

Fremont High School

Oakland Unified School District

Report of the Visiting Committee

Western Association of Schools and Colleges
California State Department of Education

April 19-21, 1999

Committee:

Marie V. Bañuelos, Chairperson
Coordinator, Curriculum/Staff Development
San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools

Penny Burney
Counselor
Bethel High School

Rita Donahue
Vice Principal
John F. Kennedy High School

Gail Donovan, Ph.D.
Director, Accountability/Evaluation
San Francisco Unified school District

Felton Owens.
Director
Oak Grove High School

Sylvia Segal
Teacher
Westmoor High School

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Chapter I: Student/Community Profile

- *Include School's Student/Community Profile*
- *Comments on significant findings of the profile and other items not included in the profile*

John C. Fremont High School has undergone many changes in the past five years. The school has had two different principals and five other administrative changes since the 1995 WASC review. The school received a waiver from WASC to delay their visit to this year because of the district's reconfiguration of the school which added 40% new staff (1997-98), 800 new 9th graders, and 600 new 10th graders. The school began working on their self-study the beginning of last year. This year there are 22 new staff members. Over 60% of the staff have been at the school two years or less.

John C. Fremont High School, in Oakland Unified School District, is an "all-academy" school. The school is divided into six academies, three 9th grade pods, and one "International House," which is the English Language Development Program. The academies are Architecture, Arts and Letters, Business and Government, Electronics, Health and BioScience, and Media. Fremont High School houses approximately 2000 students on a seven-acre campus, the smallest comprehensive high school campus in the state of California. The high school has been reconstructed twice, once in 1930 after a fire and once in the 1970's.

Fremont High School's student population is made up of 64% on AFDC (an increase of 6% over the previous year), 44% on free or reduced lunch, 79% from single-parent households, and 23% in contact with the juvenile justice system. Fremont High School's dropout rate is 15%.

The staff consists of five administrators, 94 teachers (includes one activities director, 49 classified personnel (nine are campus supervisors, 19 clerical, nine food service personnel, 10 custodians, and 11 instructional assistants), and four counselors with a counseling ratio of 500:1. Fremont High School makes an effort to hire diverse staff members. Currently staff is represented by 39 African-Americans, 14 Hispanics, 41 Caucasians, 4 Asians, 3 Filipino, and one Native American. Caucasians are over represented while Hispanics are under represented when compared to the student population. Forty percent of the staff was new to the school in 1997-98, and 22 new teachers in 1998-99.

There are two building complexes containing 53 classrooms, an auditorium, student and staff cafeterias, and school bank, connected by the main office and library. There are 30 portables surrounding the central buildings, located in the physical education area. The school is crowded on its small campus. No student parking is available on campus; parking is very limited off campus in the residential areas.

In 1997, Fremont High School enrolled its first ninth grade class of 700 students. The school population is 46% Latino, 39% African-American, 13.6% Asian (including Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thailand, Filipino, and Pacific Islander), 0.6%

Caucasian, and 0.08% Native American. Fremont is a 9-12 campus of 2000 students coming from a diverse, inner-city community. Forty-five percent of the student population are identified as Limited English Proficient (an increase of 7% over the previous year), 261 are identified special education (93 students in SDC). One hundred and sixty-eight students are supported with resource specialist services. Students receive additional support from West Oakland Health Council Conflict Resolution Program, Educational Guidance Center, a Student Assistant Program coordinator, Living Out Loud Together Programs, a psychologist, and career specialists.

In 1996, Fremont High School students in the 10th grade scored in the 21st percentile on the CTBS Test, and by the 12th grade they had scored in the 27th percentile. The school-wide GPA for 1998 was 1.89. Only 10% of students go on to four-year colleges.

The SAT test was taken by 38% of seniors in the school year 1995-96, and 34% seniors in 1996-97. Average SAT scores were: 1995-96 – Verbal 374, Math 391; 1996-97 – Verbal 363, Math 390; 1997-98 – Verbal 359, Math 391.

In 1989, the faculty voted to start classes ten minutes earlier on four days a week in order to add a weekly planning period. The planning period was used so faculty could examine school data, especially absence rates, failure rates, and dropout rates. Faculty began looking at other schools who had made successful changes in student achievement. A grant supported trips to schools on the East Coast, such as Central Park East High School, and those in the central valley of Fresno, Sacramento, and the Bay Area. Faculty studied schedules and their guiding principles. In that year, Fremont High School adopted the 9 Principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools.

Fremont High School piloted the FRESH Program (Fremont School in Houses Program). The program involved 250 10th graders, those identified as ESL-ELD students. The focus of the program was to provide instruction by the same teacher in English and social studies, and the same teacher in math and science. The program included off-campus community service as elementary tutors, service to the Red Cross and Highland Hospital. No evaluation data was included in the school's report that assessed the success of this program.

In 1992, Fremont High School received a 1274 grant that supported their restructuring into four career-oriented houses and a house for bilingual program students. By fall 1993, all students were scheduled. The school experienced many problems having enough resources, placing students in community service, and in the design of the master schedule.

In fall 1996, the school conducted a study of student GPAs and found that students in academies and houses had higher GPAs in core academics. Grade point averages above 3.0 by academy were: Media, 20.1%; Architecture, 28%; International, 34%; Business, 9.2%; Health, 16%; Humanities, 8.9%; and Industrial Technology, 4.5%. It was determined that GPA was affected by several factors: (1) Students kept in smaller learning communities for all core classes, (2) The state-funded academies had resources,

which supported field trips and other interventions, and (3) Internships and work opportunities were made available to the students. A BASRC (Bay Area School Reform Collaborative) Leadership School Grant supported the school to implement the academy model throughout the school.

The BASRC grant has focused the school on connecting what the school does with student results. It has provided funding for additional personnel, staff development time, and outside resources.

In the fall of 1997, the school adopted a block schedule. This change was made to support more hands-on, project-based student work. It also gave staff one day a week to meet for planning and discussing student progress.

Fremont High School has a Site Based Management Team that has input from stakeholders. Teachers, administrators, and some students are regulars of the team.

Chapter II: Progress Report

- *Comments on the school's major changes and follow-up process since the last self-study*

Fremont High School has concentrated on developing a clearer understanding of their Expected Schoolwide Learning Results. They are continuing to work on involving parents and students in the process for developing rubrics for the ESLRs.

The school has chosen to focus on reading to direct their school improvement efforts. This has resulted in a dedicated period for sustained reading. To increase staff preparation time, the school has developed a master schedule that provides a 70-minute period per week for teachers to work, with an early departure for students on that day.

The school has been successful in obtaining a Bay Area School Reform Collaborative Leadership School Grant that gives more support to the school in its reform efforts.

- *Discussion of the progress made on all recommendations from the last full visit*

1. There needs to be commitment for continuous and thorough clarification and refinement of the ESLRs and their use in guiding the work of the school.

Fremont High School has begun the process of developing indicators for their ESLRs. The school supports the process by providing Saturday workshops to continue the work. The BASRC grant provides additional support to focus the school on reading improvement and developing indicators for ESLRs. All certificated staff is involved in the Saturday workshops. Other stakeholder groups have minimal involvement in the clarification and refinement of ESLRs, and are not involved in Saturday workshops.

