

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

**FOCUS ON LEARNING
VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

FOR

FREMONT HIGH SCHOOL
Los Angeles Unified School District

APRIL 3-5, 2000

WASC 27905

FREMONT HIGH SCHOOL

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Chapter I: Student and Community Profile

John C. Fremont High School (FHS) was opened in 1924 and is a four-year comprehensive high school in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Los Angeles Unified School District operates fifty-four comprehensive high schools. Fremont is an urban high school located in the heart of South Central Los Angeles. LAUSD is organized into 27 geographic clusters as a result of restructuring, which began in 1994. The Fremont Cluster is composed of one high school, three middle schools, and fifteen elementary schools, with a population in excess of 30,000 students.

The community is a densely populated area and primarily residential. The area is economically disadvantaged with small businesses, light industry and factory work as the commercial base. An overwhelming majority of the students come from families receiving various forms of public assistance. While 98% qualify for free or reduced cost lunch program, no more than 78% participate. The average parent education level is less than a high school graduate.

In 1994, Fremont became a multi-track, year-round school. Each track has 163 days of instruction. The instructional day is extended by 39 minutes to compensate for the loss of 17 instructional days.

Fremont is a large, urban, high school with an enrollment of over 4,300 students. Student enrollment increased by nearly 400 students this year. The ethnic composition is 78% Latino, 21% African American, and less than 1% represent other ethnic groups. Over the last fifteen years, Fremont has transitioned from predominantly African American to predominantly Latino. The Latino student population is primarily composed of immigrants who are limited-English proficient. The LEP/Bilingual program serves over 48% of the student population. The Fremont Cluster is 80% LEP.

Fremont has an extremely mobile student population. A ninth grade population of 1,500 students will lose 500 students by the time they get to tenth grade. Another 500 students are displaced by eleventh grade. The Average Daily Attendance is currently 83.21 %, which is a slight increase from the prior year. There is a continuing effort to improve attendance by adding a .5 counselor and calling parents by the third day of absence. The Math/Science and Technology Magnet average daily attendance ranges from 85%-93%, far exceeding the regular program.

Student Discipline is addressed in a comprehensive manner by Fremont staff. There are three deans, nine counselors and one administrator who are directly involved with student discipline. Suspensions remain very high but expulsions are low. Discipline proceeding involve mostly ninth and tenth grade students. There are three times as many boys than girls involved in discipline matters.

For the past two years, standardized test scores have been consistently low. Based on percentile scores for the Stanford 9 and Aprenda, Fremont students scored 16 in reading

and 23 in mathematics. The Academic Performance Index (API) of 399 ranks Fremont in the lowest decile. In Reading, 65.28% of all students scored in the lowest quintile. In Math, 42.79%, and in Language, 51.78%, scored in the lowest quintile.

Fremont has a wide variety of course offerings in each core curricular area. In addition, Fremont offers electives in visual and performing arts, business and computer education, health, physical education industrial arts and JROTC. Special classes are offered in reading for ninth grade students who scored below the 15th percentile on the Stanford 9 tests.

The Mathematics/Science and Technology Magnet offer students a rigorous course of study with an emphasis in Mathematics and Science. The Academy of Travel and Tourism Program and the Perkins Vocational/Academic Program integrate real work experience in the classroom. Students take advantage of the Advanced Placement offerings in Government, Physics, Calculus, Spanish Language, Spanish Literature, Biology, English, and Chemistry. Last year 400 AP tests were taken and 190 received a score of 3 or better.

A large majority of the 204 teachers have less than five years experience. It is a culturally diverse staff: 36 Latinos, 41 African Americans, 93 non-Hispanic white and 5 Others. Approximately 25% of the teachers possess a Master's degree, 5% have a Doctorate and 22 % possess an emergency credential.

In the past year, Fremont has experience significant turmoil. In September of the current school year, students demonstrated by walking out of school. In early November, the principal was reassigned and an experienced and well-respected principal was brought in to bring the staff together. The staff members appear to appreciate the change in leadership and are working together.

Chapter II: Progress Report

During the last three years, the school has had many accomplishments. Some of the highlights are listed:

- Title I and the Bilingual programs have expanded the integration of technology into the curriculum. Computers are in classrooms and there are five computer labs. Technology training is on going.
- The Academic Decathlon Team has finished as high as 15th in the Super Quiz and 30th in the LAUSD competition. Student interest and enthusiasm for the Academic Decathlon Team is increasing.
- The Pathfinder Band Organization is a premier performing group in the state. The Marching Pathfinders, the Concert Band, the Color Guard, the Jazz Big Band, the Jazz Combo, and the Percussion Ensemble have won many awards. Yearly, over 40 students are awarded "All District Honors."
- The Fremont Marine Corps (JROTC) unit is actively involved in community service, as well as in inter-JROTC athletic and drill competition. They routinely earn top rankings. They volunteer their services in the community, including the L.A. Marathon and at the West L.A. Veteran's Administration.

In the last year, the library has purchased over 2,000 new books and started a "New Arrivals" section to promote access to high interest literature for reluctant readers. The EIA-LEP program has purchased \$10,000 on Spanish language books for the library. The Visual and Performing Arts Department was awarded a \$70,000 grant from Arts CONNECT that supports collaborative projects. The arts grant will enrich the curriculum through a wide array of workshops and performances.

In spite of a major transition in administration, stakeholders have focused on improving the educational program. Teachers have looked outside their classrooms and better understand their role in the school's instructional program. Teachers are eager to work in collaboration with one another and less in isolation. In the last half-year, morale and expectations have improved significantly.

