

THE WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
in cooperation with
THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

“FOCUS ON LEARNING” VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

**ALHAMBRA HIGH SCHOOL
MARTINEZ, CALIFORNIA**

February 27-March 2, 2005

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CHAPTER 1: STUDENT/COMMUNITY PROFILE

Alhambra High School, established in 1897, is the only comprehensive high school in the city of Martinez. Although Martinez has a population of 38,000 and is the county seat of Contra Costa County, it maintains a “small town culture.” A 2001 city-commissioned study characterized Martinez as “a mid-size, slow-growing moderate-income community.” This “blue collar” city supports 21 unions. Commitment to the school is generational. It is not uncommon for both parents and grandparents to have attended Alhambra. The high school is strongly supported in both curricular and extra-curricular programs by the entire community.

In 1994, the high school was renovated, resulting in a beautiful facility that blends the best of the former school with the needs of the present. It is a focal point and source of pride for the entire community and has served as a home for “Martinez Relays,” the oldest high school relays in Northern California. With the commitment of the district and the Martinez Education Foundation, a state-of-the-art language lab was added in 2002. In 2003, the last part of the renovation was the completion of the Center for the Arts, a 350-seat theater that houses drama, choir and band classes. This award-winning facility was the venue for the John Muir musical, “Mountain Days.” In 2004, many aging exterior facilities were improved, including the swimming pool, tennis courts, soccer fields and exterior physical education teaching areas.

As the only comprehensive high school in Martinez, Alhambra High School is steeped in tradition and “the Martinez way.” This tradition is evident through their strong parent involvement in PTSA, Booster Club, Site Council, athletic events, Grad Night, AHS Arts Foundation, Strategic Planning (both district and site) and leadership activities. Most of their students have lived in the community and attended school within this small district throughout their school years.

Alhambra High School’s site and district administrative team has changed twice since their last full accreditation. A new superintendent assumed the position in January 2003 and a new assistant superintendent for business began in February of that same year. A new principal was hired for Alhambra High School in 2001. The Assistant Principal who had been at the high school for 13 years, retired at the end of 2002. In 2002-03, budget cuts eliminated a custodian, the college/career specialist and one gardener. In the past five years, there have been three other vice principals. In 2003-04, the school was staffed with only one assistant principal. The athletic director retired in 2003, and the principal temporarily handled the duties. In spring 2004 the principal went on medical leave, and there were two interim principals for the remainder of the year. In her absence, the staff “stepped up” to help with the leadership of the school and to keep things going. A new principal was chosen in July of 2004. A part-time vice principal was hired at the start of the 2004-05 school year. With the new administration in place, the staff is hopeful and supportive.

Alhambra High School’s student population showed a 7% increase in the freshman class for 2003-04, the third consecutive year for enrollment increases. Freshman enrollment rose slightly in 2004-2005 and this is expected to fall sharply in

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2005-06 to 291 before rising again approximately 10 to 15 percent during each of the following two years.

For 2004-05, AHS student population distribution is as follows: Other 2%, American Indian 2%, Asian 3%, Filipino 3%, African American 4%, Hispanic 15%, and White 71%. In the past five years, the breakdown of ethnic population has not changed dramatically. Total minority population constitutes less than 29% of total student population and 15% of that is Hispanic. For 2004-05, Hispanics and Filipinos showed the largest increase. Whites decreased 3% from 973 students to 946 students.

Minority population at the school is not necessarily an accurate representation because enrollment coding of students can vary within a family. Enrollment coding takes place when parents enroll students in the Martinez Unified School District.

Of the total student population, 7% were English Language Learners. Ninety-four students were designated LEP/FEP. Only 26 students were not fluent and enrolled in a LEP program in 2003-04. In 1999-2000, there were 2 ESL classes. In 2000-01 there were no ESL classes on campus. In 2001-02 there was one section. As a result of a 2002 CCR (Coordinated Compliance Review), the program was extensively revised. For 2003-04, there were five sections. Twenty-five teachers are currently in the process of completing their SDAIE training.

Over the past 4 years, there have been 30% more entering freshmen than exiting seniors. In 1999-2000, there were 297 entering freshman. As of 2000-2001, the Board adapted the secondary policy of involuntary transfers for any student not on line with the required number of credits to graduate. This can be one of the factors that contributed to a decrease in graduating students. In 2002-03, that freshman class (cohort) had 238 seniors graduating. In 2000-02, the freshman class was comprised of 365 students. In 2003-04, there were only 289 graduating from the original cohort.

The Alhambra staff, both credentialed and classified, are an integral part of the positive reputation that Alhambra has with the community. Many live within the community and have children who have attended AHS. For 2004-05, the staff was comprised of 62 credentialed and 32 classified staff members.

Most teachers are teaching within their subject area. Of the nine teachers who are teaching outside their credentialed area, only four are teaching multiple periods outside their credential. The remaining five teach only one period outside their credential.

Thirty-nine percent of the teachers have their Masters Degree with 21% having their Masters Degree and an additional 30+ hours. Twenty percent of the teachers have been teaching more than 20 years. Thirty-two percent of the credentialed staff is CLAD or equivalent certificated and 39% of the staff is in SDAIE training.

For 2004-05, all teachers are credentialed. Between 2001-03, AHS lost a number of veteran teachers due to retirement. As new teaching staff entered AHS, the culture of the staff community experienced change. This change was brought on by new personalities, philosophies, and teaching pedagogy being infused into the community. The drop in teachers in 2004-05 is due to an increase in class size by the District. This

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has a potentially positive effect, but that effect has not been seen immediately as the staff adjusts to change.

In 2002-03, the district bought a new student database, AERIES. This system allows the site to access more student data in a variety of ways and to not only disaggregate by grade but also narrow the search to include class and gender. In 2004-05 the plans to test Aeries Browser Interface (ABI) were postponed. This program would have allowed staff access to testing data and student demographic information. Currently, ARIES is not accessible to all staff. In the 2002 changeover from SASI to AERIES it became apparent that much of the data entered in SASI prior to 2000 was incorrectly entered or transferred. This will be obvious in looking at the data tables. In analyzing the errors, it appears to have been a combination of personnel and lack of consistent district standards for entering data at all levels. This will be remedied with the use of AERIES; however, it was logistically and financially impossible to update all of the prior data.

There has been a 78% increase in students enrolled in AP classes over the last four years. In 2001-02 there were 148 students enrolled in AP classes. In 2004-05 there are 257 students enrolled in AP classes. Over the past 4 years, biology, calculus, English and statistics were the only AP classes offered consistently. The number of sections for each of these four may fluctuate from year to year. In 2000-01 and 2001-02, biology had two sections, and in 2002-03 and 2003-04, there was only one section. In 2000-01, 2001-02, 2002-03 calculus had one section, but in 2003-04, there were two sections. In 2000-01, English had only one section, but since then there have been two sections. AP English has doubled in enrollment due to it's being offered it to all students. Consequently, since that represents 25% of the senior class, the level of the remaining six classes has plummeted. In 2004-05 two sections of Statistics were created due to student requests. AP classes in chemistry, fine arts and United States History have been offered in the last two years. Course offerings are is dependent on student requests, and as a result, the number of sections may fluctuate. Termination of AP Challenge funding eliminated some sections with low numbers and the on-line AP courses. AP biology has seen a 50% decrease in 2002-03 and 2003-04 due to lack of district funding but was increased to two sections for 2004-05. Generally speaking, ethnic minorities are represented in AP classes in approximately the same proportion as they are represented in the school's population.

The "Bubble Program" began in 1999. In June 1998, the results of a senior survey and a review of transcripts showed that 49% of seniors, if they had the opportunity, would have wanted to go to a four-year college. The "Bubble Program" was created to identify "at risk for four-year college students" and continues to function each spring with the support of staff. Staff members voluntarily choose to mentor students during the school year to help keep them "on track."

Alhambra High School offers many opportunities for extra-curricular activities. Leadership sponsors well-attended extra-curricular events that encompass noontime activities through elaborate Homecoming and AHS traditional events. The leadership class strives to be inclusive and to be truly representative through their House of Representatives that works with the leadership class. The House of Representatives supervises programs and activities. Every sixth period class has a student who is a voice

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for constituents in the House of Representatives. In 2003-04 there were approximately thirty-five clubs with a total membership of a thousand students. Clubs of many types are represented on the campus and include Harambee, Mock Trial, Model United Nations, and Drama Club in addition to the interest-based clubs (like Cheese Club and Knitting Club). The school and the community support co-curricular activities. For 2004-05, Jazz band was added as an 8th period with 25 students. The Drama program is supported by a community organization called the AHS Arts Foundation.

The Drama Club sponsors two productions a year that draw a large community crowd. The spring production is a musical and the fall production a drama. This past spring, a dance choreographer and a musical director were hired with Drama Club funds to help with the show "Cabaret." The school newspaper, "The Watchdog," publishes twelve issues a year. Three hundred community members subscribe to the school newspaper, because it is an excellent source of news about the high school. The yearbook staff has won the Outstanding Theme Development award for the past four years.

Alhambra High School's athletic program has over 38 teams as part of the Diablo-Foothill Athletic League (DFAL). There are over 900 student participants, and this number reflects the many students who participate in multiple seasons. Traditionally, Alhambra has students who reach the state level in track, and two to four teams compete at the state level each year in softball, baseball, basketball, and/or football.

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS REPORT

The School's Major Changes

One of the unexpected challenges for Alhambra High School has been the administrative turnover during the past six years. Since the last WASC evaluation, Alhambra has had nine changes in administration, creating a lack of consistent direction in proceeding with the recommendations of the WASC Visiting Committee and the School-wide Action Plan. The sudden disability of Principal Bell in the fall of 2003 was responsible for delaying the WASC visitation date from November 2004 until February 2005. Toni Taylor became the Principal effective July 1, 2004.

Another complication for the WASC process was the lack of sufficient in-service time to conduct home and focus group meetings and write reports. As the result of a Curriculum Compliance Review, twenty-five staff members were committed from 2002-04 to SDAIE training. Though this training equipped half of the school's teachers with worthwhile instructional strategies, it also hindered them from participating in the WASC process.

The Follow-up Process

This Self-Study is the second *Focus on Learning* that the Alhambra High School staff has undertaken. ESLRs were developed for the 1999 visitation and have been regularly reviewed.

After completion of the WASC year, in 1998-99, Alhambra High School became a part of the District's Strategic Planning Process that began in January of 2000. The process used the WASC Action Plan as a base, as well as other governing documents, but the District's goal was to convert all sites to the same long-range planning process.

The process of strategic planning involved setting broad goals that guided the creation of Action Teams to implement change over a process of five years. During the 1999-2000 year, there were four Strategic Goals developed by a committee of students, staff, and parents/community members. Yearly monitoring of the goals was part of the strategic planning process.

Preparations for the WASC Mid-term Review began during the first months of this new administration. The School-wide Action Plan and the Report of The Visiting Committee both recommended the creation of a governance system to standardize procedures for implementing change and to deal with operational and organizational issues. That was completed and adopted in 2001. The goal for 2001-02 was to bring convergence to the documents by developing a School-wide Integrated Plan and to determine a three-year focus.

Progress Made on the Critical Areas for Follow-up

The following represent the Critical Areas for Follow-up from the Major Recommendations of the previous WASC Visit.

1. *The Alhambra High School community design a stakeholder inclusive committee to monitor progress on the School-wide Action Plan and coordinate the various groups and committees that will be working on it over its life.*

During the first five months of the 2001 school year, the Site Council was reorganized and updated its bylaws. As part of the reorganization, the Site Council in conjunction with the Site Curriculum Committee/Department Chairpersons set two tasks to complete. The first completed task was to create a formalized governance plan that clarified and simplified the decision-making process for both operational and curriculum decisions. This process allowed for responsible decision making that has input from all stakeholders. The second completed task was to bring convergence to the documents for AHS and to create one school-wide, three-year plan. The documents that needed to converge were: the Strategic Plan, WASC Visiting Committee Recommendations, WASC Action Plan, Martinez District Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives, 1882 Staff Development Plan, Digital High School Grant and the Federal Curriculum Compliance Review.

Current documents were adopted in isolation from other committees and lack a consistent focus, either strategically or operationally, for systematic change. Documents may not be congruent with district goals and objectives or may not have considered federal and state compliance issues. The Site Council reviewed and analyzed all plans and created one plan to serve as the guiding force for change. To ensure that future congruence is maintained, all future district-planning committees will have selected representatives from the Site Council or Department Chairpersons.

