

**SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

**WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES  
CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**FOR**

**ARAGON HIGH SCHOOL**

**900 Alameda de las Pulgas**

**San Mateo, CA 94402**

**San Mateo Union High School District**

**March 5-7, 2012**

**Visiting Committee Members**

Patricia Avilla  
Vice Principal, Granada High School

Susan Charlip  
Assistant Principal, Albany High School

Jason Noll  
Principal, Tracy High School

Kevin Miller  
Assistant Principal, Ann Sobrato High School

Greg Ponikvar  
Teacher, Everest Public High School

Brian Irvine, chair  
Teacher, Fremont High School

## **Chapter 1: Student/Community Profile**

Aragon High School was established in 1961 as part of the San Mateo Union High School District. This comprehensive high school primarily serves feeder schools from San Mateo, Hillsborough, and Foster City, although according to SMUHSD policy, any student from any part of the district can request admittance to any district school. The school is consistently at capacity (about 1500 students), and a waiting list for admittance exists year to year.

Aragon's student body reflects the population of San Mateo County as a whole. A decrease in the Caucasian population (by more than 5% in the past decade), and increases in the numbers of Latino (3.5%) and Asian (2.7%) have shown up in the changes in the diversity of Aragon.

Since the last WASC visit six years ago, the school has undergone substantial facility improvements. The interiors of both wings of the school were completely remodeled, with modernized, more spacious classrooms. The football fields and stands, student services building, and a new swimming pool and deck area were completed over the past few years, improving the beauty and usefulness of the areas. Solar panels were installed district-wide last year, led by the efforts of an Aragon student. More plans for this and coming years include a new theater, career technology building, and renovated gyms and locker rooms. A push is on this year to provide wireless technology campus-wide.

An active parent group (Parent Teacher Student Organization) has streamlined fundraising efforts since 2007 by asking for donations of \$600 per family to support a wide range of school endeavors. This Fair Share drive has yielded about \$300,000 each year, and helps to support such programs as AVID, AP Chinese, Engineering Technology, and College Study Skills classes, as well as providing teachers' resources (Smart boards, computers, and document cameras). This funding has also been used to support field trips, equipment, and other materials for the teachers at the school. It also has paid for all tenth graders to take the PSAT, helped support a computer lab aide, library aide, copy room aide, and increased security on campus. The funds are overseen by the PTSO, and distributed with the assistance and guidance of the principal. Parents are also active in the various booster clubs (athletic, drama, and music), and a longstanding Asian parent group works with the administration and staff to help support the causes of all Aragon students.

Support from the community is demonstrated through the ties the school has with the Rotary Club and the Lions Club, providing for scholarships and leadership development opportunities for the students. The Peninsula YMCA provides counseling and mental health services through an on-site counselor, and a representative from Peninsula Conflict Resolution has helped provide counseling, primarily for Latino students. The school plans to provide leadership training for parents of these students as well. Many additional organizations have provided scholarship opportunities and other material support for students, culminating in over \$1,500,000 in scholarships and awards last year.

## **2. WASC history**

In 2006, Aragon underwent its last self-study. The visiting team from that year recommended a clear six-year term of accreditation. The school provided WASC with a three-year updated community/school profile in 2009, as well as a progress report, outlining the progress made since the 2006 visit.

## **3. School Purpose and Expected School-wide Learning Results**

The following vision and mission statements are taken directly from the report:

### **Vision Statement**

Aragon will be a comprehensive high school with a reputation for quality academic, career, and co-curricular programs. These programs serve as models of creative and innovative solutions that meet the changing emotional, physical and educational needs of its student population and professional staff. The culturally diverse staff will be dedicated to professional growth, innovation, and collaboration leading to improved instruction. The community will be enhanced through a variety of educational, social, recreational, and cultural activities. By making use of its district and community resources, Aragon will be a dynamic organization constantly searching for better ways to provide a broad range of services.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Aragon High School is to guide students to become productive and contributing members of society. In a safe and caring environment, Aragon will provide a strong academic and co-curricular program. The staff shall coordinate the resources of the school and community in such ways that students respect themselves and others, appreciate the value of diversity and individual creativity, recognize the problems and opportunities of change, seek a set of moral standards that allows them to thrive in the world they inherit, and experience the joy of learning as a lifelong process. The value system that underlies efforts to accomplish this mission includes these beliefs:

- A school community should be a safe and caring environment that promotes respect, self-worth, creativity, and academic growth.

- All members of the school community should work collaboratively. This process includes good communications, shared decision-making and accountability.
- Learning is a process in which all can participate and succeed. Inherent to the process is innovation, risk-taking, and the challenge of one's personal limits.
- Education must be responsive to the changing needs of our students, staff, and community.
- The school community should foster the intellectual, emotional, and physical well-being of each student.
- Diversity should be welcomed for the strength it brings to the education of all members of the school community.
- Education should be celebrated as a lifelong process that fosters personal and positive growth.

### **Aragon's Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs)**

Aragon's ESLRs were created during the school's 2000 WASC process and revised in 2005 and again in 2010. Through the most recent revision process, the Aragon community kept intact the four broad categories of the original ESLRs but made major edits to streamline their content and make them more accessible to students. After completing the revision process, staff, parents and students voted overwhelmingly to accept this most recent version of the ESLRs.

ARAGON HIGH SCHOOL'S  
**EXPECTED SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING RESULTS**  
*KNOW THINK DEVELOP CONTRIBUTE*

*All Aragon graduates are expected to...*

***KNOW FOUNDATION SKILLS AND INFORMATION IN EACH DISCIPLINE and can***

- Identify and understand key facts and concepts
- Speak and write effectively
- Read and listen actively
- Gather, process and communicate information using appropriate technology
- Transfer skills to emerging technologies

***THINK CREATIVELY using HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS and can***

- Gather, analyze and evaluate data
- Define problems, propose and implement solutions
- Generate their own ideas and organize material using a variety of techniques
- Think metaphorically and categorically
- See relationships within and between disciplines

***DEVELOP EFFECTIVE METHODS OF SELF-MANAGEMENT and can***

- a. Maximize personal strengths while exploring a variety of academic and co-curricular areas
- b. Demonstrate reliability, time management, organization and self-discipline
- c. Set appropriate goals for physical fitness, hygiene, nutrition, and emotional health
- d. Develop personal goals for career, family and community life
- e. Identify areas of personal challenge and self-advocate to manage them constructively

#### 4. Status of school in terms of student performance

Aragon High School has seen its base API increase from 800 in 2005-06, to 841 in 2010-11. A new significant subpopulation of English Language Learners has been designated, and a large drop in their test scores (67 points) has been observed. Overall, the school consistently ranks among the top schools in the state, meets its API growth target each year, and, until this year, showed significant gains in most subgroups. The school's consistently high test scores are listed as a reason for its popularity among many parents who want their students to attend Aragon, and is one of the reasons for the annual waiting list of students trying to get into the school

#### 5. Enrollment

Aragon's student population is consistently at capacity with a waiting list. Since a high of 1670 students in 2008, the district has more strictly limited the enrollment cap leading to the decline in students over the past few years. The population is broken down according to grade, gender, and ethnicity in the following tables. As previously noted, the shift in population mirrors that of San Mateo County itself.

Grade	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
9th	447	387	456	464	406	369	342
10th	407	424	386	460	464	385	372
11th	352	385	395	381	425	433	368
12th	364	327	365	365	337	400	417
Totals	1570	1523	1602	1670	1632	1587	1499

Gender	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Male	804	744	758	791	795	777	730
Female	766	779	844	879	837	810	769
Totals	1570	1523	1602	1670	1632	1587	1499

Ethnicity	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
African- American	47	34	39	44	32	16	16

Am. Ind./Alask. Nat.	5	8	9	10	11	1	0
Asian	382	370	414	432	454	382	419
Hispanic/Latino	302	314	315	335	346	385	395
Pacific Islander	78	83	90	83	74	46	34
White not Hispanic	678	632	628	629	627	492	475
Multiple/No Resp.	21	26	40	61	3	197	160
Totals	1570	1523	1602	1670	1632	1587	1499

The following special programs are offered to aid specific populations of students.

### Enrollment in Special Programs

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
AVID	51	83	92	124	112	127	116
GATE	275	290	309	322	331	286	258
Special Education	194	240	170	176	126	132	110

A strong academic program is led by the AP and AS courses offered by the school. Over 50% of the students take advantage of these classes.

### Enrollment in Advanced Standing and Advanced Placement by Ethnicity

	Spring 2009	Spring 2010	Fall 2011
African- American	11	13	13
Am. Ind./Alask. Nat.	0	1	1
Asian	311	331	299
Filipino	44	47	37
Hispanic/Latino	100	88	115
Pacific Islander	10	8	5
White not Hispanic	327	324	319
Multiple/No Resp.	37	0	3
Total Enrollment in AS/AP	840	812	792

Percent of Students in AS/AP	53%	52%	52%
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## 6. Language proficiency numbers

### Number of Students by Language Proficiency Level

Proficiency Level	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
English Learners (EL)	102	114	124	114	106	82
Fluent English Proficient (FEP)	458	485	473	493	505	477
Redesignated to FEP (RFEP)	16	19	3	9	16	23

## 7. Attendance

### Attendance and Truancy Rates

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Aragon Attendance Rate	95.84%	95.80%	95.95%	96.58%	96.52%
Truancy Rate*	34.78%	28.23%	25.72%	11.86%	8.21%

\*A student is considered truant when he/she is tardy or absent from school for more than 30 minutes without a valid excuse on three or more days.

## 8. Suspensions and expulsions

### Number of Students Suspended or Expelled

Discipline	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Suspensions	374	341	409	120	95	115
Expulsions	4	5	10	10	16	4

## 9. Socioeconomic status

According to CST resources, data over the past few years indicates the school has seen 11-14% of its population identified as economically disadvantaged. There are currently 129 students who are signed up for free lunches, and 58 for reduced price, totaling 187 students.

## 10. School safety and facilities

Located in a suburban, residential community, Aragon is considered to be less vulnerable to criminal activity. Over 90% of respondents to the staff, student, and parent surveys confirm the belief that this is a safe, clean, and orderly place to learn. The school is committed to maintaining the safety and cleanliness of the school, and works together with outside agencies to keep the school this way.

