

# FOCUS ON LEARNING

*The report of the WASC Visiting Committee*

**FOR**

**OAKLAND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL**

*April 7, 8, 9 1997*

Oakland Technical High School  
4351 Broadway  
Oakland, CA 94611

FOCUS ON LEARNING  
APRIL 7,8,9, 1997

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## CHAPTER I: STUDENT/COMMUNITY PROFILE

Oakland Technical High School is located on thirteen acres in North Oakland. There is a main classroom building, girls' gym, boys' gym/ROTC, auditorium/classroom building, and a shop/ classroom building. There are a total of 68 classrooms and 13 departmental offices. The main building houses administration, counseling services, the library, treasurer, student store, attendance office, classrooms, and health clinic.

Oakland Technical High School is one of six comprehensive high schools in the Oakland Unified School District. The original school site was built in 1915 and has, since then, gone through many physical changes including a 7 - year period in which it underwent major renovation to make it earthquake safe. The renovated Tech reopened in 1983.

Oakland Technical's staff consists of 4 administrators, 5 counselors, 81 teachers ( including 1 student Activity Director and 1 TSA) , 1 Librarian, 1 part time psychologist ( funded through Special Education) , and 1 part time Speech Therapist. The 46 classified staff members consists of Special Education instructional Assistants, 2 Aides to the handicapped, 2 half time Bilingual Instructional Assistants, 1 Outreach Consultant ( funded through SB-65), 7 campus Supervisors, 2 Physical Education Attendants, cafeteria staff, and 12 clerical staff.

In addition, Tech has 1 full-time custodian assigned during the day and 5 assigned to evening duties.

There are seven (7) Campus Supervisors, who are responsible for student and staff safety, as well as the security of the facility. They make regular patrols throughout the school and the outside areas, handling disruptions, loitering, trespassing, and identifying potentially hazardous situations. In addition, our administrative staff and other school personnel provide supervision. All school related activities are supervised by the teachers and administrators.

Our campus is open, allowing students to leave during lunch. Some students have difficulty returning from lunch; however, the majority of the students return on time.

We have a fifteen (15) minute tardy rule. Students are not allowed to leave the class for the first fifteen minutes of class. Teachers may allow students to leave with a blue pass after the fifteen minute holding period is over.

All students new to Tech attend an orientation in the Fall. During this orientation, school rules are discussed.

While the School /Student/Community Profile is included, the following represent comments on the significant findings of the profile and other items.

The school enrollment has increased by about 15% since the 1993-94 school year. The 10th grade class has grown the most, (43%), while the 9th grade class has decreased by 7%. The senior class has increased by 19% and the junior class by 13%.

The ethnicity has also changed. Asian students have increased by 25%, Hispanics by 6%, Blacks by 8.4% and Whites by 13%. Black students still comprise the bulk of the student population at 63%. Asian students follow at 21%.

Student attendance is up over the last year with 12th grade attendance up 155%, 11th up 9%, 10th up 13%, and 9th up 9%. Total school attendance stands at an average of 80.5%. Students had a 73% 4-year completion rate.

The District average G.P.A. for 1995-96 was 1.92. Students at Oakland Tech achieved an average G.P.A. of 2.07, 8 percentage points higher.

Grade distribution in the core subjects of English, math, science and social science tended to follow a normal distribution. Grades in English and Social Science were slightly skewed toward the high end while grades in Math were slightly skewed toward the low end. Science grades were fairly evenly balanced between all letter grades.

On proficiency exams, Oakland Tech scored better than the district average--37% passing compared to the District's 34%.

In 1996, students scored above the district average on the SAT I, but below the national average. Verbal scores were 1% above the district while they were 16% below the national average. Math scores were 4% above the district average but 9% below the national average. The school compared favorably with the district, state, and national percentages of students taking the tests with 44% taking the test in 1996; down from 56% in 1995. Of the 1994 graduates, 16% qualified for Advanced Placement credit.

The school had 60% of students enrolled in the University of California A-F requirements in 1995. In the class of 1994, 68% attended California public colleges. Twelve percent went to UC, while 14% enrolled in CSU. Community college enrollment was 42% of the senior class.

Scores on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/4) increased 28% in mathematics for 10th graders between 1995 and 1996. The language scores increased by 34% and the reading scores by 8%. Ninth graders showed similar gains in math and language but reading scores increased by 48%.

The dropout rate for the school averaged 8.3% for the years 1992-1995. This was the third lowest rate in the 6 comprehensive high schools in the District.

To aid in school restructuring and staff development, a Coordinating Council with the representation from all stakeholders was established in 1994. However, at the end of the 1996 school year, twelve faculty members left the school and all were school and program leaders. Other staff members then stepped up to fill those gaps

The bell schedule was changed for the second time in two years to accommodate a two hour block of time for staff development and work on the Focus on Learning School Report.

Starting in the fall of 1997, the curriculum in all high schools will be based on Career Pathways. The accompanying grade level configuration will have little impact on Oakland Technical High School. The addition of ninth grade classes to other Oakland high schools will have little impact on Oakland Tech as it already serves grades 9-12.