2. *The staff, working with the above stakeholder committee, develops and implement an annual staff development plan based on the needs of department and school-wide goals and the School-wide Action Plan.*

The Site Curriculum Committee/Department Chairpersons are the coordination link between the staff and administration on both operational and curricular decisions. Members are chosen by an application process and are then voted on by department members and approved by administration. Their experience at the site and their professional training makes them the logical curricular leaders who will operate with input from the Site Council and Student Leadership. Their roles are:

- To develop and recommend curriculum to Site Council,
- To review data in support of the comprehensive program development,
- To initiate and review operational policies to present to the total staff,
- To plan school-wide and departmental staff development for submittal to Site Council, and
- To provide a communication link between the administration, students, and site council

3. *The staff collects, disaggregates, and studies data that is collected and used to make decisions related to program efficiency.*

Although the staff of Alhambra seriously understands the need to collect, disaggregate and study data to make decisions vital to driving their curricular program

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this has not happened consistently over the past six years. There are many legitimate reasons that could be used for this lack of consistency; changes in site administration, inadequate data systems and lack of faculty access and training.

The district's student information system, SASI III did not provide data in an easy to read, understandable format. During 2001-2002, the district contracted with a third-party service provider, EDMIN. EDMIN was hired to take the SASI data and create a user-friendlier interface using the Internet. Key teachers at Alhambra attended workshops to pilot EDMIN. As the result of under-performance of the EDMIN system and complex technical difficulties, the district released the EDMIN contract. During the summer of 2002, the district bought a new student database, AERIESxp. AERIESxp allows access to student data in a variety of ways, not only to disaggregate by grade but the user could narrow the search to include class and gender. AERIESxp also provides data in a user-friendly format. The district is now piloting the AERIES Browser Interface, which will allow educators access to the student information system through a web browser, including standardized test scores.

During 2003-2004 the AHS staff established a site-based process to study data. In order to have the data needed for their Student/Community Profile, they went online and pulled data from the websites of the County Office of Education and the California Department of Education. Considerable work still remains to be done in accessing data and making it available to the classroom teacher for use in differentiating the instruction to benefit the students of Alhambra High School.

4. The staff ensures that all students have access to the core curriculum and are supported to reach high levels of learning and academic achievement.

In the last six years, Alhambra High School has been working toward strengthening and improving the core curriculum. Almost every department has submitted courses to UC for college preparatory or advance placement approval. Additional advanced placement courses have been approved, but not always added each year, because of enrollment requests.

The English and social studies departments have expanded their integrated curricula by increasing the numbers of sections of American Studies at the junior level and by trying to fully integrate the sophomore English and modern world history courses. The hope is that by 2006-2007 all students at the sophomore and junior levels will be participating in these programs. The English department currently continues to offer sophomore and junior level honors classes, but hopes to move away from honors and toward additional AP level classes. The social studies department has added AP U. S. History, but has been reluctant to offer additional AP classes due to heterogeneity issues.

The science department offers AP biology and honors chemistry. It continues to offer two remedial science courses, Science I and Basic Life. The math department has worked toward standardizing their curriculum and has begun designing common assessments. Below grade level courses such as pre-algebra, algebra IA and algebra IB are currently offered. However, beginning in 2005-2006, pre-algebra will be dropped from the program. The special education department works very closely with the students

who have been mainstreamed into “regular” classes. Those students are given extra support through “learning center” classes. The language acquisition program was totally revised to meet state guidelines.

Intervention strategies to support ninth graders achieve success in their core classes included; moving modern world to the tenth grade and placing recommended at-risk students in a small-group setting where they received English and study skill instruction.

The summer bridge program is offered to incoming freshman during the summer prior to their 9th grade year. Bridges-to-reading is a course that focuses on reinforcing basic reading skills needed for success in high school courses. Reading, vocabulary, comprehension fluency, and organizational skills are emphasized. Bridges-to-math focuses on reinforcing basic math skills. Student successfully completing these courses receive high school credit.

The progress in this area has meet with significant, but limited success. Progress on this recommendation appears to be centered in certain departments and not in others. More work needs to be done in this area.

5. That the guidance staff implement four-year plans that incorporate testing information, interest survey data, post-graduate goals, as well as the required course work to meet them.

The guidance staff began the implementation of four-year plans incorporating interest survey data and postgraduate goals, as well as the required course work to meet them beginning in the 1999-2000 school year. From 1999 through 2003, the following program was in place. A career folder was designated for each student beginning in ninth grade and materials related to the formulation of four year plans were kept in this folder in the counseling office and given to the student for reference at each regularly scheduled meeting for the students. Counselors met with each graduating class twice each year for the purpose-once in the fall semester and again in the spring semester.

Currently, the counselors meet once a year with juniors and seniors and twice a year with freshman and sophomores. Freshman and sophomores are given a career questionnaire and helped with their four-year plans during these meetings. Counselors meet with incoming eighth graders in groups of 30 to one counselor for an introduction to the four-year plan. They also meet individually with a counselor or an AHS staff member at the time they make their requests for courses. At this time, no interest surveys are being given.

Even with the limited academic counseling services, the school needs to continue to work on providing a four-year plan with an increased level of services to the students of Alhambra High School.

6. A global statement of philosophy on heterogeneity and access to all programs.

Since their last WASC evaluation, this issue has been passed back and forth between the department chairs, School Site Council and the AHS Strategic Planning Committee with no real response to the original recommendation. All stakeholders have made statements in favor of supporting heterogeneity, but nothing has been formalized.

Toni Taylor, the principal of Alhambra High School, strongly believes that heterogeneity and student access to all programs must be a major focus of the Alhambra educational community. She clearly explained at the AHS December 2004 staff meeting that she expects the school to move forward with the recommendations of the 1999 Visiting Team as part of the school's 2005 Action Plans.

7. The creation of collaborative time to research, develop, and implement programs that respond to the steps described in the School-wide Action Plan.

Instead of creating collaborative time to research, develop and implement programs that responded to the steps described in the School-wide Action Plan, Alhambra High School incorporated the School-wide Action Plan into the District's Strategic Planning Process. The primary vehicle for planning and program development is the AHS Strategic Planning Committee. The committee is made up of all stakeholders. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum coordinates it. It has been a part of Alhambra's planning for six years. Out of the planning in the last six years, there have been eight action teams with blueprints for implementing the steps described in the School-wide Action Plan. With the advent of *No Child Left Behind*, the focus of Strategic Planning changed from a global view of all issues at the high school to a focus on student achievement. During workday meetings of the AHS Strategic Planning Committee, tactics were written as goals/action steps. Action teams would then research, develop and recommend a proposed plan of action to achieve the goal/action steps. Sub-committees were often used to complete some minor action steps. In order to include a wide range of stakeholders, no one could be on both the tactic and action committee of any selected focus area in a school year. There have been limited opportunities for staff members at AHS to create or further implement programs or strategies to improve student performance and master of the content standards and the school's ESLRs.

CHAPTER 3: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

The School's Expected Schoolwide Learning Results

CRITICAL THINKERS ... who can access, analyze, synthesize, evaluate and use information and ideas from a variety of resources to meet personal and curricular needs.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS ... who can use oral, written and visual forms of communication to convey messages and ideas successfully.

INNOVATIVE CREATORS ... who develop intellectual, practical and artistic works that reflect originality and risk-taking.

COLLABORATIVE WORKERS ... who, while maintaining personal initiative and discipline, can contribute ideas and effort for completion of group tasks and positive resolution of conflicts.

RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS ... who hold a code of ethics and will participate in the democratic process in a manner that respects the dignity and worth of all people.

HEALTHY INDIVIDUALS ... who have the skills, habits and knowledge to embark on a lifelong path of good mental and physical health.

LIFELONG LEARNERS ... who have the literacy and other basic academic and technological skills to pursue independently those paths of learning that will enrich their lives.

The Development of the Schoolwide Expected Learning Results

The process of developing their ESLRs started as part of the District Strategic Plan. With strong AHS representation, the committee formulated a District vision and mission. Each year the District committee reviews the vision and mission statements. Consultants from UCLA School of Education facilitated multiple meetings between the staffs of AHS and Martinez Junior High School (MJHS) to develop a description of an ideal junior high school graduate. Armed with the description of an MJHS graduate, AHS cross-curricular groups then discussed and defined the qualities and skills they felt each AHS graduate should possess. Consensus was reached on one profile, which described a graduate who was ready for a successful, productive life after Alhambra. The profile was shared and discussed with members of the District School-to-Career Committee. The committee included representatives from business, unions, community colleges, ROP, adult school, District, and AHS administration and teachers. After many jigsaw meetings between departments, focus groups, and the School-to-Career committee, the Leadership team refined the profile into ESLRs. After consensus was reached on the ESLRs, the Leadership Team clarified the final wording. The ESLRs were then shared in department meetings, staff meetings, leadership classes, House of Representatives, PTSA, Boosters, School-to-Career as well as the school newsletters, the student handbook and weekly bulletins.

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Chapter 3: Self-Study Process

After attending a State sponsored planning workshop on WASC, the AHS co-coordinators recommended the school consider revisiting their ESLR's and reducing the number from seven to two. Using the newly established Governance System, the principal shared the recommendations at a meeting of the Department Chairs. After a lengthy discussion, the department chairs recommended that they limit the number, but not open the issue of revisiting the ESLRs. Paramount in the discussion was the limited amount of time available to revisit their ESLRs compared to the lengthy inclusive process that had taken place when they were developed. The WASC visitation was scheduled for November 2004. All of their staff development days in 2003-04, except one day late in November were committed to SDAIE training for twenty-five members of our faculty.

The WASC process was re-introduced to the staff, students, community and district administration during the fall of 2003. During this process, all stakeholders made every effort to follow the Self-Study process as outlined in Focus on Learning: Joint WASC/CDE Process Guide. Preparations began in earnest with the selections of focus groups, home groups, a support group, parent group and student group. The data from the Student/Community Profile along with a review of the School-wide Integrated Plan was shared with the AHS Strategic Planning Committee. The AHS Strategic Planning Committee serving as the leadership team selected the critical areas of academic need based on that data and the plan. Home group chairs recommended the selection of Critical Thinkers, Effective Communicators and Collaborative Workers as the ESLRs that most addressed our critical areas of academic need.

The sudden disability of Principal Janie Bell in the fall of 2003 was responsible for delaying the WASC visitation date from November 2004 until February 2005. Toni Taylor became our principal effective July 1st 2004.

In reaction to the lack of in-service days and based on the feedback from WASC trainers, the AHS WASC co-chairs advocated a bullet format for focus reports. Focus groups met to gather and analyze student data, share analysis of the WASC criteria from the home groups and to begin to create their Self-Study reports. A pattern of jig-sawing between home groups and focus groups was established until the focus reports were finished. Each department created an ESLR Profile to highlight the ESLRs, which addressed our critical academic needs. Teachers were asked to begin to collect evidence of students mastering content standards and working on ESLRs to put in individual evidence boxes.

Before finalizing their reports, focus groups once again reviewed Profile data that related to their criterion questions. Focus groups then created lists of Areas of Strengths and Areas of Growth and Improvement. The lists were placed on poster paper and the entire staff along with District administrators and student representatives prioritized what they felt was most critical for AHS to focus on in order to support student achievement.

The Leadership Team, consisting of the chairs of each focus group, the administration, the District Superintendent, the Associate Superintendent of Curriculum, two students, a parent, a Special Education teacher, and the WASC co-chairs met and used the staff list of priorities to begin formulating the Action Plan. The Leadership Team finally decided there would be two plans; one would be general and the other

would be detailed. The detailed plan would include areas of concern from all the focus groups. The general Action Plan was presented and received majority approval at the January staff meeting. Several members of the staff had concerns about timelines and were reassured that timelines could be revisited. The Action Plan was presented to and approval by the Parent Support Group and the Board of Trustees.

With input from the departments and the agreement of School Site Council they decided to concentrate on three of their ESLRs. Looking back introspectively the AHS staff feels the need to more obviously tie their ESLRs to content standards throughout the disciplines. The three ESLRs the school chose are:

CRITICAL THINKERS ... who can access, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and use information and ideas from a variety of resources to meet personal and curricular needs.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS ... who can use oral, written, and visual forms of communication to convey messages and ideas successfully.

COLLABORATIVE WORKERS ... who, while maintaining personal initiative and discipline, can contribute ideas and effort for completion of group tasks and positive resolution of conflicts.

