



CONFIDENTIAL
Accrediting Commission For Schools

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Recommendation for a Term of Accreditation

Name of School Visited: Susan M. Dorsey High School
Address of School: 3537 Farmdale Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90016
Name of District: Los Angeles Unified School District
Form Used in Self-Study: Focus on Learning-WASC/CDE
Visit: 7th SS
Date of Visit: 3/19/01 through 3/21/01
Accredited Grade Span: 9 to 12
Enrollment: 1814

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

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

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

VISITING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<u>April Woody</u>	<u>April Woody</u>	_____
<u>Charlene C. Ortiz</u>	<u>Charlene C. Ortiz</u>	_____
<u>John C. Link</u>	<u>John C. Link</u>	_____
<u>James R. Garrett</u>	<u>James R. Garrett</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____
Type or print name	Signature	_____
		<u>Rick Kempainen</u>
		<u>Rick Kempainen</u>
		3/21/01
		Date
		Committee CHAIRPERSON

DOCUMENTATION AND JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

For proper processing, please complete the information in box:

Rick Kemppainen	Susan Miller Dorsey High School, Los Angeles
Chair's Name	Name and City of School Visited
(562) 866-9011 extension 3308	(562) 804-2887
Chair's Work Phone	Chair's Home Phone
Alt. number during end of June (if applicable)	
Rkemppainen@busd.k12.ca.us	
E-mail address (if applicable)	

Complete the narrative rationale for each section. Circle the rating that best fits the results of the self-study and the visit. Then use the ratings as a tool in preparing the rationale. Note that if there is *no evidence*, please comment on this in the narrative rationale.

- ✓ **highly effective:** The results of the self-study and the visit provide evidence that this factor has had a high degree of impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
- ✓ **effective:** The results of the self-study and the visit provide evidence that this factor has had a satisfactory level of impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
- ✓ **somewhat effective:** The results of the self-study and the visit provide evidence that this factor has had a limited impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.
- ✓ **ineffective:** The results of the self-study and the visit provide evidence that this factor has had little or no impact on student learning, the school's program, and the school's operation.

An accreditation term will be based upon a school demonstrating the following:

1. The involvement and collaboration of stakeholders in the self-study that addresses the self-study outcomes.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective
 Narrative Rationale:

Susan Miller Dorsey High School made a minimal effort to involve all stakeholder groups in the self-study process. Given the size of the school community, this was a difficult undertaking, but the leadership team used several strategies to bring the various groups together. Surveys were utilized soliciting a small sample of students, parents and staff in gathering data.

2. The clarification of the school's purpose and the expected schoolwide learning results.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective
 Narrative Rationale:

The expertise of some certificated and classified staff, parents, students, and community members have been involved in the development of the school's vision, mission, and expected schoolwide learning results. This cross-section of expertise was used in focus groups, which examined instructional programs and selected student data as to meeting the expected schoolwide learning results. As a result of this process, participating members of the learning community have a general understanding of the school's direction and focus.

3. The use of a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, and analyze student performance data.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Susan Miller Dorsey High School employs some assessment strategies to evaluate student progress, modify the curriculum, and improve instruction. The school is beginning to collect data concerning student progress toward attaining the expected schoolwide learning results. The school's staff has analyzed SAT 9 data and API schoolwide and disaggregated data. In addition, the school utilizes a variety of school-level and teacher directed assessment instruments to monitor student progress towards meeting objectives. All teachers have access to student performance targeted areas and student data which are included on class rosters. Within the school's action plan, staff will begin to align student performance and achievement with the expected schoolwide learning results and instructional decisions will be based on identified data. Some departments have begun this process by beginning to develop course outlines, rubrics and align instruction to standards.