## 11. Staffing

### Number of Staff Members

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Certificated	87	81	84	89	87	82	81
Classified	43	45	55	48	49	49	43
Qualified Counseling	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
Pupil Services	7	7	6	8	5	5	6
Administration	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Totals	142	138	151	151	147	142	136

### Disaggregated by Gender/Ethnicity

#### Number of Staff by Gender

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Certificated male	37	34	37	36	36	36	36
Certificated female	50	47	47	53	51	46	45
Classified male	11	12	14	13	14	15	14
Classified female	32	33	41	35	35	34	29

#### Number of Certificated Staff by Ethnicity

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
African- American	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Am. Ind./Alask. Nat.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian	4	5	6	7	7	8	6
Filipino	0	0	0	2	1	1	1
Hispanic/Latino	1	1	2	3	3	3	3
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White not Hispanic	77	71	71	72	73	67	68
Multiple/No Response	1	1	2	2	0	0	0

**Number of Classified Staff by Ethnicity**

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
African- American	0	1	2	2	2	4	2
Am. Ind./Alask. Nat.	0	0	0	0	3	0	1
Asian	4	3	4	4	1	4	3
Filipino	0	3	3	4	3	2	4
Hispanic/Latino	6	7	11	8	10	8	8
Pacific Islander	3	0	2	1	2	4	1
White not Hispanic	26	25	27	25	28	27	21
Multiple/No Response	4	6	6	4	0	0	3

**Certificated Staff Details****Education Level of Certificated Staff**

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Bachelor's	4	5	6	9	3	2
Bachelor's + 30	27	23	25	26	31	27
Master's	10	10	9	10	3	3
Master's + 30	36	34	34	33	40	40
Doctorate	2	2	3	3	2	2

**Beginning Teacher Support Program**

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
BTSA year one	3	5	2	4	1
BTSA year two	6	2	3	3	2

**Teacher Credential Status/Experience**

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Fully Credential	78	74	75	77	81	74	80
Emergency Credential	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Interns	2	0	2	3	3	2	1
Waivers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Avg. Yrs. Teaching	12.3	12.1	12.4	12.3	13.3	12.7	12.9
Avg. Yrs. in District	8.9	9.2	9.3	9.4	10.5	9.9	10.1

**Student Performance Data**

***A. How does Aragon High School rank in relation to other California high schools and has it met annual targets set by the state (Academic Performance Index growth targets) and Federal (Adequate Yearly Progress) accountability systems?***

Aragon consistently scores well on standardized tests. The school's ranking, when compared to similar schools, has dropped from a high of 9 in 2007-08 to a low of 4 this past year. However, statewide, it has earned a score of 9 every year for the past six years. The most recent scores for Language Learners, a relatively new subgroup, fell significantly this past year.

API Overall Scores	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Base API	800	810	800	813	822	841
Growth Target	A	A	A	A	A	A
API Score (Growth)	819	800	813	822	841	839
Met API Target	A	A	A	A	A	A
Points Gained	+19	-10	+13	+9	+18	-2
Statewide Rank	9	9	9	9	9	9
Similar Schools Rank	7	7	9	6	5	4

**API for Significant Subpopulations**

	2008-09			2009-10			2010-11			2010-11		
	Base	Growth	Met									
Asian	888	-1	Yes	887	+14	Yes	901	+8	Yes	909	-3	Yes
Hispanic or Latino	665	+13	Yes	678	+21	Yes	700	+36	Yes	738	-3	No
White not Hispanic	833	+9	Yes	842	0	Yes	843	+18	Yes	863	+12	Yes
Economically Disadvantaged	623	+10	Yes	633	+21	Yes	654	+50	Yes	707	-2	No
English Learners*	650	N/A	Yes	650	N/A	N/A	740	+33	Yes	775	-67	No

B. \*English Learners only recently designated as a significant subpopulation, so some data is not available.

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)****Adequate Yearly Progress**

	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
All Components	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
English Language Arts	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Mathematics	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
API	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Graduation Rates	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PI Status	Not T1	Not in PI	Not T1	Year 1	Not T1	Year 2

**California Standards Test (CST)**

The school makes every effort to have all Aragon students participate in CST testing. Each year, 99-100% of students take part.

**Comparison of CST Scores for all Students – English Language Arts**

	2009			2010			2011			2009			2010			2011		
	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011
Grade 9	49%	49%	53%	26%	28%	23%	16%	14%	13%	7%	5%	6%	3%	5%	5%	75%	77%	76%
Grade 10	36%	46%	46%	31%	29%	25%	23%	17%	20%	6%	5%	6%	5%	4%	3%	67%	75%	71%
Grade 11	40%	41%	43%	30%	26%	20%	11%	22%	20%	8%	8%	5%	11%	4%	4%	70%	67%	63%

**Comparison of CST Scores for all Students – Algebra I**

	2009			2010			2011			2009			2010			2011		
	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011
Grade 9	1%	3%	1%	22%	24%	23%	31%	29%	30%	31%	27%	30%	15%	17%	16%	23%	27%	24%
Grade 10	0%	0%	0%	12%	0%	2%	18%	17%	24%	44%	45%	52%	26%	38%	22%	0%	0%	2%
Grade 11	0%	NA	0%	0%	NA	18%	37%	NA	27%	37%	NA	36%	26%	NA	18%	0%	NA	18%

**Comparison of CST Scores for all Students – Other Math Courses**

	2009			2010			2011			2009			2010			2011		
	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011
Integrated Math I*	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	5%	21%	21%	42%	71%	63%	47%	8%	13%	5%	0%	2%	5%
Geometry*	11%	11%	9%	32%	25%	34%	27%	35%	31%	22%	22%	20%	8%	7%	5%	43%	36%	43%
Integrated Math II*	0%	4%	4%	13%	35%	27%	65%	41%	57%	17%	18%	9%	4%	1%	4%	13%	39%	31%
Algebra II*	8%	17%	20%	25%	28%	26%	37%	34%	33%	20%	17%	16%	10%	5%	5%	33%	45%	46%
Summative Math*	29%	28%	22%	33%	35%	42%	22%	24%	20%	16%	12%	16%	1%	1%	1%	62%	63%	64%

\* Data for end of course

### Comparison of CST Scores for all Students – Social Studies

	2009			2010			2011			2009			2010			2011		
	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011
World History*	33%	43%	39%	28%	25%	23%	20%	19%	19%	10%	5%	8%	10%	9%	11%	61%	68%	62%
US History- grade 11	44%	41%	41%	28%	34%	34%	16%	13%	16%	4%	8%	4%	9%	5%	4%	72%	75%	75%

\* Data for end of course

### Comparison of CST Scores for all Students – Science

	2009			2010			2011			2009			2010			2011		
	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011
Life Science- grade 10	33%	42%	41%	33%	24%	25%	20%	22%	22%	8%	5%	4%	6%	7%	8%	66%	64%	66%
Biology*	42%	37%	36%	27%	29%	28%	25%	25%	25%	5%	5%	6%	2%	4%	5%	69%	66%	64%
Chemistry*	11%	17%	18%	32%	34%	33%	42%	38%	40%	9%	6%	7%	5%	5%	3%	43%	51%	51%
Earth Science*	18%	18%	6%	47%	39%	33%	27%	25%	37%	5%	8%	16%	3%	9%	9%	65%	57%	39%
Physics*	63%	16%	30%	26%	40%	43%	11%	35%	22%	0%	5%	2%	0%	4%	2%	89%	56%	73%
Integrated Science I*	0%	0%	9%	7%	9%	35%	41%	47%	37%	22%	12%	11%	31%	32%	9%	7%	9%	44%

\* Data for end of course

### Disaggregated CST Scores – Asian Students

	2009		2010		2011	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
English Language Arts- grade 9	89%	111	87%	92	88%	86
English Language Arts- grade 10	80%	118	86%	114	80%	82
English Language Arts- grade 11	86%	110	71%	111	77%	111
Algebra I- End of Course	34%	29	39%	31	42%	24
Geometry- End of Course	58%	84	59%	49	57%	47
Algebra II- End of Course	51%	102	66%	106	72%	64
Summative Math- End of Course	67%	120	77%	115	74%	129
World History- End of Course	78%	121	80%	115	77%	82
U.S. History- grade 11	87%	110	86%	110	87%	111
Life Science- grade 10	81%	118	80%	114	77%	82
Biology- End of Course	83%	157	83%	151	81%	119
Chemistry- End of Course	53%	85	61%	88	68%	73
Physics- End of Course	85%	20	63%	41	91%	43
Integrated Science I- End of Course	16%	19	N/A	2	67%	24

### Disaggregated CST Scores – Hispanic/Latino Students

	2009		2010		2011	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
English Language Arts- grade 9	53%	108	60%	96	49%	90
English Language Arts- grade 10	48%	82	57%	103	49%	101
English Language Arts- grade 11	38%	68	54%	68	61%	98
Algebra I- End of Course	13%	125	11%	121	7%	104
Geometry- End of Course	16%	61	24%	55	27%	74
Algebra II- End of Course	5%	38	31%	32	18%	33
Summative Math- End of Course	23%	13	41%	17	41%	27
World History- End of Course	36%	90	50%	105	33%	115

U.S. History- grade 11	40%	68	51%	68	59%	102
Life Science- grade 10	38%	82	46%	103	41%	106
Biology- End of Course	44%	68	51%	91	38%	133
Chemistry- End of Course	26%	31	32%	41	31%	35
Physics- End of Course	N/A	4	33%	12	47%	19
Integrated Science I- End of Course	6%	77	8%	49	14%	29

### Disaggregated CST Scores – White Students

English Language Arts- grade 9	79%	170	85%	153	89%	110
English Language Arts- grade 10	71%	161	80%	165	83%	118
English Language Arts- grade 11	77%	121	72%	143	74%	132
Algebra I- End of Course	22%	106	28%	94	28%	64
Geometry- End of Course	44%	146	35%	116	48%	98
Algebra II- End of Course	27%	126	36%	124	43%	81
Summative Math- End of Course	61%	56	53%	85	55%	83
World History- End of Course	68%	164	73%	165	77%	123
U.S. History- grade 11	81%	119	80%	141	80%	132
Life Science- grade 10	75%	158	73%	163	79%	119
Biology- End of Course	69%	163	70%	189	74%	140
Chemistry- End of Course	44%	108	52%	129	51%	93
Physics- End of Course	92%	25	57%	37	70%	44
Integrated Science I- End of Course	6%	54	18%	17	57%	30