The AHS Strategic Planning Committee reviewed the results of the Content Standard Tests and identified core and school-wide critical academic needs. By subject areas, they linked two of the three ESLRs to an academic need indicating how they use content standards to reinforce their teaching of the ESLRs. Working collaboratively as subject teachers, descriptions of sample lessons were chosen that teach to the academic need, the content standard and the ESLR. The sample lessons were then developed into complete lesson plans and placed in a departmental binder and/or shared folder on the school fileserver. The staff enjoyed the collaboration and was gratified to discover that they were indeed, teaching to the ESLRs by covering the necessary content standards. Alhambra High School has built the process of completing more common assignments and assessments and will reviewing our vision, mission and ESLRs into their 2005 action plan.

The Self-Study presented to the committee includes ESLR Profiles by each department at Alhambra High School. Each department addresses two of the three ESLRs chosen by the school for consideration in this report. The departments were instructed to choose the two ESLRs that applied most directly to their department. The profiles are particularly well done as they address what the ESLR means for their individual department, as well as the indicators of achievement and the forms of assessment used in that department.

The Self-Study Process With Respect to its Expected Outcomes

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

Alhambra High School has addressed each of the five expected outcomes of the WASC/CDE Self-Study process. All of the staff and the various stakeholder groups

collaborated and were involved in the Self-Study process to enhance student achievement. Each group was involved in the evaluation of data and developing the responses and the action plan for improvement. Focus group teams and home group teams reviewed the guide questions and shared perspectives, ideas and concepts during their discussions. Surveys were developed and distributed to students, staff and parents. This process resulted in a focused effort to address three ESLRs that specifically addressed immediate needs of the students of Alhambra High School.

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

The original ESLRs for Alhambra High School were developed for the initial Focus on Learning visit in 1999. The stakeholders at the school have reviewed the ESLRs on a regular basis. There was consideration given to reducing the total number of ESLRs but that decision was postponed. The school has begun aligning the ESLRs with the state standards and various testing blueprints. There is still some work that needs to be done in this area. The staff decided to focus on three ESLRs for this study, Critical Thinkers, Effective Communicators and Collaborative Workers.

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

The gathering and analyzing of data is an area of concern. The reliability of data collected prior to the last three years is in doubt due to significant changes in the way data was collected and analyzed. Much of this data is unreliable due to entry errors and systemic problems with the district data system. It appears that the new system of data collection and retrieval will allow the school to keep better track of data about students and students achievement.

4. The assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning in relation to the expected school-wide learning results, academic standards and WASC/CDE criteria

The Martinez Unified School District has provided assistance and training to enable the school and individual teachers to collect student data from internal sources. The school is now more aware of data and information that is available through the County Office of Education and the State of California. The school has been collecting school-wide information from the latter two sources. The collection of individual student data is still a work in progress and is addressed in the current report.

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

The Action Plans are centered on the main issues facing Alhambra High School. The result is a focused effort to address the immediate needs of Alhambra High School:

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- Strengthen Curriculum.
- Increase achievement for all students through multiple avenues of support.
- Create a positive empowering learning community.
- Create a monitoring committee to oversee progress on Action Plans.

CHAPTER 4: QUALITY OF THE SCHOOL'S PROGRAM

Part A: The State, Strengths and Needs within the Six Criteria

Curriculum and Instruction

What's in place

Criterion A-1a: To what extent do all students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the academic standards and the expected school wide learning results?

Criterion A-1b: To what extent are the expected school-wide learning results accomplished through standards-based learning?

Alhambra High School offers some students a rigorous, relevant and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of academic standards and the expected school wide learning results as evidenced by the increasing number of students enrolled in Advanced Placement and academic courses that prepare them for college eligibility. Not all students have access to this advanced curriculum. In math and English, the ninth-grade lower level courses are 20:1 and the departments have created common assignments and assessments to ensure all students reach expected outcomes. At the 10th and 11th grades there are integrated English and Social Science courses that are offered to students.

2004 CAHSEE test results for Alhambra High School were well above the state average (75% ELA and 74% Math) with scores of 88% passing ELA and 92% passing Math. In addition their CST scores were also above the state average. AP classes currently serve 257 students and ROP courses serve 233 students.

All departments have begun to correlate the ESLRs to curriculum and state standards. More sharing of successful practices and assessments among staff would continue to increase student achievement. Greater consistency within and across departments can only help. The use of backward planning is one tool to increase the connection of instruction to standards. Several staff members have been trained in backward planning. Collegiality and collaboration exists within departments. There needs to be more time for interdepartmental collaboration.

Criterion A-2: To what extent do all students have access to the school's entire program and assistance with a personal learning plan to prepare them for the pursuit of their academic, personal and school-to-career goals?

The ELL curriculum has been revised to meet state guidelines and approximately half of the faculty has attended SDAIE training. There currently is only one ELL class serving 12 students at four ELD levels. There is a long-term substitute who is not bilingual and has no formalized CLAD training. This substitute is teaching without

curriculum. There is concern by some staff and students that students have been re-designated prior to these students having achieved the skills necessary to successfully access ever challenging curriculum. Some teachers use SDAIE strategies to support greater access to the core curriculum for English Language Learners, but the teachers are not informed as to the language acquisition levels of these students. Currently there are no sheltered classes offered. The Special Education department offers courses in the core curriculum that address discipline content standards at a level that their students can access. Without the benefit of collaboration time built into the teaching day, some departments and staff members voluntarily meet in levels or integrated subjects to collaborate.

With the disappearance of the AVID courses this school year, there will be no support courses for these students 'in the middle'. There is a Bubble Program to assist students who are just missing the A-G college entrance requirements.

There is a strong level of concern among some staff and parents that not all students are being challenged as evidenced by meetings with parents and staff. There is a concern whether there is a sufficient effort being made to meet the needs of all students with divergent needs. Most departments offer courses that are heterogeneous grouping.

Currently there are only two full time counselors to meet the guidance needs of 1300 students. Although counselors work with students to develop a 4-year plan, the necessary ongoing support for students in need is not possible with the reduction from three counselors to two. In addition to their caseload of over 650 students each, the counselors open up the career center each lunch so that students will have at least minimal access to this resource that was lost in staffing cutbacks.

Criterion A-3: To what extent are students able to meet all the requirements of graduation upon completion of the high school program?

Last year's CAHSEE results show a pass rate of 88% on ELA and 92% on Math. CST scores are above the state average. Starting with the class of 2005, changes have been made to the graduation requirements. There has been a reduction of some requirements as a result of student, parent and staff committees who presented their concerns to the Alhambra School Board.

When students are short 20 credits toward graduation requirements and have reached their sixteenth birthday, board policy dictates that these students be moved to an alternative program. This is a discretionary policy at the site. The staff expressed concern that these at-risk students were being moved without any institutionalized interventions. Alhambra High School has graduation rates and requirements that exceed the state average and requirements. The Visiting Team believes that the high stated graduation rate at the school is suspect because of the number of students who are transferred to other environments when they are down twenty credits. The Visiting Team while reviewing data presented in the School Self-Study raised this issue. The particular area of concern is the relatively low number of the original cohort of the in-coming freshman class that graduate. These concerns were also raised by the school's self-stated lack of transience in their student body.

Data was acquired as a result of the WASC Self-Study process. For the first time multiple pieces of data were made available to all staff. Access to the data was made more difficult by district policies and the lack of technology support. Most staff expressed it was well worth the effort and has helped identify areas of improvement needed for greater student success.

Criterion A-4a: To what extent are students involved in challenging learning experiences to achieve the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results?

AHS offers two honors courses and ten AP courses that can both challenge and prepare students for college. Most of the AP courses are offered as an elective rather than an opportunity to meet graduation requirements. The prerequisites required for most AP classes impact the school's elective program and participating students already jammed schedule. There is concern expressed by some staff and parents that there are not enough opportunities for students to have access to challenging curriculum. In the English department for example only one section of English 10 Honors is offered. Some students who are qualified and capable are not able to take the class because of the size limits. As a result of the sequencing of courses and pre-requisite process there is limited access to AP courses throughout the school. College Board research indicates that students are more successful in college if they have taken AP courses rather than an Honors level course. Current heterogeneous grouping may not meet the needs of the "upper-end" students. At the same time, students at the "lower-end" may be encouraged to be stronger students, but due to time constraints within the classes they take they cannot always receive the support or differentiated instruction from which they would benefit most.

In addition to core academic programs, vocational and ROP offerings are full and expanding to meet the needs of a wide variety of students. These classes are the prime examples of true authentic assessment on the Alhambra High School campus.

Criterion A-4b: To what extent do all teachers use a variety of strategies and resources, including technology and experiences beyond the textbook and classroom that actively engage students, emphasize higher order thinking skills, and help them succeed at high levels?

All freshmen are enrolled in a "Communications Technology" course as a requirement for graduation. This course supports the ESLRs that have been chosen for school-wide focus. This course includes an information literacy standards-based orientation unit designed to familiarize students with the resources available in the Library Media Center. In addition, teachers bring their students to the library to support their Big 6-research model. This model was designed by teachers to prepare students to learn research methods that will enable them to be more successful in academic core classes.

Within the staff, expertise is evident in strong standards-based instruction. More common planning time for collaboration and training could make quality instruction

more consistent. A great deal can be gained from teachers sharing their skills and talents as well as experiences.

Effective technology support can assist teachers in the use of a greater number of resources. The staff recognizes the need for a long-term technology plan and has developed a committee to address this issue. The model for staff development used during the implementation of the Digital High School grant proved successful. With no funding specific to technology from the district, maintaining what exists is a very real concern.

A variety of educational experiences that go beyond the textbook are found at Alhambra. Vocational and ROP classes are examples. Students in the Visual and Performing Arts courses participate in a wide variety of authentic assessments, performances and public productions.

What's on the horizon

With the end of the AVID program there will be no intervention courses to assist "mid-range" students. The staff is beginning to dialog about addressing the needs of all students after reviewing the data presented in their Self-Study. Identification of students in need of intervention to meet graduation requirements at the comprehensive high school, rather than re-designation to an alternative program needs to occur. To meet the needs of all students, departments are having the difficult discussion regarding the current policy of heterogeneous courses versus AP and Honors classes.

Most staff recognizes the need for additional data to drive curriculum decisions. There is a strong desire for district support for readily accessible and understandable data on all students. This will require staff development to train staff on access and interpretation of data. There needs to be greater technology support. Work orders and trouble shooting need to be resolved far more quickly. In addition, there is a need for common planning time to allow for collaboration that encourages consistent application of standards based instruction driven by the data. Collaborative time can also be used to address the achievement gap and how the designing of intervention programs and effective strategies in mainstream courses can help raise all students' achievement.

Staff and parents alike recognize the need for additional counseling personnel. Students are not being directed to the appropriate resources and served as a direct result of cutbacks in the number of counselors. Counselors, like many staff members are doing more with less in difficult times. There is a clear need for increased identification and intervention strategies for students at-risk.

Areas of strength

As Identified in the School's Self-Study

As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

Areas of strength

As Identified in the School's Self-Study

- Academic standards in each course
- Increased number of students meeting the A-G requirements
- CST scores above the state average
- Collegiality and collaboration of staff
- 4-year plans for all students
- Advisement day
- ETS and college support programs
- High pass rate on the CAHSEE
- Care Team/Bubble program/AVID
- Revised graduation requirements
- AP and ROP programs
- Power Standards
- Standards aligned curriculum
- Atmosphere of professional respect
- DHS staff development model

As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- Collegiality and collaboration within departments
- Recent improvement of CAHSEE and STAR test scores
- Voluntary effort of all staff, certificated and classified, who go above and beyond their job description to make AHS a better place
- Vocational education and ROP courses

Critical areas of growth and improvement

As Identified in the School's Self-Study

- Need for common planning time
- Intervention and support programs
- Correlation of ESLRs to curriculum and assessment
- Common assignments and assessments
- Better ELL identification and re-designation
- Counseling ration of 650:1
- Formalized 4-year plans
- School to career connections
- Support to attend workshops
- Summer school class size and salaries
- Long range technology planning
- District school-to-career support
- Access to AERIES data
- Attendance and grades

As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- Common planning time to be built into the schedule
- Support and Intervention Programs
- Access to Data
- Increased Technology support
- Relevant school wide Staff development
- Reduction in the achievement gap
- Consistent correlation of ESLRs and Standards
- Additional counseling personnel
- Additional Advanced Placement courses

Critical areas of growth and improvement

As Identified in the School's Self-Study As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- More AP and Honors offerings especially in Social Science
- Funding for staff development
- Cultural clubs and activities.

Assessment and Accountability

What's in place

Criterion B-5a: To what extent do teachers employ a variety of strategies to evaluate student learning?

Criterion B-5b: To what extent do students and teachers use assessment results to enhance the educational progress of every student?