1. Increase accountability and clarify responsibilities among stakeholders.

Accountability and responsibility among stakeholders remain areas needing improvement. The size of the school plant, the large enrollment, and year-round status on three tracks offer difficult challenges in the areas of accountability and responsibility. The school staff has begun to make some improvement as evidenced by publication of responsibility charts, policies, and minutes of School Site and Leadership meetings. The rapid turnover of teachers and administrators during the last three years has seriously affected the school's ability to improve accountability and clarify responsibilities. It is hoped that the increase in staff stability will allow for continued improvement in this area.

2. Improve daily student attendance.

Attendance has improved a few percentage points every year over the last three years. Student absences still range from 15-20% per day. There is a tardy policy enforced with consequences ranging from a warning by the teacher to referral to the dean's office for a parent conference. Excessive tardiness is still significant during first period. It has improved due to regular tardy sweeps.

The PDSA counselors, deans, and the Drop-Out Prevention Coordinator all work together to counsel students with attendance problems. They set up contracts, work with families, and make recommendations to outside agencies as needed. Recently, a part-time PSA counselor was added to the staff to increase the number of parent contacts and to counsel with students to improve daily attendance.

3. Improve students' acquisition of reading, study, and test taking skills to better prepare them for high school and post-secondary curricula.

Students' composite reading scores remain in the low eighteenth percentile rank on the Stanford 9 Test. Nonetheless, many strategies have been employed to address students' reading skills.

In partnership with UCLA, facilitators from Center X met weekly for three months in 1998 with small groups of teachers in core subjects. They worked together to develop lessons to improve reading comprehension in the content areas. "Literacy for All", in another partnership with UCLA, gave another group the opportunity to receive hands-on training in developing strategies for teaching reading and writing. In the spring of 1997, content area teachers received training at the Los Angeles County Office of Education Teacher Technology Center that provided teachers with strategies to create multimedia projects and lessons to be used in the classroom.

Title I provided funded for teachers and parents to attend Marie Carbo Reading Styles conferences for the last three years. Teachers then conduct workshops to help other teachers learn to use those reading strategies.

During this school year, "Reading for All", a pilot reading program, was implemented. It consists of three teachers with six classes. The program targets students who scored below the 15% on the Stanford 9. The program is highly structured and provides students with individualized learning opportunities to develop and strengthen their reading skills.

Teachers have invested time and effort in understanding how to improve reading. They continue to attend literacy conferences and, along with the cluster, are close to defining the literacy program.

4. Expand the availability of and access to materials and resources within the school and community.

The number and quality of textbooks have been expanded although there remains a need for more textbooks. Funds have come from several sources including state, district, categorical programs, Rodriguez funds for new teachers, and L.A. Adopt-a-School. The superintendent made available a grant to purchase additional textbooks.

The school library is undergoing a revitalization process. Since June 1999, the library has converted to computerized processing, rebuilding and modernizing the collection as well as remodeling the facility.

Technology has improved significantly through Title I and Digital High School funding. Since receiving school-wide status as a Title I school, Fremont has used the funds to supplement the instructional program with two multimedia computer centers: language arts and math support. The Digital High School grant has provided technology training, five new computer labs, classroom computers, Internet access and networking in four labs.

Fremont is expected to have infrastructure put in place to facilitate the wiring needed for the Digital High School grant. It is being funded from Measure BB.

5. Increase parent/community involvement in school activities and decision-making.

Parent/community involvement in school activities, and decision-making is inadequate and inconsistent. Attendance at monthly Bilingual and Title I Advisory meetings is sparse. Day-to-day parent involvement is limited.

Title I and Bilingual community representatives serve as liaison with parents/community and the school. They contact parents and members of the community regarding the school advisory meetings, programs, activities, and other vital school news.

The UCLA Parent Curriculum Project invited parents to participate in a training program for twelve weeks. This program focused on language arts, history/geography, mathematics, and science instruction. Thirty-five parents within the cluster were enrolled the initial year it was done. There has been limited follow-up with parents since the training.

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Chapter III: Self-Study Process

Upon graduation from Fremont High School, students are expected to be:

Effective Communicators who:

- Demonstrate proficiency: Listening, speaking, reading and writing in English for a variety of purposes.
- Apply critical thinking, problem solving and computational skills to academic and real life situations.

Life-Long Learners who:

- Set goals, assess needs, and apply appropriate educational, professional and personal strategies, to accomplish identified goals.
- Gather, interpret and convey information from a variety of sources for an intended purpose.
- Use technology appropriately as a tool to enhance learning and to perform complex tasks.

Quality Producers who:

- Work cooperatively and demonstrate appropriate interpersonal and social skills.
- Create intellectual, artistic and physical products to represent meaningful concepts.
- Contribute time, energy and talent to improve the quality of life in the community and the nation.

"The Mission of Fremont High School is to effectively educate all students to become self-sufficient, life-long learners who are active, responsible citizens in a global society." The "Focus on Learning" process has provided Fremont High School with the opportunity to collaboratively review and build consensus regarding its philosophy and purpose to determine expected school-wide learning results. The process led to the revision of the previously developed ESLR's. All stakeholders agreed to retain the school's mission statement. The mission statement reflects the vision all stakeholders have for the students. The self-study was conducted with the intention of objective review and accurately reflecting the school's program for students. Student work was examined, and students in classrooms were observed. Staff, parents and students were interviewed, student data was reviewed, and surveys were analyzed. From March through June 1999, stakeholders in home groups and sub-committees began the process of refining the ESLR's.

ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE KEY OUTCOMES

(1) The involvement and collaboration of all staff and other stakeholders to support student achievement.

The development of the Fremont's Expected School-wide Learning Results involved the entire staff over a 12-month period. Students and parents had minimal involvement in developing the ESLR's. Each department reviewed and aligned the old ESLR's with the language of the district's content standards. . The ESLR's were presented to staff during staff development day last spring, to parents at advisory meetings and the Leadership Class. In July 1999, ESLR's were distributed to students in record rooms and posters were displayed in classrooms and offices.

