SAMPLE

SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

FOR

SUCCESS HIGH SCHOOL

100 Any School Drive

Any City, CA 95000

March 26–28, 2010

Visiting Committee Members

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Associate Superintendent, California USD

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Amy Chang
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Resource Specialist, Los Angeles High School

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WASC FOCUS ON LEARNING VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

Chapter I: Student/Community Profile

Briefly summarize the most critical information from the student/community profile that impacts the school. Include the following:

- **Brief description of the students and community served by the school**
- **School's analysis of student achievement data**
- **Other pertinent data**

➔ Note: The entire profile does not need to be included but insert or attach pertinent charts/graphs on student performance.
Comment on significant findings revealed by the profile and/or pertinent items that were not included in the profile.

A major challenge of _____ High School has been the changing student population to include the many characteristics that compose the culturally diverse student population. Special population students include Emergency Immigrant, Limited English Proficient (LEP), Migrant, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, and GATE. Other factors to consider are gang affiliations, single parent families, pregnant/teen parents, substance abuse, dysfunctional families, at-risk (academically and behaviorally), and foreign exchange populations.

The norm referenced SAT 9 tests administered to the students over the past three years indicate the continuing need to stress reading comprehension and mathematics across the curriculum. The school is transitioning from a norm-reference standardized test approach to a stronger multiple approach of student assessment and school accountability. The development of a schoolwide writing rubric is at the early stages. Senior projects are now a requirement for graduation. Developing some means of aggregating the information about student performance that is revealed in Senior Projects might be as useful to the school and the community as it would be for the "visitor." It was unclear how some of the data elements such as the transiency rate, the graduation rate, and suspension information were determined.

Overall the Parent Survey revealed that more than half of the respondents consider the school to be doing an effective or very effective job in helping students meet the expected schoolwide learning results (ESLRs). Parents feel that the school maintains a safe and orderly place for students to learn and the staff expects students to produce quality work that reflects their best efforts. Areas of greatest need are better communication with parents and providing students with a better understanding of their civic responsibilities.

The Student Survey revealed that 58% of all students gave the school an "effective" or "very effective" rating. The highest rated areas were "writing" and "opportunities to work collaboratively with other students"; the lowest rated areas were "communication regarding your progress," "developing knowledge or appreciation of our diverse culture," "relating positively with our diverse population," understanding of your civic responsibility," and "instruction regarding current health issues."

The teachers are properly credentialed for their current assignments. Professional development is determined by Board priorities, staff surveys, and committees; however, it is important to note the staff is proactive in attending conferences, workshops, and seminars. More teachers are working toward credentialing in language development to assist them with the increasingly ethnic diverse student population.

Chapter II: Progress Report (suggested length: 2 pages)

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

The school's critical areas for follow-up have been integrated into the school's annual plan. The school reports activities that it sees as leading to accomplishing these; however no student success measures have been indicated or required.

Since the last accreditation, the school has made great strides in opening the lines of communication and decision making. Two years ago a new principal was assigned to the school. The current administration's open door policy greatly contributed to "creating a more trusting environment and open working relationship." The school is also in the process of designing an educational program in which all students can achieve at a high level.

- **Discuss how the school through its action plan has accomplished each of the critical areas for follow-up, including the impact on student learning.**

Previous critical areas for follow-up from the WASC Visiting Committee have, in large measure, been addressed. Five areas dealt with instructional delivery including professional development, budget, facilities/class size, and articulation with feeder and post-secondary schools. Below are summary comments regarding the issues addressed in these majors.

- Monies have been used to fund professional development activities with schoolwide emphasis, including integrating writing, reading, and technology across the curriculum. Some activities were short-term; others have been longer term (i.e., writing workshops for English, science, social studies, special education, foreign language, and home economics teachers). Other professional topics are selected based upon Board priorities and staff surveys and committees. While numerous, these activities seem to have been somewhat disconnected as staff now gauge that most learning is primarily textbook centered.
- Fourteen teachers now hold either the Language Development Specialist (LDS) or Cross-Cultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) credential and four hold the Bilingual-Bicultural (BCC) certificate. Six other teachers are currently engaged in training programs leading to the CLAD certificate.
- Cooperative learning, computer technology, and group work is used in all departments at various levels of sophistication.

