

FOCUS ON LEARNING

Washington Preparatory High School

Visiting Committee Report

April 30, 1997

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1997

Chapter I: **Student/Community Profile**
(from: Washington Preparatory High School's Self Study Profile)

STUDENT INDICATORS:

Washington Preparatory High School began the 1996-97 school year with a student body of 3159. This is a slight increase over the 1995-96 school year. These figures include magnet and regular school students. Because of the potential problems of school overcrowding, there has been a change in scheduling to the multi-tract, year round instructional program. The addition of the magnet students means scores have moved closer to the national average above the district average.

ATTENDANCE PATTERNS:

Attendance is a concern both at the district and local school site. Students continue to be tardy to school, with a 50% failure rate for first period. The school has a 75% attendance rate, but 90% attendance rate for the Magnet programs. Seniors must meet a 90% attendance requirement in order to participate in graduation exercises. Since the previous accreditation, several different policies addressing this concern have been implemented.

SCHOOL SURVEYS/INTERVIEWS:

Over five hundred representative students were surveyed regarding the academic program. Over half of these students rated their core-subject classes as good or excellent, with physical education receiving the most favorable response (75%). Eighty percent of the students surveyed felt involved in the learning process and found their classes both challenging and adequately

preparing them for the future. Student positive response was less strong regarding the use and availability of computers, although this positive response was still over 50 %.

SCHOOL WIDE DATA ON STUDENT PERFORMANCE, BY SUB POPULATION:

Washington students, on the whole, strive to achieve academic success. The majority of students do achieve an overall "C" average each semester. An awards assembly for students who have achieved a 3.0 grade point average is held each semester. Standardized achievement test data indicates students perform significantly below state and national averages; however, compared to schools with similar socio-economic indicators, Washington students are at or above the average. There have been areas, particularly writing, that have shown improvement and growth over prior years.

Until now the primary standardized test measure utilized by the Los Angeles Unified School District has been the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) and Aprenda. Beginning with the current school year the district will be utilizing the Stanford Achievement Test. In the regular school, student CTBS scores have remained fairly stable through the years, significantly below the state and national average. Ninth grade magnet students have shown more variance of scores between specific years.

SCHOOL WIDE TRENDS OF STUDENT INTENTIONS AFTER GRADUATION (BY SUB POPULATION):

Students at Washington Preparatory High School are encouraged to engage in a challenging curricular program. Over one-third of the students in the regular school program are enrolled in four or more University of California preparatory courses. This rises to seventy percent of the students in each of the magnets. Over half of the graduating seniors for the last four years (68% for 1993) have met University of California entrance requirements. During the last three years over 90% of the students reaching senior status, in both the regular and magnet programs, received their diplomas. Seventy-five percent of the graduating seniors indicate

post-secondary plans to continue their education. Eighty-five percent of these students received financial aid and scholarship assistance offers.

STAFF:

The staff of Washington Preparatory High School, including the two Magnet Centers, consists of 154 faculty members and 46 classified staff members. In addition, 47 paraprofessionals are employed as Instructional Assistants, Special Education Assistants and Aides, and Supervision Aides. The certificated staff includes 6 site administrators, 8 coordinators, 9 counselors (including a full-time college counselor and career advisor), and 3 in-house deans.

There are 128 classroom teachers, a full-time librarian, and a full-time nurse. The classified staff includes 16 office and 16 cafeteria workers. All faculty members are credentialed, although a significant number have emergency credentials. Approximately one half of the instructional staff possesses master's degrees with nine faculty members having doctoral degrees. Currently 9 teachers have or are in training to receive CLAD, BCLAD or LDS credentials. The staff is fortunate to have 8 mentor teachers.

Sixty-seven percent of the certificated staff is African-American, 24% Anglo, 5% Latino, and 3% Asian/Pacific Islander. Even though the number of Latino staff has risen since the previous accreditation process to 5% of the instructional staff, it is not reflective of the changing student demographics. The average age of the certificated staff is 45.1 years, with the average number of years of service in the district being 13.5 years.

SCHOOL/DISTRICT GROWTH NEEDS:

Washington Preparatory High School has experienced a period of growth since the previous accreditation process. The regular school currently has an enrollment of 2685 students in grades nine through twelve. The Magnet Centers have an enrollment of 485 students leading to a combined school population of over thirty-one hundred students. This significant increase in

population had led the school community to implement a multi-track year-round instructional program commencing with the 1995-96 school year. Using a Concept 6 Calendar, students have a school day expanded by thirty minutes resulting in seventeen fewer instructional days. The school operates on three tracks with approximately 2,000 students in attendance at any one time. The Magnet and Voademics programs both operate on "A" track making it slightly larger than the other two tracks. The E.S.L. program operates on "B" track. Special education students are assigned to all three tracks. The rest of the school population is assigned to a track on a geographic basis. While not as dramatic as the changes at neighboring high schools, Washington Preparatory High has experienced a significant demographic transition.