2. Students and parents should be part of the Focus Groups.

Involvement of parents and students in Focus Groups is still very limited. Parents and community are informed about the Focus Groups' work but do not have significant participation. This remains a weak area for the school. A team of students has been involved in the process this school year. The school has begun to use Focused Reading time to address work on ESLRs with students.

3. The staff and district are encouraged to continue their commitment to keep current with the research and to use their findings to help guide their reform.

The school began to discuss and analyze research at their leadership retreat in 1997. The work has continued through summer institutes open to all certificated staff. The focus of the institute has been on rubrics, standards, indicators, and integrated curriculum. Conference and workshop information is shared among staff. The focus on reading has encouraged research on reading and a new sustained reading program.

4. Decision-making is unclear.

The school has developed a chart delineating the connections of all stakeholder groups in the decision making process. The school also has clearly defined by-laws for site-based management including the processes and procedures for making decisions. The scope of decision making is not indicated, however, in the chart or by-laws.

5. Powerful learning and teaching should be shared and discussed.

Discussion and sharing about student work occurred mainly around the development of the portfolio for BASRC when the school applied for membership. Discussion and sharing have continued in workshops and presentations. The school plans to include these activities in their staff development plan.

6. The bilingual program needs more coordination

The district has provided more training for teachers since the passage of proposition 227. The district supplies exit tests for ELD students at each level. An on-site liaison has been provided by the district who works closely with teachers and works on compliance issues.

7. Advisory should be used as a vehicle for student voice.

Advisory is now a Focused Reading Period. There are some opportunities during this period for students to discuss their points of view regarding curriculum and their experiences in the classroom. Though the last visiting team indicated using the Focused Reading period for student input, this visiting team's understanding is that there is a greater need for student input and participation in decision-making groups in the high school. A student team participated in the self-study process this year.

Inclusion of student voice in policies, procedures, and other decisions in the school still needs to be strengthened.

8. Fremont needs to work more closely with their feeder schools.

The configuration of the high school has changed since the last accreditation report. Fremont now has 9-12 students. This has given the school control over ninth grade scheduling and placement. Increased articulation has occurred in Math and Science because of the "Comprehensive Partnerships for Mathematics and Science Achievement." Articulation in other content areas is limited.

8. There has to be a system in place for students to choose their House (academy), and who need to change academies.

Now that the school has a ninth grade population, their ninth graders are better informed about the academies resulting in better student selection of academy. There have been few requests for changes, less than 10%. For changes that are requested, both academy

directors must approve of the change. There has been a concerted effort to see that all academies are representative of the total school population and that the entire range of academy choices is available to all students.

9. Fremont needs to narrow their focus.

Fremont High School is focusing on reading. Staff development opportunities have been aligned with this focus. Student literacy is the foundation of the school's first ESLR. Current staff development focuses on this theme.

10. There needs to be a monitored safety program.

Conflict Resolution Program is a vehicle for improving school safety. Video cameras have been installed to discourage graffiti and other unacceptable behavior. A district police officer has been assigned to the school who works on campus, trains campus supervisors, and helps supervise after-school activities.

11. A system needs to be in place outlining responsibilities and duties.

Duties, names, positions, and responsibilities were distributed at the beginning of the school year. Administrative responsibilities were also clearly defined.

Chapter III: Self-Study Process

- ♦ *Include a copy of the school's expected schoolwide learning results.*
- ♦ *Comments on the school's self-study process with respect to the key outcomes and accuracy-observable evidence representative of what ALL students are doing and producing and supportive of the identified schoolwide growth areas.*

Fremont High School devoted the majority of staff development time to engaging in self-evaluation of all aspects of the school this past year. The school has examined both its programs and student performance data. Some programs are new and have not been assessed as to their effect on student learning. Special populations such as ELD and Special Education have some data to indicate that those programs are improving. The academy system has increased the focus on student interest and preparation for post-secondary options. There is preliminary data indicating that the academies are facilitating improved outcomes in student learning.

The framework provided by expected schoolwide learning results is not operational in the as of yet. The staff is still struggling with understanding the ESLRs and how curriculum and instruction support their accomplishment. To date, stakeholders have had minimal involvement in the development and evaluation of the expected schoolwide learning results. Reporting on student progress toward ESLRs is envisioned as a task that will be addressed in the next in the next few years.

1. The involvement and collaboration of each stakeholder group in the self-study

There was representation from the academies, the ninth grade cluster, and the International House took part in all of the focus groups. Monday afternoon planning times were dedicated to working on the self-study and articulation of the ESLRs.

The development of the school's vision and ESLRs involved site committees in which some parents participated, but there was little proactive attempt to involve parents or students. Some parent groups met and discussed the school's vision and ESLRs once they were developed. Parents were invited to the October 30 Inservice Day which was devoted to working on the self-study. Parents were also invited to give their input through surveys. Overall, participation by students and parents was limited and is a weakness in the self-study.

Student participation was minimal throughout the self-study process. Although they were surveyed at several points, and briefed on the importance of the visiting committee's work, their absence from the self-study process is reflected in the substance of the report.

2. A better understanding about the impact of the program on student learning

The self-study process has focused staff on the importance of ESLRs and their impact on curriculum and instruction. The focus has also helped the school identify a strong need to

strengthen assessment so student data can be used more effectively to make instructional decisions. Reviewing student work has helped clarify what quality work looks like. Discussing student work and its relationship to standards, curriculum, and ESLRs has strengthened understanding of student expectations.

3. *The development, clarification, or refinement of expected schoolwide learning results*

The school began revisiting their ESLRs in the summer of 1997. ESLR discussions resulted in consolidating ESLRs into five major domains. Staff participated in the review and revision. Other stakeholders were not included in this process.

4. *A better understanding of specific disciplines/support programs compared to appropriate curricular references/current educational thinking*

The school has participated in summer workshops, Oakland Works, for the past two years. The institute focuses on current research on education and has examined issues around rubrics, standards, indicators, and integrated curriculum. This institute has emphasized the need for addressing standards in academics.

Conferences on topics such as Senior Exhibition, Language Arts, and the BASRC Institute have prompted more discussion about student learning. The school has explored the emerging brain research and its implications for student learning, school-to-career issues, and project-based learning.

The focus on reading and literacy development resulted in a silent reading program. Researchers, such as Michael Fullen, have been introduced to many staff members.

5. *The assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning with respect to the criteria, the guide questions, and the rubrics*

The school's self-study references the Focus on Learning rubric and then seems able to recognize where they are on the continuum. Though the school staff recognizes the need to improve, their report does not acknowledge the significance of their findings on the rubric or what they would like to do to move on the continuum.

6. *The development of a schoolwide action plan and correlated discipline/support program action steps to address identified growth needs*

The action plans submitted as part of the self study addresses literacy, rubric development, curriculum integration, parent communication, technology implementation, support for special needs students, and test-taking skills. These topics are addressed in very general terms. The "Strategy" section of the action plan lists the kinds of activities the school will employ to accomplish its target goals. Specific timelines are indicated on the work plan, but specific evaluation criteria have not been specified as to expected.