## CHAPTER II PROGRESS REPORT

The school's process for addressing recommendations has been through the Coordinating Council and departments. These recommendations have been an integral part of the school's restructuring and staff development plans.

Previous major recommendations from the WASC Visiting Committee have been satisfied.

Despite a strike, a substantial turnover of teacher personnel and the lack of a full administrative team for a while, Tech understands the need to begin the process of implementing its ESLRs in all content areas for all students. With the addition of three new academies, Tech is in the process of designing an educational program in which all students can achieve at a high level. The Focus on Learning process has served as a focal point for current staff.

Below are brief summary comments concerning the five major recommendations:

- All stakeholders participated in the development of a mission statement that focused on student outcomes.
- Discipline and attendance policies were revised to focus on expected student behaviors and consequences. These policies also contained clear delineation of administrative, staff, and student responsibilities.
- Site administration and the Coordinating Council worked collaboratively to establish a Staff Development Committee. Staff attended conferences and visited other school sites. The second and third Wednesdays of each month are shortened days to provide time for staff development and other collaborative activities.
- Effective methods of communicating with parents include Back to School Night, the Report Card Pick-up Night, PTSA newsletters, automatic phone calling for absences, orientation materials, letters of classroom expectations, parent to parent phone calls, teacher conference periods, and a new All Sports Booster Club. Parents also participated in a field trip that focused on Violence Prevention.
- Two new offset copiers and one photographic copier were on site by January, 1995. Staff training for "new operators" of the machines is deemed necessary yearly to avoid costly repair down time.

Similarly, recommendations to schoolwide and department committees have been addressed. Among the most notable changes.

- Utilizing a facilitator to assist in the school restructuring process with additional time being given to staff development.
- The implementation of SB65 program to monitor student attendance and academic progress with parent participation.
- The addition of extra-curricular programs to develop student multicultural awareness and improve student rapport. The community has also supported this effort through donations and encouragement to their children to participate in the school activities and events such as Black History Month, Cinco De Mayo and the International Assembly.
- The establishment of a third academic academy, Communications and Computer Repair. The entire District is transforming the curriculum to Career Pathways, building partnerships between schools and businesses. The school has also established a computer exchange program where students perform repairs to discarded computers and make them available to students throughout the District.
- The establishment of partnerships with IBM, Bechtel, Summit Medical, UC Berkeley, Kaiser, and others in the development and implementation of a computer literacy plan for students.
- The expanded and improved multicultural curriculum in the English Department.
- A 9th grade English/Social Science course entitled, "California Studies"
- A new interdisciplinary link between World Cultures and Drama. However, permanent staffing continues to be a problem.
- More E.S.L. students are being placed in Visual and Performing Arts and Physical Education.

## CHAPTER III SELF-STUDY PROCESS

### **Accomplishment of the Seven Key Outcomes and Accuracy**

The school has used the Focus on Learning process to focus, in a collaborative manner, on a new vision statement. Curriculum development and staff development are driven by this vision statement. Currently, staff is working on an alignment between the formal vision statement and a working version.

The culture and climate of the school is continuing to improve. The staff is beginning to work together toward common higher shared expectations for student achievement.

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

All stakeholders had the opportunity to participate. All staff, plus representatives from parent and student groups, participated in the focus groups.

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

A major objective is to have each teacher produce and implement a professional development plan that is tied to the teacher's personal goals, the vision of the school, and the ESLRs.

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

The school has developed expected schoolwide learning results for the first time. Staff in-service will make it possible for departments to focus on the development of department-wide standards of student achievement and ultimately school-wide standards.

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

The Health & Bioscience Academy, Communications and Computer Repair Academy, Engineering Academy, Interlinks, Paideia, California Studies, and Advanced Placement classes provide students with the opportunity for exemplary academic training for one-half of the student body. However, it was our observation that exemplary meaning-centered teaching strategies were also being used in the traditional classrooms as shown in many of the evidence folders. The activities were also documented as to how they satisfied ESLRs.

There is also articulation with feeder schools, local colleges and businesses.

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.



While the District regularly reviews student grades and test results, there is no direct correlation between student progress and the stated Expected Student Learning Results. The administration is making an effort to use a variety of assessments of school-wide learning results to drive the school's program development resource allocations. While the school is trying to align what it is doing with the ESLRs, there is no consensus about how to develop, implement, and address student achievement of the ESLRs.

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

The District has mandated that all high schools plan and implement CAREER PATHWAYS starting with the 10th grade in 1997 and adding another grade level each year. Interest surveys were given to all staff and students by IAP and STCL. Results of these surveys were made known and staff made choices about which Pathways would be implemented with the teachers, schedules, and students in place by June 1997.