DISTRICT POLICIES/SCHOOL FINANCIAL SUPPORT:

The programs and services offered at Washington Preparatory High School are provided by a combination of general, categorical and special grant funds. These funds are supplemented in support of student activities by a Parental Support Group, adopters and special donations. The Primary Instructional Budgets, allocated by the district, based upon student enrollment, are the Instructional Materials Account IMA (\$ 76,768) and Textbook Account (\$ 43,316). Separate allocations are made to the Magnet Centers. By contractual agreement, these budgets are developed by the School Site Council with significant faculty input. The instructional budget is additionally supported by: State Categorical Funds (\$ 637,356), Bilingual (\$ 97,355), Special Education (\$ 6,958), and Gifted (\$ 4, 289), Year-round Schools (\$ 174,072), a block grant (\$161,164), Vocational Education Grant (\$134, 121), Library Technology Grant (\$77,000), and a Gender Equity/Teen Parenting Grant (\$11,000). A student body account is held separately, to support student activities.

The school is completing the 3rd phase of modernization and renovation. This has caused a great deal of campus disruption and inconvenience, but the final results have been well worth the expense and effort. The district is to be commended for their support.

EXTERNAL FACTORS:

Although there are a few small entrepreneurs and fast food franchises on the major thoroughfares in the school attendance area, there are no major business and no strong business in the community from which the school can draw financial support or in-kind support. The one business supporting the school is McDonald's. The school has been able to obtain academic support programs from the University of California Los Angeles, University of Southern California, and Southwest Community College.

The Shell Oil company has adopted the Performing Arts program and donated \$ 30,000 to the performing arts. The Ray Charles Foundation, and the Thelonious Monk Institute provides jazz teachers. There are scholarship partnerships with Columbia Charitable, \$5,000 for college awareness only, and a separate amount of money to be given solely as a scholarship. The owners of Sweet and Low corporation are currently in the process of setting up a fund for the performing arts. There is an inter-session enrichment or remediation program in place for students off track.

Chapter II:**Progress Report**

The previous recommendations from the WASC Visiting Committee have been partially met. It seems as though many members of the staff support the changes and recommendations, but there continues to be a need for buy-in from the total staff population.

The need to refurbish the school was addressed. The school is in the final phase of a three year modernization program that has included offices and classrooms. Electrical wiring has been upgraded. Improved lighting has been added to the library, classrooms and hallways. Student and staff restrooms have been added. Students however tend to deface and disable their restrooms on a daily basis. On campus graffiti continues to be a serious daily problem.

Elevator access for handicapped staff and students is available. The Home Economics Department now includes a full service commercial kitchen, in addition to a total upgrade in the facilities and equipment. A serious installation safety problem with the new equipment continues to exist. All science labs have been upgraded and refurbished.

Attendance is a concern both at the district and local school site. Students continue to be tardy to school, with a 50% failure rate for first period. The school has a 75% attendance rate, but 90% attendance rate for the Magnet programs. Seniors must meet a 90% attendance requirement in order to participate in graduation exercises. Since the previous accreditation, several policies addressing this concern have been implemented. This year the staff is utilizing a teacher-staffed detention room for tardy students. Students are given a verbal reminder on the PA system of the remaining time left before they will be tardy, remanded to the Tardy Room and subsequent disciplinary action.

The committee has serious concerns about the value of this policy, based on interviews with staff, students and parents and observations by the committee. Not all teachers fully participate in the program. The student lock-out often appears unreasonably enforced, with no avenue for exceptions. Parents and students feel that a limited number of teachers and staff are

rude and disrespectful to the students who are tardy. Since attendance and tardiness continue to be a concern, it does not appear that this tardy policy is being effective.

The discipline policy is well known and consistently enforced. The "Prep Contract for Success," which outlines behavior standards, dress code and tardy policy is published in the Washington Prep Agenda. In addition, this information is mailed home in English and Spanish prior to start of school. Grade level assemblies on the George Washington Prep discipline policy are held at the beginning of each semester. Off-campus programs at the various feeder schools also provide discipline policy information for both the regular and magnet programs. Counselors discuss the discipline policy as part of the intake procedure. Student information is included as a part of the daily announcements whenever necessary.