7. *The development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan*

The self-study report includes a follow-up process that stresses a strong reporting component. The plan also redefines the use of current meetings and staff development. Though parents and students acknowledged, these two stakeholder groups are viewed as information receivers and they have a minimal role in the follow-up process. Benchmarks have not been established to measure progress on goals, and the criteria for success have not been established nor have intervention contingencies have not been indicated.

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

- ◆ *Discussion of the school program and the school support for student learning through what currently exists*

A. Vision, Leadership, and Culture

What currently exists

Fremont High School has worked hard to articulate its vision and expected schoolwide learning results. The school is very aware of its students' needs and the difficulties students bring with them to the academic setting.

The school's purpose is clearly defined in its five expected schoolwide learning results. New programs focus on students achieving the ESLRs and on enabling staff to support student learning. Staff has taken an active role in defining and refining their school purpose and has participated in staff development both inside and outside the school day and week. Stakeholders, however, have not been so involved. Few parents have been involved in developing the vision and mission of the school, and few were involved in the development of ESLRs.

Interviews reveal that some staff views the school as a "new" school, as a school in its first year, really beginning many programs and strategies anew. The "old" culture of the school is slowly changing in their view. Staff Development is viewed as the major intervention to improve student instruction and learning.

A1

- *Does the school have a clearly stated vision based upon its beliefs, student needs, and current educational research?*

Fremont High School has a clearly stated vision statement based upon its beliefs, assessment of student needs and educational research findings. The vision is, "Fremont High School will challenge its learning community to meet high standards in a safe and caring environment." The vision statement was formulated by a team of staff members and has been approved by all members of the staff. The vision statement reflects student needs as described in the self-study.

- *Is the vision supported by the governing board and the central administration?*

The district supports the school by providing inservice opportunities in areas the school identifies as needs. The district staff supports the curriculum in the school by developing History/Social Science standards that will be used to select a textbook next school year. The tutoring program, ACCESS, is supported by the district. The district recognizes that the school staff has difficulty interpreting and utilizing data. The self-study cites the assistance by central office to eliminate graffiti and vandalism by installing security

cameras and placing a police officer on campus. The school has also been able to hire another dean.

Staff perceives that problem students seem to be moved from school to school. The district policy for dealing with violent students needs to be strictly adhered to by the school. Some teachers reported that district support is sometimes unclear as evidenced by lack of response to purchase orders and requests for more police intervention to deal with violent students.

■ *Is the school's purpose defined by expected schoolwide learning results?*

Fremont High School has ESLRs in place that define the school's purpose. The ESLRs were articulated recently and the work of integrating them into the curriculum is still ahead. The ESLRs are consistent with the school's vision. The faculty will need to provide adequate time to work on the integration of ESLRs into classroom instruction. This will need to include development of rubrics.

A2

■ *Does the school leadership make decisions and initiate activities that focus on all students achieving the ESLRs?*

School leadership consists of administration, the leadership team composed of academy, cluster, and house leaders, department chairpersons, and the School Based Management Team.

The school explained that the achievement of the math ESLR rests on the support of the University of California's ACCESS program. The staff development program has focused on the development of performance tasks that will reflect the ESLR on critical thinking.

At this point, the ESLRs do not drive decision making regarding student achievement, but as the self-study indicates, "The school-based management team approves the staff development program and therefore supports the continued connection of the ESLR's to the life of the school."

The administration regularly solicits input from the leadership team.

■ *Does the school leadership empower the school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning?*

In spite of a large turnover, 40 new teachers in the past two years and administrative changes, the school leadership has steadfastly encouraged commitment and shared responsibility for student learning. Evidence includes: supporting new teachers, staff workshops and conferences, a monthly Saturday staff development day, and a school-wide follow-up process to assess the effectiveness of the school's action plan, which

includes a quarterly time table in which each stakeholder designated as the responsible party will report his/her summary at student, faculty, community, and parent and staff development meetings. Specific responsibilities relating to curriculum integration will be focused on each academy/cluster/house. Constant review, sharing ideas, and collaboration are the vehicles for accomplishing the work.

Parents and community have opportunities to attend Community Awareness Day twice a year to get information on programs available to students. Parents are represented on the school site council and the bilingual advisory committee. Parents come to Back to School Night. The Media Academy invited parents to an Internet Day.

Parents were unfortunately not involved in all of the focus groups convened for the development of the self-study.

The principal has recently established a student committee in an effort to solicit input from students on issues that directly concern them. The group was named Principal's Advisory Committee (PAC). It is comprised of student representatives from each of the six academies, the ninth grade pod, and the International House. The group has designed the student bulletin board to increase communication, influencing contents of daily announcements, and making changes in the food available in the cafeteria. A member of PAC is a member of the Site-Based Management Team.

A3

- *Is staff supported, utilized and monitored to facilitate student achievement of ESLRs?*

Staff members continue to work on supporting one another and calling on each other as resources to improve literacy and student attendance. Mentor teachers work with many of the new teachers; an academy coach, a literacy coach, and a Senior Project coordinator are also available. Staff indicated that the Special Education Department lacks adequate staff support, but they are working to solve this issue.

The school has provided numerous staff development opportunities to assist teachers in the classroom. The focus has been on developing sound instructional practice, but these practices have only been recently implemented and have not been evaluated vis-à-vis improvements of Fremont's student achievement results.

Fremont High School has spent a large amount of time organizing its structure to accommodate the six academies. Now that the academies have been established, Fremont plans to focus more time on curriculum development.

- *Is leadership and staff part of an organized structure that is committed to professional development?*

Fremont staff is working toward better mutual support. Staff is participating in BASRC training and school-to-career summer institutes. The school used eight staff development

days last summer and will have twelve days this summer. Once-a-month Saturday staff development days will continue through May 1999, and consultants will be on campus twice a month to coach teachers in such areas as literacy efforts and the student exhibitions

A4

■ *Is the school a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning?*

A large school in population if not in its physical plant, Fremont is an urban school with significant truancy and student discipline problems. Most Fremont students considered their school safe and orderly in the recent student survey and their perceptions may reflect such improvements as the addition of more campus security personnel, a truancy reduction program, and the popular Conflict Resolution program. Some teachers feel that procedures in place for dealing with students with criminal records need to be consistently followed by the district.

Interviews revealed that students appreciate the friendly atmosphere, but also view their campus as plagued by graffiti, trash, and dirt. Most believe that the overcrowding has much to do with the depressing condition of the campus.

The campus is overcrowded, and the problems of overcrowding plague the school site. Graffiti is present on the outside of the school despite the efforts of both the school and district to eliminate it with surveillance cameras and regular, weekly clean ups. The academies try to address these issues, and there has been some discussion about locating academy rooms closer to each other so that students can take more ownership for their immediate environment. Other ideas include having students clean the graffiti and have the work count towards their community service requirement.

Overcrowding has created other difficulties as well. Every nook and cranny is used for classroom space and much of the physical education area is taken up with portables. This makes for a complicated maze of classrooms and using non-classroom spaces to provide instruction to students, and many teachers sharing rooms

Parents interviewed from the Bilingual Advisory Committee expressed concern about school safety, about some places on and around the school that are unsafe for children. They reported incidences of student harassment and thefts of money. The principal stated, "The school and district responded to these negative reports by assigning a police office to the site, by installing schoolsite security cameras, by offering ongoing training for campus supervisors through student discipline. Another parent acknowledged that this year, the school has a feeling of improved security on campus and that students are more comfortable," as evidenced by the comparison of suspension data for 1996-97 and 1997-98.