(2) The clarification and measurement of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do through expected school-wide learning result and academic standards.

The school is working to align the State Standards, the curriculum, SAT 9 and other measures to develop a clear picture of what students should know and be able to do. New textbooks, training of teachers, curriculum development by teachers and use of Title I and other support structures must all be aimed at improving student success.

(3) The gathering and analyzing of data about students and student achievement.

The school has begun to gather and analyze data on student achievement, and is being trained by the district to use that data to drive curriculum development. The importance of data collection and analysis cannot be over-emphasized. Using up-to-date information that provides an accurate picture of students' achievement and progress will allow the school to make informed decisions about the educational program.

- (4) The assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning in relation to ESLR'S, academic standards, and WASC/CDE criteria.**

The staff is committed to the assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning. They have begun aligning the ESLR's, academic standards and WASC/CDE criteria in a variety of core and elective subjects and are continuing to work on this process.

- (5) The alignment of a long-range action plan to the school's areas of need; the development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the plan.**

Although the school has written a long-range action plan, it does not have action steps that show movement toward the school's areas of need in measurable steps. The school is committed to the concept of accountability but the plan does not detail a system for monitoring the accomplishment of the plan. The action plan needs to be enhanced to include specific steps to achieve the school's goals.

DOES THE SELF-STUDY ACCURATELY REFLECT THE SCHOOL'S PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS?

Completion of the self-study has given the school an opportunity to assess the quality of its student program and to review the program's ability to address the ESLRs. The study revealed that a rigorous and challenging instructional program is not available in all classrooms.

DOES THE OBSERVABLE EVIDENCE REFLECT A SAMPLING OF WHAT ALL STUDENTS ARE DOING AND PRODUCING WITH RESPECT TO THE WASC/CDE CRITERIA AND THE ESLR'S?

The school provided limited evidence of students work. Some evidence was available in some classrooms, but the visiting team was unable to develop a clear picture of the relationship between student work and the ESLR's.

DOES THE OBSERVABLE EVIDENCE SUPPORT THE SCHOOL'S IDENTIFIED AREAS FOR GROWTH?

Growth needs, as identified in the self-study, were formulated as a direct result of the self-study process. The school recognizes that staff development is a critical component in the creation of a student program that addresses the needs of all students while providing instruction that emphasizes integrated skills and instructional strategies across the curriculum.

The School-wide Action Plan needs to be expanded to include the necessary steps and details needed to bring about program improvement. The identified outcomes are too

broad and do not target closely enough the specific shortcomings impacting student attainment of the ESLR's.

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

A. VISION, LEADERSHIP, AND CULTURE

The Vision, Leadership and Culture focus Group, and for that matter, all of the Focus Groups have had a challenge to get the Self Study finished in that this school operates on three attendance tracks and there is always someone off track at any given time as meetings are happening. But in spite of this the group has worked together to produce a picture of the school, as they know it.

A1 The school has a clearly stated vision of purpose based on its beliefs, student needs, and current educational research. Supported by the governing board and the central administration, the school's purpose is defined further by expected school-wide learning results: what all students should know and be able to do by graduation.

The Los Angeles Unified School District has a clearly stated mission statement for its students and Fremont has taken that mission statement, with very little modification, and made it its own. The District's mission statement also serves among stakeholders as a guide for what they can expect. The school reviewed and revised the ESLRs, resulting in a much greater buy-in by all stakeholders. Various programs at the school imply the commitment to effective, responsible graduates including the Travel and Tourism academy and the teaching academy. In the student survey, administered summer 1999, a majority portion of the student population expressed dissatisfaction with everything from decision-making policies of the administration to the safety of the campus to staff sensitivity to racial issues. These sentiments are mirrored in the responses of the staff to similar questions on the staff survey. However, the change of the principal in November of 1999 has brought about a positive change in attitude and outlook by all stakeholders.

The turnover in administrative staff is mentioned several times in the report and there has been little time to reformulate a vision for the school. It appears that the previous leadership had little staff support. Fremont is in need of a clear, articulated vision shared by all stakeholders. Assessment data, including the API, push for immediate action, but there are a number of new and energizing programs with good potential at the school and support for those programs needs to be worked into the fabric of the institution. Campus beautification, including renovation of the quad area, the painting of the gymnasium exterior wall with "Pathfinder Pride", and the retiling of floors with school colors and mascot, has rejuvenated a sense of pride and respect by both students and staff.

The fact that the school board's mission statement so closely resembles that of Fremont is indicative that District support exists. However, the incredible size of the LAUSD and the challenges that arrive with that make direct district support less focused. The District has supported the year-round program, which gives students alternatives to the customary

September-June schedule and allows new options for facility usage that has somewhat diminished the overcrowding.

The staff at Fremont supports the mission and understands and pursues achievement of the ESLRs. The ESLRs are prominently displayed throughout the campus and inside each classroom and office. Teachers review the ESLRs and discuss how they are connected to daily instruction with their students.

A2 The school leadership makes decisions and initiates activities that focus on all students achieving the expected school-wide learning results. The leadership empowers the school community and encourages commitment, participation, collaboration and shared responsibility for student learning.

Issues, which affect students in the classroom, are dealt with by the Instructional Leadership Team, which works with the administration and the faculty to establish and coordinate curricular and classroom policies and innovations. They are working to establish standards-based instruction, reading and writing instruction and vertical teams in all curricular areas. This group has made decisions directly related to student achievement issues such as low test scores and instructional improvement. The School Leadership Council works with the administration to determine budgeting, scheduling and to prioritize needs on the campus so that instruction goes as smoothly as it can. There is no indication in the report of the make-up of either of these two groups, though, and the organizational chart does not include either of these groups to further explain their duties or their influence.

