has increased as well.

Despite their socio-economic and educational limitations, Belmont students have perseverance and a desire to learn and better their lives. They work hard and appreciate the help they are given. Belmont graduates are successful in college, and in the work world. Most of them have learned how to adapt to a new culture and to succeed in an urban environment, so adjusting to college life is relatively easy. Finally, the knowledge and appreciation of diverse cultures they have acquired at Belmont is an education in itself.

B.   A description of significant developments at the school since the last visit which have had an overall effect on the school or on specific departments

Significant developments which have had a positive effect on Belmont

Belmont was recently awarded a three year, 2.4 million dollar grant by the State of California. This money will be used in conjunction with other monies from specially funded programs and other budgets, and the Los Angeles Unified School District's recent BB bond issue to convert Belmont into a digital high school over the next three years. It is expected that additional funds will also be made available in years two and three. A portion of these funds, approximately $500,000, will be used for staff development. The school has committed itself to improvement in three areas: student achievement, teaching methods, and computer resources. All three have an important bearing on the staff development to be conducted at Belmont. Belmont will spend at least $2.75 million during the next year on hardware, software, and technology

infrastructure. This sum will fund major technological improvements. First of all, the school will acquire more computers. Currently it has 366 student-use computers spread across thirteen computer labs, two computer classrooms, and the library. Many of these computers are two processing-chip generations behind those currently available. During the next year, the school plans to purchase 274 new computers. The bulk, 209, will be used to replace existing computers in the labs. The other sixty-five will also go to the labs and library as additional machines. One hundred and fifteen of the computers that are being replaced will go to individual classrooms, one per room, and ninety-four, the older IBM clones, will be given to teachers who want to use them. In addition, the school is spending a considerable amount on software and such peripherals as printers, servers, scanners, computer-ready TVs, and digital projectors. The BB bond money is being used to re-wire the school so that every computer and every classroom will have access to the school's network and to the Internet. Once the equipment is acquired, Belmont will have taken a quantum step forward technologically.

Belmont has created an active Bilingual Bicultural Advisory Council that works in conjunction with the Bilingual Coordinator to oversee the Program for English Learners. The BBAC participates in an annual needs assessment and provides input to the Bilingual Program budget and the revisions of the school plan.

The faculty has worked diligently to increase the percentage of LEP students who are able to meet the criteria for redesignation and be placed in a "regular" English program. Belmont has incorporated six new policies in order to meet this goal. First, all students in "preparation for redesignation" are given the LAS redesignation test at least once a year. Additionally, teachers and counselors may refer students to be tested at any time during the year. Any new LEP student who enrolls at Belmont is sent from the admissions office to the bilingual office and immediately evaluated prior to being programmed by the counseling office. Second, in an effort to increase the percentage of students who pass the LAS redesignation test, a special "language unit" has been developed to address the often repeated examples of language deficiencies of the PRP students. These students are given series of LAS preparation mini-lessons which focus on reading comprehension, vocabulary development and writing skills. In conjunction with the classroom teacher, a resource teacher is assigned to work with the students as a class and on a one-to-one basis. The purpose of the "language unit" is to target the specific needs of each individual student as she or he prepares to take the LAS Redesignation test. Third, all ESL and English teachers receive staff development regarding the redesignation process. The teachers are made aware of all components of the LAS redesignation assessment. Teachers are informed of the identified areas of weakness in order that they may address these difficult areas in their classes. Fourth, a

Language Appraisal Team (LAT) is in place to redesignate students who have passed the LAS test, but have not demonstrated academic success in their coursework. Fifth, ninth grade students in "sheltered English" classes are enrolled in an English literacy development lab. This is a computerized literacy development lab that addresses itself to the students' specific reading and vocabulary deficiencies. Sixth, all LEP students who do not pass the LAS redesignation tests are encouraged to enroll in tutoring before/after school, the Extended Learning Sessions Academy (ELSA) intersession classes, and/or the English Literacy Development lab.

The Bilingual Council has instituted a new program that monitors the academic progress of recently redesignated students (within the last two years). This is a crucial component of the program, since many of our students who have successfully redesignated continue to struggle in their academic classes. An intervention program for these students was piloted on C track in the spring of 2000. The program determines whether the student is meeting difficulties in his academic program through survey, interviews with the student and/or the parent, and a questionnaire to each of the student's teachers. Goals are established with student and family input and agreement. A contract is signed. If intervention is necessary, it follows in the form of counseling, tutoring or a change in the structure of the student's home life.

The Belmont English Literacy Development Lab (EDL) provides a completely integrated, multi-sensory instructional program which diagnoses, instructs, and provides practice and reinforcement of both reading and writing competencies. A personalized, computer-generated curriculum, in addition to one-on-one instruction, results in the average student gaining approximately two grade levels of reading competency per year of instruction.

The lab was inaugurated in July of 1999 with the principal goal of significantly increasing literacy in one year. We begin by trying to eliminate negative attitudes toward reading, thereby increasing a student's chance to bond with the written word. This is done mainly through the avoidance of frustration-level work, in-house assignments that are targeted at a student's developmental level, and homework assignments, seven days per week, that are targeted at a student's independent reading level.

Even though the EDL Lab serves all levels of our student population, from at-risk to advanced placement, Belmont's ninth grade ELL population constitutes the majority of our regular session students. This population was targeted because of its chronically low

achievement on standardized reading tests. The lab is also open after school and during intersessions. Preliminary evaluation indicated that the program is meeting its objective.

The Language Arts Center (LAC) at Belmont High School continues to provide students with an opportunity to develop their English and computer skills by providing computer access, instruction in word processing and composition, and an interactive reading program. The center houses sixty computers for student use. Students may choose from AppleWorks and Microsoft Word for their word processing program, consult CD-ROM encyclopedias, improve their keyboarding skills with special typing software, and access the Internet. Teachers who bring their classes to the LAC may use the facility to enhance their own lessons or have their students participate in lessons designed by the coordinator of the center. A new component to LAC since the last Focus on Learning visit is the Scholastic Reading Counts (SRC) program. SRC is a reading motivation and management program that encourages and supports independent reading. In the LAC, students may select from a library of over 5,000 books reading materials that meet their individual interest and reading levels. After reading, students are tested, via the computer, to verify their reading comprehension.

Our recent positive Coordinated Compliance Review (CCR) gave validation to our special programs and numerous commendations to the spectrum of challenging curriculum we offer our students. (Specific commendations may be found in the Curricular Strand section of this report.)

Significant developments which have had a negative impact on Belmont

For the past three years we have capped our school the first or second week of each new school year. Our school continues to be extremely overcrowded.

In January of 2000 the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education voted to stop building the new Belmont High School Learning Complex and abandon the site. This has been a crushing blow to the students, parents, faculty, and community. The Board is looking for alternative sites for several small high schools, but has not communicated any information as to where these sites are located and when they might be operational. This has created a great deal of stress and uncertainty within the school.

C. A description of the school's procedures for the implementation and the monitoring of the schoolwide action plan. Include how annual progress reports, as well as this third year report, have been prepared

In 1997 when the Focus on Learning team visited Belmont High School for the accreditation review, Mr. Augustine Herrera, the principal, was just beginning to work with a leadership team of thirty-eight faculty members, administrators, and out-of-class personnel to restructure our school and create an all academy school. This team worked in conjunction with the Focus on Learning Committee and the Shared Decision-Making Council. These two groups provide a forum for faculty, parents and students to express their ideas and concerns regarding the goals and vision of the school. There was overwhelming support from parents and students to implement the academy approach, and the majority of faculty members supported this restructuring. Those faculty members who wished not to join an academy were assured they could continue teaching at the current site, which would remain if not fully, then partially, a traditional high school.