- *Is the culture of the school characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement?*

Staff is working on improving trust through summer staff development days and monthly Saturday staff development days, BASRC training, and School-to-Career Academy Summer Institutes. Professionalism is encouraged through affiliation with professional organizations. A high percentage of the staff is actively involved in staff development.

Bilingual Advisory Committee parents in interview report they are treated rudely and discourteously by office staff. They report they are treated with disrespect and their needs are not addressed by front office personnel. The principal stated, "The school continues to work on its customer service component. Some parents and community members have severely criticized the front office staff for displaying behavior perceived as discourteous and disrespectful while others have complimented them for their efficiency. The negative reports, however, have justified special training, which has been supported by District staff. It has also prompted the school to include training for office personnel in its overall plan."

Fremont High school identified its growth needs as follows:

1. The district needs to follow through with commitment to eliminate overcrowding and the sharing of classrooms by teachers.
2. New teachers need more orientation to the school.
3. Curricular development should continue to be a priority with a constructive form of evaluation.
4. More time to plan and implement curriculum is needed.
5. A sense of shared responsibility for student achievement is needed.
6. Expand Focused Reading to cover other areas, such as learning about rubrics.
7. Establish unified planning time for academies so groups can learn from each other.

Areas of Strength:

- ✓ Redesigning the school into academies provides students with closer relationships with their teachers and meaningful curriculum
- ✓ A wide range of staff development opportunities offered outside of the school day and Saturdays focusing on instruction and ESLRs.

Keys Issues:

- ✓ The effect of staff development on student achievement has not been evaluated
- ✓ Classroom teachers need more assistance in understanding data and its use for making instructional decisions

Evidenced through:

Focus Group Meeting
Parent Interviews
Staff Interviews
Student Interviews
Principal Interview
Self-Study Report
Observations

Curricular Paths

What currently exists

Students in the ninth grade take courses that are required for graduation and electives. During the spring semester, students attend assemblies given by the principal to help them determine their academy choice.

The school has six academies and an International House; each has its own complement of teachers and students. Three academies are state funded: Architectural & Design, Health & Bioscience, and Media Communications. In the state-funded academies especially, efforts are made during common planning times to integrate the academic and career preparation curriculum.

Students in the International House can choose an academy when they attain a fluency level of 5. Many do not achieve this level even in their fourth and last year.

Core curriculum courses are taught in the primary language or as SDAIE classes in the International House.

B1

- *Do all students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum that supports the achievement of the ESLRs?*

Overall, the actual performance of the students with respect to the academic curriculum is poor. There are high failure rates in biology, algebra, career exploration, world civilizations, and focused reading. This is the first year that all students are taking algebra and that fact may account for the reduction in passing grades in this discipline. More data is needed to support opinions on the matter, however.

Since ESLRs are not aligned with curriculum and instruction, it is difficult to assess how students are accomplishing expected schoolwide learning results. In the next school year, the focus of staff development will be to connect curriculum, instruction, and ESLRs and gather data to assess the progress of students.

Staff development workshops did not assist veteran or new teachers with utilization of new instructional strategies in the delivery of curriculum to students. However, one new teacher stated he/she had learned how to test and develop rubrics.

B2

- *Do all students have access to the school's curricular paths, assistance with development and ongoing adjustment of a personal learning plan and knowledge of post-secondary opportunities?*

The school has developed a process whereby students are informed of the various academy programs allowing for student choices that reflect their career interests and goals. The school makes a conscious effort to balance academies so they reflect the school's demographics. Students select courses by completing a course selection sheet; they do not have formal four-year plans.

The counselor ratio is 500:1 with counselors assigned to one or more academies.

Most students enter the work force or enroll in a two-year post secondary program after graduation.

The state funded and private non-profit funded academies have received the most outside support with businesses that readily employ Fremont students in summer internships. While staff has indicated ROP is within each academy, further explanation of the opportunities for apprenticeships, internships, or ROP programs for students enrolled in the other academies and the International House is needed. The Oakland Unified School District provides paid work-based learning experiences related to the career focus of the academy. The district School-to-Work Office assists all of the academies and works with Oakland Works.

ELD students of level 5 proficiency have some access to the academies while enrolled in the International House. Students with proficiency levels 1-4 are given an opportunity to take a Career Exploration and Technology course to gain information about post-secondary opportunities in education and employment. While the school's goal is English proficiency for ELD students, the opportunity for ELD students with proficiency levels 1-4 to enter an academy is limited.

Some core content courses are aligned with content standards. For example, English and Math are aligned with the district standards.

B3

Are all students prepared upon graduation to continue the pursuit of their academic and occupational goals?

Data does not reflect the preparedness of students to continue their pursuit of academic and occupational goals. There is a high rate of failure in the Career Exploration class.

Areas of Strength:

- ✓ Student choice of academies is more easily accommodated
- ✓ Reorganization of the academy structure has encouraged teacher collaboration
- ✓ Academy programs incorporate career preparation

Key Issues:

- ✓ The school needs to find ways to assure students' first choice of academy
- ✓ Staff and students in the International House need to be connected to academy experience
- ✓ Identified Special Education, RSP, and SDC students need to be connected to academy experience

Evidenced through:

Staff Interviews
Self-Study
Focus Group Meeting
Counselor Interviews
ELD Student Class Schedules

Powerful Teaching and Learning

What currently exists

In a student survey conducted last fall, some students indicated there were classes that were unmotivating or classes that enrolled students who were "not learning anything;" others reported that classes were challenging and engaging. The data presented in the school's self-study focuses on how well a student "likes" programs and situations, but does not present student achievement data which validates student opinion. At this point in time, the school's efforts are very much focused on staff development to improve teacher skills in the classroom. The effects of this effort on improved instruction and student achievement is not documented in the school's self-study, however.

C1

- *Are all student involved in challenging learning experiences to achieve the ESLRs?*

The school has chosen to focus on reading, writing, mathematics, independent work, and critical thinking skills contained in two of the school's ESLRs. There is a district requirement that all ninth graders must take algebra or higher-level math classes; however, there is a high failure rate. Students who fail the first semester are enrolled in "re-start" classes that feature instruction delivered through "distance learning," which is video-delivered instruction. Oakland Comprehensive Partnerships for Mathematics and Science Achievement, CPMSA (part of the National Science Foundation Grant) are

addressing the high number of ninth graders who are not achieving in algebra and the shortage of qualified mathematics and science teachers and a small pool of substitutes that does not cover the daily needs of the sites.