Since the previous WASC visit, the school has made a concerted effort to include the community in the day-to-day activities of the school. Programs with community partners such as the CBOP academic outreach program with UCLA have benefited students in their preparation for life after high school. Lack of parent involvement remains a problem. Though parents are welcome on a variety of committees such as the Title I Advisory, Bilingual, and Site Councils as well as in many campus meetings, few take the opportunity to become involved. The response to the parent questionnaire was so small that the school could not deem it a representative sample and did not include information from it in the report. The opportunities are there for expansion of involvement by both the community and parents; the school will need to find ways to make it happen.

There is a significant difference between the number of entering freshmen and the number of graduating seniors. The largest drop in enrollment occurs between the beginning of the sophomore year and the beginning of the junior year. There needs to be a commitment of the entire school community to address the educational needs of the students and retain them at Fremont High School.

A3 The support, utilization, and monitoring of staff facilitate achievement of the expected school-wide learning results. Leadership and staff are a part of an organized structure that is committed to professional development.

Regular staff and department meetings keep staff informed of events and situations at the school. Several of the teachers have begun to make efforts to collaborate and support each other in their classrooms. The aim is to provide learning experiences that will make the student more successful after high school. The Travel and Tourism Academy along with the Humanitas program both use an interdisciplinary approach, which allows teachers to work together in new ways. Teachers indicate that they are concerned with issues of support in the areas of discipline, preparation time, class size and general support for instructional needs.

Monitoring takes place through Stull teacher evaluations and through departments. Content standards are being implemented and the achievement of those standards will provide another means of determining how well students and teachers are achieving the ESLR's. Funding is available for some conference attendance through 1882 funds and some specialized subject matter funds. With a staff as large as this one, it is hard to determine who should go to conferences. Conference participants are expected, though, to share conference information with other department members. District mandates have limited conference attendance to events, which center on literacy and mathematics. Being on a year-round schedule has allowed teachers to have time to work together on inter- and intra-disciplinary planning problems and questions that arise as they begin their careers.

New teachers have added support from department chairs and veteran teachers at Fremont as well as monthly meetings to address problems and questions that arise as they begin their careers.

The administration is supportive of professional development in the form of conference attendance and staff members are encouraged to participate in forms of staff development during their intersession breaks. Standards-based training is a priority for all teachers. The entire staff will participate in ongoing staff development through the Digital High School Grant as well. Teachers who choose to return to school while off-track are compensated at the Z-rate.

A4 The school is a safe, clean and orderly place that nurtures learning. Trust, professionalism, and high expectations characterize the culture of the school for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement.

The Fremont campus is an older site and requires maintenance more often than a newer site. Recently, efforts have been made to beautify the campus and reinstate pride in the school community. Cleaning, repair and replacement in many areas have brought about a new look, and repainting is in the near future. Increased efforts to control graffiti have resulted in a more positive atmosphere.

Overcrowding has taxed the existing facility and the addition of thirty-two bungalows has alleviated that somewhat. The school has been able to group certain classes, such as the Magnet Program classes in a common area, which helps build a sense of community within that group of students.

A staff of twenty campus supervisors and two uniformed LAUSD police officers focus on the safety of the campus. Campus supervisors are equipped with radios and bicycles, but they do not always have sufficient training to deal with the variety of situations they may face and the various policies they have to enforce. Tardiness and truancy are persistent problems at Fremont and they account for a tangible amount of frustration with the lack of student success.

Discipline, school safety and cleanliness are the exclusive responsibility of administration and addressed in response to situations as they arise. With the change in administration there appears to be a change in attendance and morale on campus. Teachers and staff are receptive to and appreciative of the recent changes, as well as improvements to the grounds and facilities. The staff feels strongly the need for additional Deans and supervisory staff. There continues to be an ongoing problem of truancy and tardiness among students.

Areas of Strength

- Better staff morale with the advent of a new principal
- Success of the cleanup and beautification efforts
- A clear mission statement which parallels that of the District
- Revision of the ESLRs to accommodate changes in priority and instruction

Key Issues

- Establish a consistent tardy and truancy program
- Continue the development of trust and professionalism among all stakeholders
- Coordinate and align student assessment data and programs to address the needs of all students
- Increase parent involvement in all aspects of the school

Evidence in Support of Strengths and Key Issues

- Schoolwide focus group dialogue
- Interviews with students, staff and parents
- Student and teacher surveys
- Self-Study
- Student test data, including API and AP

B. CURRICULAR PATHS

B1 Do all students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum that supports the achievement of the ESLRs?

The document states "various programs are available for students who choose to challenge themselves beyond the minimum standard educational program." It also acknowledges that rigorous, relevant and coherent curriculum must apply to all students. Classroom observation and conversations with students, parents and teachers indicate that students receive a curriculum based on traditional expectations for skills and knowledge. Faculty agrees that students come to Fremont with a wide range of ability levels but the faculty is divided on how to address this issue. Test scores and performance in classes indicate that the Magnet and Academy students, who self select to be in these programs, outscore the mainstream student. More effort needs to be given to finding curricular paths that all students can identify with.

The Focus Group for Curricular paths sees the standards as the force behind the development of curriculum for the school across all departments. Many of the departments are addressing the standards issue and are realigning the curriculum to meet the expectations of standards. The teachers are working with support materials and other sources in an attempt to meet the rigor of standards. More training and resources need to be put to this endeavor. Across-the-curriculum planning appears to be limited to the Humanitas and Magnet programs as evidenced by study of the evidence, student interviews and classroom observations. In the academic foundation courses, learning is primarily textbook-driven. The emphasis of the instructional program appears to be on facts and concepts, which are assessed by the use of chapter tests. The use of rubrics, which reflect the ESLRs and the frameworks, is limited. The relationship among the ESLRs, student work, the standards, and instruction has not been established among students or faculty. Although the district has provided some sample lessons as seen in the evidence collection, students do not seem to be aware of the significance of the ESLRs in their studies. The ESLRs are posted in every room and are announced over the loudspeaker and are highlighted on chalkboards in classrooms. Yet the connection to the curriculum is not evident.