The leadership team extensively researched the academy model, which included numerous visits to other schools that house academies. After evaluating this research, and determining the expertise of our faculty, the leadership team decided that the best model for restructuring the school created four academies, each consisting of 350 students, on each of the three tracks. The four general foci: House I—Arts and Humanities, House 2—Health and Human Services, and two tracks of Science and Technology, House 3—Law and Government for all three tracks, and House 4—Travel and Tourism, and two tracks of Banking and Finance. This approach creates a small-within-large program and provides a more individualized approach to student learning. The architects met with faculty, staff, administration, parents, and community members. The architectural plans for the new school were developed to reflect these house choices. House 1 would contain two computer rooms for lighting and sound design, as well as the multi-media program, six art rooms, a kiln and a gallery for art shows. House 2 would have several state-of-the-art computer rooms and laboratories. House 3 would have a courtroom and House 4 would have a culinary center and several computer rooms. This new school would provide both small schools for individualized and personal education and also a large school for a strong music, theater, and sports programs.

As the proposed new Belmont was being designed and built, the internal school design was progressing with the work of the principal, Mr. Augustine Herrera, the vice-principal, Ms. Tonya Cameron, and the Leadership Team, with input from the Shared-Decision Making Council, parents, and other staff and faculty members. The Leadership Team discussed the Lead Teachers positions and voted on Lead Teachers for each academy. Lead teachers met with Mr. Herrera and Ms. Cameron every two weeks. Since this was the first time any school in the country had decided to use the academy model for the entire school, Mr. Herrera encouraged each academy to develop curriculum, incorporate a school-to-career component, develop partnerships, write grant proposals, and any other pertinent and creative actions. Rather than lay down rules and stifle energy and creativity, each academy was allowed to pursue its own course of action with a great deal of support from the administration. This was a highly effective approach since there was no model for the development of an all academy high school. Lead teachers would then share their courses of action, and other academies would follow the paths that were successful. The academies have made tremendous progress by instituting creative, innovative and commendable programs which include: new curriculum development, job shadowing, internships, partnerships with higher educational institutions, and partnerships with community organizations. Some highlights of this growth are indicated below.

- Two of the academies, Travel and Tourism and Business and Finance, were accepted as partners to their national affiliations.

- The Multi-Media Academy just received an implementation grant from the California Partnership Academy which totals $42,000 this year and $81,000 each year after that.

- The Performing Arts Academy is applying for the California Partnership Grant this year. It has partnerships with California Institute of the Arts, Los Angeles City College, The Colony Theatre, The Music Center, The Victory Theatre, and A Noise Within Theatre. Students job shadow at these theatres and have paid internships.

The academies are simultaneously preparing students for college and career opportunities with the inclusion of a challenging academic curriculum and an evolving school-to-work component.

The rejection of the new site by the School Board has created a great deal of uncertainty at the current site. When the current site was being planned, faculty members could

choose to be a member of an academy and move to the new site or remain in a traditional school setting at the current site. Now that option is no longer available. The Board has directed the school to keep the academies at the current site, but offer a non-academy program as well. Belmont is once again in the process of reconfiguring the school program. Lead teachers meet with the current principal and assistant principal to support and develop the academies.

The Leadership Team worked together in the preparation of this report and all school reports. The school will have to expand this team to include non-academy members.

II.   Report on Schoolwide Action Plan Progress

A. Communication Among Belmont Stakeholders
Substantial progress toward the goals set in the Communication Action Plan have been realized. The school is working towards completing the plan.

Items That Have Been Implemented

- An orientation for incoming ninth grade students will be inaugurated this year. A committee of administrators, counselors, teachers and other stakeholders has planned the event for the evening of June 21st. The event is intended to acquaint students and parents with the school's physical plant, programs, the educational and extracurricular opportunities offered to our students, and to welcome parents and students to the campus. An information fair with booths run by clubs, organizations, and academies will distribute information, sell food and other items, and urge students to participate in the life of the school. While students and parents visit the different booths, they will also register the students for school. Afterwards, they will attend a general session introducing staff and outlining, briefly, the programs at the school. This portion of the event will be held in the auditorium. After this meeting, breakout sessions for students and parents will detail special programs, college goals, and all the other opportunities offered at the school. A tour of the campus will complete the evening's activities. Bus transportation will be offered from the major feeder middle schools to and from Belmont. The entire staff is looking forward to a successful evening. After gathering feedback from all the stakeholders, the orientation committee will evaluate the program and continue to improve the orientation for future presentations.

- A video program orienting students and parents to Belmont has been completed. It will be available for parent and student viewing.

- The school's website has been established for some time; however, a webmaster was recently selected and is in the process of expanding and updating the site.

- A Student Planner, first distributed to ninth grade students in 1995-96, outlines pertinent information for all students and provides a place to organize their activities. Distribution of the planner was subsequently expanded to include tenth, eleventh and twelfth graders (1999-2000). All students are provided this tool for organizing their time and maintaining a methodical record of assignments completed and needing completion.

- District publications—*Guidelines*, and *Standards* have been distributed to students and parents. These items are available in the student's home language.

Items that continue to be implemented

Belmont continues to:

- hold monthly parent workshops, in conjunction with the two parent advisory council meetings.

- have Bilingual TAs continue to call homes for teachers who request this help.

- expand voice mail and automated telephone messages. All homes are called to notify parents and students of meetings, special events, and calendar modifications.

- send the Parent Newsletter to every home each month. It is translated into Spanish.

- update the staff on all new developments at least twice a year in opening meetings and other venues when appropriate.

- research to improve the use of technology which is augmented through the implementation of the Digital High School Grant.

Partially Implemented Items

Belmont has continued to improve and expand the counseling program:

- Night counseling has been established one night a week on a regular basis.

- Counselors remain after school for scheduled appointments with parents.

- The College Counselor continues to publish newsletters.

- A catalog of courses, along with their prerequisites, is in development.

- A special counseling program that focuses on ninth and tenth grade students, those most at-risk of dropping out of school, has been established. It focuses on counseling individual students, groups of students, and student-parent groups on improving achievement, requirements for graduation, and college requirements.

- A letter is sent home to parents in the senior year outlining student deficits and their remedy so students and parents may be completely aware of what the student must do to complete the course requirements and receive a diploma.

The elements of the Communication Action Plan that still need to be implemented are:

- Formalizing the Communication Center and Communication Committee. A system for intraschool communication does exist in the form of daily bulletins, memos, letters between teachers and administrators, PA announcements, and newsletters; however, a formalized plan needs to be developed and implemented.

- Completing the (generic) Belmont Brochure.
  Most of the academies have developed and published their own individual brochures. Pamphlets describing the IMPACT Program have been published in English and Spanish. The Accountability Report Report Card is published each year and translated into Spanish.

B. Schoolwide Curricular Strand

The recent Coordinated Compliance Review commended Belmont for the scope of its curriculum design. "Belmont Senior High is commended for providing academies curriculum to students that are geared towards career options and college preparation..." The committee found that the "quality for advanced learners is evident," and that "...the Belmont High School Vocational Education programs have stimulated a high level of enthusiasm among teachers and students for the skill programs that are offered at the school...You have made it easy for us to recommend Belmont as a place to observe vocational education at its very best." Belmont was also lauded by the CCR team for equal access to the curriculum. "Belmont Senior High School is commended for ensuring that all courses and educational activities are open to all students. This was exhibited in the school's academies and vocational educational classes. Both genders were well represented in the Digital Graphics, photo design, drafting and automotive classes. Belmont is also commended for ensuring that pregnant and parenting students are not excluded from participation in their regular school program." The CCR committee also found that the "quality for advanced learners is evident."