The focused reading period was designed to improve literacy; however, the self-study does not present student achievement data which supports that the period has been successful. The students surveyed reported that they “like” the period, but the impact on their literacy development is yet to be determined. At this point, teacher interviews underscored many positive outcomes, e.g. students are reading who would not usually be reading on their own; teachers have contact with the same students everyday; the dedicated time has helped students recognize their own reading needs; and students are reading in other classes before class begins. To many staff members, students appear more engaged in reading activities, but the students were quite forthcoming about this program innovation as well. They stated that Focused Reading was not a valuable use of time. They felt that faculty and administration “had their hearts in the right place” to improve reading through the Focused Reading period. They did not believe that a quiet reading time necessarily improved their reading neither did they value it. The Visiting Committee saw many students leaving campus during Focused Reading. Students described everything from sleeping, doing homework, talking, passing notes, going to eat, to a few students reading. Visiting committee members observed the whole range of behaviors and activities they described.

The eleventh and twelfth grade students said Advisory Period was a better use of time because it met a variety of their needs such as doing homework, SAT preparation, and college and career preparation discussions. The students said they valued tutoring and discussions about their futures after high school.

Students receive 2.5 credits for Focused Reading, and teachers reportedly differ on how students are graded. While some teachers require that students read during this period, others allow students to do homework; one teacher has recently imposed a biweekly essay on the personal reading. Focused Reading was selected as an innovation by the staff during a 1998 summer institute.

- *Do teachers use a variety of strategies and resources, including technology, to engage students actively and help them succeed at high levels?*

Teachers use a variety of strategies for instruction. Students do research, participate in field trips, job shadowing, internships, and projects. Some teachers use hands-on instruction, real-world based learning problems, and creative activities. But the primary mode of instruction tends to be traditional direct instruction through the textbook.

There is a concern that school efforts to improve student achievement are hindered by a lack of updated technology. Fremont High School has been identified as “next in line” for the Digital High School Grant. There are computer labs that need to be updated. The socio-economic level of students has made it difficult for most students to have

computers at home. Students in Health and Biotechnology, Business and Government especially need access to computer technology.

- *Do all students experience learning opportunities that emphasize higher order thinking skills and integrate academic and applied content?*

Some students are involved in collaborative activities that reflect real-world application. Academies offer curriculum connected to actual use and application. The school recognizes its need to begin to develop curriculum that is relevant to the real world and that engages and challenges the student.

- *Does collaboration occur 1) among staff, 2) between staff and students, 3) among students, and 4) between school and community?*

Many teachers are willing to work together. A lack of time and the fact that new teachers must take courses are cited as reasons why they are not able to collaborate as often as needed. Academy teachers are compensated for working together after school resulting in better collaboration in the academies. Teachers are being trained as peer coaches to enhance collaboration.

Staff and students collaborate on integrated projects. Academies provide a "family model" where teachers with common students can work together. Student surveys say that students develop fond feelings for their teachers. The report does not present student achievement data which describes the impact on student learning.

Some students are able to collaborate with each other while doing integrated projects. They also engage in structured assignments that promote collaboration. Role-plays, labs, group work, classroom discussion, and real-life study groups are some activities requiring student collaboration.

The community is involved in collaboration through the academies. Industry provides job shadowing, internships, and guest speakers. Partnerships have been established between the school and the community with industries throughout the greater Bay area.

C3

- *Do students routinely use a variety of resources for learning and engage in learning experiences beyond the textbook and the classroom?*

Some students use a variety resources beyond the classroom and textbook. Some teachers use primary source materials for instruction. Some teachers use community resources and field experiences. There is a need to improve the use of technology as a resource to enable students to learn beyond classroom walls. Academies provide internships and field trips. These practices, however, are not routine for every teacher. Female Special Education students receive additional support from the Living Out Loud program. There is a concern, however, that the consultation model, which is used when RSP students are completely mainstreamed, has led to the students getting fewer services.

Regular education teachers feel they do not have strategies or support for working with students in the mainstreamed classroom. They believe that the resource specialists need to develop a system for coordinating their services.

Areas of strength:

- ✓ Academies encourage collaboration between teachers, and collaboration between teachers and students, and departments.
- ✓ The school is focused on staff development to improve instruction for students
- ✓ Monitoring of classroom instruction must occur on a regular basis to ensure effective teaching practices and student engagement.

Key Issues:

- ✓ The school must exert greater efforts to provide challenging and engaging curriculum to all students
- ✓ All teachers need to use a variety of instructional strategies to engage all students in higher order thinking skills
- ✓ The school needs to explore strategies for promoting student efficacy by scaffolding opportunities for personal planning as well as community problem solving.

Evidenced through:

Focus Group Meeting
Individual Teacher Interviews
Student Interviews
Observations
Self-Study Report

Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth

What currently exists

The self-study report discusses five areas of support for students to help ensure academic success. The Focused Reading period, special education issues, the ELD program, the library, and the master schedule are all analyzed to see how they fit the needs of Fremont High students.

D1

- *Do all students receive appropriate support to help ensure academic success?*

The Focused Reading Period was established to help increase reading proficiency. Evidence based on standardized scores, teacher observations, and student surveys were utilized. A recent student survey indicates that 70% of students surveyed liked the new reading period. The survey also indicated that students read more outside of class. Interviews with students contradicted the survey findings. How the Focused Reading

period has impacted student learning and accomplishment of the ESLRs is not included in the self-study.

The Special Education Department is working on standardizing support for special education students in special and mainstreamed classrooms. A learning center is available to all special education students. Many students, however, do not visit the center. Lack of qualified personnel has made it difficult for the department to meet special education student needs. Classroom teachers of mainstreamed special education students feel unprepared. There is disagreement among mainstreaming teachers regarding the support they receive from special education. Special Day Class teachers report a lack of new materials for classroom use especially in mathematics and English. New teachers find it difficult to know where to find information on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and veteran teachers still do not feel they have solid procedures to follow when certain situations occur on a regular basis. The failure rate of mainstreamed special education students is a major concern in the school.

ELD students are tested and classified and placed in appropriate classes for their skill levels. ELD students are in the International House until they reach a level 5 of language fluency. It is unclear to the Visiting Team what happens to ELD students and their access to the academies. One ELD teacher said students are retained in the International House English until proficiency level 5 is met and then have access to academies. Administration says students are maintained in International House until reaching proficiency level 4 and then have access to academies and career preparation. The school needs to investigate how to maximize ELD students' access to the academy experience.

The Master Schedule has been structured to facilitate the academy model and to assist students in meeting graduation and college entrance requirements; however, only 10% of graduates enter four-year colleges. The placement of students into academies is structured so that students have access to their choices.

The Library has extended its hours to accommodate students who wish to use the library after school. Students are introduced to the library in the ninth grade with an orientation in the English classes. Teachers may sign up for classroom time with the librarian. With the increase in student population, the school's funding for SB 862 has increased. A faculty committee is being convened to assist the librarian in purchases for the library based on the academies' needs. Fifteen new computers have been added with Internet capabilities. Students are limited to thirty-minute sessions on these computers.

D2

- *Do students have access to a system of personal support services, activities and opportunities at the school and within the community?*

Students have access to a variety of clubs, sports, and service organizations. Students participate in a variety of after school athletic programs designed to fit a wide range of skills. Many leadership opportunities are provided through student clubs such as Black Student Union, La Raza Leadership, Vietnamese Student Club, Polynesian Student Club,

AYPAL, and Chess Club. Guidance counselors serve in each academy and help students with course selection and a path to graduation. The Tiger Health Clinic services are available to all students and provided by medical personnel. The Tiger Clinic's responsive care and the excellence of its follow-through were praised often in the interviews with students and staff.