Those students, who are in a pathway, meet A-G requirements or participate in Humanitas and Magnet programs may experience a more consistent package of standards, curricular pathways and engagement with rubrics and ESLRs but the school has not yet reached minimum standards. Teachers express a desire to reach for standards but recognize that many of their colleagues do not have the same expectations. Many of the teachers with more experience are resisting the mandates of standardization and are teaching a traditional curriculum as evidenced by teacher statement and observations in classes. Use of portfolio, application of national and state standards, the ESLRs and the California State frameworks are not seen as usual operations for all students in all classes as evidenced by classroom observation, teacher discussion in Focus group meetings and examination of evidence.

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 document identifies 5 curricular paths: Military, vocational, university, employment and post-graduate training. It also states that the creation of a learning plan for all students would help them take advantage of opportunities provided by the school for access to those curricular paths. However, teacher discussion, and interviews of AP Magnet and ASB students indicate that the use of student four-year plans is widespread among that population. In the mainstream classroom however the articulation of a scope and sequence of classes for all students remains unclear. The document indicates that all of the training necessary to succeed in those 5 paths is available but students do not "pay attention" or take advantage of all of the opportunities available. The document does not indicate the level of outreach the school is committed.

The document details that many students take advantage of educational opportunities outside of the school to attend to the rigors of preparation of school to work related goals. Students should be commended for seeing the relationship of those outside school opportunities although the school has done little to augment a four-year plan leading to these training opportunities. The 9th grade Education and Career Planning course, which meets with all 9th graders for 8 weeks, details an exploration of career and other pathways but the work that is done in this class does not reach the hands of 10th grade counselors. Every effort should be made to connect the work of this class and its revision (Life Skills for 2000-2001) to the work of the counselors in determining curricular pathways for students. Regular counseling to these ends is part of the school's identified area of improvement.

Students' personal learning plans are used primarily for scheduling classes and are checklists of required courses for graduation and /or college entrance.

Introductory levels of courses are open to all students. Completion of prerequisites in core curriculum and elective areas depends on the students' success at the introductory level. College Awareness Night and Career Day activities help students gain knowledge of realistic post-secondary opportunities but appear limited and not threaded through the entire core curriculum.

Articulation with the feeder schools is necessary with regard to the importance of planning for the future and the courses needed for graduation at FHS. The school's self study identifies facilitation of Career Days, enlargement of the functions of the Career Center, and Increased linkages with business in the community as areas of improvement.

Many students see little or no relationship between the curriculum and their future career opportunities, academic performance and future opportunities. The school must seek opportunities to meld the Standards based curriculum, as it evolves, and career awareness for all students in all classes.

Focus Group and student meetings attest to the importance of the four-year learning plan as a live document that is subject to change as student needs evolve. Parent attendance at 10th grade counseling is low. Discussion with counselors indicates that basic information about the high school prior to registration for classes is not discussed with many parents and, as a result, many parents are not informed of opportunities or prerequisites for graduation. Parents who spoke at the parent meeting are requesting opportunities to share in the decisions that affect their students' goals and education.

B3 Are all students prepared upon graduation to continue the pursuit of their academic and occupational goals?

Some students take advantage of outside sources, extra preparation tutoring and other means to achieve success. Opportunities for choice of curricular goals and programs appear to be focused on the Magnet program, the Humanitas program, JROTC, and the Academy of Travel and Tourism.

The AP program is expanding, is successful and is to be commended. Classroom observation, evidence and teacher comment indicate that these honor classes, however, do not provide the level of rigor set forth in the state frameworks. Teachers need to be inserviced and held accountable for the level of instruction deemed appropriate for high school in the state frameworks. District and site plans should reflect the need for teacher inservice and materials.

Although the use of DHS funds has been delayed because of measure BB and other factors not in the school's control, the Fremont teachers have still been able to use inservice to begin to develop personal skills in technology. Although this is a good start, the DHS inservice program should be focused on the need for a level of instruction, which not only incorporates technology, but also incorporates the standards, the ESLRs, and the frameworks. Once the actual technology is in place, however, the DHS Plan must include the incorporation of technology skills imbedded in curriculum for all students. Evidence and classroom observation show many students using technology for productivity. Integrated activities, in alignment with state standards need to be developed.

Areas of Strength

- o Fremont High School has developed Magnet and Academy programs in an effort to provide career focus for student and recruits students into pathways.
- o The numbers of students enrolled in AP class and taking the exams are increasing.
- o Fremont High School has begun Standards Based Instruction

Key Issues

- o Develop a plan to align the curriculum with California Content Standards for all students in all classes at every grade level.

- Counseling efforts must include a four-year learning plan for all students that use the Life Skills class, Magnet and Academy recruiting at the 9th grade level and the State and National Standards of Counseling.
- Evidence of student learning must include incorporation of the ESLRs, content standards, rubrics and frameworks for all students in all classes.
- Increase the opportunities for more students to access a variety of curricular paths, by increasing the number of academies.
- Improve parent and student access to and information about career opportunities and the paths students must take to achieve goals.
- Develop and implement a plan for the infusion of career awareness across the curriculum for all students in all classes.
- Develop and implement a plan for all students to attain their academic and career goals.
- Utilize the DHS plan to enable teachers to increase the integration of technology in all curricular areas.

Important Evidence

Focus Group Discussions
Self-Study Report
Classroom Observations
Evidence
Student Group Discussions
Cluster Interviews

C. Powerful Teaching and Learning

C1 To achieve the expected school-wide learning results, all students are involved in challenging learning experiences. Teachers utilize a variety of strategies and resources, including technology that actively engage and help students at high levels.