The Coordinating Council will lead the assessment program and lead all stakeholders in the creation of an action plan. It was our consensus that the second action plan was really a statement of the need to develop and implement an action plan which would create school-wide student outcome standards and the development of valid, reliable, and equitable assessment practices to measure student achievement on a school-wide basis. One staff development day each spring will be set aside for the site research analyst to present graphic data about Oakland Technical High School. The school will then be able to base changes on student needs rather than staff desires and instincts. A site administrator will be charged to facilitate moving the Action Plan forward.

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

A follow-up process to monitor the implementation and accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan is in draft form and will be presented to the Coordinating Council.

## ESLR's

**Expected Student Learning Results: Oakland Technical High School**  
**Our Expectations of each student who graduates from Oakland Technical High School:**

1. Demonstrate Effective Communication

- write a logical, coherent essay
- present a logical, coherent speech or dramatic presentation
- create original prose and/or poetry showing the emergence of an individual voice and an awareness of the importance of form
- demonstrate an understanding of art as a means of communicating the human experience

2. Solve problems by using thinking skills of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation

- transfer learned skills to new learning
- show how to analyze and synthesize
- produce meaningful evaluation

3. Integrate the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics, and the arts into a meaningful activity or project

- gather data for the purpose of presentation in writing or some other form
- create a product illustrating an understanding of a reading task or science/math problem in a new and unique way

4. Work effectively independently and collaboratively with others

- participate in a group project requiring an extended time period of a week or more with
- the success of each individual depending to some extent on the success of the group
- the group operating in a democratic way
- the project requiring the assigning of specific roles

5. Demonstrate awareness of the world's various cultures, histories, and belief systems

- discuss, orally and in writing, literary or historical material that represents a point of view different from the American mainstream. This point of view may or may not represent the student's own culture
- show an ability to communicate competently in a second language
- demonstrate tolerance and respect for others

6. Demonstrate basic scientific and technological literacy

- demonstrate competence in the use of a computer
- demonstrate competence with other appropriate technology devices
- demonstrate keyboarding skills
- understand the application of basic scientific principles to everyday life

7. Demonstrate an understanding of basic living skills

- devise a personal budget
- conduct an analysis of his or her nutritional habits
- discuss personal goals as a family member, including the financial and time obligations
- write a resume
- have an awareness of nutrition, exercise
- understand management of credit
- demonstrate awareness of family planning options

8. Contribute to his or her community

- help others on campus (e.g., tutoring, "buddy system", club membership)
- voluntarily help students outside of the school site
- participate in documented community work (e.g., volunteering in a hospital, working at a crisis center, participating in a safe-driving program)
- develop environmental awareness
- demonstrate positive and productive citizenship

9. Develop a road map for the high school years and beyond

- have a written plan that governs meaningful class selection and extra-curricular participation with longer-term goals in mind
- have a written plan that outlines his/her possible goals and beyond high school graduation
- overcome obstacles by effective application of skills
- develop implementation strategies

10. Take responsibility for personal health - physical, mental, and social

- practice fundamental hygiene skills
- be familiar with health resources and networks
- improve student/family relations through parent/grandparent workshops
- know warning signs of suicide/depression in self and peers
- participate in peer support groups and other linkage programs
- determine health needs and seek appropriate service

## CHAPTER IV: QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL'S PROGRAM

### A. Vision, Leadership and Culture

- **A1. The school has a clearly stated vision or purpose that reflects the beliefs and philosophy of the institution. The school's purpose is defined further by expected schoolwide results; what all students should know and be able to do by graduation.**

There is a clearly stated vision statement that was written by the stakeholders. The staff was involved as well as parents and students. The vision statement was presented to the District and school board. The vision statement is posted in most of the classrooms and according to students surveyed, it was discussed with them by their teachers. In the process of formulating the ESLRs, the vision statement was used as the focus. The ESLRs do correlate with the vision statement and they also are posted in each classroom. Again, the staff and students had a dialogue about them. Instructional goals are now being written based on the vision statement, ESLR's established graduation requirements, college entrance requirements, and perceived student needs and interests. Individual teachers' personal goals will be developed.

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

The school community is working on curriculum and programs at this time to incorporate the ESLRs into all classes and programs. This is still in the embryonic stage. The school leadership is diligently working on incorporating participation, collaboration and shared responsibility for student learning. The school leadership and staff are committed to ongoing professional development which promotes ESLR related student learning. Two afternoons a month have been set aside to collaborate on the curriculum and ESLRs. New programs are being implemented for the 1997-98 school year with this in mind. The principal needs to maintain effective communication with the district. The district is committed to facilitate and support district-wide and site specific plans to implement ESLRs.

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

Oakland Tech employs a qualified staff that is committed to the school and its students. Time was set aside each month for staff development. A large portion of that time was devoted to the writing of the school report, creating the vision statement, and developing ESLRs. The document included a timeline for implementation and all items have been implemented to a certain degree. However, there appears to be an inconsistent application of the solutions. Coaching and mentoring of the new staff appears to be limited by resources, time and workload. The stakeholders need time to meet, discuss and plan how to incorporate the vision and ESLRs into the current and new curriculum. Individual teachers need time to develop personal and instructional goals that correlate to the vision statement and the ESLRs.