- Six computer labs (social science, science, compensatory education, college prep, business, and bilingual) are available; additional computers are available in some classrooms. The library media center has been remodeled to accommodate technology. A multi-media presentation center, electronic public catalog and reference materials are incorporated in the program. Student produced multimedia presentations are becoming more frequent.
- The budgeting process was reviewed annually and was changed. Consensus among department chairpersons is that the new process should occur every year as departments needs change.
- No formal improvement process to address organizational, curricular, and personal development has been developed or implemented. However, a number of activities have been accomplished which lead in this direction.
- Physical facilities and class size issues have been addressed within the constraints of school budget.
- Articulation with feeder and post-secondary schools has been largely department based.

Similarly, key issues or recommendations to schoolwide and department committees have been addressed. Among the most celebrated changes:

- Instituting a ninth grade student success program two years ago that now includes all freshmen and is seen by parents, staff, and students as extremely successful; (Staff continues to seek ways to more objectively measure the program's success.)
- Conducting technology summer workshops;
- Requiring multicultural and traditional core literature in English classes;
- Integrating technology into math, English, and bilingual classes through compensatory education and bilingual computer labs;
- Initiating integrated curriculum within some departments;
- Eliminating all basic tracked courses;
- Providing sheltered instruction across the curriculum;
- Initiating more writing assignments and a pilot tutorial writing program which allows teachers to help students revise papers;
- Implementing new math curriculum into Algebra 1 and 2 and Geometry;
- Providing all students with activity-based instruction in science; and
- Expanding video library and computer accessibility in social studies.

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Chapter III: Self-Study Process (suggested length: 1-½ pages)

Comment on the school's self-study process with respect to the parameters and accuracy.

- **Did the school accomplish the five parameters of the self-study? (See Focus on Learning, page 3 or Reference Card #1)**
- **Does the self-study accurately reflect the school's program for students?**
- **Does the observable evidence reflect a sampling of what ALL students are doing and producing with respect to the WASC criteria and the school's expected schoolwide learning results?**
- **Does the observable evidence support the school's identified areas for growth?**

The school used the self-study process to foster schoolwide collaboration and to refocus energy and resources on a common purpose: What students are doing and what students are learning. As is typical in major change processes, there was a period of "confusion and frustration" which eventually led to the accomplishment of each key outcome in the *Focus on Learning* self-study report. There is no question that the school's self-study was conducted with the intention of presenting an accurate reflection of the school's program for students. The open and honest manner in which the self-study was pursued by the school is illustrated with the sharing of recently available information regarding first semester poor performance results with respect to grade distributions and dialogue centered upon teacher standards and the evaluation of student performance.

1. The involvement and collaboration of school community members in the self-study

All persons involved with learning activities were included. The Leadership Team, composed of two administrators, the co-self-study coordinators, and the Focus Group leaders, provided direction and guidance to the self-study process. Much organizational work was done by school community groups, all of whom were represented in each Schoolwide Focus Group. The Parent and Student Groups met to draft and review the student, parent, and community survey and interview questions and representatives participated in the Focus Groups.

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

In carrying out the self-study process, the school maintained a clear focus on trying to achieve a better understanding about the impact of the school's programs and services on students. Development of the school's statement of expected schoolwide learning results was specifically undertaken in conjunction with the *Focus on Learning* process. The process used by the school insured that staff, parents and members of the community had the opportunity to participate in developing these expectations. Nevertheless, because of the short time between their development and the school's involvement in the comparison to the criteria, the potential relationship between these guiding expected schoolwide learning results and the specific expectations of instruction in each discipline and the services provided by each of the school's programs has not been fully explored. However, because of the importance that the leadership has attached to this *Focus on Learning* process, the school's expected learning results will become integral to the school's improvement efforts.