Common rubrics, especially for research and writing projects, are in the process of being adopted across the disciplines, for both core and elective courses, from the 9th through 12th grade levels. This commonality is most explicit with the integration of the 10th grade English with Modern World courses and the 11th grade English with United States History courses. Classroom assessment of student performance has been primarily in the form of end-of-unit tests and semester final exams in order to determine grades. Class-wide and individual student data has not been viewed as a means to improve instruction, document successful strategies or document weaknesses of programs.

Administrators increasingly analyze data on school-wide standardized test scores, course grades, attendance and behavior. That analysis has not been widely employed to reveal critical areas of need. Some school-wide interventions address the needs of at-risk 9th grade students: the Bridges-to-Reading and Bridges-to-Math classes during the summer between 8th and 9th grades and smaller classes with emphasis upon English and study skills. The school also moved the Modern World History course and the Science 1 course to 10th grade, though selected 9th graders do enroll, the latter to allow the students to mature one more year before undertaking a lab-based course of study.

Prior to a year ago, data on student achievement had been collected sporadically and unevenly, usually in response to external demands. The data provided was not timely or fine-grained to the extent needed to indicate curricular areas that were either not aligned with state standards or was inadequate in instructional strategies. In 2003 the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction provided training to the WASC Leadership Team for reading and interpreting standardized scores of various large-scale standardized exams including the CST, CAT6, CAHSEE, SAT, etc. A systematic process to evaluate student performance emerged last year. A teacher now serves as a data specialist to assist departments in analysis of student achievement. That teacher gathers an array of hard-copy materials sent to the district office by STAR (Standardized

Testing and Reporting), disseminates them to the departments and assists them with analysis to identify content clusters for improvement. These reports include disaggregation by student sub-groups and grade levels as well as three-year trend analysis. Based upon analyses of this data, the four core departments determined power standards for each course.

Over the last two years, about twenty-five teachers with CLAD or SDAIE certificates participated in professional development activities that addressed embedded formative assessment and consequential differentiated instruction. Most staff members now realize the importance and relevance to implement formative assessment and differentiated instruction in their classrooms school-wide. Regardless of the growing membership in these three cadres, none of the teachers interviewed reported actually using either of these two strategies. The school's action plan does not adequately address funding for staff development, implementation and monitoring of these assessment and instructional strategies.

Criterion B-6: To what extent do the school, district and community regularly review student progress toward achievement of the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results to enhance the educational progress of every student?

Counselors have traditionally analyzed student transcripts manually, a time consuming process prone to errors. The district use of the SASI 3 student information database system prohibited the analysis of student transcripts for the determination of remedial needs of at-risk students and enrichment needs of college-bound students. The recent purchase of the ARIES student information database system has enabled counselors to assess individual student records as well as analyze school-wide needs and trends.

The school has previously cited standardized assessment data to justify or modify programs, services or resource allocation. The use of data disaggregated by student sub-group had not been employed due to the relatively high levels of ethnic and economic homogeneity of the student body. The requirements of the 2001 "No Child Left Behind" legislation has driven the current use of disaggregation and the future design and implementation of related intervention nation-wide.

The school has established levels of accomplishment for the academic standards on state standardized tests in core subjects, including power standards identifying areas of the greatest knowledge needs. Critical Areas of Need have been identified school-wide to drive the curriculum and programs of non-core subjects such as Foreign Language, Visual and Performing Arts, Business, Industrial Technology and Physical Education.

The Educational Talent Search program provides assistance to 11th and 12th grade students to apply for college scholarships and admission. The Bubble Program identifies self-declared college-bound 10th and 11th grade students who will fall slightly short of college entrance requirements. By providing additional assistance since 1999, college eligibility has increased from 35% to 40%.

The school has not adequately addressed enhancements of the educational progress for low-performers. The “down-credits” list identifies students who have failed classes and are therefore at-risk of not graduating from high school. Letters are sent home to their parents shortly after the end of each semester explaining the consequences of down-credits. Students are counseled and meetings with parents are held to describe the options to “catch up” including a 7-period day, Adult School for evening classes, Vicente Continuation High School, the Brione’s Independent Study Program and the Diablo Valley College courses for high school completion. Students under the age of sixteen years qualify only for the 7-period option during their sophomore year. The Opportunity Program for low-performers provided two periods of English and Study Skills Support for 9th graders and one period of Study Skills Support for 10th graders. This program was eliminated several years ago due to compliance issues and a conflict of teacher allocation and scheduling with the English Language Development program. Data analysis has not been conducted to compare the performance of these low-performing students who were enrolled in that Opportunity Program with similar students who have since not had access to such a course. Low-performing Freshmen students are provided support classes that address their basic literacy and numeracy needs including Bridges-to-Reading and Bridges-to-Math classes.

Last year the staff began a system of assessment and accountability in regards to academic standards though without reference to expected school-wide learning results. A moderate variety of indicators for courses and subject areas, dropout and college admission rates and aggregated student scores on state standardized tests have been employed to identify student needs though needed interventions have not yet been identified, with the exception of support for 9th grade students in entry level English and Mathematics classes. The school charts and publishes course grades and standardized test scores in various school- and community-based media. Planning efforts for the facility, curriculum and general operations for the one hundred year old Alhambra High School have historically been reported to and have involved this close-knit, low-transience community.

Last year the WASC co-chairs produced comprehensible and meaningful formats to share achievement data on standardized exams with the staff members and other stakeholders along with three-year trend analysis. Last year, for the first time, disaggregated student performance data was reviewed by the staff leading to the development of power standards and discussions of various classroom and school-wide interventions.

Criterion B-7a: To what extent does the assessment of student achievement in relation to the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results drive the school program and resource allocation and use?

Teaching assignments were previously based upon seniority, the need to cover the master schedule and extra-curricular responsibilities. Over the last decade, state and federal requirements for teachers with CLAD and SDAIE certificates have increasingly driven staff development and teacher assignment rather than data analysis. With the advent of the 2001 “No Child Left Behind” legislation, teaching assignments are now

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also based upon compliance with state credentialing requirements regarding academic majors and minors and supplemental authorizations rather than analysis of student achievement data. Assessment results have not been used to identify staff problems and individual professional development needs.

The Content Standards Tests are taken by students statewide in the spring of each year. Score reports for individual students are prepared by STAR and mailed to parents in July. STAR also provides to each school district aggregated CST scores, CST scores disaggregated by all subjects, content clusters, grade levels and student sub-groups and trend analysis beginning in 1998. The CDE also supplies raw test scores on a CD-ROM disk and over the Internet that can be imported in various analysis software tools for higher levels of analysis. Though this data is readily available, with the exception of the data specialist, the site administrators, counselors and teachers have not yet explored its use.

Several years ago when the ARIES.xp data system was installed at Alhambra High School, a consultant provided a few hours each week to maintain the system, provide technical support and provide on-site training. Off-site intensive training on the use of the ARIES.xp data system has not been provided to any of the administrators, counselors, classified staff or teachers of Alhambra High School. Administrators and counselors have conducted queries and data analysis and generated reports without the necessary knowledge and skills. Due to entry errors, some of the data in WASC Self-study is incorrect – including the number of students completing A-G requirements, the percent of graduates earning A-G requirements by ethnicity and the various pass rates on the CAHSEE. Though the administrators and counselors have learned to make data inquiries in this system, the power of advanced inquiries and the many types of reports have not been adequately tapped. They have not used the database to its full advantage in identifying low-performing students in need of intervention. Though teachers have not been provided access to ARIES, the Math and Social Studies departments reported the use of the STAR Student Mastery Reports to identify content clusters that negatively impacted the school's API and AYP scores and redesigned their curriculums appropriately. This practice has now occurred for two years though it is not school-wide. Though training and support by the site data specialist is provided, the other departments have not yet adopted this practice.

Since the last WASC Visit, the school community has made several significant changes in governance purposed, and with substantial potential, to improve the school's conditions for learning. The School Site Council was reorganized according to recent state-mandated changes concerning membership, purpose and internal processes. A formalized governance plan has simplified decision making for both operational and curriculum issues. To increase impact and reduce redundancy of projects and programs, a new three-year school-wide plan was developed to converge and align the Federal Curriculum Compliance Review, the district's Strategic Plan, its vision & mission, the latest WASC Recommendations, its subsequent Action Plan, the Single School Plan, Staff Development Plan and Technology Plan.

Criterion B-7b: To what extent are the human, material, physical and financial resources sufficient and utilized effectively to support students in accomplishing the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results?

The district and school staff actively attempts to make best use of available internal and external resources though without a deliberate and comprehensive approach to resource utilization. The school staff is recognized as resources for student learning though their input. Recognized needs are discussed with district staff members. Budget and resource allocation have been based upon program needs rather than long-term student achievement gains. Planned changes are seldom interrelated or directed toward improving student achievement. There is no direct connection of resources to student achievement of academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results.

Numerous reductions in funding have negatively impacted the programs of the school. The ratio of students to counselors has increased to 650:1. The AVID program for average college-bound students will be eliminated next year. Many of the Vocational Education and Regional Occupational Program courses for lower-performing students have had their funds reduced and continue to search for outside funding. The federally funded Education Talent Search administered by the Diablo Valley College has escaped the budget cuts and continues to provide free services to students from first generation college students and low-income families.

Every classroom has sufficient and up-to-date core and supplemental materials. Many classes also have a classroom set of textbooks enabling use during class time. Due to restricted funds, materials and technology in the library are not current and its hours of operation have been reduced.

With the funds from the state-based Digital High School Grant, several computer labs were established. Ninety percent of all teachers use e-mail and a computerized grading program. Teachers still must enter attendance and grades by bubbling the scanable forms. Most classrooms have only one computer with Internet access available for student use, inhibiting wide spread use for research and report writing. Though the funding of the DHS Grant has been eliminated, the goals of the district technology plan remain in place.

Though the school's physical plant is supporting a learning environment where students exceed state academic averages, it is in need of repair. There is no plan for on-going improvement of the plant based upon improvement of student learning. The most explicit needs are that of the Science, Business and Physical Education departments which suffer from an inadequate number of classrooms and learning stations per classroom in tandem with large class sizes. These issues inhibit a fully implemented hands-on program for all students.

What's on the horizon

The need to develop and employ common course syllabi, grading criteria, rubrics, learning tasks, embedded formative assessments and summative assessments for each

course has been accepted by most teachers. Though these commonalities are slowly, but increasingly being developed for most courses, they are not being consistently employed by the various teachers of each course. In general, progress toward uniformity is more rapid and consistent among certain departments (i.e. English, Foreign Language and Math).

The school will soon pilot the ARIES Browser Interface, hopefully driving instruction by providing teachers access to their own students' scores on state standardized tests, grades and attendance and the capability to analyze and disaggregate that data on a class-wide basis. Based upon past problems and unfilled promises of SASI 3 system, the later but short-lived EDMIN system and the current ARIES.xp system, teachers have taken a "wait and see" posture.

Increased use of disaggregated assessment data shows promise for the identification of student, teacher, section, course and department level problems and needs. Even when these capabilities are made available, teachers and site administrators need district opportunities and technical assistance for collaboration time, training, support and research on best practices. The school's action plan has not adequately addressed this need.

The newly established Monitoring Committee promises to increase the implementation of the action plan. This plan addresses the widespread use of data analysis and subsequent research and implementation of best practices in intervention for students who are at-risk of not graduating from high school.

What else is needed

An intervention program has not been initiated for the 15% of the freshmen class that have earned forty or less units of the sixty units expected by the end of their second semester; neither has a program for failing students under the age of sixteen years been implemented. Despite the implementation of the Bridges Summer Program, the special needs of at-risk students are not being adequately addressed.

With the passing of the Digital School Grant, funding for purchase, replacement, repair and support of equipment, software and other forms of communication and instructional technology is grossly inadequate school-wide. Most classrooms have only one computer available for student use, inhibiting wide spread use for research and report writing.

Though benchmarks are in place in most courses, the periodic comparison of standardized scores, the daily classroom reinforcement of these benchmarks, innovative teaching practices affecting all students and the long-term improvement of student learning are yet to be a part of the "Martinez Way." Assessment of student's achievement of the expected school-wide learning results, their depth of understanding and their performance and application of skills continue to elude the staff in the core academic classes. Few teachers at the school have embraced an analysis-research-improvement orientation.

The development of common syllabi, grading criteria, rubrics, learning tasks, embedded formative assessments and summative assessments among all sections for each course is limited and inconsistently employed. Teachers need opportunities and technical assistance for collaboration time, training and research on best practices in teaching, learning and assessment. Though the school's action plan has addressed this need, follow-through is wanting.