The Administration, Counselors, and Staff have implemented plans to insure placement of all students into the proper classes by implementing the following:

- The four-year Prepper plan
- Installation of more structured AP placement and honors classes
- A core-scheduling process
- Development of the Vocademics Career Path program

Both the District and school-site Administration have faced great difficulty in securing bilingual staff. It is the desire of the school to increase their number of Latino staff, more equitable method of distribution of staff needs to be implemented at the District level.

While there appears to be evidence that there is greater participation from parents than there was three years ago, there is still a feeling that greater active participation from parents is needed. The number and variety of parents participating in meetings may be greater, but the work is still done by a few individuals. There is a need to provide more avenues to meet the variety of parental needs that reflect the changing school population.

Several steps have been undertaken to implement counseling procedures for timely notification and assistance to staff regarding special needs students. A special needs counselor position was created two years ago. A new, more explicit, coding system to identify special education students was implemented. There is a new assessment system, and the district has implemented a computer Student Information System.

Chapter III:

Self-Study Process

Mission Statement:

George Washington Preparatory High School is an urban, four-year, comprehensive high school. Our school is committed to delivering a superior preparatory education to a diverse group of students. George Washington Preparatory High School aims to develop within students the knowledge and skills to be productive, critically aware, and creative individuals who will be life-long learners and contributing members of their community. Our school places emphasis on empowering all students to strive for excellence and to develop their fullest potential in meeting the challenges of our changing global society.

Washington Preparatory High School's Expected Schoolwide Learning Results

Washington Preparatory High School Graduates are Expected to be:

- **Critical Thinkers**
- **Effective Communicators**
- **Responsible and Productive Individuals**
- **Individuals Prepared for Post-Secondary Life**
- **Health Conscious Individuals**
- **Multiculturally/Globally Aware**

The school used the self-study process to foster school-wide collaboration and to re-focus energy and resources on a common purpose. The school was also mandated by the district to institute standards, or benchmarks, of what every student is expected to know at each level of

education. The school has used this as a time to work on both standards and ESLR's simultaneously. The staff has found this to be an arduous task. Most teachers are struggling with aligning both the standards and the ESLR's into the existing curriculum. The district is monitoring this process to ensure that this district priority is implemented.

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

Staff development workshops on February 29, 1996, introduced Focus On Learning to faculty and staff who were given an opportunity to make choices regarding their focus group participation. From March through April, several major events occurred at the same time. During March, Self-Study Coordinators and the principal met regularly to select chairpersons for Focus Groups, the School and Community Profile Committee and the Parent and Student Committees. After the committee chairpersons were selected, a timeline and meeting schedule were developed and presented for the Shared Decision making Council's approval; an important component of the timeline was dates for four pupil-free days (July 1, August 28, October 25, March 3, 1997) with staff from all three tracks present, as well as dates for minimum and shortened days.

Coordinators and several key persons from the Leadership Team attended WASC training sessions. Then, the Coordinators instituted a series of training meetings for the Leadership Team. At the same time, the School and Community Profile Committee initiated the difficult process of collecting appropriate data and information to accurately represent the complex community.

May and June involved initial meetings of focus and stakeholder groups where they examined criteria, guide questions and rubrics. During June, the Leadership Team created an observation form and the ground rules for the classroom observation process. During this time, what would become a recurring problem emerged, communicating effectively with off-track personnel and encouraging them to return for meetings. Planning for July 1, the first pupil-free day, intensified an already busy period, as the Leadership Team completed the Prior

Recommendations; the Profile Committee completed its sketch of our school and community, and stakeholder group discussions generated tentative ESLR's.

One of the major successes of the accreditation process happened on July 1 when representatives from all stakeholder groups, including the majority of the classified and certificated staff, met at the Red Lion Hotel for six hours to review the tentative ESLR's and School and Community Profile and to continue discussions of focus group criteria, guide questions, and rubrics. At the end of July, the school sent the first mailing to all parents regarding the accreditation process, and a series of parent meetings were scheduled.

A small group of parents held several evening meetings to continue their discussions, review the accreditation process, and review of ESLR's. The Parent Survey was administered in late October. Ongoing presentations and updates were made at a variety of parent meetings including the Bilingual Advisory Council, Title I Advisory Council, and at Back-to-School and Parent Conferences program. In December the Student Committee began weekly meetings.