This January, the Board of Education made the decision to abandon the new Belmont Learning Complex, so the priority growth need of restructuring curricula based on the academy model will have to be altered. Belmont may not be an academy school entirely, and as such, curriculum development will have to reflect these physical changes. Departments and academies are aligning their curriculum with State standards, but the school will have to develop a leadership team which includes academy and non-academy members. Prior to this time, the faculty who served on the leadership team were all in academies.

Department curricular strand

Departments are aligning their curriculum with State standards. The focus for the past several years has been on academy curriculum which is interdisciplinary and not departmentally oriented. The school will need to decide whether it will stay focused on the academies or split its focus and develop both academies and departments.

The Math Department has made a major adoption, the Integrated Math program, since the last accreditation report. It was piloted on A-track five years ago and adopted by the entire department three years ago. Integrated Math 1, 2, and 3 are taught in place of Algebra, Geometry, and Algebra 2. The program follows a sequence that integrates all three areas by process and allows students to frequently use manipulatives. Students solve problems that have real life applications. There is more reading involved in this program and students interact with one another and work together to solve problems. Since the Integrated Math program has been instituted school wide, students have shown significant improvement on their Stanford 9 math scores. Our ninth-grade scores have shown a ten point improvement, tenth grade scores have improved by nine percent, and the eleventh grade scores have improved by seven percentage points. This improvement is greatly attributed to the integrated program.

The Board of Education considered eliminating the Integrated Math Program, but recently sent our school a letter indicating that each school could choose the math program it wished to follow, and that the integrated math texts would be available for schools to purchase. There are some members of the Math Department who wish to return to the traditional math program. As of now, the department will continue the Integrated Math Program for next year.

Academy curricular strand

Since the last visitation, several academies have been created and developed, while others have dissolved. Currently, Belmont hosts seven academies: Arts and Humanities, Health and Human Services, Science and Technology, Law and Government, Travel and Tourism, MultiMedia, and Banking and Finance. As stated in Section IC, the academies were given the opportunity to develop curriculum, partnerships, and programs. This was a dynamic process filled with tremendous growth and opportunities for the students, parents and faculty. The next step in the action plan was to have all academies share their successes and align their paths. This step is now on hold until the District determines the restructuring of the school. The strides and accomplishments of the academies' curricula are as follows:

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- aligning their curriculum with State standards
- developing a challenging academic program which will prepare students for a successful transition to college
- developing and instituting new elective courses that meet academy goals
- creating interdisciplinary units which focus on action-based projects
- developing community service components
- providing job shadowing and internships in their respective career paths
- encouraging and having greater parent involvement

There are numerous successful elements in the academy curriculum, but a few of the stellar developments are listed below.

The MultiMedia Academy has been in existence for four years. It has developed job shadowing programs in printing with Automation Printing, Bert-Co Graphics, and George Rice and Sons. They also have job shadowing programs for editing/audio with KLCS TV, KVEA TV, and Paramount Studios/Entertainment Tonight. The academy has also developed a senior project which is the culmination of the tech core training. It will result in an interactive CD that will serve as the senior portfolio. This year's senior project was a community analysis report based on various neighborhoods in the Belmont area.

The Performing Arts Academy has brought numerous artists to the school for performance and workshops. Some of their programs have included a workshop/performance in Kathakali Indian Dance/Theatre, performances by a Commedia dell'arte group, an African Storytelling and Dance Ensemble, a Latin Jazz band, and an Indian Ensemble. The freshmen in this academy studied Africa for an eight week unit in both their history and English class; and, through a grant, all one hundred freshmen attended three museums that worked cooperatively to present a program entitled, "An African Music Journey." The academy also offers the Belmont Café every other month. This café is open to the school and provides a venue for students to dance, sing, act, play music, and show film and video clips they have created. The Performing Arts Academy also produces three major productions each year and a Shakespeare Festival for the entire school. The Shakespeare production this year is *Comedy of Errors,* and it is set in the post-Zoot Suit riot era of Los Angeles. The academy has integrated a performance strand which includes acting, dancing, and music classes, and a theatre technology strand which includes lighting, sound and set design classes. The Performing Arts Academy has been selected by Los Angeles City College to be the recipient of an Upward Bound grant. Twenty-five of our sophomores attend

programs, as well as academic and theatre arts classes at the college each Saturday and for six weeks during the summer. This is done under a three year grant. Students will be given individual college preparation and advice through this program.

The academies have, and will, continue to help students achieve our communications ESLRs, through active classroom work and through communication and partnerships with community organizations and businesses.

Academy teachers have attended numerous workshops on interdisciplinary team teaching. Many teachers have attended the Advanced Placement Building Success Program, which teaches strategies to prepare students for college prep and Advanced Placement Courses in English and history. Teachers have also attended vertical teaming training, so that each academy builds its program, not only horizontally, through the interdisciplinary approach, but also within each discipline from the ninth grade through the twelfth. These workshops have been valuable in helping academy teachers build a strong academic program that works to meet the school's analytical and communication skills ESLRs.

C. Instructional Delivery

An instructional leadership team, consisting of the Assistant Principal, who oversees the committee, the Bilingual Coordinator, the Technology Coordinator and the Title I Coordinator, has been responsible for recruiting facilitators and planning instructional seminars since 1997. In this last semester, a formal, professional development committee has been established with representatives from the various departments and academies, and special programs at the school. It is this group's responsibility to develop a long-range staff development program and action plan, and to monitor its implementation.

Over the past three years, the bulk of staff development time has been devoted to developing curricula for the various academies, aligning them to state and district standards, and developing a system for their implementation and evaluation. To date, there are eight academies functioning with over half of the student body having made the choice to belong to one. The abrupt halt to the opening of the new school, which had occupied all our focus until last fall, means re-evaluating the scope of the academy program. The district has not provided plans for Belmont's future; and, at the current time, the faculty is divided as to whether Belmont should be an academy school. Had

we been able to move, those teachers in opposition would have stayed at the old site and continued with the traditional model. The district has indicated that Belmont may be divided into several sites, but until this conflict is resolved, it is difficult to move forward with the planning.

The integration of technology into the curriculum has been the other major focus of professional development. Teachers are at varying stages of technological literacy. A study has been conducted to determine each teacher's knowledge of computers. Some are still unfamiliar with them, but even those who are familiar are not sure of their integration into the classroom. Much remains to be done.

The recent implementation of the Digital High School Grant—as yet, only partially complete, due to the slowness of the school's infrastructure upgrade—will drastically reform the manner in which material is presented to students. The action plan for seminars and workshops outlining the integration of technology into the curriculum is contained in the grant proposal. It includes a plan for optimizing the use of technology, the training of staff, and the goals for student use and proficiency. In a few words, it is the aim of the program to produce students fully at ease with multimedia tools who are able to use them in completing their projects. This will be a major factor in achieving our life-long learners objective which is to have graduates display basic technological literacy.

The professional development committee will formalize the action plans for other areas. With the superintendent's mandate on improving literacy, the bulk of the next few years' programs will focus on this area. The committee, however, will conduct ongoing surveys to keep the needs of the staff and students at the center of its plans.

D. Student Responsibility and Accountability—A

Develop, implement and evaluate a new, comprehensive Education and Career Planning (ECP) Curriculum

The Los Angeles Unified School District developed and distributed its own ECP Curriculum that was implemented in the schools over the last two years.