3. The assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning with respect to the criteria and the ESLRs (Note: Include discussion about the use of a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, and analyze student performance data.)

While the extent of specific knowledge and the depth of understanding of reform documents such as curriculum references varies among stakeholders, the self-study process has been employed as one effective vehicle for broadening that knowledge and understanding so that specific practices at the school can be compared to the standards promoted by these guides. All Focus Group summaries represent all School Community Groups' analysis of the school's current status in relation to the curricular references, the learning results and the criteria. Each person was responsible for classroom observations, student interviews, and collecting and relating evidence to curricular frameworks, expected schoolwide learning results, and the 14 WASC criteria.

The assembled evidence attested to the broad array of strategies currently being employed to assess student learning; examples of evidence ran the gamut from traditional standardized test results, samples of teacher-developed tests, specific samples of student work collected from all departments to videotapes of student projects. However, the Visiting Committee found that is was unclear what standards the school used to judge the quality of student work and how representative of student performance were the assembled samples. Although these factors make it difficult to generalize about student performance or about the impact of the school's programs on student performance on the basis of much of the evidence examined by the school during the course of the self-study, the samples do provide an excellent starting place for developing a more systematic approach to assessment built around authentic evidence of student performance and including standards that might be constructed around such performances.

4. The development of a schoolwide action plan that integrates subject area, program, and support plans to address identified growth needs

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

The sections for the Schoolwide Action Plan were developed by the Leadership Team as they considered the growth areas of the Focus Groups and identified central themes. The school community groups identified specific actions that will be taken within departments to ensure accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan sections. A follow-up process to monitor the implementation and accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan has been established, with a reorganized School Site Council serving as the central facilitating body. Membership in this council will include a melding of the present WASC Leadership Team. (See Chapter V, Visiting Committee Report).

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Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

Part A: For each category:

A. Organization for Student Learning

B. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

C. Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth

D. Resource Management and Development

- **Summarize an analysis of what currently exists and its impact on student learning.**
  - **Highlight areas of strength (if any)**
  - **Highlight the key issues (if any)**
  - **List important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues**

CATEGORY A. ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT LEARNING

What currently exists

A1. School Purpose Criterion

Guide Questions: To what extent...

has the school established a clear statement of purpose that reflect the beliefs and philosophy of the institution?

is the purpose defined further by adopted expected schoolwide learning results that form the basis of the educational program for every student?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

A2. Governance Criterion

Guide Questions: To what extent...

does the governing authority adopt policies which are consistent with the school purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results for the school?

does the governing authority delegate implementation of these policies to the professional staff?

does the governing authority monitor results?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

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A3. School Leadership Criterion

Guide Questions: To what extent...

does the school leadership make decisions to facilitate actions that focus the energies of the school on student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results?

does the school leadership empower the staff?

does the school leadership encourage commitment, participation and shared accountability for student learning?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

A4. Staff Criterion

Guide Questions: To what extent...

are the school leadership and staff qualified for their assigned responsibilities?

are the school leadership and staff committed to the school's purpose?

does the school leadership and staff engage in ongoing professional development that promotes student learning?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

A5. School Environment Criterion

Guide Questions: To what extent...

does the school have a safe, healthy, nurturing environment that reflects the school's purpose?

is the school environment characterized by a respect for differences, trust, caring, professionalism, support, and high expectations for each student?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

A6. Reporting Student Progress Criterion

Guide Questions: To what extent...

does the school leadership and staff regularly assess student progress toward accomplishing the school's expected schoolwide learning results?

does the school leadership and staff report student progress to the rest of the school community?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

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A7. School Improvement Process Criterion

Guide Questions: To what extent...

does the school leadership facilitate school improvement which is driven by plans of action that will enhance quality learning for all students?

does the school leadership have school community support and involvement?