There are individual classrooms and collaborative programs at Fremont High School which have fostered challenging learning experiences for all students with the goal of attaining the ESLR's, but it is not the norm overall. The school feels that more coordination is needed to ensure that students have the opportunity for similar experiences in all classrooms. Honors and AP classes challenge the students at the top end of the spectrum, but there is no evidence regarding similar opportunities for the middle to lower student. There is a need for a concentrated effort to address the academic needs of the non-college bound student, as ninety percent of the incoming freshmen do not pursue a college career. The local improvement plan, the Title I program, along with other Categorical programs need to align themselves to address the needs of all students.

A good deal of time and energy is being spent to make students more successful with standardized tests, and with test taking in general. Team teaching and collaboration exist in limited instances, primarily in academy and magnet situations. The large number of ELL students necessitates a variety of teaching techniques in these classrooms. Programs in the Visual and Performing Arts also promote collaboration. Seniors complete a career portfolio as a graduation requirement. Lab reports and lab books in science and cumulative math notebooks provide other evidence of growth over time. Evidence shows that reading and writing are being practiced and encouraged in assignments across the curriculum also.

The establishment of computer labs via Title I and Bilingual funding has opened up many opportunities for students to work with technology for research and production. There is also a need to use some of this technology, specifically computers, for remediation and practice for students who are not succeeding academically. There are five computer labs on campus and they are busy all the time.

While there are good examples of challenging assignments and projects throughout the school, it is still felt that too much of the curriculum is presented through lecture and textbook centered work. The evidence of student work presented to the Visiting Team was insufficient and not in line with the expectations of Focus on Learning. There was not student work available from each teacher, nor was there analysis of student work in terms of nature, frequency and quality. Additionally, there were not samples of student work representing each of the levels: high, middle and low. Both new and veteran teachers need ongoing professional development in current methodologies and trends in education to make sure that all Fremont students have a rigorous and challenging experience.

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As a Concept 6, year-round school, the master schedule must ensure that all students have equal access, regardless of which track they attend. Academics, the Magnet Program and AP/Honors programs are not always available each track, thus off track students must return voluntarily to attend workshop and AP classes

C2 All students experience learning opportunities that emphasize high order thinking skills and integrate academic and applied content. Collaboration about teaching and learning occurs 1) among staff, 2) between staff and students, 3) among students, 4) between school and community.

In classes geared toward the college bound student at the top of the class, higher order thinking skills are the norm. In addition, AP and Honors classes also have project assignments, which emphasize academic and applied content. There are examples of this same attitude at other levels and in other subjects, though it is not pervasive. Academy and Magnet programs offer work involving analytical skills, as well as offering hands-on opportunities that are aimed at connecting the students to the school and to learning.

The teaching staff is beginning to work together more and more to develop and share lessons and units that incorporate higher order thinking skills. Most project-based assignments now have a written component, which has not always been true in the past.

In some classes, teachers have developed rubrics for assignments, and in some instances, students develop rubrics for assignments as well. Guest speakers are used in some classrooms and limited funds are available for field trips.

Staff development is a major concern at Fremont. The staff recognizes their weaknesses and is aware of their need to learn and improve. Time for staff development is limited and Categorical funded budgets need to be prioritized in order to provide adequate monies for staff development. The District has determined the focus for staff development and schools must comply with designated guidelines. Changes such as standards-based education have begun to happen at Fremont and the staff is aware of their need to change as well. Some teachers are beginning adjust their approach to the standards in order to meet the students abilities and levels of progress.

C3 Students use a variety of resources for learning and are engaged in learning experiences beyond the classroom.

Full implementation of the Digital High School grant will allow Fremont to expand its use of technology and has given students access to the Internet. Meanwhile five computer labs are available to classes and are in use all of the time. The library is undergoing renovation which will improve the book collection as well as make cosmetic improvements tot he facility.

Fremont participates in a variety of events outside of the school day, including Academic Decathlon, marching band competitions, speech competitions, drama competitions and JROTC opportunities. Through school assemblies, programs are presented that highlight cultural experiences and backgrounds. Most notable are the Ballet Folkloric Group, the Jazz Band and the Fremont Poets, all of which are also featured at the Jazz Café. Fremont also has a viable interscholastic athletic program that has recently enjoyed considerable success. The sports program allows students to train and compete in twelve different sports on thirty-five teams.

The majority of students polled feel that they have access to a variety of resources to promote and assist learning. Sixty-eight percent of the students indicate that they use various resources beyond a textbook to help with their schoolwork. However, a majority of students also feel that they do not know enough about how to use these resources effectively. Most teachers feel that there are not a variety of resources available for students. This difference of opinion reinforces some basic and underlying differences that exist on the campus regarding the commitment of teachers and students and the effectiveness of the program offered at Fremont. Through the Digital High School Grant the plan is to have five computers in each classroom with Internet access.

AREAS OF STRENGTH

- Renovation and modernization of the library
- Computer labs and increased computer access for students
- Efforts being made to enhance test-taking skills and improve reading and writing scores
- Co-curricular opportunities available for students

KEY ISSUES

- Align curriculum with standards-based instruction
- Provide consistency in assessment within each classroom per subject area (Benchmarks and/or exit exams)
- Implement a focused, consistent reading program schoolwide
- Institute departmental collaboration for consistency in teaching at grade level
- A concentrated effort needs to be in place to begin to address the specific needs of the nearly ninety percent of the students who are not college bound.

Evidence Supporting Strengths and Key Issues

- Self-Study Report
- Observations by Visiting Team
- Student and staff surveys
- Dialogue with focus Groups
- Interviews with students and staff

D. Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth

D1 All students receive appropriate support to help ensure academic success.

All students at Fremont High School have access to a variety of resources that are designed to help ensure academic success. These resources are offered on all tracks and during a variety of times to meet the needs of the students.