Belmont teachers of ECP are using the planner distributed to ninth grade students as an integral part of the curriculum. The planner provides a vehicle for teaching organization

and planning, essential study skills. The planner also contains information about the school, graduation requirements, and college entrance requirements. It is an important aid in helping students set goals and evaluate their progress. Students who are to become "Life-Long Learners" as described in our ESLRs, must be able to set goals and evaluate their progress toward them. Classroom teachers were trained on how to use the planner as part of their classroom routine. When planners became available for all students, it helped to reinforce the process of organizing and preparing in advance for projects and classroom activities.

Establish a Student Portfolio Committee—Create and Implement a Student Portfolio Assessment

In 1997, the only portfolios in use at Belmont were for advanced art students who were preparing for special programs and entrance to art school. The then superintendent had also introduced a senior portfolio that was not really an assessment, but a collection of student work and a listing of individual milestones to be presented to a potential employer.

A real portfolio, an authentic assessment of student achievement, has not been developed in this district nor at this school—at least for wide use. It has, however, been implemented in certain Belmont academies and departments: the Performing Arts Academy, the Visual Arts and Humanities Academy, the Art Department and the ESL Department. The use of the portfolio comes with its own problems—specifically how and where to house it. We need to establish a portfolio committee to address these issues.

E. Student Responsibility and Accountability—B

Improve attendance and punctuality

The tardy sweep program, already implemented from period 2 through 6 when the Focus on Learning Committee visited in 1997, continues. As a result of the accreditation self-study, implementation of a period one sweep began shortly after. It, too, continues to this day. With only slight modifications in keeping records, there is little that is different. Most importantly, it is an example of the cooperation among the Belmont staff necessary to make any program successful.

During the last three years, several incentives were tried to improve student attendance and punctuality. Pins, assemblies, and prizes were offered to students exhibiting good attendance. Students with perfect attendance are part of the parade at homecoming; their names are listed in the main hall display case as examples for other students to emulate.

Establish a viable Community Service strand in the school's program

Here is another instance where the self-study preceded reforms and improvements (like a new ECP curriculum) in the district, and in this instance, the state. There is interest in making community service part of the requirement for graduation. We are waiting for this to be implemented.

In the meantime, we have not been idle. Our cluster received a CalServe Grant last year. The cluster is partnered with the Constitutional Rights Foundation, and the Belmont component is administered through the Law and Government Academy. With the implementation of the grant, curriculum, staff development, and follow-up support to over 100 teachers and community members to connect service-learning and civic responsibility to the curriculum at all school levels will be realized. Other areas where students participate in service to the community and the school include tutoring at the elementary schools in the area, volunteering at local convalescent homes and participating in clubs at school that are service oriented, such as the Campus Environmental Club, the Youth Task Force, and the Key Club.

Several academies have incorporated service learning into their curriculum. The Law and Government Academy works with the National Association of Latino Elected Officials. Members of that academy provide language support to people completing their citizenship applications. They will broaden their involvement to include student-

taught citizenship workshops for parents, voter education, and community involvement with a focus on improving the neighborhood. The Multimedia Academy has started a school-based business supplying multimedia services to the community and schools. They videotaped the Echo Park Arts Festival and the AIDS march. The Health and Human Services Academy are working on a ninth grade community service project. In the past, their students have volunteered at Good Samaritan and St. Vincent's Hospital. The Performing Arts Academy works with Amnesty International, and students write letters to Presidents, Prime Ministers and Heads of State in support of political prisoners. This academy also requires local community service from its members. To meet this requirement students must choose a place such as an elementary school or convalescent home and perform a dance, a musical composition, a theatre piece, or a dramatic reading.

The Community Service strand, which has seen tremendous growth is an excellent method for ensuring that our students meet our Community Involvement ESLR. The school needs to spread this community service component beyond the academies and into the entire school.

Consistent application of student discipline is ongoing as we specified in the action plan

Belmont has to study ways for informing students of rules and consequences.

The student planner is the most visible result of this directive. School rules and state law that pertain to student interaction are outlined there. In addition, the district provides a Student/Parent Guide that is comprehensive. All state laws and district regulations that apply to the schools are listed there. These books are provided free to all students and the school assures they are delivered to the home by requiring the student to return a tear-off with a parent signature verifying receipt of the guide. Rules and regulations are also published in the *Parent News*, the monthly newsletter sent through the mail to every home. Students are reminded at the beginning of each semester, in an auditorium assembly, which behaviors are acceptable and which are not. Finally, a component of the Ninth-Grade Orientation for parents and students will address this area.

Left undone is the establishment of a daily detention room. This is left to the discretion and implementation of the counselor, dean and classroom teacher. The school still needs to explore the feasibility of a student court.

F. School Security and Environment

Improve Security of the Campus

The School Security Committee meets every Tuesday at 9:30 A.M. in the principal's conference room. The committee consists of the three deans, school police, campus security, an assistant principal and the principal.

The Belmont Cluster has received a Safe-Schools Grant that will be implemented in the next school year. Part of the monies from the grant will provide us with security cameras and extra campus aides. This is especially important since the District has only this week rescinded the funding for year-round programs that have, over the past twelve years, provided us with this assistance.

This year our school employs five three-hour security aides, one six-hour aide, and two police officers.

Create a Belmont Beautiful Committee

Although there is no formal litter abatement program the custodial staff has an organized plan for clean up; the school rules, which are posted throughout the school, direct students to keep the school clean; and the Leadership class encourages students to keep the campus clean.

An active Environmental Club may provide the beginning to what surely should be a campus-wide School Beautification Project. To date such projects have not grown into an ongoing process.

We have had better success dealing with the restroom problem. In a school this size, with so many students on campus at once, keeping the restrooms clean is a difficult job. However, the principal and the plant manager have instituted a process whereby all bathrooms are cleaned three times daily: after nutrition, after lunch, and after school. Custodial staff is held responsible for seeing to their cleanliness. Restrooms are "deep cleaned" once a week. All restrooms in the main building are open all day. Restroom stalls are being replaced, and the restrooms will be remodeled during the school's renovation. This was scheduled to happen in 2001-2002; however, because of the cancellation of the new site, no one knows when these improvements will occur.

Supplement to Progress Report

Priority Growth Need: <u>Communication Among Belmont Stakeholders</u>

Establish a Belmont Communication Committee (no). Establish a Belmont Communication Center (no).

- Formalizing the Communication Center and Communication Committee has not occurred, as yet. A system for intraschool communication does exist in the form of daily bulletins, memos, letters between teachers and administrators, PA announcements, and newsletters; however, a formalized plan needs to be developed and implemented.

Continue monthly publication of **Parent News** *and* **Principal's Report***; continue publications from college counselor (yes)*

- The *Parent News* is sent to every home each month. It is translated into Spanish.

Create and publish a Belmont Brochure (yes, for various academies). Completing the (generic) Belmont Brochure (in progress)

- Most of the academies have developed and published their own individual brochures.
- Pamphlets describing the IMPACT Program have been published in English and Spanish.
- The "Accountability Report Card" is published each year and translated into Spanish. It contains all testing, demographic, personnel, and attendance statistics for the preceding year.

Update staff twice each year on new programs (yes)

Create a video program orienting new students/parents to Belmont (yes)

- A video program orienting students and parents to Belmont has been completed. It is available for parent and student viewing.

Create and manage a Belmont website (yes)

- The school's website has been established for some time; however, a webmaster was recently selected and is in the process of expanding and updating the site.

Supplement to Progress Report

Expand use of automated telephone technology for parent communication (yes)

- All homes are called to notify parents and students of meetings, special events, and calendar modifications. Calls are in English and Spanish.