Focus Groups continued to meet and began drafting responses to criteria questions for the remainder of 1996 and early January, 1997, with a number of other activities occurring concurrently. The timeline was revised so that Focus Groups had ample time to complete their reports, including areas for improvement. The Coordinators worked with the Student Council and the Student Committee to prepare the presentation of the ESLR's to students at grade level assemblies for each track. Posters of the ESLR's were distributed to all classrooms and offices.

Chapter IV:**Quality of the School's Program****A. VISION, LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE:**

The school has developed a mission statement which combines its rich tradition and history with its goal of creating students who are contributing members of society. The school's mission is supported by a shared system of beliefs. Washington Preparatory High School, one of 49 comprehensive high schools in the LAUSD is governed by a seven member board. The high school is one of two high schools in its local cluster.

The school's purpose is clearly defined by its expected student learning results and District standards. The ESLR's are known by most of the stakeholders within the school community. ESLR's can be seen attractively posted in some classrooms and offices. Reports, observations and interviews reveal that staff, students and parents have participated in the process of developing the ESLR's.

Attempts have been made to involve all representative groups in shared leadership. There is a need to include more parents and student groups. Selected activities such as Open House, football games and performances result in greater parent participation. Parent classes and Saturday Tutorial Workshops yield small groups of parents who are already involved. There are opportunities for shared leadership and collaboration through site councils, staff development and the principal's "open door" policy. The sharing of information has been negatively influenced by the implementation of the year round scheduling and the two magnet school programs.

Communication within the school is achieved through departmental meetings. It is perceived, however, that while some departments function at a high level of collaboration, others are not. Collaboration tends to happen sporadically among small groups of teachers. The year-round schedule has impacted the staff's cohesiveness and participation. Faculty meetings are held regularly, but one-third of the staff is always off-track. Timely communication with off-track

teachers has been a problem. Teachers who work during intercession have reported an increase in opportunities for interaction with their students and have had positive results in student achievement. Washington Preparatory High School has identified, in the action plan, the need to develop a comprehensive assessment system that guides instruction and reflects ESLRs and District standards to ensure SCHOOL WIDE learning results.

The staff has used SB1882 funds to develop and deliver a rigorous instructional program to include; student-centered problem-solving activities, classroom practices to promote mutual respect, technology in all curricular areas, and preparing students for post-secondary options.

An ongoing challenge to campus cleanliness involves the removal of graffiti from the walls and buildings. The staff has made an honest, frank appraisal of its problems of safety, discipline and absenteeism. A safe and orderly campus is an important issue on Washington Preparatory High School's campus and in the community. Safety and order on campus has improved by the parents helping with supervision on the campus. The campus has a problem with graffiti and the district has provided a crew that visits the school twice per year, but the custodial staff has to clean up most of the graffiti.

Most teachers feel safe on campus. They have recognized the large percentage of students who are "at-risk". The staff is in the process of addressing this problem and dealing with it in the future. A few teachers stand by their doors during passing periods and encourage students to arrive on time, especially to period one class. The school's culture is described as one which focuses on high student expectations and continuous improvement. The homeroom concept connects each student with a teacher who assists with building self-esteem, pride, and the establishment of a sustained silent reading program. The staff feels working at Washington Preparatory High School is a challenge and they are committed to helping their students succeed. A common phrase heard on campus is "We Are Family."

B.**CURRICULAR PATHS:**

Curricular Paths at George Washington Preparatory High School provide a range of offerings encouraging students to participate in an academic foundation program which is aligned with District Standards and State Frameworks. Through the development of an individualized four-year plan called the "Prepper", students are involved in a rigorous core curriculum in grades 9-12, allowing for career choices in grades 11 and 12. This program provides for the inclusion of UC entrance requirements, A-F requirements and is specifically designed, in the four-year plan for magnet students, to meet those requirements.

The addition of the four-year plan for vocademics which offers students interdisciplinary instruction through career clusters, leads to a basic or college preparatory education. Students with special needs and abilities are given individual guidance and allowed extra time as needed to complete a curriculum leading to post-secondary opportunities. All programs are very popular with students and provide a curriculum based on ability level and traditional expectations for skills and knowledge.