4. The acceptable progress by all students toward clearly defined expected schoolwide learning results, academic standards, and other institutional and/or governing authority expectations.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

This is an area that is addressed in the school's Action Plan. The school, through implementation of the Action Plan, will align standards-based curriculum with expected schoolwide learning results. The district is in the process of completing content and performance standards and aligning with instruction. The school has demonstrated a decrease in student performance for high achieving students.

Progress in meeting the WASC/CDE criteria. Note: In addition to the rating and narrative, list by number the schoolwide areas of strength and the critical areas for follow-up from the visiting committee report.

5. *Vision, Leadership and Culture that supports high achievement for all students.*

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Supporting Area(s) of Strength:

Supporting Critical Area(s) for Follow-up:

Narrative Rationale:

After an extensive exploration of the Vision, Leadership, and Culture of Susan Miller Dorsey High School, the WASC visiting committee determined that a rating of somewhat effective was appropriate. The school's vision and mission statements are well documented. The leadership team is making efforts to include and empower a larger school community to increase student achievement. Susan Miller Dorsey High School leadership have included in their action plan specific language that addresses the need to measure the effectiveness of the school's instructional program. Susan Miller Dorsey High School has proven to operate a safe and clean school environment.

6. *Curricular Paths that support high achievement for all students*

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Supporting Area(s) of Strength: 1-2-3-4-5

Supporting Critical Area(s) for Follow-up: 1-2-4-5-6-7

Narrative Rationale:

This has been identified as a key area for follow-up at Susan Miller Dorsey High School and has been addressed in the school's Action Plan. A key element in the action target 2 will assure that all required core curriculum will meet a-g university requirements. The school has a plan in place to meet this basic requirement. Susan Miller Dorsey High School has numerous curricular offerings available for all students, and has increased the number of offerings for special needs students. The learning community supports the school's instructional efforts and has confidence in the school to provide a quality education for all students.

7. *Powerful Teaching and Learning that supports high achievement for all students*

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Supporting Area(s) of Strength: 1-2-4-5

Supporting Critical Area(s) for Follow-up: 1-2-4-5-6-7

Narrative Rationale:

Susan Miller Dorsey High School offers Advanced Placement classes in all tested areas. There is a significant need to increase the number of students participating in Advanced Placement courses. Areas that need to be addressed include active, challenging, learning experiences for all students that involve them in problem-solving, collaborative work, meaningful application of knowledge and skills; performance-based assessment methods and models; and cross-curricular career path models and strategies. Departmental and schoolwide academic content standards need to be implemented throughout all disciplines. Reading and writing across the curriculum needs more emphasis as all students access to a rigorous and challenging core curriculum that meets a-g requirements.

8. *Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth that supports high achievement for all students*

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Supporting Area(s) of Strength: 1-2-3-4

Supporting Critical Area(s) for Follow-up: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7

Narrative Rationale:

Based on student needs of support programs, Susan Miller Dorsey High School students are provided with many avenues to get assistance or guidance. Services are communicated to the parents in English and Spanish using several methods. The guidance department is not able to provide the level of services required of the school's large population due to the discipline responsibilities they must carry-out.

9. *Assessment and Accountability that supports high achievement for all students*

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Supporting Area(s) of Strength: 1-2-4-5

Supporting Critical Area(s) for Follow-up: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7

Narrative Rationale:

The Visiting Committee rated Susan Miller Dorsey High School in the somewhat effective category for the area of Assessment and Accountability. Many of their teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate student progress; others primarily utilize direct instruction. The school has collected data as an assessment tool in order to measure attainment of expected learning. SAT-9 scores are published for the school community.

10. The alignment of a long-range schoolwide action plan to the school's areas of greatest need to support high achievement for all students..