Conduct ongoing research for improving the use of technology between Belmont and its stakeholders (yes, this is ongoing)

- Research to improve the use of technology continues to be augmented through the implementation of the Digital High School Grant.

Expand direct contact between counselors and parents to help our students become self-directed learners who are committed to achieving personal goals and assuming family responsibilities

- A special counseling program that focuses on ninth and tenth grade students, those most at-risk of dropping out of school, has been established. It focuses on counseling individual students, groups of students, and student-parent groups on improving achievement, requirements for graduation, and college entrance requirements.

- A letter is sent home to parents in the student's senior year, outlining student deficits and their remedy, so students and parents may be completely aware of what the student must do to complete the course requirements and receive a diploma.

Establish a night counseling program at least two nights each week (yes, one night a week, and others, by appointment)

Expand use of bilingual TAs to call home for teachers (yes, available upon request)

Increase and improve communication of information to students about programs, requirements, and options (yes)

- A Student Planner, first distributed to ninth grade students in 195-96, outlines pertinent information for all students and provides a place to organize their activities. Distribution of the planner was subsequently expanded to include tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders (1999-2000). All students are provided this tool for organizing their time and maintaining a methodical record of assignments completed and needing completion.

- District publications—Guidelines, and Standards have been distributed to students and parents. These items are available in the student's home language.

Continue monthly parent workshops (yes, for both CEAC and BBAC parent groups)

Implement a 9th Grade Counselor/Student/Parent Orientation (yes)

- An orientation for incoming ninth grade students will be inaugurated this year. A committee of administrators, counselors, teachers, and other stakeholders has planned the event fort the evening of June 21st. The event is intended to acquaint students and parents with the school's physical plant, programs, the educational and extracurricular opportunities offered to our students, and to welcome parents and students to the campus. An information fair with booths run by clubs, organizations, and academies will distribute information, sell food and other items, and urge students to participate in the life of the school. While students and parents visit the different booths, they will also register the students for outlining, briefly, the programs at the school. This portion of the event will be held in the auditorium. After this meeting, breakout sessions for students and parents will detail special programs, college goals, and other opportunities offered at the school. A tour of the campus will complete the evening's activities. Bus transportation will be offered from the major feeder middle schools to and gathering feedback from all the stakeholders, the orientation committee will evaluate the program and continue to improve the orientation for future presentations.

Priority Growth Need: <u>Schoolwide Curricular Strand</u>

The recent Coordinated Compliance Review commended Belmont for the scope of its curriculum design. "Belmont Senior High is commended for providing academies curriculum to students that are geared towards career options and college preparation..." The committee found that the "quality for advanced learners is evident," and that "...the Belmont High School Vocational Education programs have stimulated a high level of enthusiasm among teachers and students for the skill programs that are offered at the school...You have made it easy for us to recommend Belmont as a place to observe vocational education at its very best." Belmont was also lauded by the CCR team for equal access to the curriculum. "Belmont Senior High School is commended for ensuring that all courses and educational activities are open to all students. This was exhibited in the school's academies and vocational educational classes. Both genders were well

represented in the Digital Graphics, photo design, drafting and automotive classes. Belmont is also commended for ensuring that pregnant and parenting students are not excluded from participation in their regular school program." The CCR committee also found that the "quality for advanced learners is evident."

Restructure curricula based on academy model which will expand departmental curriculum to include thematic interdisciplinary, and career strands (yes)

- *Since the last visitation, several academies have been created and developed, while others have dissolved. Currently, Belmont hosts eight academies: Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Multi-Media, Health and Human Services, Science and Technology, Law and Government, Travel and Tourism, and Banking and Finance. As stated in Section IC, the academies were given the opportunity to develop curriculum, partnerships, and programs. This was a dynamic process filled with tremendous growth and opportunities for the students, parents and faculty. The next step in the action plan was to have all academies share their successes and align their paths. This step is now on hold until the District determines the restructuring of the school.*

- *Each academy is creating interdisciplinary units which focus on action-based projects and are thematically linked.*

Create a standing committee of stakeholder representatives for curriculum evaluation, modification, and implementation that meets at least monthly. (no)

- Departments and academies are aligning their curriculum with state standards, but the school will have to develop a leadership team which includes academy and non-academy members. Prior to this time, the faculty who served on the leadership team were all in academies.

Develop and expand appropriate curricula to include a college and career application for each academy. (yes)

- *Each academy is developing college-bound courses and programs which are linked to a career focus. Academies have developed and continue to develop partnerships with colleges that encourage and allow our students to take their*

classes. Each academy is developing job shadowing, internships, and guest speaker programs with the community-at-large to enhance the career strand.

Develop a thematic approach to activities and assemblies that ties in with instructional focus: plan for activities that emphasize cultural awareness. (yes)

- *The Performing Arts Academy has brought numerous artists to the school for performance and workshops. Some of their programs have included a workshop/performance in Kathakali Indian Dance/Theatre, performances by a Commedia dell'arte group, an African Storytelling and Dance Ensemble, a Latin Jazz band, and an Indian Ensemble.*

- *Each academy is working to develop cultural awareness, but a school-wide plan has not been developed yet.*

Standardize department curricula (yes)

- Departments are aligning their curriculum with state standards. The focus for the past several years has been on academy curriculum which is interdisciplinary and not departmentally oriented, although each academy is integrating state standards for each discipline into its curriculum. The school will need to decide whether it will stay focused on the academies or split its focus and develop both academies and departments.

- The math department has made a major adoption, the Integrated Math program, since the last accreditation report. It was piloted on A-track five years ago and adopted by the entire department three years ago. Integrated Math 1, 2, and 3 are taught in place of Algebra, Geometry, and Algebra 2. The program follows a sequence that integrates all three areas by process and allows students to frequently use manipulatives. Students solve problems that have real life applications. There is more reading involved in this program and students interact with one another and work together to solve problems. Since the Integrated Math program has been instituted school wide, students have shown significant improvement on their Stanford 9 math scores. Our ninth-grade scores have shown a ten point improvement, tenth grade scores have improved by nine percent, and the eleventh grade scores have improved by seven percentage points. This improvement is greatly attributed to the integrated program.

The Board of Education considered eliminating the Integrated Math Program, but recently sent our school a letter indicating that each school could choose the math program it wished to follow, and that the integrated math texts would be available for schools to purchase. There are some members of the Math Department who wish to return to the traditional math program. As of now, the department will continue the Integrated Math Program for next year.

Implement standards for each department/discipline that reflect district/state standards . (yes)

- All available state standards and frameworks have been distributed to their respective departments, and departments are working on integrating standards into the department curriculum.

Implement department standards into each academy's curriculum. (yes)

Create a model for statistical evaluation of student progress (in progress)

- The head counselor has just started working with a few lead teachers to develop an evaluation tool which will measure students' academic progress and growth.

Establish a teacher media resource/curriculum center (in progress)

Expand and enhance students' use of Belmont library and other research venues. (no)

Develop a set of lessons introducing students to the traditional library and research by alternative methods (e.g. internet) (yes, the librarian conducts an orientation to the library for classes)

Implement a freshman orientation to the library and other research venues (yes, along with the library orientation, students are introduced to the internet as a research venue in various labs)

Develop a database of reading materials (available in the library) relating to specific classes, themes, and curricula (no)

Establish a career library appropriate to Belmont's academy model (partially)

- Each academy has selected books and materials which the librarian has ordered.

Require keyboarding/Intro. To Computer classes for all ninth grader students (no)

- There is not enough space nor computers to offer this course to all freshmen. Part of the requirement of the Digital High School Grant is to ensure that each freshman takes this course. Additional computers are on order.