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

Safety appears to be one of the main concerns on the campus. In December a sub-committee of the PTSA drafted a report outlining priorities for the climate and safety at Oakland Tech. Areas covered included (1) zero tolerance for drugs on campus, (2) the implementation of photo ID badges for all staff and students, (3) truancy and campus control, (4) site safety, and (5) the physical condition of the school. The document included a timeline and most of the items have been implemented. As a result of parental concern to clean the school environment, all stakeholders have participated in school clean-up days. A new telephone system scheduled for completion will be in place for the 97-98 school year as a further response to safety concerns and the need for more effective communication.

There are high expectations for students in most classes at Oakland Tech. The staff needs to continue to work to ensure that all students are provided the opportunity to use higher order thinking skills in their classes.

The school continues in restructuring on a school-wide basis. The primary focus of this effort has been the self-study for the past year and in the future will focus on academics and the implementation of the ESLRs, including related staff development. A second focus will be on the career pathways and the addition of three new academies. Future staff development should take advantage of staff expertise and "best practices research".

The school seems to function in isolated islands where great things are going on, however, a concerted effort needs to be put forth to have all these ideas and plans done on a schoolwide, cross curricular basis.

**Criteria A Areas of strength.**

1. School has a clearly established vision statements and ESLRs that correlate with the vision statement.
2. Stakeholder involvement in the self-study process appeared to be very inclusive in that everyone was given an opportunity to participate.
3. The PTA's five point plan for improving climate and safety.
4. The involvement of all stakeholders in cleaning up the campus.
5. The challenging and rigorous curriculum of the special programs demanding use of higher order thinking skills and collaboration.

**Criteria A Key Issues**

1. The need to incorporate ESLRs into all classes and programs.
2. The need to (fully and consistently) implement every point in the PTSA safety plan.
3. The need to continue efforts to maintain a clean, safe and orderly learning environment.
4. The need for a consistent, school wide focus on best practices.

**Important evidence :**

Schoolwide Focus Group dialogue

Self-study documentation

Classroom visitations

WASC criteria guideline rubric

Binders and file boxes containing the "evidence"

## **B. Curricular Paths**

- **B1. All students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum that supports the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results.**

Oakland Technical High School provides some of its students with the opportunity to enroll in one of three established academies: Health and Bioscience Academy, Communications and Computer Repair, and the Engineering Academy. Participation in these academies provides an articulated, meaning-centered curriculum with real-life experiences. In addition, the school shows evidence of interdisciplinary courses through such programs as Interlinks, Paideia, and California Studies. In-depth and sequential learning is provided through six AP courses. State Frameworks and national standards are used as guides across the curriculum. Course outlines, syllabi and green sheets provide a basis for a rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum. There is strong evidence of articulation with K-8 feeder schools.

- **B2. All students have access to the school's curricular paths, assistance with the development and ongoing adjustment of a personal learning plan and knowledge of realistic post-secondary opportunities.**

Three hundred (300) 9th graders take the career exploration/ technology course in preparation for selecting an academy as a 10th grader. Two or three additional academies will begin in 1997-1998. Students have multiple opportunities to develop and adjust their personal learning plans through assistance from school counselors, academy staff and community resources. Students may participate in SAT preparatory sessions through the UC ACCESS program. The Educational Guidance Center organizes workshops for college applications and financial aid applications and provides an outreach college advisor two days a week. A career center is planned to be fully operational by 1997-98 to further help students explore career options.

- **B3. Upon graduation all students are prepared to continue the pursuit of their academic and occupation goals.**

Approximately half of the student population participates in academies and special programs. The articulated, sequential program provides a personal learning plan for each student beginning their 10th grade year. Employers who have summer interns from the academy programs report high levels of satisfaction with student performance in the workplace. Several new career pathways will begin in 97-98. Home Savings and Rotary Club provide occupational preparation for students not in special programs. Resource students assemble a career portfolio, develop interview skills and are exposed to a variety of career choices.

### **Criteria B Areas of Strength**

1. The existence of three (3) academies and the introduction of two (2) to three (3) new academies next year that will provide an articulated meaning-centered curriculum for all students.
2. The interdisciplinary courses and AP courses that provide in-depth and sequential learning opportunities.
3. K-8 school visits and other measures that provide orientation and articulation for new students to Oakland Tech.
4. The 9th grade career exploration/ technology course as a preparation for academy choice decisions.
5. The outstanding use of community resources within the curriculum and as a general supplement to the curriculum such as mentors, tutors, job shadowing and parent patrols.

### **Criteria B Key Issues**

1. A need to articulate a clear and consistent application process for admissions to academies.
2. A need to ensure all programs are balanced in regard to ethnicity, gender and accessibility for all students.
3. A need for the continual use of innovative programs that address the truancy and drop out problems.
4. A need to validate course curriculums against the ESLRs and to adjust the programs accordingly.
5. A need to ensure that continued funding is allocated to development, maintenance, training and updating of technological advances.
6. A need to increase the awareness and ownership of all stakeholders as to the economic resources of the site.