does the school leadership effectively guide the work of the school?

does the school leadership provide for accountability through monitoring of the schoolwide action plan?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

Areas of Strength for Organization for Student Learning Category (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

Key Issues for Organization for Student Learning (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

CATEGORY B. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

What currently exists

B1. What Students Learn Criterion

Guide Question: To what extent...

does the school provide a challenging, coherent and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose and results in student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results through successful completion of any course of study offered?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

B2. How Students Learn Criterion

Guide Questions: To what extent...

does the professional staff use research-based knowledge about teaching and learning?

does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students at a high level of learning consistent with the school's purpose and expected schoolwide learning results?

A strong effort is being made to meet the needs of the majority of the diverse student population. There is a sizeable population of mostly ESL students who feel disconnected from the school. The school recognizes the need to solicit more input from students, parents, and the community in order to design courses, curriculum, and instructional experiences with greater relevancy to the students.

Most teachers provide students with goals and objectives; however, few teachers actively involved students in the process of establishing these goals and standards. Some students are ambivalent about school, seeing only limited connections between the classes, the school's expectations for them, and life outside of school. Performance standards are defined by the teachers and the academic course levels.

Many teachers still see themselves as content area experts who encourage their students to learn as much as they can, and some still see themselves as experts who present their knowledge through lectures and presentations and expect the students to learn what has been covered. However, teachers have begun to review and revise their courses to make them more effective and more closely aligned with the schoolwide learning results. While many teachers still refer to textbooks and course outlines to prepare and sequence class sessions, reinforce students' learning, and serve as a basis for judging students' effort and achievement, an increasing number are frequently trying innovative methods encountered through research and professional development activities. Science, social studies, and English programs are examining redesigns to offer integrated courses that will provide students with more challenging approaches.

Although several teachers feel that there is considerable room to grow, the majority of departments indicate that teachers are beginning to see themselves as guides or facilitators who use teaching strategies requiring the active involvement of students. There is a growing awareness and utilization of student learning styles in planning and implementing instructional practices. Teachers change approaches, activities, and assignments when they are given ideas through staff development programs, workshop presentations, or textbook instructional guides.

Many students are experiencing approaches that involve inquiry, creating new knowledge by formulating and solving problems, teamwork, reflecting on and communicating about their work, and revising work in progress. Students are involved in collaborative activities and in learning that reflects real, meaningful tasks and products. These students are encouraged and given opportunities to apply their knowledge in other classes and in situations outside of school. They participate in school and community activities, competitions and exhibitions that involve real-world applications of skills and knowledge. They also participate in course work or classes which integrate academic and vocational content. However, these approaches are concentrated in the more academically rigorous classes. In many other classes, students are just expected to do the work assigned. The structure of learning experiences comes primarily from the teachers, reinforcing recall and comprehension. Although some enrichment activities require higher order thinking and inquiry, the majority of student work relies on passive and rote learning with a focus on a teacher-or textbook-defined correct responses.

Teachers occasionally use primary source documents, community resources, and field experiences to enhance student learning. The library is an outstanding resource for teachers and students. Students have the opportunity to join a wide assortment of special interest activities and clubs or enroll in work/study, or other technical preparation programs that provide field experiences and connections to the world outside the school.

A few teachers creatively incorporate technology into student learning. The Visiting Committee found availability of technology at the school through the five computer labs, in the library and in some curricular areas. Computer labs are fully booked, the multimedia is over-subscribed, computers in the library are accessible and used throughout the school day. However, staff and students seem to agree that the integration of technology as a key instructional tool does not exist throughout the instructional program.

B3. How Assessment Is Used Criterion

(Note: Include comments on the degree of acceptable progress by all students toward clearly defined expected schoolwide learning results, academic standards, and other institutional and/or governing authority expectations.)