Priority Growth Need: Instructional Delivery

Develop and implement a comprehensive professional development program (in progress)

Appoint an Instructional Leadership Team with responsibility for recruiting and training facilitators for instructional seminar groups (yes)

- An instructional leadership team, consisting of the Assistant Principal, who oversees the committee, the Bilingual Coordinator, the Technology Coordinator and the Title I Coordinator, has been responsible for recruiting facilitators and planning instructional seminars since 1997. In this last semester, a formal, professional development committee has been established with representatives from the various departments and academies, and special programs at the school. It is this group's responsibility to develop a long-range staff development program and action plan, and to monitor its implementation.

Form a professional development committee (yes)

- The professional development committee (see above) will formalize the action plans for other staff development areas. With the superintendent's mandate on improving literacy, the bulk of the next few years' programs will focus on this area. The committee, however, will conduct ongoing surveys to keep the needs of the staff and students at the center of its plans.

Submit an action plan for a series of seminars on instructional strategies (in progress; however, various seminars have been implemented, especially with respect to academy curriculum and instruction, and integrating technology into the classroom.)

- Seminars are held weekly to acquaint new teachers, many of whom have had no classroom experience, to various classroom strategies.

Submit an action plan for a series of seminars and workshops outlining a curriculum which incorporates effective communication skills, multicultural awareness, and tolerance (will also be addressed by newly-formed professional development committee for schoolwide emphasis. However, each academy has developed and implemented its own curriculum incorporating each of these elements, and the academy teachers have had extensive inservice on their implementation.)

- Over the past three years, the bulk of staff development time has been devoted to developing curricula for the various academies, aligning them to state and district standards, and developing a system for their implementation and evaluation. To date, there are eight academies functioning with over half of the student body having made the choice to belong to one. The abrupt halt to the opening of the new school, which had occupied all our focus until last fall, means re-evaluating the scope of the academy program. The district has not provided plans for Belmont's future; and, at the current time, the faculty is divided as to whether Belmont should be an academy school. Had we been able to move, those teachers in opposition would have stayed at the old site and continued with the traditional model. The district has indicated that Belmont may be divided into several sites, but until this conflict is resolved, it is difficult to move forward with the planning.

Submit an action plan for a series of seminars and workshops outlining the use and integration of technology into the curriculum (yes; the Digital High School Grant meets this requirement)

- The integration of technology into the curriculum has been the other major focus of professional development. Teachers are at varying stages of technological literacy. A study has been conducted to determine each teacher's knowledge of computers. Some are still unfamiliar with them, but even those who are familiar are not sure of their integration into the classroom. Much remains to be done.

- The recent implementation of the Digital High School Grant—as yet, only partially complete, due to the slowness of the school's infrastructure upgrade—will drastically reform the manner in which material is presented to students. The action plan for seminars and workshops outlining the integration of technology into the curriculum is contained in the grant proposal. It includes a plan for optimizing the use of technology, the training of staff, and the goals for

student use and proficiency. In a few words, it is the aim of the program to produce students fully at ease with multimedia tools who are able to use them in completing their projects. This will be a major factor in achieving our life-long learners objective which is to have graduates display basic technological literacy.

Implement and monitor instructional strategies seminars (yes)

Implement and monitor curriculum seminars (yes)

Implement and monitor technology seminars (yes)

Priority Growth Need: <u>Student Responsibility and   Accountability A</u>

Develop, implement and evaluate a new, comprehensive Education and Career Planning (ECP) curriculum (moot)

- The Los Angeles Unified School District developed and distributed its own ECP Curriculum that was implemented in the schools over the last two years.

Establish a ECP Curriculum Committee (this was done; however, when the district distributed its own curriculum, need for this group evaporated)

Prepare a new, comprehensive ECP curriculum

- See above

Implement a staff development program to familiarize teachers with the new curriculum (yes, this was done for teachers of ECP classes)

- Belmont teachers of ECP are also using the planner distributed to ninth grade students as an integral part of the curriculum. The planner provides a vehicle for teaching organization and planning, essential study skills. The planner also contains information about the school, graduation requirements, and college entrance requirements. It is an important aid in helping students set goals and evaluate their progress. Students who are to become "Life-Long Learners" as

described in our ESLRs, must be able to set goals and evaluate their progress toward them. Classroom teachers were trained on how to use the planner as part of their classroom routine. When planners became available for all students, it helped to reinforce the process of organizing and preparing in advance for projects and classroom activities.

Create and Implement a student portfolio assessment (implemented in part in various academies and departments)

- In 1997, the only portfolios in use at Belmont were for advanced art students who were preparing for special programs and entrance to art school. The then superintendent had also introduced a senior portfolio that was not really an assessment, but a collection of student work and a listing of individual milestones to be presented to a potential employer.

- A real portfolio, an authentic assessment of student achievement, has not been developed in this district nor at this school—at least for wide use. It has, however, been implemented in certain Belmont academies and departments: the Performing Arts Academy, the Visual Arts and Humanities Academy, the Art Department and the ESL Department. The use of the portfolio comes with its own problems—specifically how and where to house it. We need to establish a portfolio committee to address these issues. We expect to begin this process in July of 2000.

Establish a Student Portfolio Committee (not yet done)

Prepare an action plan for student portfolio assessment beginning in the ninth grade (not yet done)

Integrate the portfolio assessment into the ECP curriculum [not yet done; however, various departments (English and ESL) and academies (MultiMedia and Visual Arts) have implemented these evaluations]

Implement a staff development program outlining the portfolio program (to be done)

Conduct parent and student orientations for 9th grade students on ECP curriculum and portfolio assessments (to be done)

Priority Growth Need: Student Responsibility and Accountability—B

Improve attendance and punctuality (yes)

- The tardy sweep program, already implemented from period 2 through 6 when the Focus on Learning Committee visited in 1997, continues. As a result of the accreditation self-study, implementation of a period one sweep began shortly after. It, too, continues to this day. With only slight modifications in keeping records, there is little that is different. Most importantly, it is an example of the cooperation among the Belmont staff necessary to make any program successful.

Continue tardy program developed by Strategic Planning Committee (yes; has also been implemented during period one)

Review and revise the entire BHS Attendance Plan (no)

Develop and implement a system of incentives to encourage good attendance and punctuality (yes)

- During the last three years, several incentives were tried to improve student attendance and punctuality. Pins, assemblies, and prizes were offered to students exhibiting good attendance. Students with perfect attendance are part of the parade at homecoming; their names are listed in the main hall display case as examples for other students to emulate.

Establish a viable Community Service strand in the school's program

- Here is another instance where the self-study preceded reforms and improvements (like a new ECP curriculum) in the district, and in this instance, the state. There is interest in making community service part of the requirement for graduation. We are waiting for this to be implemented.

- In the meantime, we have not been idle. Our cluster received a CalServe Grant last year. The cluster is partnered with the Constitutional Rights Foundation, and the Belmont component is administered through the Law and Government Academy. With the implementation of the grant, curriculum, staff development,

· and follow-up support to over 100 teachers and community members to connect service-learning and civic responsibility to the curriculum at all school levels will be realized. Other areas where students participate in service to the community and the school include tutoring at the elementary schools in the area, volunteering at local convalescent homes and participating in clubs at school that are service oriented, such as the Campus Environmental Club, the Youth Task Force, and the Key Club.