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

Through the Focus On Learning process, Susan Miller Dorsey High School's learning community is committed to improving student learning. The school has identified four major areas to focus on within the Action Plan which were identified after closely reviewing student data: 1) All students will make progress toward meeting district and state standards in reading, writing, speaking and mathematics to achieve Expected Schoolwide Learning Results, meet or exceed SAT-9 target growths, and prepare students to meet or exceed performance standards as measured on the High School Exit Exam, 2) Establish programs, procedures, and policies for incoming ninth grade students to ensure a high success rate for all students, 3) Enhance guidance and support services for all students, 4) Establish policies and procedures for inclusion of all stakeholders. The school's expected schoolwide learning results are global and reflect what the learning community desires for all students. The Action Plan will provide a strong focus in leading to improved student learning and achievement.

11. The capacity to implement and monitor the schoolwide action plan.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

The school team, through collaboration with the Visiting Committee and the IIUSP consultant, identified the areas of their Action Plan. The visiting committee and the school's leadership team have identifier areas that can leverage the school to move forward with full implementation of the action plan. With the support of an external consultant, fiscal resources of the IIUSP grant, the Action Plan is very doable and defines the areas of greatest need at the school site.

The school has a motivated principal and experienced leadership team and support from Area G district administration to move the school forward. Through continued collaboration, the school has the potential accomplish the action plan.

12. The use of prior accreditation findings and other pertinent data to ensure high achievement of all students and drive school improvement.

Visiting Committee Rating: Highly Effective Effective Somewhat Effective Ineffective

Narrative Rationale:

The staff stated that the Action Plan is broad-based and is designed to improve student learning for all students. At the time the Action Plan was written, the staff had been working on the improvement process for two years. The Local Leadership Council was formed to examine school programs, previous accreditation findings, course offerings, period schedules, and explore possibilities which will provide for staff development and collaboration. The Focus on Learning process enabled the learning community to concentrate their efforts on a schoolwide integrated plan for improvement, with IUUSP support, gathering input from all stakeholders.

The Visiting Committee agrees that the Action Plan developed by Susan Miller Dorsey High School represents a validation of the direction of the school's efforts to improve student learning as examined from the previous accreditation to the findings of this accreditation process and the IUUSP process. There is support and a commitment from most stakeholders to implement the plan. An emphasis placed within the plan, with regard to timelines and accountability, will facilitate its successful implementation.

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

- term options seriously considered
- reasons for the term recommended

In the comments reflect upon the following:

- the degree to which students are learning
- the strength of the school in all areas of the program and the operation
- the capacity of the school to implement and monitor the action plan

The Visiting Committee thoroughly reviewed and validated Susan Miller Dorsey High School's Self-Study. The school learning community has been working on improving student learning using a collaborative model for the past several years. As a result, many successful programs have been developed and implemented which have directly supported improved student learning. School staff have analyzed student assessment data, disaggregated data, and they have shared the results throughout the learning community. All staff members have access to assessment results for students. The school staff is learning how to more effectively utilize the data to make instructional decisions, provide support, and better meet the academic needs of students. In the area of reading and mathematics, staff members have made modifications to programs to better meet students needs, English class sizes have been reduced for 9th and 11th grade students. School staff are at the beginning stages of taking a critical look at testing results SAT 9, API (and associated rankings), districtwide assessments, proficiency results, and teacher made assessment results to drive the curriculum, modify teaching strategies, and develop programs. The school recognizes there is an urgency for improved student learning, and has a general consensus that the school's Action Plan will guide them to improved student performance.

Based on the findings at Susan Miller Dorsey High School, the Visiting Committee's recommended term was reached by consensus. Through the Focus on Learning process, the learning community was successful in taking a close look at the school's instructional offerings, support systems, student learning, teaching methodologies, and community involvement. Through this process, the school developed an Action Plan that lists specific steps, timelines, persons/positions responsible for overseeing implementation, measurement and assessment techniques, and systems to report progress out to the learning community.

The school district's administration is strongly supportive of Susan Miller Dorsey High School's Action Plan and is in agreement that the four areas identified will move the school to the next level. The commitment from the school to carry-out the Action Plan is strongly supported by district personnel and is in compliance and supported by the district's governing board.