Guide Questions: To what extent...

is teacher and student use of assessment frequent and integrated into the teaching/learning process?

are the assessment results the basis for measurement of each student's progress toward the expected schoolwide learning results?

are the assessment results the basis for regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction?

are the assessment results the basis for the allocation of resources?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

Areas of Strength for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Category (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

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- A genuine commitment to address the learning needs of the diverse student population
- An increased awareness by many staff of the variety of student learning styles
- Increased schoolwide dialogue about instructional practices as a result of professional development activities
- In-depth schoolwide discussion about critical issues of learning results and correlated program standards of rigor, differentiated expectations for various groups, and integration of higher level thinking
- The risk takers who have piloted the use of innovative instructional strategies that address greater performance based assessments

Key Issues for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

- The development, implementation, and monitoring of a focused staff development program sustained over time that enhances active, challenging learning experiences for students
- The increased involvement of all students in challenging learning experiences that involve problem-solving, collaborative work, meaningful application of knowledge and skills
- The investigation of creative strategies for making technology more accessible to all students to enhance the curriculum
- The incorporation of student input into lesson designs and performance standards
- The development and use of more learning activities that are relevant to the students' needs and interests
- The establishment and development of greater community participation and use of community resources through such vehicles as business partnerships

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

- Student work that provided insight regarding the use of higher order thinking skills, active learning, collaborative learning, application of knowledge to real world problems, technology, and activities that use both individual and group assignments
- Summary comments by staff that explain analysis of representative student work
- Self-study and additional written comments from faculty that reflect changes they have made in course content, materials, and strategies to adapt to changing student needs
- Student projects that demonstrate progress toward attaining the school's learning results
- Observing instruction
- Schoolwide Focus Group dialogue
- Dialogue with students and staff, individual and stakeholder meetings
- Extended dialogue with Leadership Team

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C. SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

What currently exists

C1. Student Connectedness Criterion

Guide Question: To what extent...

are students connected to a system of support services, activities and opportunities at the school and within the community that meet the challenges of the curricular/co-curricular program in order to achieve the expected schoolwide learning results?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

C2. Parent/Community Involvement Criterion

Guide Question: To what extent...

does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to ensure that parental and community involvement is integral to the school's established support system for students?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

Areas of Strength for Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth Category (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

Key Issues for Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth Category (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

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D. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

What currently exists

D1. Resources Criterion

Guide Question: To what extent...

are the resources available to the school sufficient to sustain the school program and effectively used to carry out the school's purpose and student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

D2. Resource Planning Criterion

Guide Question: To what extent...

do the governing authority and the school execute responsible resource planning for the future?

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

Areas of Strength for Resource Management and Development Category (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

Key Issues for Resource Management and Development Category (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

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Part B: Synthesize the strengths and key issues from all categories into schoolwide strengths and schoolwide critical areas for follow-up. Include the information given below (suggested length: 2 pages)

- general comments about the emerging schoolwide strengths and critical areas for follow-up.
- schoolwide areas of strength (list numerically) Be sure that these can be documented by other sections of the report.
- schoolwide critical areas for follow-up that will do the following: (list numerically) Be sure that these can be documented by other sections of the report.
  - *support* those areas already identified by the school in the action plan sections
  - *strengthen* those identified areas in the action plan sections
  - address additional areas identified by the visiting committee. This includes areas related to student achievement and other profile data, the school program and operation, and the action plan.

General Comments

The stakeholders are commended for the thoroughness in the preparation of the *Focus on Learning* document. All stakeholders assisted the Visiting Committee in the collection and clarification of data that was needed in order to analyze the existing status of the school. The district office administration provided direction, training and other resources to the school. The Visiting Committee found that students were extremely congenial and appreciative of the efforts made to improve the quality of educational opportunities available to them.

Schoolwide Areas of Strength (list numerically)

1. The schoolwide sense of commitment to improve the school's instructional program and the achievement of students.
2. The collegiality of the staff, the enthusiastic student body, and the safe and orderly campus.
3. The staff's willingness to explore and try new instructional strategies to increase student achievement.
4. The staff's assessment of student work and the use of the senior portfolio/project.
5. The staff's curricular support that is available to individual students through programs such as English literacy, AVID, specialized algebra courses, after-school tutoring, and the reading/activity classes.
6. The large number of students' participating in academic, athletic, or social extracurricular activities.