#### **Important evidence :**

Schoolwide Focus Group dialogue  
Self-study documentation  
Classroom visitations  
WASC criteria guideline rubric  
Binders and file boxes containing the "evidence"



### **C. Powerful Teaching And Learning**

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

The teachers at Oakland Tech see their role as powerful teachers in a variety of perspectives, including content experts, guides, facilitators, managers, models, lecturers, demonstrators and coaches. Teachers use technology to augment textbooks and other teaching aids. Technology is supplied in the form of the usual multimedia resources such as VCRs, overhead projectors, video cameras, copy machines and computers. There are computers located in the library and several classrooms in addition to a classroom full of computers in the Writing Center which is staffed by two part time lab assistants. The Internet is available on the library computers. The Computer Academy is one area where students are learning to work on and repair computers. It is a new program instituted this year. There is a technology committee that meets on a regular basis.

- **C2. All students experience learning opportunities that emphasize higher 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, and 4) between school and community.**

There is a dedicated and caring staff at Oakland Tech. The staff needs to collaborate with each other to understand how the Vision, ESLRs and Key Outcomes relate to each other and to the overall instructional program. In-service time is tentatively planned for the 1997-98 school year.

Interdisciplinary courses afford students learning opportunities that require higher order thinking skills and creative ways to solve problems. The staff needs to make a concerted effort to incorporate these teaching strategies into every class in the school so that all students regardless of ability level, ethnicity, or gender will have equal access. The staff has made efforts to collaborate to provide specific projects for students. There is also collaboration between the school and the business community. Many Oakland businesses including IBM, Bechtel, Summit Medical Center, Kaiser, and Labor Occupational Health Program through UC Berkeley have special programs with the school to highlight the importance of the connection between school and work.

- **C3. Students routinely use a variety of resources for learning and engage in learning experiences beyond the textbook and the classroom.**

Students can avail themselves of a wide range of resources beyond conventional classroom and textbook activities. Via the library students have access to CD ROM resources such as : Infosearch, and electronic encyclopedias and on-line linkages to city, county, college, and university libraries through the Internet.

R.O.P. and work experience help students to experience learning outside the school setting. Extra-curricular activities offer further opportunity for academic, cultural and personal growth. The Techniclinic offers courses that promote health awareness and personal growth. There are many activities at the school which bring real world experiences into the classroom. For example, the three academies (Engineering, Health and Computer) incorporate a myriad of outside resources to enrich the experiences of the students. There are also Career Week activities and a Job Faire to help students look beyond the classroom.

#### **Criteria C Areas of Strength**

1. Teachers use a variety of strategies and resources, including technology, to actively engage students in the learning process.
2. Many students have challenging learning experiences.
3. The new Computer Lab which houses the Writing Center is an asset. The before and after school availability is commendable.
4. The Oakland Technology Exchange (OTX) is to be commended for its innovative approach to providing personal computers for students.
5. The rich and unique qualities of the school and community partnerships enable students to see connections between school and careers

#### **Criteria C Key Issues**

1. There is a need to insure that all programs are balanced with regard to ethnicity, gender and accessibility.
2. There is a need for all students to be involved in learning experiences that are directed to achieving the ESLRs.
3. There is a need to provide wider access to technology for all students and teachers.
4. There is a need to assure adequate staffing for all classes at the beginning of the school year.

5. There is a great need to provide orientation, training and mentoring, of new teachers at the site level.

6. Although there is evidence of some collaboration between individual staff members, there is a need for consistent and continuing departmental and schoolwide collaboration with effort to ensure attendance and participation of all staff members.

**Important evidence :**

Schoolwide Focus Group dialogue

Self-study documentation

Classroom visitations

WASC criteria guideline rubric

Binders and file boxes containing the "evidence"

#### **D. Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth**

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

All Oakland Tech students have access to a full range of supportive services to assure success within an integrated, meaning-centered curriculum. A full counseling staff offers opportunities for students to develop a personal learning plan which serves as a pathway to high school graduation and post-secondary options.

Supportive counseling services are available for students who are experiencing personal, educational, social and psychological problems which may impede personal and academic growth. The SB-65 Outreach Coordinator provides additional services to at-risk students, and their parents.

The Technology Exchange (OTX) program offers an opportunity for all students to become technologically literate and to earn a used computer for personal use.

The Special Education and ESL departments offer concerted efforts to provide academic support to their students as tutoring, one-on-one counseling, and mentoring. ESL students are also supported through sheltered content instruction cross-cultural language development and field trips.

The Health, Computer, and Engineering Academies students are given academic support through tutoring, mentoring and academic advising.

To encourage and complement academic success, a variety of school and community tutorial services are offered to students. Mathematics tutoring, all subject tutoring, and Tech's After School Academic Coaching Program are campus programs. Community tutoring programs include Upward Bound, MESA and the Educational Guidance Center.