Increasing numbers of students are participating in a rigorous curriculum as evidenced by the number of students passing advanced placement exams; the addition of honors courses; the number of students completing A-F requirements; percentage of students accepted and matriculating at two-year colleges, four-year colleges and universities. The four-year educational plan serves as the focal point for course selection and exploration of future options. The students' personal learning plan is reviewed by counselors, students and parents with modifications being made as needed. Through this process, parents are involved in consulting with students about choosing academic core courses, electives and aligning them with post-secondary plans. A variety of information about post-secondary options is available through the College Center and the Career Advancement Center. Representatives from college campuses and enrichment programs such as Upward Bound, MESA, and Young Black Scholars provide assistance in disseminating information. Parents indicated satisfaction with the correspondence between school and home

regarding the child's Curricular Paths success. Responses from parents interviewed confirmed that school staff provided strong support in assisting students and parents with the college entrance process.

Teachers consistently place emphasis on students developing and pursuing post-secondary options. The Curricular Paths survey indicated that 64% of the students felt they were being prepared for post-secondary pursuits. Senior portfolios also show evidence that students saw the relevance of selected course work as it pertained to post-secondary plans. Strong counseling support enables students to meet LAUSD graduation requirements. The class of 1996 saw 90% of its members meeting those requirements. Students are given the option of taking college preparatory, vocational or basic education programs that meet both established requirements and benefit students in post-secondary efforts.

The Vocademics Program provides for a sequential course of study in the technical fields of food services/hospitality, business, graphics, communication, child care and education. The common planning time utilized by teachers in the Vocademics Program needs to be used to integrate curriculum more effectively. Plans are already developed to allow for this in the next school year. Services offered through college and career advancement programs expand student opportunities for post-secondary options. ROP programs, partnerships with Shell Oil, Fritz Company, Northrop's HIP Program, JROTC and the UCLA "Links" program, combined with college center activities, broaden student contact with real world curriculum.

The Curricular Paths Committee has identified the need to develop a four-year plan for students which includes additional career paths for regular students and greater student and parent input. That major growth area will serve as an excellent starting point for the exploration and adoption of a three to five-year action plan which takes advantage of the curriculum offerings already in place. The plan should be aligned with the school's identified ESLR's and place emphasis on making connections between and among post-secondary plans and options, the relevancy of selected course offerings to those plans, and the assurance that all students have equal access to the core courses and program majors.

C. POWERFUL TEACHING AND LEARNING:

The focus group on Powerful Teaching and Learning presented a forthright picture of the efforts at George Washington Prep to identify those teaching and learning strategies including the use of technology which enhance student learning; emphasize higher order thinking skills in an integrated and applied content; and, provide students the opportunities beyond the textbook and the classroom. Their conclusion identified a wide variation in the level of student involvement from class to class. While the long-term school goal has been to move the instructional process away from one which may be described as "textbook driven", this transition has not occurred school-wide. Interviews with the members of this focus group and classroom visits confirmed this staff assessment.

Many teachers still view themselves as content area experts encouraging students to pursue knowledge. Teachers have been part of ongoing efforts toward utilizing strategies that help students explore, organize and present knowledge. To that end, students in many classes are actively engaged in the learning process involving collaborative learning, hands-on projects, panel discussions, computer applications and role playing. One of the outcomes of the student opinion survey supports this trend in changing instructional strategies. More than 70% of the 552 students surveyed agreed that teachers involve them in their own learning and encourage them to be creative in the methods used to complete assignments.

Staff development has played a role in assisting staff with the transition from teacher-centered to student-driven instructional strategies. Several English and Mathematics teachers specifically have attended institutes and explored avenues to move from traditional to student-centered instruction.

A variety of technological resources are available at Washington prep to support instructional program. In addition to the use of more traditional audio video equipment, the school is moving toward a greater integration of computer resources in instruction. Presently,

that resource is limited. Many teachers use computers at home or school for record keeping and word processing. Students have some success to computer related technology. Most often that technology is used for word processing or technology aided class projects. To enhance this sparse status of computer resources, a large portion of school resources has been committed to providing a satellite system to link computers in fifteen classrooms in two buildings. This networked system will allow for distance and interactive learning experiences for students. The addition of computer hardware and software in the library as a part of the school renovation project is eagerly awaited by staff and students.

Curriculum design is such that opportunity for students to be involved in learning approaches that involve require, formulation and problem solving exist. The Math and Science/Communication Arts Magnet and Vocademics Programs integrate academic and career-technical content. There are many examples illustrating student involvement in collaborative learning activities. Co-curriculum activities such as participation in the Academic Decathlon emphasize higher order thinking skills and stress collaboration among students. The production of the school newspaper in English and Spanish, as well as the publication of the Phoenix, Washington's Literary Magazine, apply directly to the school ESLR for communication, citizenship, and technological ability. Collaboration for learning is an outcome demonstrated through exemplary programs presented by performing arts groups in jazz, drama, vocal music and dance.