### Disaggregated CST Scores – Economically Disadvantaged Students

English Language Arts- grade 9	42%	59	55%	71	40%	55
English Language Arts- grade 10	25%	55	50%	54	40%	55
English Language Arts- grade 11	15%	39	38%	55	49%	41
Algebra I- End of Course	13%	85	12%	82	5%	63
Geometry- End of Course	6%	36	20%	35	24%	45
Algebra II- End of Course	6%	16	39%	19	10%	20
Summative Math- End of Course	N/A	4	N/A	9	N/A	10
World History- End of Course	17%	61	45%	57	28%	64
U.S. History- grade 11	26%	39	44%	55	56%	43
Life Science- grade 10	25%	55	41%	54	22%	60
Biology- End of Course	29%	34	33%	64	34%	62
Chemistry- End of Course	9%	11	17%	23	8%	25
Physics- End of Course	N/A	1	N/A	9	N/A	4
Integrated Science I- End of Course	5%	59	5%	38	6%	18

### Disaggregated CST Scores – English Learners Students

English Language Arts- grade 9	16%	37	24%	34	7%	27
English Language Arts- grade 10	21%	39	22%	32	12%	26
English Language Arts- grade 11	10%	30	29%	21	0%	13
Algebra I- End of Course	7%	46	9%	47	3%	39
Geometry- End of Course	19%	16	N/A	10	25%	12
Algebra II- End of Course	26%	19	36%	12	N/A	4
Summative Math- End of Course	N/A	9	N/A	7	N/A	4

World History- End of Course	31%	43	23%	31	9%	35
U.S. History- grade 11	27%	30	48%	21	20%	15
Life Science- grade 10	28%	39	19%	32	11%	28
Biology- End of Course	21%	28	5%	19	29%	21
Chemistry- End of Course	N/A	10	38%	13	N/A	7
Physics- End of Course	N/A	1	N/A	1	N/A	N/A
Integrated Science I- End of Course	N/A	35	4%	25	0%	11

**B. How many students meet or exceed state standards? Are there subgroups of students that are under-achieving?**

**California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)**

For the last three years, all Aragon students have been able to satisfy the CAHSEE requirement for graduation, whether by passing the exam or by special education waiver. The exam pass rate for the class of 2009 was 99.7% with 1 student receiving a waiver; for 2010 it was 99.2% with 3 students receiving waivers, and in the class of 2011, 99.5% passed with 2 students receiving a waiver.

**CAHSEE – English Language Arts**

Percent Passing on First Attempt						
English Language Arts						
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Percent passing 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	93%	89%	90%	94%	95%	92%

**CAHSEE – Mathematics**

Percent Passing on First Attempt						
Mathematics						
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Percent passing 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	95%	90%	88%	93%	92%	93%

**Disaggregated CAHSEE Scores for English Language Arts**

Aragon	94%	95%	92%
Statewide	79%	81%	82%
Male	91%	93%	88%
Female	97%	97%	96%
African American/Black	91%	N/A	N/A
American Indian/Alaskan Native	N/A	N/A	N/A
Asian	96%	97%	96%
Filipino	100%	100%	93%
Hispanic/Latino	90%	87%	85%
Pacific Islander	73%	100%	85%
White not Hispanic	96%	98%	97%
Reclassified Fluent English Proficient	99%	95%	95%
English Learner	73%	61%	59%
Special Education	64%	77%	52%
Economically Disadvantaged	82%	82%	83%

### Disaggregated CAHSEE Scores for Mathematics

Aragon	93%	92%	93%
Statewide	80%	81%	83%
Male	92%	91%	90%
Female	94%	94%	95%
African American/Black	100%	N/A	N/A
American Indian/Alaskan Native	NA	N/A	N/A
Asian	99%	98%	99%
Filipino	100%	100%	100%
Hispanic/Latino	80%	82%	83%
Pacific Islander	73%	75%	83%
White not Hispanic	96%	95%	98%
Reclassified Fluent English Proficient	96%	95%	94%
English Learner	64%	50%	66%
Special Education	65%	48%	56%
Economically Disadvantaged	80%	76%	82%

## California English Language Development Test (CELDT) Results

### CELDT Test - Percentage of English Learners by Proficiency Level

Proficiency Level	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Total number Tested	110	126	135	141	119	91
Advanced	24%	8%	10%	21%	16%	14%
Early Advanced	56%	29%	33%	47%	54%	43%
Intermediate	19%	48%	46%	23%	22%	25%
Early Intermediate	1%	11%	10%	6%	7%	17%
Beginning	0%	4%	1%	3%	1%	1%

### Local Assessments

#### Reading Level Assessment – Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test

9 <sup>th</sup> Graders	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	Fall 2010	Spring 2011
	Form K	Form L	Form K	Form L
Number Tested	369	362	344	330
Advanced	27%	35%	29%	39%
Proficient	28%	27%	33%	26%
Basic	30%	27%	22%	25%
Below Basic	14%	11%	14%	9%
Far Below Basic	2%	1%	2%	2%

### District Common Assessments

Teachers from select departments across the San Mateo Union High School District created common assessments that evaluated students' competency on the California State Standards. The first of these tests were administered in the fall semester of 2003. Since that time, many more courses have created and administered common assessments, and the format and content

of these tests has evolved over time. For this reason, it will take a few years before all common assessment results can be compared directly over time. Over the last two years, as the district has entered the Program Improvement process, the common assessment program has expanded even more, and some departments have expanded the testing to occur several times per semester. Because of these shifts, the amount of data available increases in later semesters.

### District Common Assessments – English

#### Fall 2008-Fall 2011

English 1 F 08	432	3%	N/A	11%	N/A	21%	N/A	43%	N/A	22%	N/A
English 1 F 09	362	1%	N/A	11%	N/A	25%	N/A	36%	N/A	27%	N/A
English 1 F 10	328/330	0%	3%	2%	12%	16%	27%	38%	42%	44%	16%
English 1 F 11	307/322	1%	1%	7%	8%	35%	29%	44%	44%	13%	18%
English 2 S 11	327/326	1%	1%	13%	7%	35%	20%	38%	35%	12%	37%
English 3 F 09	436/409*	3%	-	11%	3%	32%	37%	39%	39%	16%	20%
English 3 F 10	342/340	1%	1%	12%	7%	41%	29%	37%	37%	8%	26%
English 3 F 11	342/341	1%	1%	4%	3%	18%	26%	30%	44%	46%	26%
English 4 S 11	346/345	0%	0%	11%	10%	29%	31%	37%	40%	23%	18%
English 5 F 09	312	5%	N/A	8%	N/A	29%	N/A	34%	N/A	24%	N/A
English 5 F 10	351	1%	N/A	5%	N/A	30%	N/A	34%	N/A	30%	N/A
English 5 F 11	331	0%	N/A	5%	N/A	17%	N/A	37%	N/A	40%	N/A

Note: Pt. 1 indicates the first part of the semester, and Pt. 2 indicates the second part.

Note: N/A indicates that a common assessment was not given at that time.

\*This test was in essay format

### District Common Assessments – Mathematics

**Fall 2008-Fall 2011**

Algebra 1 F 08	245	2%	N/A	13%	N/A	47%	N/A	27%	N/A	12%	N/A
Algebra 1 F 09	239	2%	N/A	19%	N/A	36%	N/A	30%	N/A	13%	N/A
Algebra 1 F 10	192/193	3%	2%	23%	31%	27%	37%	21%	25%	27%	6%
Algebra 2 S 11	173/173	2%	6%	14%	46%	26%	32%	31%	15%	26%	2%
Geometry F 08	337	0%	N/A	5%	N/A	22%	N/A	33%	N/A	40%	N/A
Geometry F 09	262	0%	N/A	7%	N/A	25%	N/A	33%	N/A	34%	N/A
Geometry F 10	259	0%	N/A	7%	N/A	24%	N/A	30%	N/A	39%	N/A
Geometry F 11	246	0%	N/A	6%	N/A	22%	N/A	33%	N/A	39%	N/A
Algebra 3 F 08	343	2%	N/A	7%	N/A	23%	N/A	39%	N/A	29%	N/A
Algebra 3 F 09	270	0%	N/A	5%	N/A	21%	N/A	44%	N/A	30%	N/A
Algebra 3 F 10	285	0%	N/A	9%	N/A	30%	N/A	38%	N/A	23%	N/A
Algebra 3 F 11	262	0%	N/A	5%	N/A	27%	N/A	35%	N/A	31%	N/A
In Math 1 F 09	54	7%	N/A	56%	N/A	31%	N/A	6%	N/A	0%	N/A
In Math 1 F 10	53	2%	N/A	38%	N/A	57%	N/A	4%	N/A	0%	N/A
In Math 1 F 11	63	5%	N/A	67%	N/A	24%	N/A	5%	N/A	0%	N/A
In Math 3 F 09	64	6%	N/A	45%	N/A	30%	N/A	14%	N/A	5%	N/A
In Math 3 F 10	75	3%	N/A	53%	N/A	39%	N/A	5%	N/A	0%	N/A

Note: N/A indicates that a common assessment was not given at that time.

**District Common Assessments – History**

**Fall 2008-Fall 2011**

MWH 1 2008-09	225/235	0%	8%	18%	8%	45%	26%	49%	24%	39%	35%
MWH 1 2009-10	235/185	8%	5%	8%	9%	26%	26%	24%	24%	35%	36%
MWH 1 2010-11	170/163	2%	1%	15%	18%	18%	25%	28%	24%	37%	33%
MWH 1 2011	175	5%	-	13%	-	33%	-	28%	-	21%	-
US History 2008	328	2%	N/A	10%	N/A	24%	N/A	35%	N/A	28%	N/A
US History 2009	395	3%	N/A	10%	N/A	27%	N/A	35%	N/A	25%	N/A
US History 2010	397	0%	N/A	6%	N/A	32%	N/A	37%	N/A	26%	N/A
US History 2011	341	0%	N/A	12%	N/A	30%	N/A	32%	N/A	26%	N/A

Note: N/A indicates that a common assessment was not given at that time.

**District Common Assessments – Health and Food Safety****Fall 2008-Fall 2011**

Health 2008-09	255/240	6%	3%	8%	2%	6%	4%	26%	16%	54%	76%
Health 2009-10	194/206	1%	3%	3%	1%	4%	5%	16%	17%	77%	73%
Health 2010-11	177/181	0%	1%	2%	2%	7%	3%	21%	12%	70%	82%
Health F 2011	210	0%	-	1%	-	9%	-	24%	-	66%	-
Food Safety S 11	118	1%	N/A	8%	N/A	41%	N/A	47%	N/A	4%	N/A

Note: N/A indicates that a common assessment was not given at that time.