- **D2. Students have access to system of personal support service, activities and opportunities at the school within the community.**

The Student Personal Growth and Academic Growth Focus Group spoke of a large number of staff members involved with students in a variety of activities outside of the classroom. Many staff members open classrooms at lunch as study, tutorial, and social centers, oversee after school tutorials, sponsor clubs and other student activities, and are spectators at athletic and other student-centered events.

Students have many opportunities to participate in activities which suit their interests: clubs, sports, student leadership, school newspaper, yearbook, ROTC, and a variety of competitions ranging from drama production to essay and story writing contests.

The Techniclinic , a partnership between school and community, serves as many as 40% of Tech students. Services include counseling , diagnosis and treatment of minor health problems, mental health and crisis counseling , parent workshops, and providing community speakers for staff meetings and classrooms.

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

A very active PTSA publishes a monthly newsletter and has an active presence on the school campus. Parents also serve on ESL Advisory Council Boards , the SSC and the focus groups as part of Focus on Learning self-study.

Communication with parents is conducted in the home language of many students and efforts are made to have translators at parent meetings .

The SB-65 coordinator and Techniclinic offer services and workshops to parents that cover topics such as parenting , reducing violence, and communication skills.

Community agencies are very involved with Oakland Tech students. The Techniclinic is an correlation of community and school efforts through the Healthy Start Planning Grant. students are engaged in a variety of services and community projects while community is involved with a a number of learning-centered projects. By providing financial support, products, mentors and internships.

#### **Criteria D Areas of Strength**

1. The variety of services offered to students throughout the school and community counseling, tutorial and outreach services.
2. The active support of the business community through providing finances ,products, mentors and internships to Tech students
3. The establishment of the Techniclinic.
- 4 . The active presence of the PTSA on campus.
5. The dedicated efforts of the Special Ed and ESL departments in providing support to students.

#### **Criteria D Key Issues**

1. The need to continue seeking ways to keep parents and community involved with Oakland Tech.
2. The need to continue to celebrate the successes of the staff and students of Tech.

**Important Evidence:**

Schoolwide Focus Group dialogue

Self-study documentation

Classroom visitations

WASC criteria guideline rubric

Binders and file boxes containing the "evidence"

## **E. Assessment and Accountability**

Evidence to support this criteria appears to be weak. No clear alignment of the assessment instruments to the schools ESLRs is evident and documentation of the responses to this criteria in the self-study needed to be more obvious to the visiting team. For instance, data was available in the evidence binder but there was no indication that the data had been correlated to the ESLRs. Classroom data to support the use of frequent assessment and monitoring of student progress was also available, but the visiting committee was only made aware later in the visit that they existed in file boxes and in the teachers' classrooms. The dialogue with the focus group indicated that addressing this criteria had not been clearly explained to them. Overall, this criteria needs more attention.

- **E1. Teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate and to modify the curriculum and instructional practices. Students use assessment results to modify their learning in order to enhance their educational program.**

The response in the self-study begged this question. The dialogue with the focus group, however, revealed that a collective misunderstanding prevailed among the members of the group on 1) the significance of the ESLRs in the WASC process, 2) the strategies required to substantively embed them in the consciousness and practices of the school, and 3) the assessment methodologies needed to assess them to determine the degree to which all students are progressing towards accomplishing them. Despite the misunderstanding, most of the staff strongly feels that the process required to complete the self-study had been a tool to enhance staff collaboration and raise the level of staff dialogue on teaching and learning. This motivation provides a ripe impetus to continue to address this criteria.

- **E2. The school, district, and community regularly review student progress toward accomplishing the expected schoolwide learning results. Assessment results are reported to the entire school community on a regular basis.**

The self-study implied that standardized tests were used to assess student progress on the ESLRs. There is no evidence, however, to show how those tests are aligned to the ESLRs much less to indicate how they directly impact the curriculum, the instructional practices and the students' personal learning plans. The Academies, the Special Education program and selected classroom teachers appeared to provide the most significant evidence available to show that frequent use of assessment results, such as grades and academic progress, take place on a regular basis and that assessment results are used for intervention and remediation and not only as a summative evaluation of student learning. There appears to be no evidence that this practice exists schoolwide.

- **E3. The assessment of expected schoolwide learning results drives the school's program development and resource allocation.**

Since there is no stated clear alignment of the instruments used for schoolwide assessment and the school's ESLRs, it is highly doubtful that the assessment results drive the school's program development on a systemic and regular basis. There is no evidence that as a matter of regular practice the resource allocation is driven by the need to accomplish or achieve the ESLRs stated objectives for all students. Commendably, however, albeit to a limited extent, ninth grade "houses" and consideration of block schedule appear to be the result of thoughtful analysis of the academic and social needs of students as seen through their achievement levels and disconnectedness to the school.

In certain departments, placement tests are used to schedule students into various classes. The school must enter into a discussion, however, on the value of using the results of the placement tests as a tool to modify the curriculum and teaching practices as opposed to utilizing it solely to sort and track students. For instance, too great a proportion of the African-American students have either been tracked or sorted out of college bound programs and certain Academies, perhaps as a consequence of this practice.