While there is significant informal collaboration at Washington Prep as evidenced by the activities described above, there is limited structured collaboration planned for staff. A core program in the pilot model stage has a Math, English and Humanities focus. Vocademics is also interdisciplinary in its approach and required collaborated efforts among the teachers in the program. Collaboration does occur within departments in all disciplines. Evidence of this collaboration is apparent in the English Department reference book of materials and in the adoption of new textbooks and courses. Mentor teachers and Title I Resource teachers also provide instructional support in a collaborative model across departments. Collaboration between

students and staff also appears limited with most occurring on an individual basis within the classroom on issues of class policy, grading, or lessons. Co-curricular activities, partnerships and activities originating with the community through the Career Advisement Center provide vehicles for collaboration between school and community.

There are experiences available to Washington Prep students to utilize resources and engage in learning beyond the textbook or in the classroom. These experiences take the form of participation in an extensive co-curricular club program. The club program includes such diverse activities as Mock Trial Teams, Chess Club, Academic Decathlon Club, and Drama Club to identify a few of the nearly 40 opportunities students have to be involved in learning beyond the classroom. UCLA and Cal State LA have established partnerships affording student structured opportunities to visit those campuses. Private industry partners are a vehicle through which approximately 200 students receive additional exposure to acquire technical competence and develop an appreciation of work ethic. Shell Oil corporation provides job training and scholarships; Fritz Company has established an internship program and offers scholarships; Northwest Airlines provides awards and incentives. Each of these exposures present a variety of opportunities for students to have field exposure and real-world problem-solving. Leadership class and the Student Council experience a wide variety of activities and conferences, bringing the students to the real world.

Students have somewhat limited exposure to primary source documents, community resources, and field experiences as an integral part of their formal curricular activities. The school library is poorly located and has limited resources negatively affecting student and staff utilization. All graduating seniors are required to complete a minimum of 40 hours of community service, an exciting prospect for students to actively engage in the real world.

The focus of the Powerful Teaching and Learning group identified the need for teachers to intensify efforts to make classroom activities more challenging and employ strategies to allow a greater percentage of students in every class to actively participate. Additional avenues for staff

to explore include a formalized, coordinated focus on higher order thinking skills in an integrated curricular approach; acquisition, training, and use of computers as an adjunct instructional tool; enhancement of the library offerings making that resource more attractive to student and staff. Staff may wish to explore different scheduling configurations, allowing for more collaborative opportunities for teachers and paraprofessionals.

D. SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

At Washington Preparatory High School there is a wide range of student support services made available to all students to help them achieve the school-wide ESLR's. Internal resources include a staff of nine counselors, which encompasses: A college center with counselor; career center with counselor; full-time probation officer, the school nurse, a school psychologist and librarian. Added recently was a case manager for special needs students. Through special services, a partnership has been developed to help at-risk students. These services include Tobacco Use Prevention, and Teen Parent Advocacy. In addition, there are Saturday tutoring programs, co-curricular programs, which include athletics, clubs, and organizations. The instructional program also includes JROTC and student government.

Students receive appropriate support to ensure academic success even though sometimes it may appear fragmented. Focused attention has been given to the Communication Arts and Math/Science Magnet Programs. Saturday tutoring is available for students needing assistance. Teachers are available before, at lunch, and after school to improve academic success. For example, computer teachers and other staff are often available to help students learn how to enhance computational skills, word processing, and produce technologically-aided projects. The inter-session program provides remediation and enrichment opportunities for students who are off-track. Numerous support comes from external resources such as: Shell Oil Company, Thelonious Monk Institute, Cal Tech, UCLA, and several grants.

Efforts have been made to develop a system of personal support, activities, and opportunities for each student. Such services are available at the school and community. For

example, counselors meet individually with 8th grade middle school students and develop a four-year academic plan "Prepper." A school-wide homeroom plan augments the personal support service. Additionally, a vocational skills program, Voademics, has been implemented to provide additional curricular pathways. Group and individual counseling and peer counseling are available.

A parent room is available for the various parent groups. Participation is limited. However, parents do help support the programs by making phone calls, maintaining campus and supervising various activities. A computerized phone system informs parents about student activities and attendance. Parents express the desire to bring the various support groups together for meetings and activities. The school leadership continues to link the school with the community regarding school events, special schedules and new policies. For example, parents participate on the Site Council, Bilingual Advisory Group, Speakers Bureau and serve as mentors. Information disseminated is distributed in both English and Spanish.