The counseling staff meets personally with all tenth grade students and some of their parents to develop a comprehensive, three-year academic plan.

Additionally, Fremont students have access to the college center that is staffed with a full-time college counselor, peer counselors and support staff from local colleges. The college counselor assists students with the college application process, including taking admissions tests, completing applications, and applying for financial aid. Students receive assistance in preparing for college admissions exams through ACT/SAT preparation course offered by Kaplan and paid for by the district.

In an effort to strengthen its reading program, the staff at Fremont has implemented several reading programs. Reading for All program began in July and targets 9th grade students who scored below the 15th percentile on the Stanford 9 Test. There is a plan to implement Accelerated Reader through the library upon completion of the network.

The Bilingual Office provides testing and re-designation of students with respect to their language classification. Additionally, the office keeps accurate account of all teachers and their certification for teaching Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. Audio/Visual items can be found in the bilingual office as well as support for those who can only speak Spanish. The Bilingual Advisory Council (BAC) is a strong component of the Bilingual Program, which brings together administration, staff and parents on issues relevant to students' achievements.

Students are encouraged to take the AP exams in order to get college credits for their efforts. Teachers hold additional study groups during off-track time to assist students with preparation for the exams.

D2 Students have access to a system of personal support services, activities and opportunities at the school and within the community.

All students at Fremont High School have access to a system of personal support services, activities and opportunities at the school and within the community, however, not all students take advantage of this.

Extra and co-curricular activities recruit new students through a variety of activities. All students are encouraged to participate. Teachers are willing to take on extra

responsibilities to assist students who become involved in these activities. Some of the extra-curricular activities are: Desafio Academico, Ballet Folklorico, Jazz Café and Athletics. Many co-curricular activities are available to give students greater opportunities to explore their talents and engage in meaningful learning experiences. A large number of students do not avail themselves of this opportunity.

D3 The school leadership employs a wide range of strategies to encourage parental and community involvement.

The school leadership affords parents and community members the opportunity to become involved through different committees. Some of these committees are: Compensatory Education Advisory Council, Bilingual Advisory Council and School Site Council. Parent Conference Nights are held each semester

D4 The human, material, and financial resources as well as facilities available to the school are sufficient and effectively used to support students in accomplishing the expected school-wide learning results.

Financial resources are allocated to the school to provide the personnel, equipment, and facilities to support student accomplishment of the expected school wide learning results. Other resources include Resource teachers, school psychologist, social worker, and computer lab teachers. Digital High Grant provides funds for technology equipment. District and state funds are utilized for books and other instructional resources. However, there is still a need to coordinate all resources in order to effectively support students' attainment of the ESLR's.

AREAS OF STRENGTH

- The college center is well staffed and provides services to students. A Kaplan SAT Preparation Course is offered to Fremont students and is paid for by the district.
- Students enrolled in AP classes receive extensive teacher support beyond class time. The number of AP tests given has increased significantly from previous years.
- Classroom libraries and Sustained Silent Reading programs have been implemented in many classes. The Accelerated Reader Program for independent reading will be implemented through the library.
- The Bilingual office is well organized and efficiently run. The Bilingual Advisory Committee meets regularly and helps keep parents informed about the school's educational program.
- Parent Conference Nights are scheduled once per semester.
- There are numerous extra and co-curricular activities for students.

KEY ISSUES TO ENSURE QUALITY EDUCATION

- A plan needs to be devised to ensure that all students are made aware of and encouraged to take advantage of the counseling services and resources available to students.
- Develop and implement a program to actively increase parental involvement.
- The UCLA Parent Curriculum Project should be revived and the Fremont parents who were initially trained should be contacted and encouraged to become involved.
- Maintain the school-wide plan to improve attendance.
- Ensure that the tutorial program that is established is a coordinated effort and offers numerous opportunities to students to receive assistance in various subject areas.
- A school wide reading intervention program must be implemented with district support.
- Title I funds should be used to support the school wide reading intervention program.
- Ongoing evaluation and data collection must become part of the reading program.

IMPORTANT EVIDENCE ABOUT STUDENT LEARNING FROM THE SELF-STUDY AND THE VISIT THAT SUPPORTS THE STRENGTHS AND KEY ISSUES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Self-Study
- Focus Group Meetings
- Classroom visitations
- Teacher interviews
- Student interviews
- Physical evidence

E. Assessment and Accountability

E1a. Do teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate students and to modify curriculum and instructional practices?

Focus group discussions point to the use of a variety of assessment strategies in the core curriculum that are used to drive instructional practices other than traditional methods tied to texts. The self-study documents do not reflect the extent of that work. The self-study, classroom observations and examination of evidence point to use of alternative assessment strategies in alternative classes: for example, a performance in a dance class. There is use of more traditional assessments in mainstream classrooms, although the English department appears to be the vanguard of alternative assessment. In fact, the use of assessment is geared to the evaluation of student performance and grading. The use of assessment to determine appropriate curriculum and instructional practices is in beginning stages across the rest of the curriculum. Evidence exists that the school modifies its instruction based on assessment other than the new emphasis, stated as across the curriculum, in multiple choice testing and "Word-A-Day" activities. In addition, the Title I office provides record room activities such as HASTE 2000 to bolster test scores. In discussions with Cluster Instructional Support personnel, no evidence emerged that the district provides comprehensive support to the school for analyzing performance data other than the CBOP project which links students to UCLA for support and academic enrichment and the SBI training which is not school-wide. This program is used to support student assessment, not teacher understanding.

E1b Do students use assessment results to modify their learning in order to enhance their educational progress?