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

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up (list numerically)

The Visiting Committee concurs with the school's identified areas that are outlined in the schoolwide action plan. These are summarized below:

1. The leadership and instructional staff establish and employ a systematic use of student performance assessment strategies that will measure the effects of the school's

programs and services, guide staff development, modify instruction, and therefore result in improved student achievement of the academic standards and ESLRs.

2. The leadership and instructional staff expand interdisciplinary collaboration and integration of technology in school programs and departmental curriculum to enhance student learning.
3. The leadership in collaboration with staff and other stakeholders improve the capacity of the school to meet the needs of all students.

In addition, the Visiting Committee has identified areas that need to be strengthened:

1. The school leadership in collaboration with staff and other stakeholders refine the schoolwide action plan sections, especially in relation to the impact of the actions on student achievement.
2. The leadership, instructional staff, and other stakeholders increase the use of the results from analyzing student achievement data in the modifying of instruction, particularly in the areas of reading, writing, math and critical thinking skills.
3. The instructional staff further develop clearly articulated benchmarks for student performance that are linked to the academic standards and expected schoolwide learning results.
4. The instructional staff members increase their participation in staff development that is sustained over time. The focus should concentrate on the following areas:
    a. Active, challenging learning experiences for students that involve them in critical thinking, problem-solving, collaborative work, and meaningful application of knowledge and skills.
    b. Analysis of student achievement data and utilization of the results to modify instruction.
    c. Effective use of technology in the classroom to support student achievement.
5. The school leadership and staff develop and implement ways to have a stronger parent, student, and community role in the entire school improvement process.
6. The school's leadership in collaboration with all stakeholders develops and implements plans to actively improve counseling services and outreach, thereby engaging parents and the community to meet the academic and personal needs of all students. This includes addressing the issue of student apathy.

Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement

- **Include a brief summary of the schoolwide action plan**

[Narrative not included in the sample.]

Comment on the following school improvement issues:

- adequacy of the schoolwide action plan in addressing the *critical areas for follow-up* Consider these questions:
  - Do the action plan sections address the *critical areas for follow-up?*
  - Will the action plan steps enhance student learning?
  - Is the action plan a "user-friendly" schoolwide action plan that has integrated all major school initiatives?
  - Is the action plan feasible within existing resources?
  - Is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, schoolwide and system wide?

The Visiting Committee finds that the action plans proposed by _____ High School are appropriately directed toward improvement of the school's performance with respect to the concepts contained in the criteria categories. The general themes of the action plan correlate to the growth areas identified by the Schoolwide Focus Groups. These are greater linkage of the ESLRs to the actual instructional program; further delineation of measurable performance-based assessment strategies based upon developed benchmarks linked to the ESLRs and curricular standards; a more rigorous, sequential, coherent curriculum and cross-curricular paths that lead to a broad range of real-world options for every student; staff development to assist teachers in involving students in challenging, learning experiences, including technology; stronger involvement of parents and community with learning; strengthening; more specific support and program modifications for the "disconnected student."

To assist the school with these concerns the Leadership Team and the Visiting Committee had many discussions: How was the school planning to implement identified changes, know progress was being made, and coordinate actions across departments, work groups, programs, and funding sources? Consensus was reached that while the important ideas were contained within the self-study and initial action plan, the most important step for the school to take was to re-examine these action plans seeking unity, clarity, and purpose in their statement and organization. These discussions resulted in greater specificity and clarity on detailed steps for areas identified as top priority within the next year. More work needs to be done on the other areas and as time expands for all action plan sections.