Again, as to the assessments alluded to in the report and shared with the school community, the correlation between them and the ESLRs is nonexistent. The level of discussion on how to address this area is sorely needed by the school.

#### **Criteria E Areas of Strength**

1. The report appears to present an honest attempt to describe "reality" at Oakland Tech.
2. The staff admission that the WASC process has raised the level of discussion to what truly matters in education -- student learning -- is noteworthy.
3. Use of varied forms of assessment to determine the degree of student mastery of the curriculum.
4. Despite the challenges they face, most of the staff have a strong commitment to addressing the needs of all students. They need to be commended for their effort.

#### **Criteria E Key Issues**

1. The staff needs to have a clear understanding of the significance of the ESLRs to the WASC process and to the complete instructional and assessment program.
2. Aligning now existing assessments with the ESLRs. The school community needs to develop or adopt the appropriate assessment instruments that will allow them to measure student progress on achieving the ESLRs both within the classroom and within the school as a whole.



3. Frequent monitoring of the progress of all students in achieving the objectives stated in the school's ESLRs and design intervention strategies to assist students who fall short of attaining their academic plans.

4. Assurance that assessment results of student performance drive the allocation of resources.

5. The entire school needs to substantively address this whole criteria with the assistance of the district.

**Important evidence :**

Schoolwide Focus Group dialogue

Self-study documentation

Classroom visitations

WASC criteria guideline rubric

Binders and file boxes containing the "evidence"

## CHAPTER IV

- **Synthesis of Schoolwide areas of Strength and Schoolwide Critical Area for Follow-up**

### **General Comments**

The Visiting Committee carefully read the school report, examined evidence provided by the staff. The Committee conferred with the school-wide focus groups, the Coordinating Council, students, parents and classified staff. The Committee members observed student-teacher interaction in the classrooms, instructional activities, student support programs and evidence binders, folders and boxes.

The school is to be commended for its honest, diligent undertaking of Focus on Learning. As a result of the self-study, the staff members feel that they have a vision statement and set of ESLRs to guide them.

### **SCHOOL WIDE AREAS OF STRENGTH**

1. The school has a clearly established vision statement and ESLRs that correlates with the Vision Statement.
2. Oakland Technical High School plans to implement a school-wide academy program which follows the pattern of current academies. This is being done to assure that all students can achieve at a high level of academic performance.
3. The ability of this school to form business partnerships is outstanding. By communicating and listening to its business partners, Oakland Technical High School has shown exceptional ability to utilize community resources to deliver services to students. Building a curriculum responsive to the needs of Bay Area employer assures that Tech students have a greater chance of making successful transition to the world of work.
4. The success of the academies at Tech has generated interest in providing all students with access to the powerful learning experiences offered by academies. The professionalism and leadership abilities of the academy coordinators is an important asset of the school. This asset gives hope that the plan to implement school-wide academies will produce high student achievement for all.
5. The variety of multicultural activities is commendable. Inter-racial cooperation is promoted by the use of both special activities and extra-curricular programs and within the classroom.
6. The school is to be commended for the outstanding variety of quality multicultural literature that all students in all classes have the opportunity to explore and enjoy

7. Oakland Technical High School has developed a significant network of contacts with middle schools and universities. These contacts have resulted in horizontal and vertical articulation of the school's curriculum with feeder schools and post secondary institutions.

#### **SCHOOLWIDE CRITICAL AREAS FOR FOLLOW-UP:**

1. The stakeholders need to develop an assessment process that measures and documents student achievement of the ESLRs in all content areas and continue the process of implementing ESLRs across the curriculum. The result of the assessment process should be a large body of evidence that indicates the staff has designed curriculum and teaching strategies that teach to ESLRs.

2. The staff should conduct a needs assessment of the problems related to implementing the ESLRs and arrive at consensus as to how the problems will be faced. The school need to produce evidence that long range planning into pathway articulation has taken place. All stakeholders need to know how the academies will function and what the role will be in making the academies a success. The plan may take years to put into place, but there should be a clear vision in the mind of all stakeholders of what Oakland Technical High School will look like in the future.

3. To work together should produce a staff development plan that provides teachers with a clear understanding of what constitutes powerful teaching. The outcome of this staff development plan should be the use of strategies that lead all students to high performance of the ESLRs. Once the plan is written, the staff should continue to use available staff development time to ensure all staff members have the knowledge and skills necessary to provide all students with powerful learning experiences in concert with the school-wide academies.

4. Increase effective parent participation in designing and implementing programs and policies to increase student performance, school safety, climate and cleanliness.

5. The need to afford all students access to a rigorous and challenging program.

6. The need for a consistent school-wide focus on "best practices" to continually improve the instructional program.

7. The need to fully implement a tardy, attendance and discipline policy to ensure an environment where learning can take place for all students.

8. The need for a conflict management or a peer counseling program to provide early intervention to help improve the school climate.

9. The need for the continued use of innovative programs that address the truancy and drop-out problem.

10. The need to develop , maintain, and update technology as a means to facilitate the transition from school to career.

11. The need for all stakeholders to be aware of the choices presented by the economic resources of the site to assure the alignment of the school program to meet the needs of the students.