**District Common Assessments – World Languages**

**Fall 2008-Fall 2011**

Japanese 2 S 09	52/52*	0%	13%	17%	33%	19%	31%	33%	19%	31%	4%
Japanese 2 S 10	40/39*	8%	5%	3%	10%	25%	56%	53%	21%	13%	8%
Japanese 2 S 11	46/46*	2%	9%	26%	37%	22%	26%	26%	15%	24%	13%
Spanish 2 S 09	237/231*	1%	1%	3%	3%	10%	19%	29%	34%	57%	43%
Spanish 2 S 10	183/176*	2%	2%	4%	5%	12%	24%	23%	30%	58%	39%
Spanish 2 S 11	147/142*	0%	1%	1%	0%	11%	14%	22%	26%	65%	58%
Mandarin 2 S 09	42/41*	2%	2%	0%	5%	10%	5%	12%	10%	76%	78%
Mandarin 2 S 10	45/45*	0%	4%	0%	8%	4%	4%	24%	8%	71%	73%
Mandarin 2 S 11	25/25*	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	8%	20%	16%	76%	76%

Note: Pt. 1 indicates the first part of the semester, and Pt. 2 indicates the second part.

Note: N/A indicates that a common assessment was not given at that time.

\*This test was in essay format

**District Common Assessments – Music Terminology****Fall 2008-Fall 2011**

Music S 09	346	3%	16%	32%	29%	20%
Music S 10	334	3%	20%	37%	33%	6%
Music S 10	322	2%	16%	32%	33%	17%

**District Common Assessments – Science**

**Fall 2008-Fall 2011**

Integ. Sci S 09	154	13%	48%	33%	6%	0%
Integ. Sci S 10	87	9%	29%	55%	7%	0%
Integ. Sci F 10	52	2%	35%	40%	19%	4%
Integ. Sci F 11	86	8%	59%	27%	6%	0%
Biology S 09	197	2%	23%	33%	29%	13%
Biology F 09	383	6%	43%	32%	14%	5%
Biology F 10	342	2%	42%	37%	13%	6%
Biology F 11	301	5%	39%	36%	15%	6%
Chemistry F 08	260	0%	18%	47%	26%	9%
Chemistry F 09	304	1%	13%	40%	30%	16%
Chemistry F 10	240	0%	21%	43%	23%	12%
Chemistry F 11	157	0%	24%	45%	25%	6%
Physics F 08	129	2%	1%	14%	35%	49%
Physics F 09	133	5%	5%	30%	40%	21%
Physics F 10	216	0%	6%	44%	37%	13%
Physics F 11	150	0%	5%	32%	49%	15%

***C. Aragon High School students' readiness for college and college level work.***

### College Test Results

As with the Advanced Placement tests reported on later in this section, students' scores are rising while a higher percentage of students are taking the exam. The percentage of SAT takers has climbed to 65% over the last 5 years, and the percentage of students scoring above 1500 has climbed as well. To continue this trend, and to encourage more students to consider taking the SAT, Aragon has worked with its PTSO to provide PSAT testing for all 10<sup>th</sup> grade students.

**Scholastic Aptitude Test Scores**

SAT Scores						
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Number of 12 <sup>th</sup> Graders Tested	222	193	215	223	219	N/A*
Percent of 12 <sup>th</sup> Graders Tested	61%	59%	59%	61%	65%	N/A*
Critical Reading Average (verbal)	559	562	551	557	555	558
Math Average	592	580	585	582	593	593
Writing Average	563	558	551	550	569	570
Percent Scoring Above 1500	47%	46%	71%	77%	77%	N/A*

\*Because this data was only recently available, the scope of the data was more limited.

**ACT Test Scores**

ACT Scores						
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Number Tested	34	38	85	94	81	N/A*
Percent Tested	9%	12%	23%	26%	24%	N/A*
Average Score	25	24.84	24.14	24.16	25.84	24.2
Number Scoring 21 or higher	29	33	69	72	71	N/A*
Percent Scoring 21 or higher	85%	87%	81%	77%	88%	N/A*

\*Because this data was only recently available, the scope of the data was more limited.

**AP Exam Results**

Aragon's Honors/Advanced Placement program was the first one established in the district, and the program has grown in size and success ever since.

- In 2005-06, Aragon offered 12 AP courses; these offerings have grown to the current number of 17.
- In keeping with Aragon's performance since the AP program began, data from the last three years shows that even as the number of students and the number of tests have grown significantly, the percentage of students passing the exam continues to rise. For good reason, Aragon is very proud of its AP program and the students who participate in it.

## AP Test Results

Biology	67	39	58%	65	49	75%	66	54	82%	57	57	80%
Calculus AB	52	42	81%	62	52	84%	61	50	82%	63	63	73%
Calculus BC	51	50	98%	34	34	100%	59	57	97%	55	55	94%
Chemistry	28	11	39%	N/A	N/A	N/A	33	20	61%	32	32	65%
Chinese	2	2	100%	6	6	100%	4	4	100%	26	25	100%
English Lang	118	85	72%	119	91	76%	110	93	85%	105	105	92%
English Lit	93	82	88%	103	82	80%	101	82	81%	91	86	90%
Environ Science	48	25	52%	122	84	69%	37	30	81%	55	53	88%
French	3	2	67%	12	7	58%	10	7	70%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Government	66	51	77%	75	59	79%	79	51	65%	77	75	85%
Japanese	11	11	100%	8	8	100%	9	9	100%	7	7	100%
Music Theory	20	13	65%	22	11	50%	N/A	N/A	N/A	23	17	100%
Physics	N/A	N/A	N/A	13	12	86%	N/A	N/A	N/A	23	23	83%
Psychology	60	36	60%	30	16	53%	66	39	59%	54	40	90%
Spanish	37	30	81%	49	39	80%	51	46	90%	39	39	97%

Statistics	21	18	86%	47	34	72%	55	38	69%	60	49	75%
Studio Art: 2D	5	5	100%	15	15	100%	29	26	90%	20	20	100%
US History	128	85	66%	128	96	75%	154	106	69%	184	184	79%
# of Test Takers	369			405			431			416		
# of Tests	799			925			920			946		
Total % with 3+	72%			76%			77%			88%		

### Number of Students Taking Algebra by Grade Level

In the fall of 2004, Aragon began the implementation of the Academic Core, which requires all students to complete Algebra I and Geometry by the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade, creating a dramatic increase- from 71% to 91% in 1 year- of 9<sup>th</sup> graders taking Algebra I or a more advanced math course. Seven years later, it is interesting to note the large increase in students taking mathematics at and above the algebra level as well as an increase in the percentage of students who eventually take the more advanced level courses, such as calculus.

### Percent of Students Enrolled in Algebra or Higher

	2004		2011		2004		2011		2004		2011		2004		2011	
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	63%	44%	21%	35%	7%	15%	<1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	91%	96%		
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	26%	7%	39%	30%	22%	31%	7%	15%	<1%	2%	3%	14%	97%	99%		
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2%	1%	16%	19%	31%	18%	27%	18%	5%	16%	13%	27%	94%	99%		
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	<1%	<1%	4%	3%	16%	15%	11%	4%	14%	23%	35%	41%	80%	86%		

### Report Card Analysis

### Percent of D and F Grades

	Spring 2009-2010	Fall 2010-2011	Spring 2010-2011
World Language Ds	5.34%	4.25%	6.54%
World Language Fs	3.93%	2.42%	2.87%
English/ELD Ds	11.09%	10.05%	12.01%
English/ELD Fs	4.45%	3.03%	3.22%
Math Ds	12.54%	10.22%	12.66%
Math Fs	8.19%	3.67%	5.60%
Social Studies Ds	9.52%	8.11%	8.85%
Social Studies Fs	3.78%	2.27%	3.48%
Physical Education Ds	4.26%	3.76%	4.38%
Physical Education Fs	6.33%	2.50%	3.96%
Science Ds	11.56%	7.47%	7.16%
Science Fs	3.65%	1.64%	2.44%
Visual and Performing Arts Ds	2.40%	2.63%	2.63%
Visual and Performing Arts Fs	2.51%	0.92%	1.26%

## Completion Rates and Post Secondary Plans

### Graduation Rate

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Graduation Rate	96%	98.1%	96.5%	97%	97%	97%

Graduation rate formula is based on the NCES definition: number of graduates (year 4) divided by number of graduates (year 4) + dropouts from grades 9-12.

### Single Year Dropouts by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
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African- American	0	1	0	0	0	0
Am. Ind./Alask. Nat.	0	0	0	1	1	0
Asian	2	0	0	1	1	1
Filipino	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	3	4	5	4	2	5
Pacific Islander	0	0	2	0	2	0
White not Hispanic	3	4	2	4	4	3
Multiple/No Response	0	1	0	1	0	1
Totals	8	10	9	11	10	10

### Students Meeting UC/CSU Requirements – 2009

Am. Indian/Alaskan Native	0	N/A	1	0%	1	0%
Asian	48	64.6%	41	85.4%	89	74.2%
Pacific Islander	8	25%	12	25%	20	25%
Filipino	3	66.7%	6	66.7%	9	66.7%
Hispanic or Latino	24	37.5%	35	42.9%	59	40.7%
African American	6	50%	7	42.9%	13	46.2%
White (not Hispanic)	61	67.2%	91	71.4%	152	69.7%
None Reported	5	60%	6	83.3%	11	72.7%
Total	155	59%	199	65%	354	62%

### Students Meeting UC/CSU Requirements – 2010

Am. Indian/Alaskan Native	2	50%	2	50%	4	50%
Asian	53	76%	56	86%	109	81%
Pacific Islander	8	38%	7	57%	15	47%
Filipino	9	33%	10	50%	19	42%
Hispanic or Latino	23	26%	28	36%	51	31%
African American	4	100%	1	0%	5	80%
White (not Hispanic)	53	49%	58	67%	111	59%
None Reported	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
Total	152	55%	162	66%	314	61%

### Students Meeting UC/CSU Requirements – 2011

Am. Indian/Alaskan Native	1	0%	0	N/A	1	0%
Asian	62	73%	55	89%	117	80%
Pacific Islander	11	9%	11	46%	22	27%
Filipino	12	50%	10	90%	22	68%
Hispanic or Latino	32	31%	44	52%	76	43%
African American	5	80%	4	50%	9	67%
White (not Hispanic)	58	52%	72	75%	130	65%

Total	181	53%	196	72%	377	63%
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### Post-Secondary Education Plans

U.C.	20%	22%	17%
C.S.U.	15%	13%	16%
Private/Out of State College	16%	21%	21%
Community College	45%	36%	42%
Specialty/Trade School	2%	3%	1.5%
Out of Country College/University	.6%	1%	.3%
Military	.5%	2%	.5%
Work	.5%	1%	.5%
Undecided/Unknown	1%	1%	.5%
Four Year Institution Total	51%	57%	54%
Two Year institution Total	47%	39%	43%
Total Graduates	348	306	374

### Significant findings of the profile

The school has identified several strengths of the school's program. A highly qualified and experienced faculty, together with a solid administration and support staff, provide Aragon's students with a challenging and well-balanced curriculum, with plenty of opportunities for students to not only enroll in but succeed in high level courses, useful electives, and gain a solid foundation for when they move on to their future academic endeavors. Students perform well on standardized tests, whether developed and mandated by the state (CAHSEE and CST), to test college readiness (SAT and AP tests), or with the common assessments developed by teachers in the district. The AVID program has grown over the past six years to more than double the numbers. Graduation rates remain at a very high level, as does the percentage of students

meeting UC/CSU requirements.