No evidence in the self-study exists that students are self actualized about testing information either in the curriculum or the standardized tests or the ESLRs except for the students involved in the CBOP project. No evidence exists that students see a link between the SAT 9, the curriculum and their futures except in the cases cited of the college bound and the student who has already identified a career choice. Classroom observations, student focus group and the Assessment and Accountability focus group see support for student performance on the SAT 9 as important but extrinsic to the mainstream curriculum. HASTE 2000 materials are distributed in homeroom regardless of the content of the homeroom class content. Students are referred to tutoring but neither the self study nor the evidence establish a connection between student performance and the reason for tutoring or the intentions of the tutoring program to improve student awareness of their own performance. No hard data is collected or maintained that points to a relationship between tutoring and increased student performance. Focus Group discussions, budget reports of Title I, Leadership Council Meeting Agendas and other evidence shows no hard data existing that points to the relationship between school-wide Title I allocations and increased student performance.

E2a To what extent do the school district and community regularly review student progress toward accomplishing the expected school wide learning results?

The self-study states that the ESLRs are in the process of being aligned to the Standards Based Instruction (SBI) and that the district is working on this alignment. Discussion with the Cluster District personnel reveals little support for the school in its examination of the evidence and its attempt to move forward with its goals. If the ESLRs are the driving force behind curricular development and the assessment of that success as a result of the Focus on Learning process, the school needs to develop a mechanism to measure that success and use that evidence to change the curriculum, instruction and practices of the school.

E2b Are assessment results reported regularly to the entire school community?

The school community is regularly advised of test results and grade reports. The school endeavors to have the community understand the links between these pieces of evidence of student learning.

Areas of Strength

- A positive commitment of the entire school community to improve student performance.
- Dedication of all stakeholders to insuring a quality program for all.
- Willingness to accept accountability and implement a plan for student success.

Key Issues

- The school must continue to develop and implement their model of reform that modifies its instruction based on assessment.
- The district must provide direction and comprehensive support to the school for analyzing performance data.
- The District must support a model that collects and interprets hard data that points to a relationship between tutoring, other support services, school wide Title I allocations and increased student performance.
- The school needs to develop and implement a model to inservice the community on test data and what it means.

Important Evidence

- Focus Group Discussions
- Interviews with District Cluster Personnel
- Classroom observations
- Student Interviews
- Self-study report
- Evidence

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Synthesis of School-wide Areas of Strength and School-wide Critical Areas for Follow-up.

General Comments

The school is to be commended for the participation of staff and other stakeholders in the self-study process. As a result of this self-study, the staff members believe that they have a much stronger focus on instruction, learning and assessment.

The important evidence that supports both the school-wide areas of strength and the critical areas for follow-up include: the school's extensive self-study; conferences with members of all School-wide Focus Groups, discipline/stakeholder groups and district office staff; observation of classrooms and support areas (library, computer labs, career center, work experience center, counseling/ guidance center, quad/open areas, admissions/attendance); examination of student work samples; interviews with students and parents; and extended discussions with the Leadership Team and focus groups.

Major School-wide Areas of Strength (Commendations)

1. Students have a strong sense of belonging to the Fremont family.
2. A committed staff that supports the students of Fremont High.
3. Highly improved school and community morale.
4. The appointment of an experienced Principal with strong leadership skills.
5. Improvement of the physical plant, including the library and campus beautification.
6. The number of students and courses in the AP program has increased, resulting in a significant improvement in the passing rate.
7. A commitment to the implementation of Standards-based instruction.
8. Excellent co-curricular programs and opportunities available to all students.
9. A positive commitment of the entire school community to the improvement of student performance.

Major School-wide Critical Areas of Follow-up (Recommendations)

1. Coordinate and align student assessment data and programs to address the needs of all students.
2. Increase parent involvement in all aspects of the school.
3. Align curriculum with California and District Standards.
4. Implement a consistent, focused school wide Reading program.
5. Counseling must include a four-year learning plan for all students beginning at the 9th grade level.
6. Utilize the Digital High School plan to integrate technology in all curricular areas.
7. Enforce and maintain a consistent tardy, truancy and attendance program.
8. Support from Cluster administration must be improved.
9. Upgrading, installation of infrastructure and beautification of the facility must be ongoing.

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Chapter V:

1. **Accountability:** Increase accountability among staff, parents and students to improve student achievement.
2. **Communication:** To improve communication among all stakeholders, in order to increase student achievement, parent involvement and staff efficiencies
3. **Curriculum:** To ensure all students meet the ESLR's, there must be emphasis on academic skills, curriculum alignment with standards and strong viable academics.
4. **Instructional Delivery:** To ensure that all students meet the ESLR's, staff must be given the opportunities to gain knowledge and strategies, to work together to meet the instructional needs of students.
5. **Support Services:** Improvement in the coordination of school support services will enhance support for students' achievement

The School-wide Action Plan addressed the critical areas for follow-up. However, they are general and the Action steps read more like objectives. The Leadership Team and staff need the support and the continuity of district, cluster and site administrators.

There is a commitment on behalf of the school staff and the school administration, so that Fremont High School will produce successful students.

The history of instability at Fremont High School (union and student unrest, teacher turnover, principal turnover) and personnel changes that are scheduled at the district have created low morale, an image problem and a lack of a clear direction in the past. The new spirit of the school, since November of this year is a marked improvement in the morale and the planning capability of the school. The school will require additional steps in order to achieve the desired outcomes.

The School-wide Action Plan should be feasible if there is commitment of additional funding from both district and site levels. The additional funding will be required for staff collaboration, release time, staff development, materials, speakers, trainers, etc.

In order for the School-wide Action Plan to be effective, the Leadership Team and staff need the support and the continuity of district and site administrators.

There is a commitment on behalf of the school staff and the school administration, so that Fremont High School will produce successful students.

Currently, there is no clearly defined follow-up process that the school intends to use to monitor the accomplishment of the School-wide Action Plan. As a result, the goals

established in the Action Plan do not necessarily match the self-study or the findings of the visiting committee.