12. The need to assure adequate staffing at the beginning of the school year. Establish a mentoring program for teachers new to Tech to provide resources to make them feel an integral part of the school and the district.

13. Although there is evidence of some collaboration among staff members, there is a need for consistent and continuing departmental and school-wide collaboration with an effort to ensure attendance and participation of all staff members.

## CHAPTER V ONGOING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

### 1. Summary of the Schoolwide Action Plans:

- Two action plans were presented in the Self-Study.

#### **Action Plan One:**

##### **Career Pathways**

Oakland Technical High School will plan and implement Career Pathways for every 10th grade student, Fall 1997. Each subsequent year, another grade level will be added to complete the Pathway. The goal of this action plan is to better prepare Oakland Technical High School Students for the world of work and post-secondary education. All ten of the ESLRs are listed as being addressed in this action plan. Preparation for school-wide pathways begin in November, 1996. Several meetings were held by staff members to design the Career Pathway Academies. The pathways will start in the fall of 1997. Federal desegregation money is listed as the funding source for the academies.

Assessment for Action Plan One is given as:

- Minutes of Coordinating Council meeting on Career Pathways
- Pathways being in place by June 1997
- An annual survey of students and staff
- Reduced drop out rate and increased attendance for students in academies
- An increase in parental participation
- A career inventory and graduate portfolio for students in Career Pathways

#### **Action Plan Two:**

##### **All stakeholders of Oakland Technical High School need to continue creating an Action Plan.**

This action plan indicates that the Self-Study is not complete. More time is needed to develop a concrete plan to bring the school vision and the ten ESLRs into the Tech classrooms.

This action plan is about stakeholders participation in the WASC process and not student learning results. The existence of this action plan may indicate that the school lacks the capacity to implement the ESLRs with or without the implementation of career Pathways. The assessment of this plan has nothing to do with student learning results. The action plan will be assessed a success if frequent planning sessions produce written reports and if there is staff participation in the process. This is not so much an action plan as it is an indication that the focus on learning needs further self study.

## 2. Action Plan Analysis

**Action Plan # 1** describes the goal of instituting academies to guarantee students the opportunity to follow secondary school with preparedness for higher education, vocational school or the job market. This goal is closely linked to the curricular paths criterion. Oakland Tech is already recognized for its Health and Bioscience, Engineering and Computer Academies which are models of integration of academic with vocational curricula. The administration and staff plan to add more academies so that ultimately, all students will be in a particular academy.

The philosophical foundation for this is the belief that the Academy model will lead students to achievement of all of Oakland Tech's ESLRs. A problem at this time is that there is only room for one half of the student body in these academies. Also, the action plan will rely for its success on desegregation funding.

This action plan leads to several questions:

- 1) How will this action plan become a reality if desegregation funding is not available?
- 2) This goal implies that the academy model will be "all things to all students." What will assure the continued progress for those students who are not interested in an academy? What will be done for those students who lack the motivation to succeed in an academy?
- 3) The action plan is based upon ten ESLRs, but the assessment of success seems to be based upon the general criteria such as GPAs, a reduction in drop-out rates, an increase in attendance rates, etc., assessment should also include the ESLRs. There also seems to be no way to prove that teacher and student assessment is integrated into the teaching and learning process.
- 4) Several times, there was mention of the need for collaboration to assure articulated and sequential courses. This would seem to be a necessity to insure success of the action plan.

The steps of Action Plan # 1 seem realistic and feasible - except for the high rate of turnover among the faculty and the dependence upon desegregation funding which may be impediments to achieving the goals of this Action Plan.

**Action Plan #2** states that all the stakeholders of Oakland Tech need to continue creating an Action Plan. This is **not a goal for action**. Rather, it implies that the action plan will be the creation of the stakeholders as a result of the WASC visit.

The rationale and the ESLRs that will be the result of this rationale do not seem to flow logically from the Action Plan. The ESLR's cited #4, 8, and 9, should not be the only ones

mentioned in this goal. #9 seems to be more suited to the first action plan, as it would most logically be the first step in freshman planning before choosing an academy.

The second step in this action plan seems to be the actual plan: to bring the vision statement and the ESLRs into the classroom where they become an integral part of the teaching and learning process. This will, of necessity, require that the staff and students develop a more concrete set of learning goals and objectives ( or show how teaching and learning is specifically aimed at achieving the ESLRs) and followed up with the development of rubrics so as to be able to assess student progress in achieving this goal.

The Portfolio that is mentioned in step 5 needs clarification - as it stands, there is no link between it and the action plan's goal.

Assessment needs more concrete steps and measurement instruments. Frequency of planning sessions and the number of staff development days are not indicators of progress, nor are written reports. What will prove that the ESLRs have been incorporated into the teaching and teaching at Oakland Tech will be lesson plans, units of study, projects, etc. that show close ties to the ESLRs and student products that prove progress in achieving these ESLRs.