Staff and students agree that there is a need for growth in all areas of support. For example, tutoring is available after school but few students take advantage of the opportunity.

Students who are not involved in sports stated a need for more activity-based clubs to help them fill their time after school. Intervention programs need to be strengthened. A greater awareness of programs is needed. The school reports a need to increase the attendance of students.

D3

- *Does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to encourage parental and community involvement?*

The school reports that parent and community involvement is limited. Stakeholders have little participation in school governance, course development, and implementation. Parent and community are informed through newsletters and bulletins that are sent home. Staff rely upon information being given to parents by students and that their report cards are utilized heavily by special education teachers as a source of communication. School communication is met on an "as needed" basis. Communications are sent home in parents' native language but not as often as possible. Some community support is evident in academies, though limited.

D4

- *What are the human, material, and financial as well as facilities available to the school?*

Each academy is supported with funding from the School-to-Career Office. Academies may receive additional funding from the state. The physical plant and resources are barely adequate to serve 2300 students. The district has made efforts to provide needed support to address graffiti and more serious health and welfare issues. Classroom supplies are limited; some classrooms are better equipped than others are. New teachers are supported by a mentor teacher program and find this to be extremely beneficial.

- *Are these resources sufficient and effectively used to support all students in accomplishing the ESLRs?*

The district resources for dealing with the graffiti are not adequate. The bathrooms, classroom supplies, and physical facilities are still in need of improvement.

ELD students continue to need additional support for moving into the academy setting before graduation.

New teachers need continuing mentoring after their first two years of teaching,

Special education students have inadequate personnel support. The school and district are trying to address the hiring of qualified personnel.

Areas of Strength:

- ✓ Clubs and leadership activities are available to all students
- ✓ Tiger Health Clinic services are extended to all students
- ✓ Communications are sent to parents in native languages
- ✓ Some new teacher mentor support

Key Issues for Follow-up:

- ✓ Assess effectiveness of Focused Reading on student literacy with multiple measures, building in input from all student constituencies
- ✓ Provide needed support for teachers with mainstreamed special education students
- ✓ Recruit appropriate special education personnel for existing openings
- ✓ Procure adequate material resources for all classrooms
- ✓ Extend student outreach efforts with respect to tutoring programs
- ✓ Build a coherent program of support services
- ✓ Clarify school policies and procedures to ensure teacher effectiveness and consistency
- ✓ Improve user-friendly nature of the communications sent home to parents so that parents are kept abreast of opportunities for their children

Evidenced through:

Self-Study Report
Teacher Interviews
District Interviews
Observations
Program documents
Student Interviews
ELD Student Class Schedules
Focus Group Meeting

Assessment and Accountability

To what extent...

Some Fremont teachers use a variety of methods to assess students. While still relying on traditional testing methods for a significant part of their assessment activity, the staff is

beginning to use various authentic assessment techniques such as rubrics and hands-on projects. With 40% of the staff new to the school, a reorganization effort based on the academy model, and the addition of a ninth grade class, however, the staff is "only beginning to understand the terminology and to develop indicators and rubrics (Self Study Report)."

Various departments--science, English, and math-- have spearheaded the use of rubrics to assess student performance, but the system has not been extended across the curriculum as yet. The school has been awarded a BASRC grant and is using this funding to develop a sound rubric system. Teachers are being trained to contribute to the system and its application, but not all of the staff fully accepts its value at this point.

The school's ESLRs have recently been revised based on school data that demonstrated poor schoolwide performance. Fremont's staff is very much at the beginning stage with respect to using the ESLRs as a focus for assessment of students and the educational process. The staff knows that there is still a great deal to be done, but appears to be willing to do whatever is necessary to improve the school's assessment processes.

E1

- *Do teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate students and to modify curriculum and instructional practices?*

The self-study states that "a wide variety of assessment strategies are used by teachers to evaluate students...." Several different assessment methodologies are mentioned (e.g. tests, quizzes, projects, exhibitions, small group discussions and explanations). Rubrics are just beginning to be developed and have not yet been used schoolwide; hands-on testing has been piloted by a number of departments. It appears, however, that traditional testing methodologies still make up a significant proportion of the student assessment process.

The school has pioneered one innovative assessment method at the twelfth grade level that has already been adopted by the district for other Oakland high schools. The overall process for the Senior Project/Exhibition is still being strengthened. Rubrics to evaluate components of the exhibition process have been written and tested by the panelists scoring the student presentations. The need for scaffolding this twelfth-grade assessment event at prior grade levels (9-11) appears to be fully appreciated.

Some teachers are using assessment results on an individual basis to modify the curriculum and "their approach." Others have only begun to join in on the work of developing schoolwide standards that include rubrics for evaluating student work. While appreciating that students perform at different levels and that children bring different levels of knowledge to their studies, the faculty has a strong commitment to move forward with course content.

The need for coordination between teachers in the same content areas is increasingly appreciated in this school. There have been frequent discussions around this issue, and

an increasing reliance on in-house expertise. At present, faculty activity around the issue of assessment could be described as open-minded but uneven. The science department, for example, uses rubrics to assess students in the areas of scientific method and cooperative learning while the English department is working to produce rubrics for grading essays and other types of assignments. On the other hand, the social studies teachers have a "general agreement" about grading, but have not created standard tests or uniform project requirements.

Teachers have recognized that student grades and performance levels do not always correspond. This finding has enriched their discussions of whether or not to return to the use of district exit exams for student evaluation. The district currently has such exams in math and ELD and foreign languages. Concerns about these exams are coupled with concerns about the district's grading policy. The self-study report summarizes these concerns as follows: "The district grading policy can allow student to receive passing grades for the semester by getting a B in only one marking period with 2 F grades in the other two periods. This is an example of the difficulty with comparing grades, true performance and growth."

Interviews with members of the focus group cited such issues as follows: (1) modest collaborative efforts in the area of assessment have enriched experiences of collegiality; (2) some students appear to be gaining a better understanding of the expectations for specific projects and assignments through use of the rubric system; and (3) ongoing in-house assessment of new program efforts such as the Focused Reading program and the distance learning course for ninth graders who failed first-semester algebra rests very much on word-of-mouth information passed from teacher to teacher. There is no readily accessible information on who is in the algebra re-start classes; for example, although this could be easily culled at the school site.

- *Do students use assessment results to modify their learning in order to enhance their educational process?*

While the staff appears to be aware of this need, they do not seem to have progressed much beyond discussion about a process for student involvement. Interviews with focus group members revealed that many teachers had observed positive student reactions to rubric use that strengthened their willingness to implement authentic assessment methods and to seek further training so that they can do so.

E2

- *Do the school, district, and community regularly review student progress toward accomplishing the expected schoolwide learning results?*

The school staff is just beginning to understand the process of using ESLRs to drive the educational process. They understand that this is an area of weakness in their ability to assess the school and their students' performance, but many of them are enthusiastic about the potential of the new systems to improve not only their work as teachers but the work produced by students. Community involvement in this process is limited. Other

than staff, other stakeholder groups have had limited opportunities to participate in the actual process of defining and discussing how ESLRs drive the educational process. The self-study process was not used as an occasion to energize the participation of community stakeholders. The Senior Exhibition process would seem to offer another opportunity to enrich this aspect of the school's functioning.