After several shifts and false starts in software conversions from SASI 3 to ARIES, teachers still do not have on-line access to the school's student information data system. Teachers cannot enter their class attendance or courses grades on-line; neither do they have read-only access to student information on parent contact, class attendance, course grades and transcripts. This lack of teacher access hinders classroom-level analysis of attendance, grades and standardized test scores that could otherwise enable teachers to differentiate instruction. Teachers continue to struggle with the capacity to analyze and report their students' classroom performance on expected school-wide learning results. Teachers need district opportunities and technical assistance for collaboration time, training, research on best practices and site-based support to use that data and to redesign their courses. The school's action plan has not adequately addressed these needs.

Data analysis needs to occur yearly on a regular cycle of inquiry. Student achievement data on standardized state exams needs to be disaggregated on both school-wide and classroom levels by student sub-group, grade level and course content clusters. Over the last few years, data analysis has focused upon short-term solutions. Even when such assessment is institutionalized, the site and district staff needs to work hard to drive resource allocation and improvement.

Areas of strength

As Identified in the School's Self-Study

- Highly qualified faculty, teaching in credentialed areas
- Curriculum aligned to standards, benchmarks and school-wide Critical Areas of Need
- Continued development of common rubrics and classroom assessments
- Use of technology by teachers
- Meaningful views of data recently made available
- Communication with students concerning achievement
- Community and parent report

As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- Improved governance system
- Convergence of school plans
- CLAD and SDAIE teacher certificates
- API scores
- Use of data to drive interventions for college-prep students (Bubble Program and Educational Talent Search)

Critical areas of growth and improvement

As Identified in the School's Self-Study

- Funding to maintain classroom technology
- Funding and hours for the Library Media Center
- Degree of development of common tasks and assessments
- Assessment of student progress towards ESLRs
- Teacher access to student data on ARIES
- Disaggregation of student achievement data at the school, department and classroom levels
- Use of data to develop programs and drive curriculum
- Parental involvement to improve student achievement
- Common planning time

As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- Counselor ratio
- Training in use of ARIES
- Staff development focused upon student achievement
- Number of student stations in Science, Business and Physical Education
- Consistent employment of common classroom assessments
- Development and consistent employment of formative assessment and differentiated instruction strategies
- Research in best practices
- Use of data to drive interventions for at-risk students under 16 years of age
- Use of data to drive resource allocation

Support Student Academic and Personal

What's in place

Criterion C8: To what extent do all students receive appropriate support to help ensure academic success?

All students are encouraged to meet the challenges of a standards-based curriculum. All students are provided with a planner that includes the ESLRs, rules, and regulations of the school and calendar.

There are a variety of services/programs to support at-risk and four year college potential students: the Bubble Program, CARE Team, ROP courses, AVID, Educational Talent Search (ETS). Most teachers offer tutoring before and after school or during lunch when needed by students.

There is a discrepancy as to the number of identified English Language Learners on several lists. Last year about thirty-five students were classified as ELL. That number dropped significantly to twelve this year in part due to graduation, dropout, expulsion, transfer to community school, transfer to special education and reclassification, both *with* and *without* the justification of retesting. As a result of a Compliance Review, the Language Acquisition Program was totally revised to meet the needs of the ELL students and to meet state guidelines. *Even with this revision*, however, there is currently only one class to meet the needs of twelve identified English Language Learners in English Language Development Levels 1-4. There is no organized ELD program. *Though twenty-five teachers were trained in SDAIE*, many of these EL students are not placed in

a Sheltered class with an authorized CLAD/SDAIE teacher in the content areas. A long-term substitute teacher is providing temporary assistance to these students. The needs of Alhambra's English Language Learner population are not being adequately addressed.

The Special Education program consists of resource classes, special day classes (SDC), counseling enhanced classes (CEC) and academic life skills classes. Students previously in non-public schools are being served at Alhambra High School. The Learning Center is a great support for the Special Education students' achievement in regular classes.

Counselors conduct evening small group meetings with at-risk freshmen and sophomores and their parents. Counselors meet with seniors and their parents regarding transcripts in the summer.

Criterion C9: To what extent do all students have access to a system of personal support services, activities, and opportunities at the school and within the community?

Most students have access to a system of personal support services, activities, and opportunities at Alhambra High School and within the community. The CARE Team, which consists of an Assistant Principal, Counselor, two teachers, school psychologist, parent and student. Due to staff reduction only two weekly half an hour to forty minute appointments are conducted. Special Education referrals are done during this time as well.

The Library Media Center provides a complete range of information sources, including, but not limited to, books, periodicals, electronic resources, reference subscription services and web-based databases. The librarian collaborates with teachers to show connections between information literacy and content standards, keeping teachers and staff aware of current curriculum-related articles, trends, and resources. The librarian applies for a myriad of grants to supplement the money currently being supplied from the district budget for library resources. Students and teachers have access to Power Point projectors, digital cameras, and video cameras and in focus machines to complete projects and presentations. The LMC has been described as the "academic heart of the campus".

The City Probation Officer works with at risk students and provides a valued male leader role model. Counselor interns work with students after school on issues such as anger management and self esteem.

Although the focus of counseling is primarily on academics, scheduling, course selection, graduation requirements, college entrance requirements, the two counselors attempt to identify students at-risk.

There are thirty clubs available to students. There are thirty-nine different athletic teams representing twelve different sports. During the 2003-2004 school year, 569 male and 253 female athletes participated on teams at Alhambra High School. During the 2004-2005 school year, 325 students were involved in student clubs. The community is very involved in the parade during Homecoming Week. There are many volunteer

opportunities available at Alhambra High School and in the Martinez community at large. This facilitates the completion of fifteen hours of approved community service to fulfill graduation requirements.

Few personal support systems are available for students with alcohol, drug, tobacco and anger management issues.

What's on the horizon

At-risk students need fully articulated services to access a rigorous curriculum. Early identification and monitoring of at-risk students at each grade level needs to happen. All EL students need to be identified in a timely manner and teachers need to be informed of the EL students in their classroom by ELD proficiency level. All EL students need to be taught by a CLAD/SDAIE authorized teacher so they can subsequently transition successfully into regular classes. There is a need to continue and support extensive and up-to date library services and resources that integrate and articulate with the curriculum, academic standards and expected school-wide learning results.

Alhambra High School needs to have more programs in place to meet the needs of all students. There is a plan to revise the schedule and programs to provide support within and outside the school day, especially for the 9th and 10th grade students. These students have not had adequate interventions and/or remediation opportunities. The school is concerned about these issues, but needs to specifically direct their energies toward programs that get students on track for graduation.

What else is needed

Areas of strength

As Identified in the School's Self-Study

- Extracurricular activities
- API Scores
- CARE Team
- Advisement Day
- Community service

As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- Library Media Center the "Academic heart of the campus"
- Extracurricular activities available
- CARE Team

Critical areas of growth and improvement

As Identified in the School's Self-Study

- Counseling ratio
- Library Media Center
- Intervention courses
- Wider range of student participation in all activities

As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- A well-coordinated EL program that meets the needs of the English Learners.
- Additional counseling services are needed to better serve all students.
- A well coordinated program/intervention services for at-risk students

Critical areas of growth and improvement

As Identified in the School's Self-Study

- Intervention/remediation program

As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- There is a need to involve more of the disenfranchised students in the extra curricular and co-curricular activities.

Culture

What's in place

Alhambra High is the only comprehensive high school in Martinez. The school's campus is architecturally beautiful and structurally safe. Artwork/murals are at various locations around the school. The city of Martinez is safe and secure. There is a long tradition of the high school in Martinez. This history is evident through their strong parent involvement in PSTA, Booster Club, Site Council, athletic events, Grad Night, AHS Arts Foundation, Strategic Planning and leadership activities. Most students have lived in this community and attended schools within the Martinez Unified School District. The AHS staff takes pride in the school and their city. A large number of the staff lives in Martinez.

Strong ties have been made between the residential and business communities and the high school. For example, the Martinez Education Foundation (MEF) and AHS PSTA have provided grants to teachers for equipment and supplements to instructional material. There is also substantial support for the school from the business community, including Chevron. The school is also supported by the many labor unions housed in and near Martinez. Community and parental support seems to be a great area of strength for AHS.

Criterion D-10: To what extent is the school a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning?

Alhambra High's staff and students are occasionally concerned about their safety. The school reports that AHS is a safe, clean and orderly environment for learning. The school has implemented many preventive measures to ensure the safety of the campus; for example, fire drills, earthquake drills, shelter-in-place drills, intruder alert drills and a camera system. Emergency exit maps are posted in each class. AHS has a comprehensive school safety plan that was revised in December 2004. The plan outlines the status of school crime; reviews school rules and policies, actions that lead to suspensions and expulsions, dangerous student notifications, sexual harassment guidelines, dress code, school discipline, and other safe school strategies and programs. Students receive a student handbook that outlines school rules, policies, and procedures. Staff members are issued a staff handbook that reviews general information, staff procedures and policies, and emergency procedures. Agendas are given to parents at Back-to-School Night. The agendas cover policies of student conduct and expectations. The school is well prepared with safety kits in each building and shelter-in-place kits in each room.

Efforts are being made to provide increased campus security. The school is well supervised considering the level of staff and security available. AHS has three campus supervisors, two SROs and one full-time and one part-time assistant principal. Dealing with overcrowding seems to be a major concern for the staff and students. In August 2004, AHS closed the campus during lunch. The management of the closed campus has stretched AHS's resources thin. The school personnel, district office and police liaisons worked hard to enforce the closed campus at the beginning of the year. In our student meetings, students stated that they could still leave campus and that areas are still poorly supervised. Currently, students believe that it is more difficult to leave campus than in previous years. Students are widely spread throughout the campus that continues to put pressure on supervision. AHS works collaboratively with all stakeholders to keep the school safe. The education-law partnership was formed due to concerns of the community. The partnership helped in getting a part-time assistant principal and an additional campus supervisor. AHS works with many local agencies to put on the "Every Fifteen Minutes" Program, an anti-drunk driving program.

Safety issues are addressed as they arise. The school added a gate at the student lot to make sure most students could not leave at lunch. Administrators, some counselors, some classified personnel and the school's liaison officer help during high student volume times. Statistics show that AHS is a very safe school, with only five expulsions and few suspensions. In our focus groups and student meetings, students and staff agreed that they feel safe on-campus. One area of contention was statistics that revealed that only 17% of freshmen and 18% of sophomores feel safe and comfortable at school (the sample size for this statistic was 26% of the freshmen and 27% of the sophomore classes). Many students do not believe that the survey results were an accurate reflection of the school's safety.

The staff is working on the issue of campus cleanliness as an ongoing issue. The student and staff surveys report that students and staff believe that AHS is not a clean campus. Part of the problem is due to custodial cutbacks and rules not being enforced. The school makes an effort to improve the cleanliness of the campus by sponsoring "Clean School" days. These "Clean School" days take place on Saturdays with students, staff, and community members coming together to clean the school's surroundings. Classes seem to be exceptionally well kept. Some students point out that the ban on gum chewing is not enforced and some students do not cleanup after themselves, therefore leading to cleanliness problems.

Criterion D-11: To what extent is the culture of the school characterized by trust, professionalism, and high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement?

Individual teachers promote a climate of caring and nurturing to enhance student learning. AHS's students are required to fulfill 15 hours of community service. School improvement is reported by the efforts of all stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, Strategic Planning Committee, School Site Council, Tactic Committee and Action Teams) in raising the API and creating the rigorous graduation requirements. High expectations of students are evident in programs such as the "Bubble Program". The

“Bubble Program” targets ‘at-risk’ students who may qualify for college. Student leadership is a driving force of change for students. The leadership students believe their voices are heard at AHS.

The primary focus at the school is related to issues of class management, curriculum coverage, and student performance as reflected by grades and test scores. The school has begun to look at the use of data to guide decision-making at AHS. Most AHS teachers use California State Standards. Teachers have not been given enough data and statistics to impact student performance.

Staff development usually relies on outside resources in response to external demands on the school staff. The staff reports that the morale could be improved at AHS. The morale issue is due to AHS having problems with the district office; in contrast, 93% of the staff said they were proud to be a member of AHS's staff. Students stated that their teachers are generally available to them at lunch and after school.

The staff is caring and supportive of student learning, growth, and achievement. The staff, not the district, has carried “the torch” in regards to initiating suggestions for improvements to enhance the school culture and safety.