With all the successes the school has identified, though, there are some areas of concern. The school has noticed recently a significant drop in CAHSEE scores among first time taking-Language Learners and Special Education students. Some subgroups showed drops in API numbers recently. There is a disparity among genders in numbers of students meeting UC/CSU requirements (72% of girls, 53% of boys) in the senior class. The school has also identified a need to better articulate with feeder schools, especially concerning their English Language Learners as they enter Aragon.

As a result of analysis of the school/community profile, Aragon stakeholders identified two major Critical Academic Needs (CANS):

1. Support all Aragon students to achieve academic proficiency
  - Raise the percentage achieving a C or better in all courses.
  - Raise the percentage achieving “proficient” or better on all CSTs and the CAHSEE
2. Enrich Aragon’s program to better empower and engage students.

These two goals are the focus for the school’s action plan, which will be discussed in another part of this report.

## **Chapter 2: Progress Report**

Aragon’s Action Plans from the 2005-06 WASC Self-Study addressed four distinct identified areas of need. Within each action plan, specific steps were identified to work on, aligned with the school’s ESLRs. The following briefly reflects on Aragon’s work over the past six years.

### **Action Plan I: Empower all students to be self-motivated and ethical learners so that they develop a strong academic identity.**

A number of changes have occurred in this area as the school attempts to address these important issues. Staff development time and the development and use of technology have played a significant role in meeting the steps concerning this action plan. Using data already available and cross referencing with other data from outside the district showed a relationship between discipline, attendance, and low GPAs, with feeder schools being a strong predictor of success at Aragon. Working together, and empowering the staff itself to address the concerns, Personalized Learning Communities were developed across the curriculum to share best practices, organized “Walk Through” observations, and developed a strong peer coaching program. A new Professional Development Coordinator position was created. This teacher, with the guidance of the staff, ascertained the need for a long-term staff development plan to provide a more in-depth

and consistent manner in which professional development time was used and structured. Using the talent already on campus, the staff has already shown willingness to continue this approach of sharing ideas, and observing each other in the classroom.

Discipline issues were a focus of the school over the past six years as the staff tried out and tweaked several new ideas. Five key areas (disrespectful language, vandalism, cheating, use of electronics, and tardiness) were identified early on as the “Big 5” to address, and the school’s “Behaviors for Learning” (BFL) directly focused on these areas. Revisions included a change to Saturday school instead of detentions, more flexibility for the individual teachers, and a shift to positive reinforcement to counter the negative actions of the students. This is an ongoing issue among the staff, and after stepping back to revisit the original goals of the BFL, remains an important area to follow-up in this report.

**Action Plan II: Evaluate Aragon’s program for support classes and under-performing students and find ways to improve areas of weakness and expand areas of strength.**

In 2006, the district implemented a 7-period day across the district, primarily to provide support classes for students who were struggling. Several courses were developed and brought in to the school, evaluated and tweaked, and many still remain within the school. Some of these include College Skills Review which provides assistance for 10<sup>th</sup> graders across the curriculum, focusing on skills necessary to succeed in high school and beyond, and Guided Studies, which not only addresses a student’s academic needs, but his/her own personal emotional and psychological needs as well. A new course developed this year, *Exploring the Social World*, was created to meet the needs of the school’s students who are on the Asperger’s or autism spectrum, helping them to be able to function well in school and beyond. AVID, a program brought to Aragon several years ago, boasts high numbers of students who are preparing themselves for college. As a result of the school’s commitment to improving their support system, student performance has improved.

**Action Plan III: Improve student knowledge of, access to, and utilization of available resources that support student learning.**

Student access to technology begins with the teachers and staff learning and using the various programs that have been adopted over the years. Schoolloop has become the driving force for communication between teachers, parents, and students, as grades, assignments, and calendars are regularly posted by most teachers. The staff has used the talent on campus to master the programs that are most commonly accessed; staff development days and summer professional development opportunities have been used to teach key staff and faculty members, who in turn, teach other members. The Technology Coordinator position has evolved from performing maintenance duties to supporting teachers in their use of technology in the classroom. As

a result of the focus on technology training, sharing of best practices, and having a position dedicated to helping teachers in their technological development, new lessons have spread all over the campus, and is now an integral part of the support class curriculum. LCD projectors are mounted in each classroom, SMART boards and document cameras are used in most classrooms, and other technology equipment has been purchased with the use of Fair Share funds, directed by the PTSO.

#### **Action Plan IV: Communicate and collaborate around the Single Plan for Student Achievement and the ESLRs to guide Aragon's direction.**

Each year, the faculty and staff review the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) and revise elements of the plan. They study the new test performance data for CAHSEE and CSTs, looking for positive and negative trends. The School Site Council also annually reviews the SPSA and makes recommendations. Throughout the year, staff and faculty regularly review data regarding student achievement and give input that is reflected in the SPSA, revise it, and post it on the school's website. Likewise the school's mission and vision statements are reviewed annually at the beginning of the school year. ELSRs were updated in 2006, and again in 2010. They are posted on the website and in every classroom. They are aligned with the school's mission and vision statements, state standards, and district goals.

### **Chapter 3: Self-study process**

#### **The involvement and collaboration of all staff and other stakeholders to support student achievement**

All staff, classified and certificated, have worked together to meet the needs of Aragon's students. Parents and other community members have been generous in money and time provided to help the students and teachers, funding some programs, buying equipment, and supporting the learning process. The school and district administration have been very supportive in allowing teachers to lead the school improvement process, and professional development. Students are involved in helping to make their school a better place through the various clubs and other activities in which they rightfully take pride. Through the self-study, Aragon stakeholders have identified areas of strengths and concerns; the latter provides the basis for their action plans. The faculty has been involved in Professional Learning Communities for several years, and school improvement seems to be embedded in the culture of the school.

**The clarification and measurement of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do through expected schoolwide learning results and academic standards.**

A survey of students in 2011 shows the percentage of students who “see how the ESLRS connect to daily activities at Aragon” indicates less of a focus on the ESLRs (from 64% answering that they agree with the statement in 2006 to 51% in the most recent survey). At the same time, the number of students agreeing with the statement “my classes help me attain California State Standards” increased from 74% to 85%, which indicates a shift in focus from the ESLRs to a determined effort to meet the state standards. That the students themselves have recognized this speaks highly of the expectations of the faculty. It appears that the ESLRs, while not always explicitly emphasized, have found their way into the everyday teaching strategies of the teachers.

**The gathering of data about students and student achievement.**

Aragon’s Technology and Data and Assessment Coordinator (one person has both these duties at Aragon) has the responsibility to learn the existing data collection system (Data Director), and then teach his fellow instructors in the use of the system. So far, a limited number of teachers use it regularly to gather data about their students, but the school sees the need to expand this. Part of the school’s Action Plans involves training more teachers in how to glean relevant information from this data collection system, and use that information in their lesson and unit planning. The school and district have gathered specific data based on common assessments within departments, and careful study of the standardized tests taken by nearly all students has shown a recent significant decline in the scores of one particular subgroup (long-term English Learners), which has driven the school’s conversations and efforts in improving those scores.

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

The self-study provided a timely opportunity for Aragon’s staff to assess its entire program. Professional learning communities, long a part of the school’s culture, allow teachers to reflect on and share the best practices displayed in the various classrooms. State standards for the different subject areas are the driving force behind instruction. Faculty members collaborate regularly on lessons and unit plans, assessment strategies and results, and larger concerns, such as a move to a new schedule possibly in the future to allow for more collaboration time.

**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.**

Using the findings of the focus groups, the school identified specific areas of growth, which became the basis of the action plans. These action plans are consistent with both the district's goals and the school's Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA). The plans are designed to ensure regular follow-up by the school with regards to accountability, and include specific goals and timelines for accomplishment. Monitoring mechanisms and extensions are built in to the action plans.

## **Chapter IV: Quality of the school's program**

### **CATEGORY A. ORGANIZATION: VISION AND PURPOSE, GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND STAFF, AND RESOURCES**

**A1. 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 at high levels?**

To what extent is the school's purpose supported by the governing board and the central administration and further by expected schoolwide learning results and the academic standards?

Aragon High School has clear vision and mission statements that communicate their belief that all students can succeed. These statements are reviewed by the staff every fall. The school uses their statements to adjust and change curricular offerings to support the students' needs.

The school's principal presents the Vision and Mission statement as well as the ESLRs every year to The San Mateo Union High School District (SMUHSD) board and ensures that they are aligned with the District's goals and objectives. There is further proof of this in Aragon's Single Plan for Student Achievement.

**A2. To what extent does the governing board have policies and bylaws that are aligned with the school's purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results and academic standards based on data-driven instructional decisions for the school?**

**To what extent does the governing board have delegate implementation of these policies to the professional staff?**

**To what extent does the governing board monitor regularly results and approve the single schoolwide action plan and its relationship to the Local Educational Agency (LEA) plan?**

SMUHSD's governing board has adopted policies to support Aragon High's mission and vision. Board members work closely with District Office administration to ensure that the vision of the school is carried out to its fullest potential. The Governing Board recently adopted (fall 2011)

10 Goals for student learning in the SMUHSD. These goals directly relate to achievement of the expected school wide learning results and academic standards. The school's Single Plan for Student Achievement aligns to these District goals. The District also funded a 7<sup>th</sup> period and further professional development to ensure the school meets the goals. Also, the board of trustees has enacted new policies focusing on student achievement including open-enrollment in Advanced Placement and Advanced Standing courses and aligning graduation requirements to the UC/CSU standards.