■ *Are assessment results reportedly regularly to the entire school community?*

At present the school and district use traditional methods for making parents aware of their children's progress (report cards, progress reports, parent conferences).

To inform the community of Oakland about the school's performance, the Oakland Unified School District's Department of Research and Evaluation regularly prepares individual school reports as well as school by school comparisons. These reports are made available to the public through news releases and other formal channels of communication. A more user-friendly annual report to the Fremont school community has not been considered as yet.

E3

■ *Does the assessment of ESLRs drive the school's program development and resource allocation?*

As the ESLRs are in the early stages of implementation, they have only begun to have an effect on the school's planning. The implementation of the Focus on Reading Program, the restructuring of the school on the academy model, and the mainstreaming of special education students have affected resource allocation, however, reflecting the staff's prescriptive work after analyzing school performance data.

Areas of Strength:

- ✓ Recent organizational and program changes have been prompted by data analysis
- ✓ English, math, and science teachers are using rubrics to assess student work
- ✓ The school has a wide variety of assessment methods
- ✓ The district uses formal channels of communication to convey annual test data across the community
- ✓ Staff is increasingly receptive to authentic assessment methods

Key Issues:

- ✓ The school has limited access to the student assessment data collected by the district
- ✓ Teachers are not able to use the data that exists to make better instructional decisions based on student needs. Further training is needed in this area
- ✓ The high failure rates in algebra need even further investigation; the situation requires articulation with feeder schools
- ✓ The data culled for other school endeavors were not used by the staff to inform their considerations for the self-study

- ✓ Assessment and accountability information needs to be communicated to parents regularly and in a user-friendly manner
- ✓ Staff members need to become acquainted with simple data collection methods for everyday use in-house; e.g. *who* is in the new re-start algebra classes?

Evidenced through:

Teacher Interviews
 Student Interviews
 Parent Interviews
 Focus Group Meetings
 Leadership Meeting
 District Interviews
 Data presented separate from self-study as requested by Visiting Team: Sat 9 results, A-F completion rates, ELL Redesignation rates, Grade distributions by course, and other information
 Self-Study Report

Synthesis of Schoolwide Areas of Strengths and Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up

The school has made tremendous strides in its restructuring efforts to provide greater educational opportunities for students and to improve the quality of instruction. Many new strategies have been introduced and new programs implemented in a short time. Some readiness activities for these changes have occurred over many years just recently culminating into action. Block scheduling, academies, ELD house, and ninth grade houses are the culmination of the years of preparation and recent innovations.

The school has been supported by BARSC in staff development and in identifying strategies to explore. Most teachers have engaged in most staff development opportunities and some have modified their instructional strategies in the classroom. Collaboration among teachers has been an increasingly rewarding outgrowth of the academy model.

The school is having difficulty understanding district-generated data and how to use it for decision-making at the site. Baseline data for assessment of new programs and strategies was not collected beyond the basic data supplied by the district. The school has not yet engaged in a formal evaluation process to analyze the success of its new programs and strategies on student learning. The staff development program has not been evaluated in terms of student results. The ability of the school to understand the effect of intervention strategies and new programs is essential for future planning of school improvement.

Schoolwide areas of Strengths:

1. Redesigning the school into academies provides students with closer relationships with their teachers and meaningful curriculum
2. A wide range of staff development opportunities offered outside of the school day and Saturdays focusing on instruction and ESLRs
3. Student choices of academies are more easily accommodate through their Master Schedule
4. Reorganization of the academy structure has encouraged teacher collaboration, and collaboration between student and teachers
5. Academy programs incorporate career preparation
6. The school focuses on staff development to improve instruction
7. Clubs and leadership activities are available to all students
8. Communications are sent to parents in their native language
9. Some new teachers receive mentor support
10. Recent organizational and program changes have been prompted by data analysis
11. Some English, math, and science teachers are using rubrics to assess student work
12. The school has a wide variety of assessment methods
13. The district uses formal channels of communication to convey annual test data across the community
14. Staff is increasingly receptive to authentic assessment methods

The Visiting Team agrees with the major growth areas identified by the school.

The following list of critical areas for follow-up is a synthesis of 1) growth areas addressed by the school action plan, 2) suggestions to strengthen these areas already identified in the action plan sections, and 3) additional areas identified by the Visiting Committee.

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up:

1. The effect of staff development on student achievement needs to be evaluated in terms of student results
2. Classroom teachers need more assistance in understanding data and its use for making instructional decisions
3. Provide challenging, rigorous, and relevant curriculum to all students including students in special programs
4. All teachers need to use a variety of instructional strategies to engage all students in higher order thinking skills
5. Students need support for developing self-efficacy
6. Focused Reading needs to be assessed as to its effect on student literacy
7. Teachers with mainstreamed special education students need appropriate support to ensure student learning success
8. Adequate personnel needs to be available to support all special education students appropriately for student learning success

9. An coherent system for student support services for students needs to be organize and implemented
10. School policies and procedures must be uniformly enforced by all school staff
11. Create user-friendly communications for all stakeholders
12. Improve communication with the district so useable data may be supplied to the school
13. High failure rates in algebra, biology, Focused Reading, and world cultures need to be addressed.
14. A schoolwide system needs to be developed for the collection of student assessment data, discussion of data as it relates to the instructional program, and application to drive the decision making process to improve student results
15. Monitoring of classroom instruction needs to occur on a regular basis to ensure effective teaching practices and student engagement
16. Teachers are not able to use data that exists to make better instructional decisions based on student achievement
17. The school has limited access to student data collected by the district
18. The high failure rates in algebra need even further investigation
19. The data culled for other school endeavors were not used by staff to inform their considerations for the self-study
20. Assessment and accountability information needs to be communicated to parents regularly and in a user-friendly manner
21. Staff members need to become acquainted with simple data collection methods for everyday use in house; e.g. *who* is in the new re-start algebra classes?
22. The school needs to find ways to assure students first choice of academy
23. Identified Special Education, RS, and SDC students need to be connected to the academy experience
24. Staff and students in the International House need to be connected to the academy experience

Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement

♦ *Include a one page summary of the schoolwide action plan*

The school has presented three action plans. The first "Develop and Implement Student Centered Curriculum," the second "Develop a Support Network for Parents to Ensure Their Own Involvement," and third "Develop and Continue to Improve Comprehensive Student Support Network." The first action plan is to help students achieve all ESLRs. The second action plan was based on the recognition that parents are key to helping students to work independently and collaboratively, the need to respect others' differences and culture, and learn good citizenry and social responsibility. The third action plan was designed to focus in on communication, critical thinking, decision-making skills, and use of technology so students will succeed at accomplishing the ESLRs. These three action plans cover major areas for improving student performance.

The assessments in the action plans do not indicate the expected effect on student learning in clear, measurable evidence. How the school will know what constitutes success is not presented in the plans.

The specific timelines are separated from the action plans in a Work Plan. The activities in the work plan are not correlated and connected to each action plan. It is difficult to see the relationship of some activities in the work plan and the accomplishment of the action plans.