Some teachers tend to work in the isolation of the classroom on curriculum and teaching strategies and issues related to student learning. Most of the staff seems to be participating in some form of teacher development; for example, 39% of the teachers have achieved or are pursuing a post-graduate degree, many participated in workshops using technology strategies, and many experienced teachers received innovative teaching strategies through SDAIE training. Some teachers received technology equipment for their classroom as well as training. Currently, very limited funds are available for staff development and technology (SB1882 funds and Digital High School). Teachers have stated that time for collaboration is needed.

AHS school improvement in the past has not been consistent and perceived by the staff as a response to issues of student discipline, attendance, and class management. Students are aware of the school's policies, rules and procedures, because they are posted in each classroom. There is a referral system in place. Students believed the progressive disciplinary action chart in the student handbook was vague in regards to consequence(s) and leads to inconsistencies. The students and staff are concerned that overcrowding and the lack of supervisory personnel will lead to a lack of discipline enforcement. The staff is concerned that they might see an escalation in fights, drug use, and trancies without more support, although, staff and students do not believe that student behavior is a major problem. A majority of the students interviewed stated they know where and how to get an assortment of drugs on-campus, and that most students know someone who has come to school intoxicated or under the influence in the past three days. Most students said and some visiting team members witnessed significant tobacco use on campus. . Students and staff members have pointed out that the administrators have been inconsistent in the discipline of students, for example, many students believed that the teachers and administrators have ‘favorites’. The staff does not seem to be consistent in their enforcement of the newly instituted tardy policy. Numerous students stated that they can cut or be truant without getting caught by the administration, also, students said the

penalty for cutting or being truant was not severe enough to deter them. Most students just receive a phone call home without any discipline from the school.

The issue involving the lack of counseling has led to a student body that feels unprepared for graduation requirements and college admissions requirements. Students and parents feel that counselors were not available to them for guidance. Low-achieving students felt they are not updated in a timely manner. Many students felt that there needs to be a system in place to address the transfer of information confidentially. If a student reported information that was critical to the safety of the campus, then they did not feel that their name would be kept confidential. A system needs to be in place for students to safely disclose confidential information. Students did point out that the SRO has made confidentiality a top priority when reporting issues. Students felt that many teachers on-campus are approachable.

What else is needed

- A plan to deal with overcrowding
- A comprehensive plan to effectively enforce a closed campus
- A comprehensive plan to address campus cleanliness

Areas of strength

As Identified in the School's Self-Study

As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- The campus is mainly secure and safe, located in a community that also shares these characteristics.
- The school is well supervised considering the level of staff and security available for the number of students.
- The school, district, and law enforcement communicate to discuss security needs at the school site.
- Students have adequate access to law enforcement and some counseling services.
- Written policies are in place regarding students' conduct and expectations and are distributed to all parents and students.
- The staff is caring and supportive of student learning, growth, and achievement. Most suggestions for improvements that are meant to enhance school culture and safety have been site rather than district generated.
- The campus is architecturally beautiful and structurally safe.

Areas of strength

As Identified in the School's Self-Study As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- Respect and collegiality are prevalent among staff.
- Staff is actively involved in all aspects of school culture.

Critical areas of growth and improvement

As Identified in the School's Self-Study As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- Limit overcrowding.
- A comprehensive plan should be developed to effectively enforce a closed campus.
- A comprehensive plan should be developed and enforced to address campus cleanliness issues.
- Collaboration between site and district office staff as per the Strategic Plan/Single Plan to address areas of needed growth.
- Goal 100% of teachers incorporating ESLRs and standards into daily classroom lessons.
- Long range staff development plan.
- Funding for conferences.

Leadership and Staff

What's in place

Criterion E11: To what extent do the school leadership and staff make decisions and initiate activities that focus on all students achieving the expected school-wide learning results and academic standards?

One of the unexpected challenges at Alhambra High School has been the administrative turnover in the past six years. The 2002 Midterm Visiting Committee noted "Since the last full Self Study, the school has under gone a rather contentious change in principal, an attempt by the community to recall 80% of the governing board, ...The school, demonstrating capacity and resilience, has regrouped and begun to move ahead..." This turnover had a great effect on the school and the leadership team due to the fact that the leadership team had to fill in and in some cases start over. With the current principal in place, it seems that the staff and the school leadership are moving in the right direction.

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The new principal is a good choice for the school based on the school's WASC Report and information gathered by the Visiting Team in meeting with the Focus Groups.

Alhambra has a principal who has experience in curriculum development and who includes all stakeholders in decisions and activities that focus on all students achieving the ESLRs and the academic standards. As the instructional leader she works closely with various stakeholder groups to shape and promote the school's culture and vision. In a limited amount of time the principal has shown she encourages staff involvement in instructional planning, goal setting, and implementation of a school-wide vision.

The principal maintains effective communication with the district and board to facilitate mutual support of district and site expectations of student learning results and academic standards. The staff has an open dialogue with the new principal particularly in the areas of curriculum and instruction.

At the beginning of the school year, syllabi are distributed to students. The principal has a copy of the syllabi in order to help support teachers with their expectations in the classroom. These syllabi explain class expectations, homework policy, attendance, and grading. The syllabi are also distributed to parents at *Back To School* Night. The majority of the distributed syllabi do not list the content standards nor are they linked to the ESLRs. Based on our Focus Group and Home Group meetings the AHS staff seems to truly care about the school and its students.

In order for students to be exposed to, learn, and understand the ESLRs and their role in overall school goals and expectations, copies of the ESLRs are posted in most classrooms and offices. During the past eighteen months some subject areas have developed a department binder that includes common assignments and assessments linked to the ESLRs and aligned to content standards. For the first time, each core department had access to testing data in a user-friendly format. Each core department completed forms analyzing testing results. Each core department also completed critical academic needs (CAN) forms for each subject area within a department. The CAN forms identified needs based on the results of the California Content Standards Tests. The CAN form linked the academic need, an ESLR, content standards and a sample assignment. Non-core subjects completed the identical project using the identified school-wide academic needs of *Writing Strategies* and *Written Conventions*. More common planning time is needed for teachers to continue to collaborate to complete, revise and update this project.

Student planners are given to all students and staff to help organize and maintain student and school information. All school rules and policies, including the ESLRs are listed in the beginning of the planner. The AHS staff handbook is given to all new and returning staff members. The handbook outlines school expectations, policies and procedures.

Alhambra's School Site Council is made up of students, staff, administration, and community members. The committee meets monthly. In response to the 1999 action plan, the site council was reestablished and its' roles and responsibilities were clarified and defined. Decisions and discussions regarding school wide issues including the ESLRs are

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funneled through this committee. The School Site Council oversees all supplemental monies as well as the WASC general leadership and monitoring committee. There is a need to create a separate monitoring committee to ensure the Action Plan goals are progressing and timelines are being met. The governance systems include all of the school's stakeholders.

Departments meet monthly. Department chairs bring concerns of their departments to monthly meetings of all department chairs and site administrators. Discussions help guide school-wide decisions regarding curriculum, discipline, grading, standards, ESLRs and any other issues or concern. Minutes are e-mailed to all staff. Members of the Department chairs also serve on the Site Council and the District Curriculum Advisory Council (CAC) as liaisons for communication between the three committees.

As part of the District curriculum review process, all site curriculum recommendations must be brought to the CAC and the Superintendent's Cabinet before presentation to the Board of Trustees. All high school course proposals must include key relationships to the school's long-range WASC plan and a list of which standards the course addresses. During the next revision of the form, the administration will be requesting the course description also include which ESLRs are addressed.

The governance system also includes the students of Alhambra High School. There is a formalized House of Representatives that is run by the ASB officers. At these meetings, an elected representative from every sixth period class attends. These students bring concerns voiced by their constituents, and the forum allows for immediate discussion by all parties. The principal attends and shares information and recommendations that may focus on students achieving the ESLRs and the academic standards. ASB officers meet with the principal after each meeting to discuss concerns and possible formation of student committees. Minutes are given to staff and students via the student representatives. The students report back to their respective sixth period classes so that their constituents feel both included and represented.

Two programs provide the at-risk students with structured support -- AVID and the Bubble Program. In 2003-04, AVID was in its third year with an enrollment of 65 students. It started in 2001-02 with a freshman class of 30 and was partially funded by the AP Challenge grant. Classes were offered at grades eight, nine and ten. In 2002-03, the AVID program received certification and a new ninth grade class was started with 28 students. The loss of the "founding teacher" for the program has made a significant difference in the success of the program. Due to budget cuts and lack of monetary support from the district and administration, AVID will maintain one class for 2004-05, the AVID Seminar class. This will be the first graduating class through the AVID program at Alhambra. At this time, there is no plan to reinstate AVID in 2005-2006, unless funding is found.

The Bubble Program has been in effect for the last six or seven years. "Bubble" students are sophomore and junior students who are on the cusp of qualifying for California State University system, but if they were to slip in any academic area, they would no longer qualify. In order to support these students, staff members volunteer to

mentor up to three "bubble" students through their junior and senior year. The mentors help these students in many ways, but one of the most important is ensuring that their students sign up for academic classes that meet UC/CSU A-G requirements. These programs do not adequately serve the needs of all students. Additional intervention programs are needed to be created at the school to assist underachieving students.

The AHS website is active. Information is posted regarding school-wide events, the daily bulletins, and links to staff email and teacher homework websites. The AHS library media center website provides school and home access to our electronic catalog, seven databases and other information resources. The electronic message board, which is placed adjacent to the main arterial into town, updates the community on upcoming school and local events.

The administration meets to share information and receive input from the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) and the Athletic Boosters Club. Other informal parent groups and community groups also give input to the administration.

Recently the principal facilitated a meeting between the Department Chairs of AHS and the Martinez Junior High School (MJHS). With a change in administration at both schools, the instructional leaders of both schools are making an effort to begin meaningful articulation. Despite all of the involvement of the stakeholders described above, the Visiting Team discovered during classroom visitations that while the ESLRs may be imbedded in some of the curriculum there needs to be an increased awareness of the ESLRs. A monitoring team needs to be empowered to ensure progress on the school's Action Plans.

Criterion E-12: To what extent does a qualified staff facilitate achievement of the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results through a system of preparation, induction and ongoing professional development.

Criterion E-13: To what extent are leadership and staff involved in ongoing professional development that focuses on identified student learning needs?

The teachers at Alhambra are a highly qualified group of instructors. One hundred percent of Alhambra's teachers are clear credentialed. Thirty-nine percent of Alhambra faculty holds master's degrees. Approximately eighty-eight percent of Alhambra faculty has units beyond a BA/BS degree and their teaching credentials.

Teacher monitoring includes formal evaluation as well as routine ongoing informal observations. Generally, the staff considers monitoring supportive and a vehicle for further professional development. Monitoring may also include peer support systems to identify needs for ongoing professional development. Peer observations allow teachers release time to gain knowledge and experience from other teachers. Coaching, mentoring, and other forms of staff support are limited by resources, time and workload.

The school has an active BTSA program for new teachers. The site uses the three state buy-back days for staff development.

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The direction of staff development has changed in the last five years. In 1998, the district relinquished control of staff development and allowed sites to coordinate their own staff development time based on the sites' needs. After completion of a staff survey AHS chose technology as the area of focused need. With cooperation and support from the District Office the site was allowed for one year to pilot a program of using seven hours as flexible in-service hours. With the implementation of the Digital High School Grant (DHS) a group of teachers was trained as department technology mentors. The mentors assessed department needs and school-wide DHS goals and published a brochure of technology workshops for the year. The workshops covered a variety of subjects and were taught from the most basic level to highly advanced. Staff members were allowed to select workshops of their choice. Some collaboration time to create and complete integrated technology projects and individual projects was allowed. The AHS Research Manual was one of the integrated cross-discipline projects completed. The vice-principal kept records of workshops completed by the staff. Unfortunately the advent of staff development time being mandated by the bargaining agreement caused the cessation of this popular and highly successful program. Reflections and evaluations completed by the staff show positive and productive reviews of these staff development activities.

The district partnered with *Intel* and offered a 40-hour technology workshop on *Teach to the Future*. Sixteen AHS teachers received compensation, software and a new PC for completing the workshop. Those teachers shared information, techniques and curriculum with other members of their departments.

The staff continued to select technology workshops of their choice until 2002 when the Digital High School Grant terminated. Subsequent to that, staff development was indirectly mandated from the district office and staff was given a Hobson's choice: either do SDAIE training as staff development, or find and complete SDAIE training on their own time and expense. The staff voted to spread SDAIE training over a three-year period. A number of the teachers did not finish the SDAIE training. Those teachers not in SDAIE training were offered options of selecting a variety of workshops: differentiated instruction, technology, college eligibility and ELD/English Standards. During 2003-04 those staff not in SDAIE training worked on analyzing test data and linking curriculum to standards and the ESLRs. Although the SDAIE training has been extremely valuable, until this year the teaching staff has not had the opportunity to work together on the school action plan. Except for once this year, all work in home groups and focus groups was done after school. The full day in-service to meet in focus groups and share information about curriculum and teaching strategies was invaluable. Under the guidance of the leadership team AHS is looking forward to planning staff development days based on their action plan.