**A3. To what extent based on student achievement data, does the school leadership and staff make decisions and initiate activities that focus on all students achieving the expected schoolwide learning results and academic standards?**

**To what extent does the school leadership and staff annually monitor and refine the single schoolwide action plan based on analysis of data to ensure alignment with student needs?**

The School reviews student achievement data in a variety of formats. They try to hit all shareholders by presenting at School Site Council, faculty meetings, department meetings, parent group meetings and professional development days. All stakeholders have an opportunity to evaluate, discuss and respond to the student data findings. From these reviews new support classes have been introduced as well as new professional development initiatives.

The Staff and administration annually reviews the Single Plan for Student Achievement and assesses areas of change and need. It is aligned to District goals. The SPSA is aligned with district and school goals and action plans and drives many of the initiatives taken at the school site.

**A4. To what extent does a qualified staff facilitates achievement of the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results through a system of preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development?**

The staff at Aragon High has on average 13 years of teaching experience and 98.5% hold full credentials. 55% of the staff holds higher education degrees. Aragon has strong relationship with the Stanford Teacher Education Program. Aragon's reputation attracts high quality candidates and new teachers are put into BTSA for mentoring and support for their first two years of teaching. The focus of professional development at Aragon High School is improving student achievement for academic standards.

**A5. To what extent are leadership and staff are involved in ongoing professional development that focuses on identified student learning needs?**

The school has a Professional Development Committee that meets with the administration and takes input for the School Site Council and Stagey Committee to direct the formal professional development of the staff. They focus on best practices and standardized testing results to drive their decision and develop plans. The school uses its professional learning communities to assess and change the culture of professional development moving to long term goals and days instead of stand-alone days. The Professional Learning Communities are made up of teachers who want to work together and meet often, once to twice a month.

The school has created an excellent peer observation and peer coaching program. The teachers are able to observe each other a couple of days a month and collaborate about instruction.

The school has a data and technology coordinator who ensures that teachers have access to student data and understand how to use their data warehouse system Data Director. The objective is that all teachers will use Data Director to inform instruction.

**A6. To what extent are the human, material, physical, and financial resources sufficient and utilized effectively and appropriately in accordance with the legal intent of the program(s) to support students in accomplishing the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results?**

Aragon High School has adequate human, material, physical, and financial resources sufficient to support student needs. Resource allocations reflect the school's vision and mission, student achievement of academic standards. The school leadership and staff, the principal, the department chairs, and the School Site Council are involved in resource allocation decisions. SMUHSD spends \$11,730 per pupil which is around \$3000 higher than the state average.

The campus of Aragon High School is safe, orderly, and clean. The passage of recent bond measures allowed for extensive remodeling of the school site. The interiors of both wings of the school have been completely remodeled as well as athletic facilities. A new theatre and Career Technical building are being finished on campus.

**CATEGORY A: ORGANIZATION: VISION AND PURPOSE, GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND STAFF, AND RESOURCES**

**Areas of strength for Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources (if any):**

Aragon High has well defined Vision and Mission statements that are aligned to the SMUHSD governing board's goals.

The SMUHSD supports the school financially

The school uses and shares data with all stakeholders at least once a year

The school reviews and shares its Single Plan for Student Achievement with all stakeholders

The school has a Professional Development Committee that guides Professional Development activities and makes sure they are aligned to district goals.

The staff members at Aragon are very collaborative and work in Professional Learning Communities

The school has an excellent peer observation and peer coaching program. The teachers are able to observe each other a couple of days a month and collaborate regularly about instruction.

The school has new Coordinators of Technology, Data and Assessment, and Professional Development that collaborate with leadership to provide training opportunities to the staff.

**Key issues for Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:**

Teachers should make data a more regular part of their teaching practice to create a more focused approach

The school needs to define best practices and increase use of them by all teachers

The school needs to establish a systematic approach for use of assessment data to drive instructional practices

Establish a systematic approach to Professional Learning Teams

Work with ELAC to develop plans focusing on improvement for long-term English Language Learners

Continue to create a systematic approach and expand Professional Development to enhance student achievement

**Category B. Curriculum**

**CRITERION B1****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 Expected Schoolwide Learning Results?**

Aragon incorporates the California Academic Standards to form the foundation of the instruction and assessment at Aragon. There are curricular learning teams of teachers who work to align district-wide courses of study to the broader state standards, but the school is supported with standards-based textbooks and extra time; late start Wednesday's allow for collaboration. The teachers also work on committees to create district-wide common assessments to evaluate student learning. There are specific course descriptions for each academic class that are aligned with the state standards. There are vertical learning teams in each department that are moving toward evaluating the success of the programs and revising them when data or other factors indicate that they should be changed. Teachers at Aragon meet in learning teams at least two times per month to plan, share best practices and to create standards-based lessons and assessments. For the first several years after teachers formed learning teams, standards-based work was the primary focus. In response to PI requirements from the district, work has been more directed toward reviewing data and creating pacing guides and common assessments. Teachers also have incorporated Peer Coaching activities, visiting each others' classes, and reflecting on their strategies.

Students are required to complete a minimum of 220 units for graduation from Aragon. To graduate students must complete 4 years of English, 3 years of math, 3 1/2 years of social science, 2 years of physical education, 2 years of science (physical and biological), 1 year of fine arts, 1 year of world language, 1 semester of health, and 10 semesters of elective courses. The school offers AP classes in 13 subject areas, and a selection of elective courses to meet the needs of all students. In individual subject areas, students can gain experiences that are both rigorous and relevant, offering real-world applications for their standards based education and for attainment of the ESLRs.

In English there are several common projects. Freshmen prepare for a mock trial after reading Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. Sophomore year, students learn to do public speaking and also participate in a consumer unit from which they learn to evaluate marketing appeals and rhetorical devices. Juniors prepare a formal debate on a current event, researching and speaking persuasively. In their senior year, students can research careers, prepare resumes, and present their learning to the class.

Social science offers a relevant, standards based curriculum. Economics teachers use simulations to show students the real-world applications of the economic theories they study. Government students all participate in a Supreme Court simulation, and there is a Street Law class that focuses on real life application of our laws.

Math and science, teachers strive to make their subjects relevant to help students see connections by striving to integrate experiences with emerging technologies used in the fields they study. Students have the opportunity to take engineering and biotech classes, a field of study that will expand next year with its own building.

Students may participate in the robotics program after school, building a robot that they then take to competition. Physical education and health teachers work together, instructing students about good habits and how their physical and mental health is affected by nutrition and exercise. Health teachers invite guest speakers to work with their classes, discussing the practical implications of the issues they discuss each day. Physical education teachers also work toward the fitness standards, preparing students to pass the state fitness tests.

Elective courses students have opportunities to develop real world skills. Culinary arts class, students learn how to run a kitchen for a restaurant, learning about safety and sanitation procedures, cooking techniques, and cost analysis. In digital photography, students learn the art of advertising and graphic design. AVID teaches students how to create a resume and cover letter and how to conduct a successful interview.

## **CRITERION B2**

**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?**

Aragon allows students to have access to the school's entire program to prepare them to achieve their goals. Counselors begin the process of creating a plan for students upon entrance to Aragon. There are meetings with students at the main feeder schools and counselors provide guidance toward choosing appropriate classes. After discussing academic and personal goals, counselors work with families to have each student create a four-year plan. Counselors do an academic review for all sophomores, they monitor transcripts, and they give individual counseling each spring. The counselors speak to groups of parents before scheduling juniors to make them aware of the stress of junior year and enable their students to make sound academic choices. Counselors and administrators visit English classes twice a year to talk to students about appropriate academic choices. In the fall and spring of each year, guidance personnel visit all English classes of all grade levels to review high school graduation requirements. Each spring, students meet with advisors to review transcripts and four-year plans, make adjustments, and choose the next year's classes.

Aragon has a successful counseling model in that each grade level has an advisor. There are three credentialed counselors on staff allowing students much easier access to advice about courses or other counseling-related matters. The counseling department ensures that all students have access to the school's entire program. Student success at Aragon is supported by the offering of many support classes in a variety of course areas.

The math department offers Strategic Algebra Support and Intensive Algebra Support for students struggling with Algebra-readiness.

In English there is Strategic English Support (SES) for students reading at the 6th-8th grade level, Intensive English Support for those reading at the 5th grade level and below. Aragon offers Credit recovery in English and Math Blended Learning courses that combine direct instruction and the use of the online course, Compass Learning. College Skill Review and Guided Studies both offer general support in all courses, but Guided Studies has an additional component, an additional period in which the teacher works with the School Safety Advocate and an intern from the YMCA to address students' social, emotional and therapeutic needs.

The students from underrepresented backgrounds or who are from families without a history of attending college, the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) courses offer the college preparatory support and skill building to help students be prepared to attend four-year colleges. The AVID classes are engaging for students to achieve and AVID pushes the students beyond the scope what the student realizes they are capable of achieving. These students have an opportunity to enroll in the courses they wish to take with guidance, the district and Aragon have taken a variety of steps. In 2005, Aragon was the first school in the district to pilot the 7-period day. This shift allowed students access to more classes, especially Aragon's support offerings. There are 13 Advanced Placement classes offered at Aragon, and access to the courses is allowed to any students wishing to take them due to the District's open-enrollment policy although students may be discouraged from taking an Advanced Placement class if they have not been successful in the regular level courses. Students have access to the entire high school program, the district also offers summer school, Blended Learning, independent study, home schooling, credit recovery and night school classes for students who may have fallen behind.

The school promotes several career-related activities, every two years Aragon parents and counseling staff provide a career day for students. An entire morning is devoted to providing the opportunity for students to experience a wide variety of career options. AVID students attend field trips to colleges. The district funding has diminished, yet the district still offers ROP classes. All special education students have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which provides a foundation for their four years of study the IEP is annually reviewed and updated. Special Education teachers are advising their students about career goals. While participating in Aragon's academic program, special education students have opportunities to visit various businesses and educational programs.

Many classes and clubs provide pre-professional education to students. Drama, music, art, culinary science, environmental science, biotech, and engineering all offer pre-professional curricula. Clubs such as the Medical Service Club, Fashion Club, Mock Trial, Robotics, Harvard Model Congress, and Model UN all promote hands-on learning in a variety of areas.