Although efforts are being made by the school leadership to keep parents and community members involved, low overall parental participation is still a major problem. Continued efforts are being made to strengthen the link between parents, community and school.

Historically, approximately 85% of the students attending Washington Prep were eligible for Chapter I services. There are approximately one hundred state-identified gifted students with two thirds of these students enrolled in the two magnet centers. Washington Preparatory High School has 328 special education students enrolled in the following programs: Special Day Class/Community Based Instruction (39), Special Day Class/Learning Handicapped (150), and Resource Specialist Program (139). This number fluctuates greatly and has increased significantly in recent years. Three hundred and fifty students are designated as Limited English Proficient, with the primary language being Spanish.

Human resources are plentiful at Washington Preparatory High School. However, there is

a need to further train certificated staff with new instructional practices and language acquisition. Currently, there are 9 teachers in the process of receiving CKLAD, BCLAD or LDS credentials. Efforts are being made at the school and district level, to be more inclusive of staff that is reflective of the student population. More than a million dollars is allocated to the instructional Materials and textbook accounts, based on student enrollment. Additional allocations are made to the magnet centers.

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Primary instructional budgets, allocated by the district based upon student enrollment, are the Instructional materials Account (IMA-\$ 76,768) and the Textbook Account (\$43,316). Separate allocations are made to the Magnet Centers. By contractual agreement, these budgets are developed by the School Site Council with significant faculty input. The instructional program is additionally supported by State Categorical Funds (\$637,356), Bilingual (\$97,355), Special Education (\$6,958) and Gifted (\$4,289) programs. The district provides additional funding for year round schools (\$174,072). the school has received a block grant (\$161,164), Vocational Education Grant (\$134,121), library technology grant (\$77,000) and a Gender Equity/Teen Grant (\$11,000).

Sufficient computer labs and other equipment is available but expanded technology needs to extend to the classrooms and library. There is space available to provide for the services that are offered at the school. There is a need to upgrade and expand the physical education facilities. The plant is reasonably maintained, but there is a need for the student body to assume more ownership into maintaining a clean and graffiti-free campus. A reduction in classified staff has resulted in a need for all stakeholders to assume a greater responsibility for maintaining and beautifying the campus and classrooms.

Changing the curriculum in mathematics and science has greatly impacted the availability of textbooks. In addition, students lose their books or transfer to another school without returning them. The availability of books for other classes have also been limited due to the intersession programs. However, the new textbook accountability system has led to the recovery of many books and funds to replace books. There are ample supplies, equipment, personnel and finances to support the ESLR's.

E. ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Teachers use a variety of techniques to assess student progress and to adjust and modify the school's instructional progress. Assessment methods range from commercially developed standardized measures of student achievement to teacher-made tests and quizzes to performance measures such as demonstrations, presentations, portfolios and individual projects. The school collects data, reports data on grades, programs, specific content areas and reports this information to the school community in its School Accountability Report Card and other publications. The Los Angeles Unified School District has mandated that all district schools, including Washington Preparatory High School, use the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills. Washington Preparatory High School can compare data for the school years 1991-96. All LAUSD students are being administered a new test this year, the *Stanford 9* and the *Aprenda* for Spanish speaking students whose primary language is other than English. The school also administers the Golden State Exams, Physical Fitness Tests, District Proficiency Exams (Sharp, Topics, and Write) Language Assessment Scales and Advanced Placement Exams.

Pupil progress is reviewed on a regular basis, particularly at the end of each six semesters. Information such as student's grade point average and college acceptances are widely known and publicized at the school. The school-wide expected learning results (ESLR's) are displayed in most offices and classrooms. Student progress is reviewed by staff and parents. Students receive one progress report and report cards at the end of the grading period. Staff and parents also review student's attendance data and use Saturday School, suspensions, and the Tardy Room to try to modify student behavior.

Teachers use assessments and integrate results on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. Chapter quizzes, pencil-paper tests, essays, performances, journal entries, contests and competitions are used to re-evaluate the curriculum and instructional practices. Steps toward student progress are conveyed to parents through a 4-year instructional plan, the *Prepper*, or *Vocademics*. Individual progress toward the plan is communicated to parents and students once per year.

Funds have been allocated for program development as learning results of the expected student learning outcomes. Title I funds have been used, for example, to purchase computer equipment for labs and to compensate teachers who have prepared instructional material such as the pre-post writing assessments.