AHS is not a SIP school and the elimination of SB1882 funds severely curtailed the attendance of conferences and workshops by the majority of departments. District funding of conferences and workshops is very limited. There seems to be a lack of communication regarding the usage of district funding for conferences and workshops. In response to the question "How often in the last three years has your department

requested funds to develop common materials or attend workshops?" three departments responded that they had received the message that there is no funding to request.

It should be noted, however, that many staff members have spent hundreds of hours of their own time collaborating with other teachers and with the librarian. If they could have time built into each school week to allow for curriculum collaboration, they believe the effect would be positive for students as well as for teachers.

The BTSA program for new teachers is supported by the district personnel department. Currently only one new teacher has an AHS BTSA provider. A parallel site-specific program for new teachers run by a previous vice-principal has been terminated. It was an excellent support for teachers new to the site with strategies for classroom management, lesson planning, procedures and site resources. The school needs to identify resources and a method to support teachers.

Technology at AHS continues to be an active component of curriculum as well as a subject for continuing teacher education. The DHS grant provided computers in classrooms and labs for all students to use in the Technology Center and the Library Media Center. DHS funding provided additional hours for the library media center to be opened after school and one evening a week to allow access to technology by all students. Each department received funding based on their technology needs. The results of three years of surveys showed a technological growth for AHS teachers. Ninety percent of the teachers use a computer based grading program and almost all teachers regularly use email to communicate with other staff, parents and the community. The Communication Technology course requirement partnered with the number of available labs as the result of funding by site, district and community have all contributed to student success using technology as a tool to achieve the ESLRs and content standards. The downside is with the elimination of state funding the school is placing band-aids on an aging technology infrastructure instead of rebuilding it. Budget cuts have erased the additional hours and reduced the access time by students to the library media center. The AHS site technology committee has met with the Superintendent regarding long term technology planning. The Superintendent has agreed to resurrect the district technology committee with representatives from all sites. Funding sources and opportunities need to be clearly communicated to the staff. In the meantime, the AHS staff has sought out funding from other sources to supplement their staff development opportunities. The school needs to investigate how to provide the staff with collaboration and planning time. The long-term staff development plan needs to be based on the school's Action Plans. The district needs to increasingly support maintenance of the technology infrastructure. The technology people are shared with all the schools in the district.

The AHS administrative team monitors all teacher activities through formal evaluations as well as routine informal class drop-ins. All temporary, probationary and categorically funded teachers are formally evaluated every year for the first two consecutive years of employment in the District and at least every other year thereafter. Teachers with permanent status are evaluated every other year. Tenured teachers may choose a self-directed evaluation process as an alternative. As the result of last year's bargaining agreement, tenured teachers who have received satisfactory or above

evaluations and meet the criterion of NCLB "highly qualified" may agree to be evaluated on a five year cycle.

Criterion E-14: To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to encourage parental and community involvement?

Martinez is an anomaly in the Bay Area because it has not had a transient population. Many of the students at Alhambra are fourth and fifth generation. Due to the nature of this particular small-town community, traditions have been firmly established at Alhambra High School and parents are very involved with the school. As a result, many of the traditional events haven't changed since their inception. For example, the community knows that when the football field lights are on during the day, there's a home game that night. The community also shows extraordinary support of the performing arts and of new ventures such as grad night. The open lines of communication between the school and parents are exemplary.

The principal, the yearbook staff, the counseling department, the Booster club, the PTSA, the grad night committee, and the leadership students use the quarterly PTSA newsletter as a forum to apprise parents and the community of all events affecting the school. This has been a major avenue for communicating. Since June 2003, the AHS website has become a vital communication link. Data shows that the number of hits to the website has increased from an average of 100 hits per month in 2003 to 1450 hits per month in 2004. The website contains links to teacher emails, homework and grading websites, the daily bulletin, Library Media Center resource links, and other items of interest to students and the community. The daily bulletin is regularly updated to inform readers of sporting events, various school club meetings, school schedule changes, counseling meetings, leadership activities and even the cafeteria menus. The school newspaper, "the Watchdog", has many subscribers who receive the newspaper in the mail as a way of being informed of school activities. Departments also use this to promote special events such as travel opportunities and Mock Trial. The electronic message marquee in front of the school also provides information to the community, since its location is adjacent to the only street that leads directly downtown.

Progress reports are mailed home twice a semester and semester grades are sent in January and June. Teachers may make specific comments and request that parents contact them. Every night the electronic absence recorder telephones parents whose child(ren) has missed one or more classes that day. When warranted, (for instance, preceding the annual STAR testing), the principal sends letters home to parents for support or assistance.

Parent volunteers help make registration run smoothly. Those parents who have students attending Alhambra are an excellent resource for new "high school" parents. At registration in the fall, a parent volunteer form is filled out for encouraging parents to get involved in the school. This survey is then compiled into different categories to make use of parent volunteers. Leadership, for example, uses the list of parent volunteers who expressed an interest in chaperoning, to help with events like dances. This past fall, (2004), there were 250 forms filled out by parents who wanted to help.

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As a means of assessing the attitudes of parents towards Alhambra a parent survey was conducted at Back-to-School night in which approximately 500 parents participated. Fifty-two percent of the parents felt proud to be members of the Alhambra community, and forty-seven percent felt welcome on campus. The overall results show a positive feeling from parents about the school and its leadership.

In the spring of 2003, several community groups collaborated to sponsor a three-day program intended to deter students from drinking and driving. The program, called "Every 15 Minutes", was well received by the student body and the community. The *Martinez Gazette* featured an article about the event and its success ensures that this program will occur every three years.

Parents participate on many school and district committees like Site Council, Strategic Site Planning and Curriculum Advisory Committee. The groups on campus consist almost exclusively of parents are the PTSA, the Arts Foundation, the Boosters Club and the Grad Night committee. All of these groups sponsor booths at registration and continue seeking new members throughout the year. The best method for recruiting for these groups tends to be word of mouth, and because Martinez is such an insular community, this works very well.

The Grad Night Committee has a large group of community volunteers who coordinate the efforts of this annual "safe night" for their seniors. The entire building that houses the commons is completely transformed in the space of one week. A community preview night is held the night before graduation, and everyone except graduating seniors are welcome. A local barbecue shop serves dinner for a small fee, and the tables that are usually set up in the cafeteria are outside. It really is a community event, and people look forward to seeing old friends as well as seeing what the current Grad Night will hold for the graduating class.

One can see the community involvement at the beginning of the year with the "Homecoming Season". Homecoming is done "the Martinez way" and the community not only helps with the building of floats, but also turns out to watch the parade. The elderly begin setting up lawn chairs along Main Street hours before the parade starts. There is a grandstand where local functionaries and dignitaries are seated, and community members serve as Grand Marshals. Sometimes the place of pride as Grand Marshall goes to someone who has given a lot to the school but doesn't live in Martinez.

Drama productions are supported by the Alhambra Arts Foundation who even provides treats to sell at intermission and their funding helps to promote the arts in the community and provides extras like field trips. The PTSA continually encourages parents' involvement, and recently they hosted the first "Meet the Principal Coffee Affair" to allow an open forum for parents with Principal Taylor. The success of the event is causing PTSA to look at similar events with all departments.

Teachers regularly communicate with parents via email and/or voice mail. Many teachers post their grades on-line which helps parents stay in touch with their children's progress. Parents also have the option of requesting weekly progress reports through the counseling office. The students are responsible for picking up the sheets in the

counseling office and ensuring that every one of their teachers makes comments, gives grades, and signs or initials their reports.

With the decrease of district gardening services, all stakeholders have participated in "community clean-up" days to help weed and plant flowers. The Strategic Tactic #1 on Environment was a parent group concerned about the conditions of the outside facilities. The group pulled people of specific expertise who had experience with and understood paving, fencing, pool tiling, and geology. The many improvements that the district made in the summer of 2003 can be attributed to this group's work.

Alhambra's largest minority population is Hispanic. In the past, the ELD teacher has hosted dinners to include parents of the ELD students who may be hesitant to come to the school. Unfortunately, this did not occur this past year. The staff and administration needs to look at ways to include the parents in this group as part of the active parent community at school. Creating a bilingual advisory committee would create events to include Hispanic parents. Scheduling of school activities and meetings also need to take into account the needs of working parents.

The staff and parent surveys show that the phone system needs to be replaced. A new "voicemail" system was added in the fall of 2003, but this "new" system is difficult for both teachers and callers to use, and even when used properly, phones do not ring through to the classrooms. In some cases, calls are directed straight to voice mail, even when the teacher is available on prep. The technology is too complicated, and not set up correctly. Messages are frequently lost and misdirected. Recorded messages are not updated regularly.

What's on the horizon

The recent addition of a new principal at Alhambra High School in the late summer of 2005 is the latest in a series of administrative changes at the school. The school Self-Study indicates that she has been well received by the staff. The Visiting Committee has had the opportunity to meet with the new principal. She is a dedicated professional who is committed to improving the opportunities for student academic achievement. She is committed to looking at the current curriculum offerings to make sure that there are more opportunities for students to take UC A-G classes. She has also focused the staff's attention on Honors and Advanced Placement classes at the school. Some of the staff and individual departments have concerns about the expansion of the AP Program, including most notably the impact on the heterogeneous grouping in the non-AP/Honors classes. The dialogue on this issue will be a major concern for the school in the foreseeable future.

Alhambra High School has not had the opportunity to study student data on state mandated assessments by individual student. The timeliness of the receipt of the data by the teachers is a major concern. The district indicates that they are working on getting the data to the teachers. The last five years indicate that this still is going to be a major chore for the school and the district. Increased articulation between the school leadership team and the district must take place to implement this flow of information and data to the school in a timely manner.

The middle school and the high school have recently established more open lines of communication. This link must be expanded. The ready flow of information will help AHS in its efforts to properly place students when they enter high school. The articulation process should also better inform the feeder school about the academic and social expectations for the students who matriculate to the high school.

The Vocational Education/ROP programs continue to be one of the bright highlights at Alhambra High School. The dedication of the teachers in the programs enables them to thrive and grow. There are plans to add new components to the present program. The Vocational Education/ROP programs are an important part of providing opportunities for every student at AHS to excel. This program is particularly important to a school and community that have a blue-collar background.

The leadership of the school needs to continue the efforts to provide interventions for students who are low achieving and the students in the middle. The school is seeking its direction in this important area. The teachers at the school care about the students. Overall the quality of the instruction is excellent. There are changes on the horizon that could improve the opportunities for all students at the school. Most of the staff is in a place to consider and implement these changes, however the road will not necessarily be smooth.

The school has a goal of creating a positive empowering learning community. The tolerance committee of students and teachers will continue to respond to hate related violence.

Students and staff members believe that all instructional minutes need to be used effectively to improve student achievement. Both teachers and staff would like to minimize the distractions that impede the learning processes; students need to be provided with positive alternatives for inappropriate conduct. The school would like to ensure that all ethnicities and cultures have an avenue for expression and support. The school plans to do this by implementing various tasks including the following:

The tasks are:

Various stakeholders (principal, vice principal, parents, house of representatives, School Site Council, department chairs, PTSA, counselors, interns, SRO, campus supervisors, leadership, and staff) will be the ones responsible for the implementation of these tasks. The groups will utilize a variety of resources, such as, the student handbook, annual surveys, leadership students, CARE team, district office, and data. Progress of these tasks will be assessed by annual surveys and data analysis. Progress will be disseminated to all stakeholders.

In addition, leadership students will meet with 8th grade leadership students to help with the transition to AHS. All 8th grade students will visit AHS in April 2005. Link Crew, a peer-mentoring program, was mentioned as a possible addition to AHS. Teachers will work on creating a common planning time to address collaboration. An intern from JFK University runs a Smoking Awareness class for students that are caught smoking and/or using drugs and alcohol.