**CRITERION B3****To what extent are students able to meet all the requirements of graduation upon completion of the high school program?**

Students at Aragon have the academic and personal opportunities and support they need to meet all of the requirements of graduation upon completion of Aragon's program. In the last three years, Aragon has had a 97% graduation rate. During the same period, 100% of Aragon students have passed the CAHSEE requirement via exam or via special education waiver, and the number of students passing by waiver has been a maximum of three in one year.

Aragon counselors and guidance staff provide all students with the information and opportunities they need to be able to meet these requirements. The Guidance Department members meet with students to explain all courses needed for graduation from Aragon, as well as for college entrance.

Each spring semester, the guidance staff meets with 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students individually to review their course selections in order to verify that their choices satisfy graduation requirements. At the end of each semester, counselors examine transcripts in order to affirm that students are on track for graduation and determine whether they need to drop or repeat a class. They subsequently notify the families of students in jeopardy and place them in makeup courses or summer school as appropriate.

Many academic support classes have been created in order to bolster student achievement and ensure all students will successfully reach graduation. Aragon offers many alternative methods for students to reach graduation requirements. Aragon offers the opportunity to repeat classes, concurrent enrollment with the community colleges, independent study, adult school and home teaching. Aragon also ensures that students and families are constantly aware of the students' progress via a variety of communication methods, such as Schoolloop, 3 and 6-week progress reports, monitoring by counselors, and frequent conferences with parents.

**Criteria B Areas of Strength:**

- Staff meets regularly to collaborate and to create best practices and share in small groups.
- All courses include rigorous standards-based instruction and assessments.
- Aragon maintains collaborative teaching staff and a positive leadership.
- Aragon's support program addresses the needs of many different types of students, providing many avenues for students to get the help they need to be successful.

- Special education students have access to curricula by highly qualified teachers and are placed in the least restrictive environment.
- 63% of 2011 graduates met UC/CSU requirements.
- Aragon's Guidance Department provides a comprehensive support program to help students create a personal education plan, successfully execute it and graduate.

#### Criteria B Prioritized Growth Areas:

- Offer more pre-professional courses and skilled labor classes, especially those relating to technology.
- Increase cross-curricular integration, especially as it benefits special education and EL students. Support for increased achievement in both the student groups, EL and SPED.
- Increase career exploration in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades of the high school across the curriculum.
- Increase frequency and substance of articulation with feeder schools to ensure students are properly placed in courses for success.

### **Category C. Instruction**

#### **C-1: To what extent are all students involved in challenging learning experiences to achieve the academic standards and Expected Schoolwide Learning Results?**

Aragon's courses are aligned with the state standards and the instruction is aimed at allowing students equal access to this curriculum. There seems to be a firm belief transmitted by teachers that all students can learn when given the right opportunities, support, and instruction. Consistent classroom 'Behaviors for Learning' across the school provide a good environment for students to be respectful towards each other, listen to instruction, take notes, share ideas, and reflect on their own learning.

Each class begins with a syllabus, which clearly states the objectives, expectations, and grading scales. Each unit begins with a communication of the unit objectives, expected learning outcomes, homework calendars, and will often include work samples. Rubrics, many of them tied to state standards, are commonly used for major projects and essays so that students understand the expectations of the assignment and can perform their best. Though communicated at the unit level and often addressed through activities, learning objectives are not commonly expressed directly in daily lesson plans to demonstrate what students should know and be able to do at the end of a given class.

Many different instructional strategies are displayed across and between classrooms. While observing classrooms over the course of day, students were engaged in teacher led lectures while students took notes and reflected on material activities. In many cases, teachers provide guided notes for students that contain interpretation and evaluation questioning that all students were expected to be ready to answer. Other common activities aligned with the ESLR's included games, pair work, fishbowl discussions, independent research projects, group simulations, multi-media presentations, discussions, and student-led group work.

Students across grade levels and tracks seem to agree that their classes challenge them on a daily basis through a variety of learning experiences. There is a culture among students that, as one student said, "if you are here, you are here to learn." As a diverse school in terms of race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, teachers at Aragon seem to have a commitment to differentiating instruction on a regular basis to try and connect with its students. Major projects and assignments include tasks that vary depending on student's interest, learning styles, readiness, and ability. Scaffolds are provided across many classrooms to help students organize thoughts and writing to make curriculum accessible. Common assessments and similar instruction across grade level courses help students achieve content standards while participating in more authentic assessments.

While courses are aligned with state standards, many teachers go beyond this requirement to make courses more relevant and challenging. Collaborative learning team time has led to the creation of a standards-based "Portrait of a Humanitarian" research project for all 9th grade English students. 10th grade teachers deliver a standards-based speech unit, followed by a controversial issue debate unit for juniors. They also maintain student portfolios of writing samples that follow the students throughout their high school careers, enabling other teachers to better address individual needs while supporting the expectations of standards-based instruction in composition.

Though courses obviously have a different feel depending on the style of teacher, common standards, curriculum, major projects, benchmark assessments, and pacing guides are used between the same courses to provide a similar experience for students.

**C-2: To what extent do all teachers use a variety of strategies and resources, including technology and experiences beyond the textbook and the classroom, that actively engage students, emphasize higher order thinking skills, and help them succeed at high levels?**

Teaching and instruction varies between teacher style and course, though a high level of student focus and attention is directed towards learning. Every Aragon teacher is highly qualified and NCLB compliant and nearly all seem dedicated to being flexible, learning new and innovative teaching skills. The structure of Professional Learning Teams is an opportunity for this professional development to happen, as the culture already seems to be one where instructional best practices are sought after and shared. Aragon teachers also participate in student teaching

programs, stay on top of new research, and observe other exemplary programs to improve.

Collaboration seems to be a large, valued, and essential part of Aragon's culture. Success in improving instruction school wide has been found in the peer observation program and finding time in faculty meetings to share best practices. Teachers are encouraged to observe each other's teaching and student learning, reflect on common assessments, and work together to increase student achievement. Peer coaching exists as another mechanism for helping teachers, which is an optional avenue for additional instructional support. Additionally, professional development opportunities led by Aragon teachers are optional to attend if there is a desire to learn more about a particular topic.

Teachers and students at Aragon actively use technology to support learning. They utilize a range of technology tools to complete their class assignments, including word processing for writing, presentation software for in-class presentations, library databases and internet search engines for research, and online textbooks to access the curriculum from any computer. In some classes, students use advanced programs such as Photoshop, InDesign, Lightroom, Google SketchUp, Google Docs, and Flickr. They also create websites and blogs to assist them in achieving the academic standards. In other classes, students use computer-based formative assessment tools, such as student response clickers, to demonstrate achievement in an interactive classroom environment. Teachers also have students submit papers through Turnitin.com, reminding students to avoid plagiarism and to take ethical behavior seriously.

Aragon students engage with class subject matter beyond studying what is in the textbook. There seems to be a culture of using the textbook as an additional source to learn from, rather than a curriculum guide. In history classes, the textbook was used as a jumping off point for the lesson. Clubs also build on the instruction from class to combine high-level skills with application in a real work environment. Examples include robotics, Community Service, technical theatre, and others. In classes such as digital photography and World Language courses, students produce projects utilizing computer software, Web 2.0 programs, Google Docs and informational resources. By using these tools, students are learning practical skills that they can use in the real world to approach everyday issues related to current events, employment, health, and education. This is encouraging, as it is demonstrating Aragon's commitment to their ESLR's to think creatively and demonstrates student's ability to use higher order thinking skills.

Aragon provides a number of opportunities for students to explore a number of different activities that can be tied to instruction outside of the classroom. Examples include Summer Opportunity Fair for students, Career Day, college visits, a Food Fair, cultural exchange programs, cultural outings in San Francisco, Community Service, and a variety of clubs on campus. Lessons will sometimes be planned around outings like these and given class time to prepare.

A variety of teaching strategies are used in various content classes to try and keep students engaged, like note-taking, lectures, simulations of historic events or government practices, primary source work, analysis of political cartoons, debates, Socratic seminars, and metaphor projects, among other things. Online resources and databases are often used and made available to students to give students access to further understanding of content and concepts.

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

- The faculty presents a rigorous, standards-based curriculum and assessments in a wide variety of forms.
- Students in all programs have access to Aragon's challenging program, and are supported to achieve a high levels and to graduate.
- Teachers use creative activities and assessments that appeal to students with a wide variety of learning styles, backgrounds and interests.
- Teachers use technology to present ideas creatively, and they ensure that students become proficient in its use.
- Lessons and assessments across the curriculum commonly contain real-world connections.
- Teachers meet in professional learning communities (PLCs) to analyze data, review best practices and develop action plans.

### **Criteria C Prioritized Growth Areas:**

- Continue to build the culture of peer observation, peer coaching and the sharing of best practices; ensure there is regular time to complete this work.
- Ensure that all learning teams have clear structure and objectives and the time to complete their work.
- Provide focused and in-depth professional development for teachers to increase their repertoire of instruction and assessment techniques.
- Increase opportunities to connect curriculum to the world of work and post- secondary opportunities.
- Make the presentation of learning objectives (what students should know and be able to do at the end of each lesson) a more consistent and integral part of lesson plans.
- Provide students a meaningful way to give teachers feedback about instruction and assessment techniques.
- Focused instruction for teachers on how to develop and target language goals and development of literacy for students who are/were English Language Learners

## **Category D. Assessment and Accountability**

**CRITERION D1 To what extent does the school use a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, analyze and report student performance data to the parents and other shareholders of the community?**

Departments meet together bi-monthly in order to use the data from these common assessments to drive the curriculum. There does not appear to be a standard protocol which all staff members

use campus-wide to assess the data collected. There is a strong effort to collaborate, but different departments will take different approaches to the PLC structure and to data analysis.

These stakeholders meet in a variety of formats, departmental, grade level, district-wide, etc. in order to create and revise district common assessments at least once per semester.

Teams also meet regularly to evaluate assessment results and to study and interpret results by district, by school and on an individual basis.

The school has been using DataDirector as its data management module. Teachers analyze the common assessment data after the assessments are given but do not appear to use a standard protocol for data analysis.

The school regularly informs parents about their statewide and district-wide testing data through the Aragon web page, email communication, the electronic billboard, mailed results, the Aragon EXPO booklet, the Parent and Student Handbook Back-to-School Night, Open House Night and meetings with parent groups (PTSO, for example).

The school uses a variety of formal and informal methods to collect, analyze, and discuss student assessments. They report those findings to students, parents, and teachers using one-on-one conversations, DataDirector printouts, Schoolloop, and PLC meeting times.