The leadership team has determined through discussions with the visiting committee and reviewing the visiting committee preliminary report that an action plan addressing the need for a system of schoolwide assessment is needed. The team worked on the new action plan and presented a working draft to the team (attached to this report).

♦ *Comments on school improvement issues*

The topics for school improvement are based in the school's recognition that students need support to succeed. The school recognizes that all students must have a rigorous and relevant curriculum delivered to them in every classroom. Teachers have been involved in improving their teaching strategies through staff development. Staff has been continuing to discuss and refine their understanding of the school's mission and ESLRs.

The school recognizes that the curriculum will need to undergo major revision to ensure that all students have appropriate experiences to guarantee their acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and behaviors required for graduation and post-secondary success. The first action plan addresses this need.

The school also recognizes that the appropriate support systems must be in place to assist students to meet their goals. The second and third action plans devote time and resources to ensure students have the needed support.

Schoolwide Action Plan

- ***Adequacy***
- ***Addressing the critical areas for follow-up***
- ***Enhancement of student learning***
- ***Feasibility within existing resources***
- ***Degree of commitment schoolwide and system wide***

The school's action plans in the self-study are aimed at large concepts that could help students succeed. However, the Tasks and Assessments do not seem adequate to accomplish the overall goal of the plans. The generalization of what needs to happen to make the plan successful indicates that the school may be unsure of what exactly the interventions will be or how they will be assessed as to effectiveness.

Assessment is a major weakness in the self-study and the ability of the school to determine exactly what interventions need to be taken to improve student performance. The school shows an understanding for general areas for improvement, but does not indicate the data in the self-study showing the specific need or an intervention addressing a specific problem.

Without connecting student assessment as indicators for student improvement, the school makes assumptions about what strategies will work but does not indicate how they will know if the strategies worked. This will make it difficult to understand exactly what strategies to continue because they are working and which to drop because they have no effect. This will limit the school's ability to maximize results with limited resources.

The school has adequate resources and support to accomplish their action plans, as long as the school defines specific timelines, specific interventions and strategies, and has an appropriate way to assess student improvement that indicates that the interventions and strategies were the cause.

The school is highly committed to schoolwide improvement. The staff engages in regular staff develop, even on Saturdays. The school has sought and uses outside coaches to assist to improve teaching and learning. Staff meetings are being utilized to continue their discussions around student work and curricular issues. The school district is willing to provide needed staff development so school staff may acquire the skill to do the work.

The Leadership Team worked on developing an action plan to address the need for an assessment system to help drive their decision making for school improvement. The new action plan exhibits clearer understanding of the need for assessment and the use of assessment for improving student learning. The Team also exhibits a clearer understanding of the necessary components of a workable action plan.

Existing factors that support school improvement

- ✓ Staff is dedicated to school improvement and most staff participate in opportunities for staff development
- ✓ Leadership is focused on school improvement and making systemic changes to assure it
- ✓ The district provides staff development
- ✓ Teams are beginning to be formed that represent stakeholders in the school who will engage in actual school advisement and planning

Impediments to school improvement

- ✓ The school is overcrowded, and absenteeism of staff and students is high
- ✓ Maintenance of site facilities is an ongoing difficulty and demoralizes staff and students
- ✓ All staff is still not united in the school's vision
- ✓ Teachers have not made connections between curriculum and instruction, state and local standards, and the school's expected schoolwide learning results

Soundness of follow-up process to monitor accomplishment of schoolwide action plan

Action plans presented in the self-study may need more specified components in order for the school to monitor their progress successfully.

The action plans presented in the self-study need to be connected to the steps and timeline of the work plan. There needs to be clear connections between selected activities and the accomplishment of each goal in each action plan.

Responsibilities of specific people need to be indicated. This will assist others to look to those who are doing the actual work and assist the action plan to diagnose progress more accurately at every step and benchmark of the plan.

Examination of specific student achievement data may assist the school to focus efforts and activities to affect particular indicators of student accomplishment. This will allow the school to be more specific in their interventions and assist them to adjust their action plans along the way to their goal. This focus will also assist the school to measure the success of each action plan.

ACTION PLAN IV: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Goal: Develop strategies to assess student achievement

Rationale: Valid, fair and reliable data is necessary to inform our practices and thereby improve student achievement.

ESLR's Addressed: All

Benchmark	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Resources	Assessment Strategies	Time Lines	Reports of Progress
I Curriculum aligned with standards	Revise curriculum to ensure that goals and strategies are aligned with state, district and site standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department Heads Academy Directors Cluster Leader House Leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Development Conferences State Standards District Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group assessment Student achievement results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin June, 1999 Expected completion, August, 2000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers report out to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments Academies Parents Community
II. Use data to assess the effectiveness of site programs and activities	<p>A) Determine the effect of our small learning communities on student achievement</p> <p>B) Measure the effectiveness of Sustained Silent Reading</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academy co-directors Administration Data coordinator STC coach STC liaison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum committee Conferences Critical friends Support provider MPR State partnership academies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher observation Performance based activities Student assessment Parent assessment District and State testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academies Staff Departments Students Parents Community Business partners District School to Career office
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy Coach SSR Teachers Data Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Curriculum and Research Depts. Conferences Curriculum Committee Consultants Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observations Surveys District and State tests Diagnostic tests Anecdotal records Student reading journals Proficiency tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biannually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Students Parents Community
	C) Determine whether Senior Project is a viable tool to measure senior competency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sr. Exhibition Coordinator Curriculum Coordinator Data Coordinator IAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School to Career office District Curriculum Dept. Parents Community Business partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher assessment Student results Action research Seniors' post-secondary choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May, 1999 and on-going 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Students Parents Community District Post-secondary partners

ACTION PLAN IV: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Benchmark	Action Steps	Person (s) Responsible	Resources	Assessment Strategies	Time Lines	Reports of Progress
III. Teachers engage in use of multiple strategies to assess student achievement	Teachers will be trained to use multiple strategies to assess student work relative to their attainment of ESLR's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Development Committee Data Coordinator Administration BASRC School Coach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Development Conferences Peer Coaching Peer observation District Curriculum and Research Departments Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Observations Norm Referenced Tests Performance based Activities Action Research Student self-Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June 1999 Staff Development October 1999 Student Release Day Continue in Spring and Summer 2000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers share assessment strategies results with their academy, the ninth grade cluster, their house and their department Teachers share assessment strategies with parents and community
IV. Teachers use rubrics to assess student achievement	Continue to train staff to develop and use rubrics as a tool to determine the degree to which ESLR's are attained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Development Committee Data Coordinator Administration BASRC School Coach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Development Conferences Peer Coaching Peer observation District Curriculum Department Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Models of Rubric District Department of Curriculum and Instruction Outside evaluation: consultants, BASRC, UC, MPR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 1999 through September 2000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Students Parents Community
V. Data resource files and other record keeping for use as resource	Maintain adequate records on student achievement for analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Coordinator Administration Counselors Academy Directors Department Heads Senior Project Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District SASI MPR BASRC Consultants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current and complete data files on school's areas of focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Students Parents Community District Post-secondary partners