Areas of strength

As Identified in the School's Self-Study	As Determined by WASC Visiting Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email communication • PTSA quarterly newsletter is a vital link between our administration and community. • A highly qualified and educated faculty • Faculty willing to write grants for resources and conferences • The AHS staff is willing to give time to a collaboration program • Alhambra's staff is now under new guidance, and the principal is beginning discussions with the staff about helping all students achieve. • Data is now more user-friendly and beginning to be used to drive programs • AHS staff truly cares about students and this school. • A governance system exists that includes all stakeholders 	

Critical areas of growth and improvement

As Identified in the School's Self-Study	As Determined by WASC Visiting Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common planning time • Implementing more support programs to help all students achieve • Separate monitoring committee for timely progress on Action plans • Stronger emphasis on making sure students and staff internalize ESLRs • Common planning time • Long range staff development plan based on action plans • Clear communication regarding funding sources for staff development • Technology infrastructure maintenance • Site program for new teachers • Website needs to be more easily accessible (faster, more user friendly) and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan to deal with overcrowding. • A comprehensive plan to effectively enforce a closed campus. • A comprehensive plan should be developed and implemented to address campus cleanliness issues. • Discover outside resources and funding that is available for prevention programs. Implement drug, alcohol, and tobacco prevention programs. • Program that helps transition students from 8th grade to high school. • Utilization of strategies that will build trust between the counselors and administrators and students.

Critical areas of growth and improvement

- | As Identified in the School's Self-Study | As Determined by WASC Visiting Team |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| more utilized by teachers | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase minority parent involvement as well as the working parent• Telephone system is non-functional• Recorded messages are not updated in a timely manner (two months old) | |

Vision and Purpose

What 's in place

Criterion F15: To what extent does the school have a clearly stated vision or purpose based on its student needs, current educational research and the belief that all students can achieve high levels?

Alhambra's vision was developed with various stakeholder groups in 2001 as part of a school-wide action plan. The vision was developed around the concepts of Opportunity to Learn and Student Support. The school's goals are represented in the ESLRs.

The District Vision Statement

We will collaboratively forge diverse paths to excellence while developing passionate life-long learners who will be guided by the Heads, Hearts, and Spirits.

We believe that:

- Knowledge empowers and enriches
- Each individual has potential to achieve goals
- Positive self-concept gives inner strength
- Diversity enriches our community
- Creative expression contributes to learning in all subjects
- A positive attitude helps attain goals
- A caring community encourages physical, intellectual and spiritual growth
- Life is a continual adaptation to change

We believe in:

- The family's influence on a person's development
- Respect and care for each other
- Modeling integrity
- Respect and care for the environment
- Collaboration
- Accountability

The vision of Alhambra High School is consistent with national, state and district standards. Instructional goals are being developed for each course through the use of Power Standards and the realignment of course syllabi. The vision resulted in the blending of the strategic planning process and the Focus on Learning Self-Study process.

The goal of Alhambra High School is to provide a rigorous course of study through which students become critical thinkers, effective communicators and collaborative workers. These concepts are represented in their Expected Schoolwide Learning Results. All students are expected to model these qualities upon graduation from Alhambra High School. The Visiting Team is concerned that every student does not have access to a relevant and rigorous curriculum. The school needs to have access to more data to impact the delivery of instruction in a comprehensive, meaningful way for the students of Alhambra High School.

Alhambra High School has experienced a great deal of administrative turnover in the recent past. The current principal has brought hope to many staff members that there will be consistent leadership. The changes in the administrative staff over the years have made it difficult for the school to maintain and advance its vision for the students and staff at the school.

Through the WASC Self-Study process the need of intervention or support programs to help all students achieve at high levels has been recognized even though very little currently exists. Articulation with the feeder school has begun. Department chairs from both schools recently met. A new governance system is in place that should help the school to redirect its energies and maintain the momentum gained through the WASC *Focus On Learning* Self-Study process.

There is no formalized intervention plan for students who are having difficulty meeting state standards and with their grades. District budget cuts have resulted in increased class sizes in some classes and fewer support classes. Teachers continue to implement interventions that they previously had in place, but have no additional support to offer at this point because of time constraints and lack of funding. SDAIE training was given to many teachers at the school, but the Visiting Team did not see widespread use of these instructional strategies.

The Alhambra community has a belief that all students can attain higher academic standards, and the needs of the student body drive the vision of the school and the curriculum goals in each department. The entire school needs to work on making sure that all students truly have success achieving higher academic standards.

There is no evidence within this report that current educational research was used in the decision-making process or had any significant impact on the writing of the Alhambra Self-Study.

What's on the horizon:

The development of a formal intervention plan for support of under-performing students is a part of the school's action plan. Although District and site resources are limited, the school sees the need for a plan regardless of financial support. Alhambra's CAHSEE pass rate last year was 88% in English and 92% in Math. This is a strong score. There are however subgroups, Special Education students, Socioeconomically disadvantaged, and English Language Learners, whose scores range between 48% and 84%. These students represent approximately 20% of the students. Another measure

showing students in need is that more than 20% of the students grades 9-11 last year were below basic or far below basic on the English/Language Arts CST.

The WASC Self-Study process has initiated dialog that can further develop and articulate a school-wide vision. A rich discussion of how to best serve all students has started and needs to be moved to the next level, "where do we go from here?" Common planning time built in to the schedule will allow for dialog and the development of the vision and the programs necessary. In addition, this time can be used for developing common assignments and assessments. A clearly articulated vision that represents the current leadership and student body would help Alhambra move forward.

Areas of strength

As Identified in the School's Self-Study

- Strong goals for students
- Common assignments and assessments
- Blending of the strategic planning process and the Focus On Learning process

As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- The use of the WASC Self-Study process to further develop and articulate a school-wide vision
- Development of Power Standards tied to the California Standards Test (CST)

Critical areas of growth and improvement

As Identified in the School's Self-Study

- Common planning time to examine data and establish curriculum
- Formalized intervention program for students not meeting standards

As Determined by WASC Visiting Team

- Common planning time built into the schedule so that staff may refine their vision and gain support
- Formalized intervention program for students who are not proficient in the state standards and/or are low performing students

Part B: Synthesis of School-wide Areas of Strength and Schoolwide Areas of Follow-up

General Comments

The Alhambra High School stakeholders are commended for their commitment to education and children and for the preparation of the *Focus on Learning* document. Whether through group meetings or individual conversations, stakeholders pro-actively assisted the Visiting Committee to gather and clarify evidence concerning past and present conditions at the school and intentions to improve. The district office administration has provided direction, training and other resources to the school. The Visiting Committee found the students to be congenial with our members and appreciative of our efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities.

Schoolwide Areas of Strength

A HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHING STAFF: The school has many caring, dedicated, hard-working teachers. Their collegial spirit benefits the education and emotional development of their students. The students appreciate their teachers, counselors and site administrators.

A HIGHLY QUALIFIED ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: The Principal and the two Assistants hold the Professional Administrative Credential and have at minimum six years of experience in school administration. Each has continued with professional development to enhance their knowledge and skills regarding the multitude of issues in site management and instructional leadership.

A STUDENT-CENTERED CLASSIFIED AND CUSTODIAL STAFF: The classified staff has an attitude that serves the needs of students and parents and the knowledge and skills necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the various support programs. The custodial staff takes pride in the appearance of the campus and often anticipates the needs of students and teachers.

A STRONG PARENT/COMMUNITY SUPPORT SYSTEM: Many of the students and staff are multi-generational to the high school, a few even fifth-generation. Parents in general are committed to the school as evidenced by their participation in various school-wide committees as well as their financial support, participation and spectatorship for the sports, the fine arts and the performing arts programs.

A VIBRANT CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS: Over half of the student body participates in interest-based clubs, vocation clubs that support school-to-work activities, sports, visual arts and/or performing arts. This high percentage of students indicates an enriching context to study, learn, work and mature.

A COMPREHENSIVE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND REGIONAL OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAM: A total of seven such programs are currently offered with two additional courses in the process of development. The instructors have practical experience, subject matter expertise and strong shop safety and management skills. They have strong ties with many of the twenty-one local unions, most of them related to the nearby oil refineries and terminals, which support these programs and offer employment for the graduates of these programs.

RECENTLY IMPROVED TEST SCORES: Last year the API score, which has a range from 200 to 1000, increased by 78 points from 654 to 732. The prior five-year record of smaller positive and negative changes rather than incremental improvement and the dropping in State-wide Rank and Similar School's Rank indicates the need for caution in drawing conclusions to the sustainability of last year's improvement.

Schoolwide Critical Areas of Need

DATA: The school needs access to coherent, relevant data in a timely manner. Data needs to be utilized to evaluate student achievement, drive future programming and to

address student's academic needs. Teachers need access to individualized student data at the beginning of the school year. Teachers need training on data analysis, and training to use the data to develop classroom instruction.

INTERVENTIONS FOR LOW-PERFORMING STUDENTS: More intervention programs need to be in place for low and middle performing students. There is a need to work with the parents of these students to increase the community support. This may include: embedding research-based specialized curricula, including differentiated instruction, SDAIE strategies, after school programs, and collecting and analyzing data which evaluates effectiveness to increase student academic performance.

INCREASE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO COMPLETE A-G REQUIREMENTS: There is a need for more assistance to be available to advise and support all students to become eligible to attend a four-year college or university. All students should be challenged by a relevant and rigorous curriculum that increases post-secondary opportunities upon graduation.

EXPANSION OF THE ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAMS: Rigorous and relevant instruction is not available for all students. There is a need to expand the A.P. program by making A.P. courses more available. The school should actively encourage and recruit students who are not traditionally in these courses. The school should review the criteria used for students to take A.P. courses at Alhambra High School. A.P. courses should fulfill the graduation requirements, so that they do not limit students' abilities to explore other electives. Research from the College Board indicates students who have taken AP courses are more successful in college than students who have taken only Honors level courses.

A MORE WELL-DEFINED, EFFECTIVE EL PROGRAM WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND IDENTIFICATION: There is a need for early and timely identification of English Language Learners and a well-defined curriculum that is supported with materials that address the ELD standards. There is a need for additional support to identify EL students (CELDT testing, Home Language Survey) and for accurate re-designation and follow-up to assist EL students in the content area classes.

COLLABORATION: There is a need to investigate avenues to provide embedded collaboration time within the school day that will allow AHS to fully address their action plans and critical areas for follow-up. The time should be well planned and inclusive to promote effectiveness, while addressing issues important to the AHS staff.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT: There is a need to increase time and resources for staff development in order to develop a shared vision for AHS. There should be a focused effort to maximize learning opportunities for all students, develop support programs, and interpreting and utilizing of disaggregated data to address achievement gaps. Training should include efficient use of technology (i.e. AERIES) and strategies to increase use of differentiated instruction in the classroom.

CHAPTER 5: ON-GOING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The Schoolwide Action Plan

Alhambra High School developed its school-wide Action Plan as part of the WASC/CDE Self-Study. That Action Plan focuses upon four major components to improve student achievement. The rationales are also from that Self-Study.

1. Strengthen the curriculum

Rationale: Increase the API score by 5%, increase the number of students at or above the Proficient level on the Content Standards Tests, close the Achievement Gap for English Language Learners and Special Education students and ensure that all students have access to a comprehensive, high-quality education.

2. Increase achievement for all students through multiple avenues of support

Rationale: Ensure that all students have access to a comprehensive, high-quality education, increase the percentage of students who are on track for graduation by the end of their sophomore year, increase the percentage of students who earn 240 credits for graduation and increase the percentage of students who are UC eligible.

3. Create a positive empowering learning community

Rationale: minimize distractions that impede student learning, ensure that all instructional minutes are used effectively for student achievement, provide students with positive alternatives for inappropriate conduct, ensure that staff has adequate time for collaboration in and among subject area, ensure that all ethnicities and cultures have an avenue for expression and support.

4. Create a Monitoring Committee to oversee the progress of the Action Plan

Rationale: Ensure that an accountability model is in place for all stake holders and ensure that Action Plan goals are met on a timely basis.

The Visiting Committee's Recommendations for Critical Areas for Follow-up

To improve the achievement of all students at Alhambra High School, the WASC/CDE Visiting Committee recommends the revision of Alhambra high School's proposed school-wide Action Plan to more fully address the seven Critical Areas for Follow-up identified during the four-day visit.

- Increase the number of students who complete A-G requirements
- Collaboration
- Staff Development
- A more well-defined, effective English Language program with additional support and identification

- Intervention for low-performing students
- Data analysis
- Expansion of the Advanced Placement Program

The Visiting Committee's Evaluation of the Action Plan

The WASC/CDE Visiting Committee evaluated Alhambra High School's proposed school-wide Action Plan by its potential to meet that committee's seven "Recommendations for Critical Areas for Follow-up." A thorough analysis of the school's Self-Study Report and evidence gathered at the school site during the four-day visit supports this evaluation. The Visiting Committee strongly believes that the school has the ability and capacity to accomplish their goals.