**CRITERION D2a. To what extent do teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate student learning?**

**CRITERION D2b. To what extent do students and teachers use these findings to modify the teaching/learning process for the enhancement of the educational progress of every student?**

Teachers use a variety of methods to complete both formal and informal assessments of formative and summative type. The use of the results of these assessments allows teachers to follow up with individuals who are struggling with the material or need to offer re-teaching opportunities when a certain skill set has not been mastered. Teachers review data in a variety of ways to assess student performance (clickers, thumbs-up, text-polling, etc.). Teachers are continuing to develop a formalized systemic practice of using data collection systems in order to drive instruction.

The school uses a backwards mapping approach that allows common assessments to be created using district and state standards that best allows students to demonstrate their understanding of a particular set of skills or content matter. The assessment thus becomes the driving force for curriculum delivery.

The school has also used its data analysis process to decide course offerings and support classes. English, Math, and CAHSEE support classes have been offered as well as blended-learning

classes to offer credit recovery options. Guided studies offers an intervention type class for struggling 9<sup>th</sup> graders that has brought the numbers of first time failing 9<sup>th</sup> grade students down. The school has also designed a class called “exploring the social world” that is geared towards students with high-functioning autism or Asperger’s syndrome, the course helps to prepare students to function well in high school and beyond.

**CRITERION D3. To what extent does the school, with the support of the district and community, have an assessment and monitoring system to determine student progress toward achievement of the academic standards and Expected Schoolwide Learning Results?**

Since 2004, the schools of the San Mateo Union High School District (SMUHSD) have developed and administered district level common assessments. Initially, only core departments participated, but at this time, all departments administer and analyze district common assessments. In addition, several departments now administer district common assessments up to 4 times per year. In recent years, teachers have also collaborated to create pacing guides for use across the district to ensure that students receive consistent access to standards-based instruction in each class and at every school. The wide variety of assessments and course requirements allow the school to directly address the ESLRs.

Students and parents are informed about student progress through the use of Schoolloop. Most teachers post assignments, test scores, projects, and grades regularly for students and parents to keep track of their students’ progress in class. All grades are submitted via Schoolloop every marking period.

**CRITERION D4. To what extent does the assessment of student achievement in relation to the academic standards and Expected Schoolwide Learning Results drive the school’s program, its regular evaluation and improvement and usage of resources?**

The school has regularly made changes to its academic program in response to revelations discovered through the use of assessments of student achievement. Assessment data is examined and used to guide program development, as well as appropriate placement of students. The counselors and staff members review CST and CAHSEE scores, District Benchmark scores, as well as CELDT scores, if applicable, to inform placement of students in appropriate and rigorous courses of study. The counseling staff (counselor and aides) contacts parents of students who are struggling academically. That contact occurs primarily at the 3 and 6 week marking periods. Parents and students are invited to one-on-one meetings throughout the year and decisions and changes are made to ensure that the needs of that individual student are met. Based on student performance, teacher recommendations, grades, and CST history, the parents, student, and counselors make a recommendation as to the placement of these strategically targeted students regarding support classes. Students are allowed to move into and out of support classes to best meet their individual academic needs.

A major goal resulting from the school's and district's assessment program in 2011 has been to continue to decrease achievement gaps by creating appropriate support classes. Especially in light of last year's drop in the school's overall API and the significant drop in the API of the English Learner subgroup, the school sees support as an especially high priority in the coming years.

The school has increased its number of support courses for English and Math. The increase in the number of classes over the past few years (advanced as well as support classes) is an example of how the right amount of rigor drives the school's programs. The district also developed its academic core policy through the use of data analysis.

**Areas of strength for Standards-Based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.**

- Data Director software provides standardized test results, identifies students' performance levels, and offers help in creating standards-based assessments.
- Aragon, in cooperation with the district and the governing board, changes curriculum based on student assessment results, student needs and student interests.
- Teacher-created learning teams use student results to evaluate their instruction, adjust assessments, and review when needed.
- Three-week progress reports identify struggling students when they still have the best chance to improve their work and their grades.
- Teachers develop and use a wide variety of creative assessments.
- The administration regularly discusses assessment results with school committees, faculty, department heads, parent groups, and students.
- Most of the faculty uses Schoolloop regularly to communicate assessment results to parents, students and other authorized stakeholders.
- Teachers create common assessments in all core academic subjects and district-wide common assessments are used at least once a year in all subjects as well.

**Key issues for Standards-Based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students.**

- Share best practices and provide more training on quick formative assessments, such as student response system clickers.
- Provide more time for learning-teams to allow them to do more consistent work.

- Creating a formalized process for the PLC's to systemically develop common assessments and interpret their results.
- Increase the effective use of Schoolloop.
- Continue to train teachers in the use of data collection systems to optimize their use of all of the program's features.
- Standardize the practice of using data collection and analysis to provide useful data to drive the curriculum.
- Improve communication with parents who do not use Schoolloop.
- Teach students how to use data to modify their learning.
- Give students the opportunity to give teachers feedback about most effective instructional practices.

**E1: To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to encourage parental & community involvement, especially with the teaching/learning process?**

Parents have multiple vehicles to be involved in school life and learn about life on campus, extra-curricular activities and access to their child's academic records. Schoolloop has improved communications and access to school information. Aeries is used to keep attendance and other demographics about students. Handouts and some important documents, bilingual services are available in Spanish, parents are encouraged to be involved in the college admissions process and a variety of community partnerships. There is an active Asian Parent Group, part of the PTSO and open to all families. Most recently they sponsored a parent education night on elder care. There is an active ELAC and groups that represent Latino parents and African American parents in the district as a whole.

Fair Share, a fundraising effort directs parent PTSO funds towards specific school programs, supplies, & classes. Parents charge themselves \$600/year per student to cover many costs. The PTSO runs this program, and with advice from site leadership, distributes the funds every year.

**E2: To what extent is the school a safe, clean, orderly place that nurtures learning?**

There are high expectations for students and many intervention courses in place to support academic success and general well being of students. Besides a school safety plan, regular drills and evacuation,(fire, earthquake, and lockdown), there is a full staff of campus security aides, a separate dean and two vice principals, a School Safety Advocate, closed campus at lunch, and an ongoing campaign that reinforces mutual respect, collaboration, and learning.

Students know themselves as learners, reflect on their own learning styles (“I am a visual learner” or a “hands-on learner”) were heard repeatedly throughout the conversations both formal and informal with groups of students. The campus is clean, and all surveys indicate that students and staff feel completely safe here. There are multiple examples of Aragon community efforts to cultivate an atmosphere of trust, respect and professionalism.

**E3: To what extent do all students receive appropriate support along with an individualized learning plan to help ensure academic success?**

Students have many opportunities to develop their own individual learning plans, access to both accelerated academic courses and intervention or support classes, depending on their particular needs. Tutoring is available to students both after school twice weekly and a general sense that teachers are very generous with their time and available to help students both in and out of class time. The AVID classes run tutorials twice a week to support the students in their program. Community service opportunities exist for Saturday school tutors, so students who are here can get the peer tutoring they may need to catch up, or master the material they may have missed. Teachers often make themselves available before, after, and during school hours for their students. For students who are struggling, counselors hold Academic Progress Meetings and students are encouraged or directed to change schedules to include intervention classes (or in some cases are sent to the continuation schools in the District).

Attendance has improved with a new tardy policy making students accountable through monitoring and reporting. After three tardies in a semester, students must attend Saturday school or do community service around campus during the break and lunch.

**E4: To what extent do students have access to a system of personal support services, activities and opportunities at the school & within the community?**

There is a wide range of club activities, extra-curricular, drama, CTE, VAPA, community service opportunities, athletics, career/college trips, counseling, and leadership training opportunities. Instructional aides in the Special Education and EL classes work with the teachers to plan strategies together, and discuss next steps for individual students.

**Areas of strength for School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth**

- The strong Aragon community, with active parents, willing students, and dedicated staff and administration
- A wide range of activities students can choose from to find their “niche” in the school
- A helpful, dedicated guidance department willing to assist students in planning for their high school career and beyond

**Areas of growth**

- More consistent communication of and follow through on discipline procedures and communication by all adults
- Continue to develop activities that promote school spirit
- Provide more safe, social spaces for students to spend free time
- Investigate ways for more individualized time between counselors and students to check in with each other more often

### **Part B: Synthesis of Schoolwide Areas of Strength and Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up**

The visiting committee would like to thank the school and all the stakeholders for producing a thorough, well-written report, and being so open and honest in all discussions. The visiting team was given all materials needed to conduct a solid assessment of the school's self-study, and recommends the following as areas of strength and critical areas for follow-up:

#### **Schoolwide areas of strength:**

1. The school's culture of collaboration that is driven by a talented, dedicated faculty
2. A rigorous curriculum that offers a wide variety of challenging courses
3. The students' awareness of Aragon as a place of academic rigor and high expectations
4. A safe, clean campus in which students and staff take pride
5. Solid parent and community involvement in the school
6. A staff-driven culture of innovation and risk-taking to support students

#### **Schoolwide Critical areas for Follow-up**

1. Investigate a variety of alternative courses to increase student opportunities
2. Develop strategies to monitor and address the needs of the long-term English Language Learners
3. Further develop the PLC process with better communication and accountability
4. Continue work in using data collection and analysis to drive the curriculum and instruction

### **Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement**

Focus groups, after completing their study of evidence and writing their responses to the WASC criteria, developed a list of the school's strengths and areas of concern. Three Action Plans were drafted and proposed, but were later combined into two. The Action Plans represent the vision of Aragon High School, and are aligned with the goals of the district. The plans are designed to ensure regular follow-up by the school with regards to accountability, and include specific goals and timelines for accomplishment. Monitoring mechanisms and extensions are built in to the action plans.

**Action Plan 1. Support all Aragon students to achieve academic proficiency.**

- **Raise the percentage achieving a C or better in all courses.**
- **Raise the percentage achieving “proficient” or better on all CSTs and the CAHSEE**

Specific steps and activities are noted to achieve this goal, including expanding tutoring and community service programs, evaluate and revise current support course offerings, providing interventions for identified students, and articulating more with feeder schools. Professional development will play a role in meeting these goals, and discussions as to how to better embed this time into the school day are already underway.

**Action Plan 2. Enrich Aragon’s program to better empower and engage students.**

The school plans to expand their course offerings and additional activities that will be integrated into the curriculum, help students identify and manage stressors, and increase communication between all stakeholders. Staff plans to use professional development to meet their needs in addressing this goal.