Assessment results are reported to the entire community. Numerous recognitions are held to support and encourage progress towards the expected district and school-wide standards. Students receive certificates, trophies and other forms of incentives for individual and group accomplishments.

The *Prepper* allows counselors and others to communicate standards and expectations to students as early as possible in preparation for the high school curriculum. Orientation sessions are held for all eighth graders at the feeder schools and particular attention is given to the *Prepper* and *Vocademics* program.

The District changed to two standardized tests, the Stanford 9 and the Aprenda allow for the school community to establish a new set of benchmarks for baseline for every student including special education, limited English proficient and general education student. Additionally, the *Prepper* allows counselors to begin communication with parents and guardians as early as eighth grade on the expected student learning result. The ESLR's are compatible without the District's focus as evidenced in the newly adopted student learning standards.

Key Issues:

- Test Scores
- Parent Participation
- Professional Training

SCHOOL WIDE Areas of Strength:

1. The faculty and staff for its overall attitude promoting student excellence.
2. The stakeholders at Washington Preparatory High School for the development of outstanding ESLR's.
3. The school community for maintaining the traditions, culture, standards, and attitudes which collectively comprise Washington Preparatory High School.
4. The implementation of a four year educational plan for each student promoting individual career decisions.
5. The school staff for enduring the prolonged process of school modernization.
6. The curricular direction including Advanced Placement Courses, Science/Match, Communication Arts Magnet Program, and the Vocademics Program.
7. The outstanding course offerings and programs in Performing Arts.
8. The candor of the stakeholders in their ability to admit areas of strength and weaknesses in the self-assessment process.
9. The successful implementation of the transition from a traditional school year to a multi-track year round program.
10. The inclusion of senior portfolios and a requirement for community service as a part of the student graduation requirements.
11. Providing an exceptional JROTC Program for students.
12. A homeroom program and its activities.
13. Dedicated classified staff who support and enhance the educational program.

14. Providing extensive human, financial and instructional resources to assist students.
15. Offering comprehensive opportunities for student involvement in co-curricular activities.
16. Adopting new standardized assessment test.
17. The school faculty and staff for providing a safe, learning environment.
18. The school community for its willingness to embark on multiple large scale projects simultaneously while maintaining an educational program for students.

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

1. Incorporate standards and ESLR's into all areas of the curriculum to ensure that powerful teaching and learning is offered to all students.
2. Coordinate activities of Latino and Black parent and student support groups.
3. Devise a plan to mesh the Latino and Black student population into a more cohesive student body.
4. Provide staff development activities for all certificated stakeholders in the Student Study Team Process.
5. Emphasize a greater attention to classroom environment in the display of current student centered work.
6. Devise different alternatives for monitoring student progress to encourage improved academic success especially for the at-risk, low achieving student.
7. Develop integrated curriculum strategies across subject matter discipline areas.
8. Utilize a wide variety of assessment tools to evaluate student work.
9. Refine and monitor all discipline and attendance policies as they relate to staff and students.
10. Continue to offer staff development opportunities, financed by district or school-site sources, to all stakeholders.
11. Provide resources to assist the classroom teacher in developing lessons and strategies for increasing educational opportunities for the non-English speaking student.

CHAPTER V.**Ongoing School Improvement**

Although the school action plans have been well developed, the committee feels that the priorities need to be reevaluated. The committee recommends that the staff consider making the area for improvement designated Action Plan #2 the number one priority for the school. The committee strongly feels that the greatest need at Washington Preparatory High School is to develop a comprehensive assessment system that guides instruction and reflects ESLR's and Los Angeles Unified School District standards.

Although a significant number of stakeholders do not have a genuine connection to the school, and this is also a valid area for remediation, the committee believes the most important action plan consideration must be to develop powerful teaching strategies to provide active learning opportunities for all students in all classes. This action plan would best enhance student learning for all students at Washington Preparatory High School. We feel there is already sufficient commitment to the action plan because the staff had already made this one of three identified action plans. The integration of standards into the curriculum is a district priority. Therefore, it is felt that additional resources could be provided for the school to carry out the action plan to develop powerful teaching strategies.

The major impediment to school improvement is that not all stakeholders buy-in to the need for new teaching methods. The development of the follow-up plan will ensure an effective educational delivery system for all students. Teachers will learn to develop student-centered lessons that incorporate collaborative learning, critical thinking skills, peer coaching and observations, utilizing the teacher as a guide and a coach.