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The Visiting Committee concurs with the action plans developed by _____ High School. They represent a validation of the general direction of the change agenda being promoted at the school. The Visiting Committee is confident that pursuing this agenda is likely to lead to higher assessment of the school's performance, based on the defined quality accomplishments of the ESLRs, curricular standards and the criteria concepts described in the *Focus on Learning* accreditation process. There is a high degree of enthusiasm, support and professional commitment by the leadership, the majority of staff and other school community members to implement these action steps.

Existing factors that support school improvement

The staff agrees that their task has just begun and is by no means completed. In fact, the staff has come to understand that they have created a far more encompassing challenge in ensuring that quality total school program is collaboratively built and undergoes improvement on an ongoing basis. The staff is committed to improving the quality of the school program. Of particular note is the integration of assessment activities in order to give direction to the curriculum improvement already underway and to strengthen teaching and learning. Both the leadership and many individual teachers are committed to focusing a more systematic schoolwide effort in the use of existing data that is pertinent to student learning and the addition of performance-based assessment methods directly linked to benchmarks for ESLRs and curricular standards.

The areas that have been identified as immediate priorities can be met given the money-pool currently being used and the school community's commitment to the plan's success. The staff has devoted resources of money and time to the overall reform they envision.

Impediments to school improvement that the school will need to overcome in order to accomplish any of the action plan sections

The Schoolwide Action Plan incorporates important schoolwide issues and relates them to the concepts of the *Focus on Learning* criteria. There is enough commitment to begin implementation of the action plan sections. However, the degree of ownership of the school's action plans on the part of those closest to the technical core of teaching, the teachers themselves, does not appear to include all of them. For example, the only impediment in the Curriculum and Instruction, How Students Learn area, as viewed by the Visiting Committee, would be resistance and/or a lack of commitment of individual staff members to participate. Another part of this issue is the fact that all school community members are not aware of their role in the plan which may create difficulty. In addition, there are no consequences for school community members who do not carry out their responsibilities unless one person is assigned the task of overseeing the implementation of the plan. The key to successful implementation of the action plan will be to gain wide acceptance of the plan on an individual basis from **all** school community members. In addition, the school must be sensitive to the time commitment required for the various action plan sections.

The school must work at ensuring that there is a supportive environment for staff to integrate the ESLRs into the instructional program; equally important, a nurturing environment for students must be ensured if these high expectations for their performance are to be met. Finally, the school must build parental support for the school's goals that will facilitate the achievement of the ESLRs. These comments are not necessarily viewed as inhibitors to progress, just issues of which the school needs to be aware.

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

Overall the school community members are committed to a follow-up process. One positive outcome of the *Focus on Learning* process was the coinciding of the major action plan areas with topics already identified by school community members. This process formalized what needs to be done and strengthened those areas in which work has already been in progress.

The reorganized School Site Council will be the central facilitating body. Membership in this Council will include a melding of the present WASC Leadership Team. Specific issues, such as the roles of previously-existing committees and newer ones formed in response to Focus on Learning will need to be clarified. At each monthly School Site Council meeting, action plan committees will report progress; there will also be provisions for keeping parents, the community, and the district informed.

In summary, the school is looking forward to ongoing celebration of progress of increased student learning with respect to the schoolwide learning results through the improvement of the educational program and services to the school's highly diverse student population.

The school’s action plan incorporates important schoolwide issues and relates them to the concepts of the *Focus on Learning* criteria. A possible impediment to the plan would be the lack of commitment on the part of all staff members to adjust their teaching strategies so as to effect successful achievement of higher order thinking skills for all students. The Leadership Team must develop innovative methods to increase parent and student participation and ownership of the plan.

The follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan appears to be adequate. The Leadership Team will be the central facilitating body. The school has demonstrated that they are committed to and involved in ongoing inservice and professional growth, which is focused on the improvement of the learning environment and increased student achievement.

In summary, the school is looking forward to an ongoing celebration of progress. The increased student learning with respect to the expected schoolwide learning results will show the improvement of the educational program and services to the school’s diverse student population.