- Several academies have incorporated service learning into their curriculum. The Law and Government Academy works with the National Association of Latino Elected Officials. Members of that academy provide language support to people completing their citizenship applications. They will broaden their involvement to include student-taught citizenship workshops for parents, voter education, and community involvement with a focus on improving the neighborhood. The Multimedia Academy has started a school-based business supplying multimedia services to the community and schools. They videotaped the Echo Park Arts Festival and the AIDS march. The Health and Human Services Academy are working on a ninth grade community service project. In the past, their students have volunteered at Good Samaritan and St. Vincent's Hospital. The Performing Arts Academy works with Amnesty International, and students write letters to Presidents, Prime Ministers and Heads of State in support of political prisoners. This academy also requires local community service from its members. To meet this requirement students must choose a place such as an elementary school or convalescent home and perform a dance, a musical composition, a theatre piece, or a dramatic reading.

- The Community Service strand, which has seen tremendous growth is an excellent method for ensuring that our students meet our Community Involvement ESLR. The school needs to spread this community service component beyond the academies and into the entire school.

Establish a committee to research other school's community service programs and requirements (yes)

Investigate the possibility of making community service a graduation requirement (yes)

Provide consistent application of student discipline (yes, ongoing)

Continue programs already in place (yes)

Continue to provide appropriate consequences for infractions (yes)

Continue to encourage classroom teachers to call home (yes, TAs are also provided when translation is necessary)

Study modifications of current practices for informing students of rules and consequences

- The student planner is the most visible result of this directive. School rules and state law that pertain to student interaction are outlined there. In addition, the district provides a Student/Parent Guide that is comprehensive. All state laws and district regulations that apply to the schools are listed there. These books are provided free to all students and the school assures they are delivered to the home by requiring the student to return a tear-off with a parent signature verifying receipt of the guide. Rules and regulations are also published in the *Parent News*, the monthly newsletter sent through the mail to every home. Students are reminded at the beginning of each semester, in an auditorium assembly, which behaviors are acceptable and which are not. Finally, a component of the Ninth-Grade Orientation for parents and students will address this area.

Formulate schoolwide discipline suggestions, apply discipline uniformly and consistently, establish a daily detention room after school (yes)

- Left undone is the establishment of a daily detention room. This is left to the discretion and implementation of the counselor, dean and classroom teacher.

Explore creation of student senate/court (no)

- The school still needs to explore the feasibility of a student court.

Supplement to Progress Report

Priority Growth Need: <u>School Security and Environment</u>

Improve security of campus (yes)

- The Belmont Cluster has received a Safe-Schools Grant that will be implemented in the next school year. Part of the monies from the grant will provide us with security cameras and extra campus aides. This is especially important since the District has only this week rescinded the funding for year-round programs that have, over the past twelve years, provided us with this assistance.

- This year our school employs five three-hour security aides, one six-hour aide, and two police officers.

Establish a school security committee (yes)

- The School Security Committee meets every Tuesday at 9:30 A.M. in the principal's conference room. The committee consists of the three deans, school police, campus security, an assistant principal and the principal.

Prepare a report on the updating and expansion of security measures (yes)

Prepare a report on the feasibility of adopting a student uniform policy (yes)

- A committee of parents who hoped to implement uniforms for Belmont student wear met for nearly one year. However, the objections of students and the lukewarm support of other parents and staff coupled with the legal tangle of implementing a mandatory policy caused the issue to be dropped.

Establish a graffiti and litter abatement program (yes)

- Although there is no formal litter abatement program the custodial staff has an organized plan for clean up; the school rules, which are posted throughout the school, direct students to keep the school clean; and the Leadership class encourages students to keep the campus clean.

Create a Belmont Beautiful Committee

- An active Environmental Club may provide the beginning to what surely should be a campus-wide School Beautification Project. To date such projects have not grown into an ongoing process.

Prepare a report on methods of preventing graffiti vandalism (no)

Prepare a report on ways of increasing restroom cleanliness and accessibility (yes)

- We have had better success dealing with the restroom problem. In a school this size, with so many students on campus at once, keeping the restrooms clean is a difficult job. However, the principal and the plant manager have instituted a process whereby all bathrooms are cleaned three times daily: after nutrition, after lunch, and after school. Custodial staff is held responsible for seeing to their cleanliness. Restrooms are "deep cleaned" once a week. All restrooms in the main building are open all day. Restroom stalls are being replaced, and the restrooms will be remodeled during the school's renovation. This was scheduled to happen in 2001-2002; however, because of the cancellation of the new site, no one knows when these improvements will occur.

Prepare an action plan outlining ways of discouraging littering and encourage the kind of school pride that manifests itself in campus cleanliness (no)

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up

1. ESLR's, program development, and the school action plan need to be woven into the regular business of school improvement.

Response:

The five ESLRs created by the Belmont staff in Spring 1997 envisioned students who would leave Belmont as:

- Critical Thinkers
- Responsible Adults
- Involved in the Community
- Life-Long Learners
- Effective Communicators

Incorporation of the ESLRs is evident in the following ways:

In order to encourage our students to become Responsible Adults and Involved Citizens (two of our five ESLRs), the following have been added to the school program:

- Community service has been established as a requirement of several academies. For example, the Law and Government Academy encourages its students to support voter registration drives, participate in the census, and engage in activities at local elementary schools. Students are currently being recruited to participate in the upcoming Belmont 9th grade orientation on June 21. Various clubs and organizations (Key Club, ROTC, Environment Club, Youth Task Force) support local tutoring programs, visit convalescent hospitals, participate in neighborhood and school clean-up projects. All clubs will participate in the 9th Grade Orientation.
- Several students have been very active proponents for the completion of the Belmont Learning Center. They are lobbying local government officials, as well as presenting their views and arguments before the Board of Education and soliciting the support of other students, parents and community members. This effort is not only an example of responsibility and citizenship, it also requires critical thinking skills, problem solving, and effective communication.

The issue of teaching Belmont students to become Critical Thinkers, Effective Communicators and Life-Long Learners is at the heart of the school's curriculum and extracurricular activities. These include:

- Integrated Math
- Academy programs linked to a career focus
- Creation of interdisciplinary teaching
- Vocational Education
- Job shadowing
- Internships
- "Project Centered" classroom (thematically linked, action-based units some of which are internet based)
- Alignment of all curriculum with California State Standards and Frameworks
- Community activities and involvement
- Development of an authentic alternative assessment, student portfolios and performance based tests

In the recent Coordinated Compliance Review, Belmont was commended for:

- The scope of its curriculum design
- The quality of instruction for advanced learners
- Equal access to programs and the curriculum

2. Identify means to report student achievement data to all stakeholders so that there is a clear understanding of results.

Response:

- Stanford results were immediately sent to the parents of every student tested with an explanation of the outcome. A further explanation was offered at parent meetings (BBAC and CEAC) , in the monthly Parent News, and by appointment with school staff. Additionally, staff was inserviced on the SAT 9 outcomes. The content clusters were explained, evaluated, and activities for improving instruction were outlined.

- Belmont's standing in the API both on a state level and compared to similar schools was explained in detail to parents, students, and faculty. A further explanation was offered at parent meetings (BBAC and CEAC) , in the monthly Parent News, and with school staff.
- The Coordinated Compliance Review gave this staff the opportunity to fully examine student achievement data.

3. Staff development and ongoing support (i.e. coaching and peer observation) are needed to increase the range of instructional strategies implemented to meet the diverse needs of students and for addressing the ESLR's.

Response:

These goals have been addressed in the following ways:

- Appointment of an instructional leadership team and formation of a Professional Development Committee charged with the development of a long-term staff development program
- Weekly New-Teacher Seminars
- District Intern Program
- Mentor Teacher Program
- Implementation of the Digital High School Plan with its emphasis on integration of technology into the curriculum and project-centered instruction
- Academies provide the opportunity for developing, discussing, and testing various interdisciplinary, instructional strategies
- Workshops for strategies to support achievement for ESL, special education, and gifted students
- Training for and Implementation of Integrated Math Curriculum
- Academy partnerships and conferences

4. Instruction needs to be enhanced beyond the textbook to provide increased meaning to students.

Response

- The academy curricula provide students with a career path focus. The curriculum is seen as part of a bigger picture, one that equates to a real life outcome. Students have participated in job shadowing, internships, community projects, and special activities linked to the full realization of the ESLRs. Some of these areas include hotel management and tourism, computer graphics, multimedia, performing arts, and visual arts programs.
- The Performing Arts Academy has brought numerous artists to the school for performance and workshops. Some of their programs have included a workshop/performance in Kathakali Indian Dance/Theatre, performances by a Commedia dell'arte group, an African Storytelling and Dance Ensemble, a Latin Jazz band, and an Indian Ensemble.
- The Integrated Math program follows a sequence that integrates all three math areas and allows students to frequently use manipulatives. Students solve problems that have real life applications. There is more reading involved in this program and students interact with one another and work together to solve problems.
- Academies are creating their own textbooks based on interdisciplinary teaching which include excerpts from books, articles, stories, poems, and essays.
- Non-academy students participate in research projects via the internet. They participate in tutoring, curricular trips and other areas which extend the scope of their achievement beyond the textbook and classroom. Students use library resources, the computer labs, the Electronic Bookshelf Program, and intersession programs to enhance and extend their understanding of math and reading/language arts.

5. There is a need to increase the communication and collaboration among programs and departments in the school and with all stakeholders, particularly parents and students.

Response:

- Most of the academies have developed and published their own brochures.

- Pamphlets describing the IMPACT Program have been published in English and Spanish.
- The "Accountability Report Card" is published each year and translated into Spanish. It contains all testing, demographic, personnel, and attendance statistics for the preceding year.
- Staff is updated on new programs twice each year.
- A video program orienting parents and new students to Belmont has been completed and is available for viewing.
- The school's website has been established for some time; however, a webmaster was recently selected and is in the process of expanding and updating the site.
- Automated telephone technology for parent communication has been expanded. All homes are called to notify parents and students of meetings, special events, and calendar modifications. Calls are in English and Spanish.
- Research to improve the use of technology continues to be augmented through the implementation of the Digital High School Grant.
- A special counseling program that focuses on ninth and tenth grade students, those most at-risk of dropping out of school, has been established. It focuses on counseling individual students, groups of students, and student-parent groups to improve achievement, explain requirements for graduation, and introduce college entrance requirements.
- A letter is sent home to parents in the student's senior year, outlining student deficits and suggested remedies, so parents may be completely aware of what the student must do to complete the course requirements and receive a diploma.
- A night counseling program has been established one night a week, and others, by appointment.
- A Student Planner, first distributed to ninth grade students in 1995-96, outlines pertinent information for all students and provides a place to organize their activities. Distribution of the planner was subsequently expanded to include tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders (1999-2000). All students are provided this tool for organizing their time and maintaining a methodical record of assignments completed and needing completion.
- District publications—Guidelines, and Standards have been distributed to students and parents. These items are available in the student's home language.
- An orientation for incoming ninth grade students will be inaugurated this year. A committee of administrators, counselors, teachers, and other stakeholders has planned the event fort the evening of June 21st. The event is intended to acquaint students and parents with the school's physical plant, programs, the educational and extracurricular opportunities offered to our students, and to welcome parents and students to the campus. An information fair with booths run by clubs, organizations, and academies will distribute information, sell food and other

items, and urge students to participate in the life of the school. While students and parents visit the different booths, they will also register the students for outlining, briefly, the programs at the school. This portion of the event will be held in the auditorium. After this meeting, breakout sessions for students and parents will detail special programs, college goals, and other opportunities offered at the school. A tour of the campus will complete the evening's activities. Bus transportation will be offered from the major feeder middle schools to and gathering feedback from all the stakeholders, the orientation committee will evaluate the program and continue to improve the orientation for future presentations.

6. Access to the range of courses offered at Belmont is limited by track assignment, although cross-tracking is available.

Response:

In the recent Coordinated Compliance Review, Belmont was commended for:

- The scope of its curriculum design
- The quality of instruction for advanced learners
- <u>Equal access to programs and the curriculum</u>

Whatever hardship is presented by having a three-track year-round schedule is overcome by the flexibility of cross track assignments, and student choice of academies which supercedes (by design) the student's original track assignment.

7. Establishing ESLR's as a focal point for determining student achievement.

Response:

- Departments have instituted departmentalized exams, both multiple choice and essay, that specifically address the critical thinking ESLRs.
- Academies are developing action-based projects which encourage our students to be problem solvers and participants in our community at large.

III. Additional Recommendations

A.. General Comments

On May 2, 2000, the WASC Revisitation Committee made its on-site visit to Belmont High School. The committee received the school's progress report in advance, which addressed the progress made toward the School-wide Action Plan and the critical areas for follow-up identified by the 1997 WASC Committee.

During the visit, the Leadership Team met with the Visiting Committee to discuss the follow-up process and the significant changes that had occurred since the last visit. Meetings were also held with administration, parents and students. The basis for additional recommendations comes from information gathered during these meetings, the school's progress report, interviews with teachers and observations of 12 different classrooms.

Given the decision by the Los Angeles Unified District School Board to discontinue the plans for building the new Belmont Learning Complex, it appears the school has made appropriate progress toward school improvement since the last WASC visit. This is particularly impressive since the major focus of the school was channeled toward the school-wide development of 12 academies that were programmed to be implemented at the new Belmont Learning Complex.

The major focus included the aligning of subject matter standards into each academy curriculum. Each academy teaching staff has developed an inter disciplinary approach to their curriculum e.g. novels in English would relate to the chosen academy career tract etc.

The staff must continue to make the adjustment from an all academy concept to accommodating both the regular students as well as those who chose academies. In doing so, attention must be given to maintaining an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the School-wide Action Plan. This includes establishing check points along the way to determine progress.
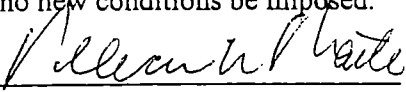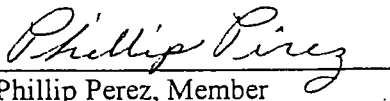
B. Recommendations

1. Although there has been progress in weaving ESLR's and program development into the regular business of school improvement, be sure to involve all students, staff, especially those that are not associated with the academy program.

2. Make use of all available data, e.g. attendance patterns, test results, student grades and graduation rates to monitor the effectiveness of the over-all instructional program, especially the academy programs.

3. The school staff and leadership team must continue to direct attention to the School-wide Action Plan and follow the steps outlined in the plan that lead to an accountability system for monitoring progress. This would include a review of the assessment and evaluation component already established.

4.   Reinforce use of Expected School-Wide Learning Results (ESLRs) as a focus in the school's improvement efforts.

5.   There continues to be a need to increase the communication and collaboration among programs and departments in the school and with all stakeholders, particularly parent sand students.

CONFIDENTIAL ON-SITE REVIEW JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

It is the opinion of the review team that **Belmont High School** has given serious consideration to the critical areas for follow-up contained in the original accreditation report. The school established a Follow-Up Committee that carried out its functions in a timely manner, and from all indications will continue to function during the next three years. Therefore, we recommend that **Belmont High School** not be subject to any additional visitations during the remaining three years of their accreditation period and that no new conditions be imposed.

Dr.. William N. White, Chair
WASC Revisit Team

Dr. Phillip Perez, Member
WASC Revisit Committee

WASC 25845